



Draft Neighbourhood Plan

(Pre-submission June 2015)

FOREWORD

This is the Pre-Submission version of the Growing Together Neighbourhood Plan which has been developed through extensive public consultation and reflects the hard work of the Neighbourhood Plan Forum over the last 12 months.

For those who want to know a little more about Neighbourhood Plans and how they fit into the planning system, the following summary may be helpful:

- They are part of the new planning system and have been introduced by the Government under the Localism Act 2011 to give people a greater say about the location and scale of development in the area and to help to protect valued landscape and community assets.*
- They can establish general planning policies for the development and use of land.*
- Once adopted, Neighbourhood Plans form part of the Local Development Plan for the local authority and are used to consider planning applications.*

Neighbourhood Plans can have real influence and they are an important means of engaging local people in decisions on how their area will appear and function over the next generation.

This is an important stage for the Neighbourhood Plan, offering local people, businesses and other organisations the opportunity to influence the form and content of the document, before it is submitted to Northampton Borough Council, mid-2015.

This Pre Submission Consultation version of the Neighbourhood Plan is a Policy Document. As well as policies, it includes a summary of the background research and the Vision and objectives for the Plan. An analysis of the policy context for the Neighbourhood Plan is available as separate documents. In due course, two further formal documents will be produced:

1 Statement of Community Involvement: This describes how local people, businesses and other bodies have been consulted on the Plan and comments, which have been made.

2 Basic Conditions Statement: This explains how the Plan meets legal requirements.

Finally, please get involved in the six week consultation on the Growing Together Neighbourhood Plan – we want to hear from as many local people (of all ages), businesses and community organisations as possible. Remember that the Neighbourhood Plan will help to shape the future of the area over the next 15 years and, if supported by the local community, it will have real legal power.

Andrea McAuliffe,
Chair of Growing Together
Neighbourhood Forum

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INTRODUCTION



1. INTRODUCTION

Plan Area and Purpose

This document is the (Regulation 14) Pre-Submission Consultation version of the Neighbourhood (Development) Plan for the Growing Together area, which comprises the communities of Blackthorn, Cherry Lodge, Goldings, Lings, Lingswood Park, Lumbertubs and Overstone Lodge (see Figure 1 below).

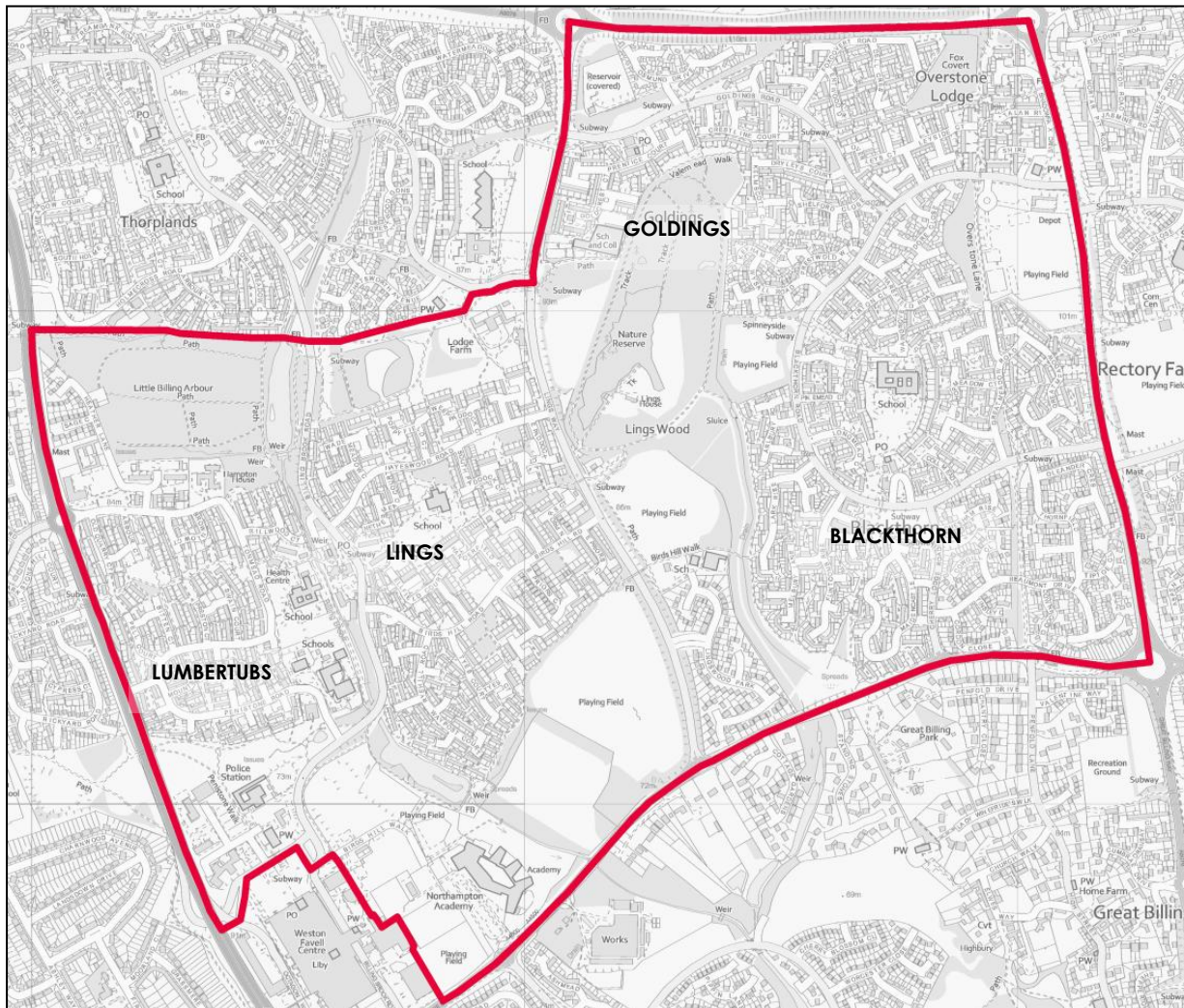


Figure 1: Growing Together Neighbourhood Plan Area

The Growing Together area lies to the north-east of Northampton town centre. Figure 2 shows wider context within which the Neighbourhood Plan area lies, and the key destinations which surround it.

Like much of east Northampton, the estates were originally developed on greenfield land in the late 1960s/early 1970s to house a “London overspill” population. This recent history does mean that there is often a sense of belonging that can be seen as unusual in an urban area, with older local residents from across the area able to refer to a shared past of migration.

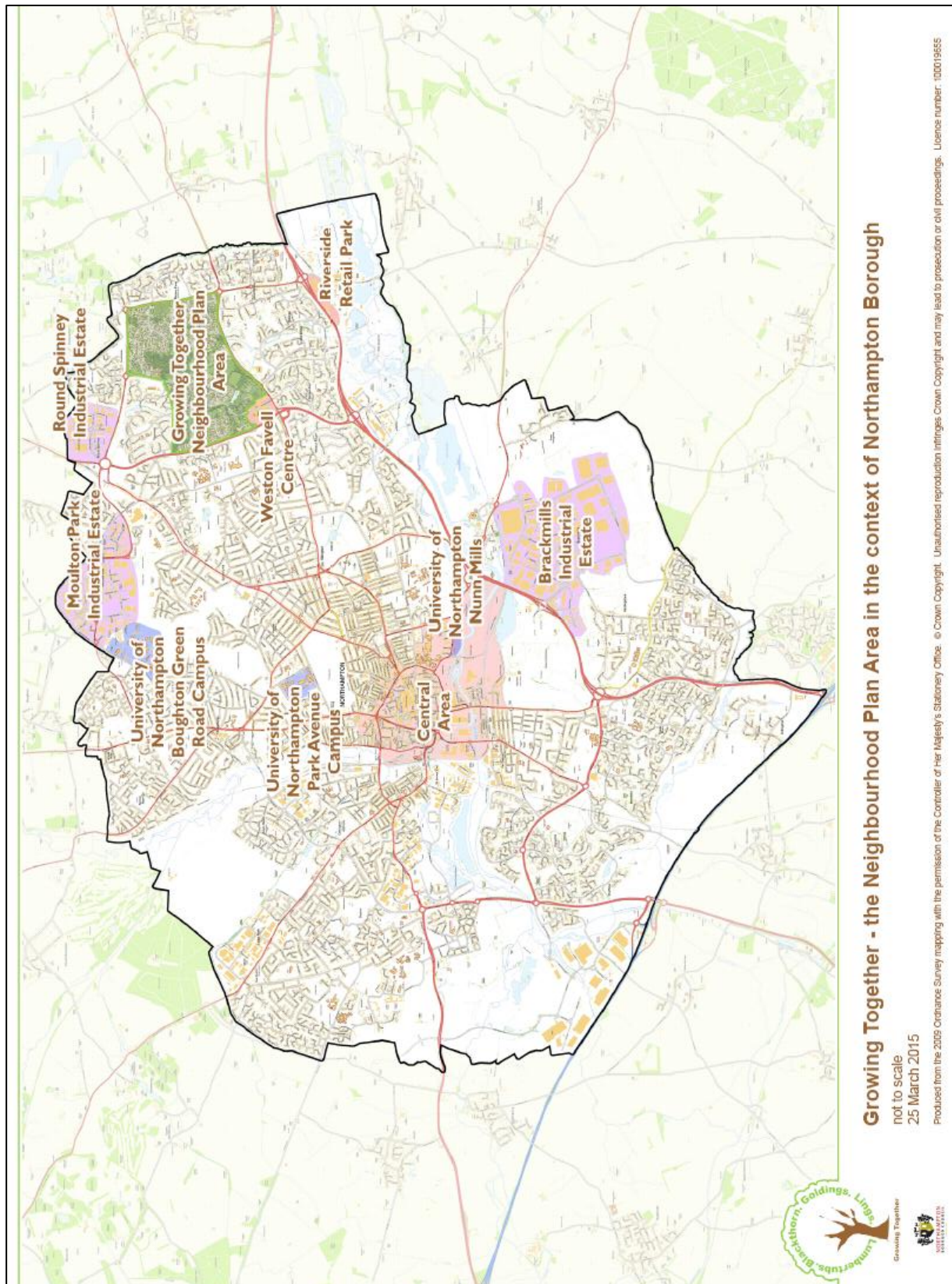


Figure 2: Growing Together in relation to wider borough context

Much of the area was developed according to the now discredited Radburn principles and the estates suffer from high excessively high levels of “permeability”,

limited vehicular access and a lack of “defensible space” around houses, all of which are now regarded as being conducive to anti-social and criminal activity.

The countryside is never far away and many of the street names provide a direct link to the rural past: Old Barn Court, Great Meadow, the Paddocks etc. Some original farm buildings still stand. The area remains blessed with abundant open natural space. At the centre are the 22 hectares of Lings Wood. The Wood is managed on behalf of Northampton Borough Council by the Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire.

Generally speaking, local retail, community and leisure facilities are provided on an estate-by-estate basis. Figure 3 shows the locations of the key local facilities provided in and around the Neighbourhood Plan area.

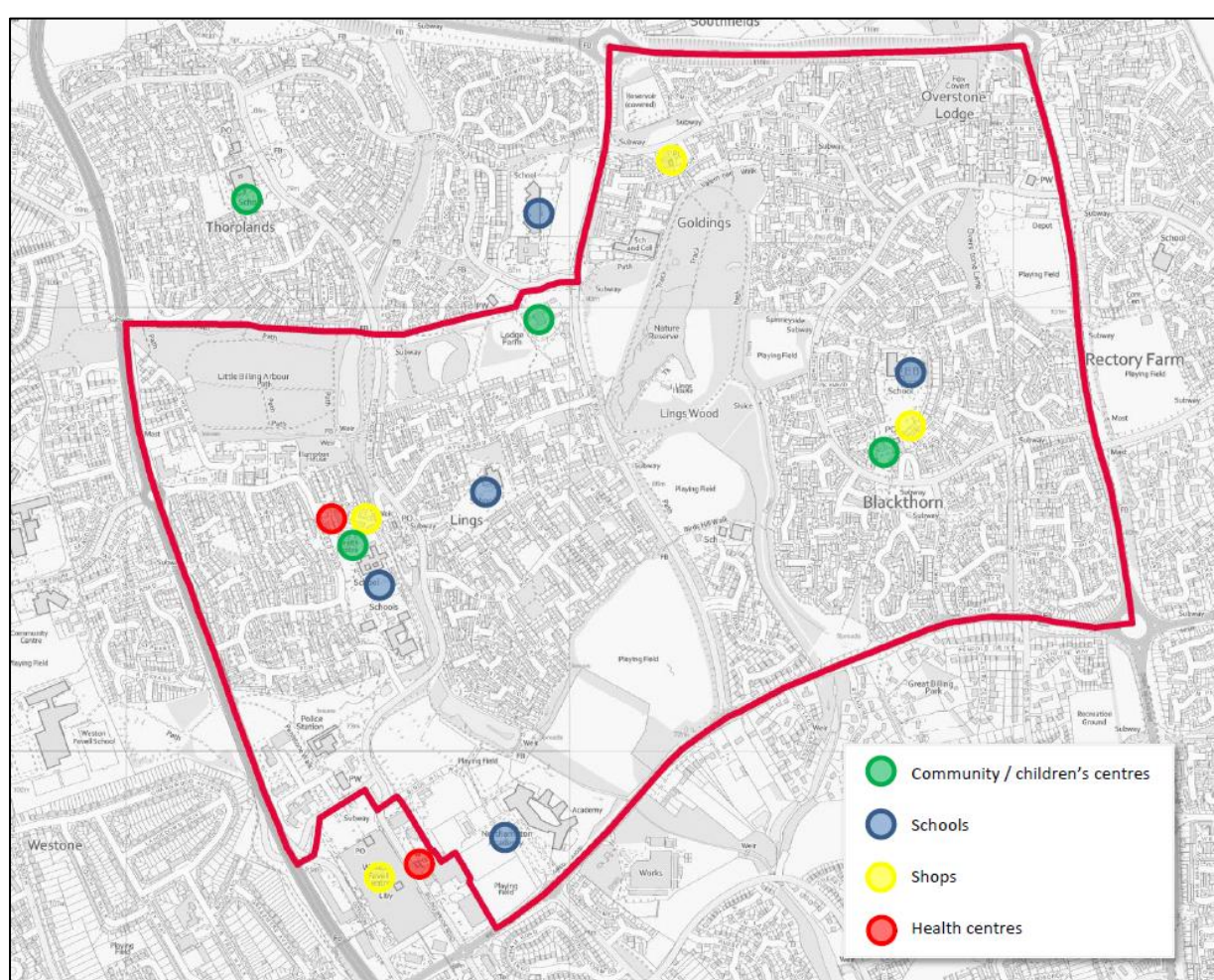


Figure 3: Key local facilities

The Neighbourhood Plan covers the period 2014 to 2029, corresponding with the emerging West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (WNJCS – 2011 to 2029) and with that document (when adopted) the Neighbourhood Plan will become the planning framework for Growing Together. It is envisaged, therefore, that the

Neighbourhood Plan will provide a context for future planning decisions for the Growing Together area over a period of 15 years.

A Neighbourhood Forum made up of local residents, elected NBC Members and other organisations such as the Police and Wildlife Trust has prepared the Neighbourhood Plan. The process commenced in September 2013 with the designation of both the Forum and Neighbourhood Plan Area.

The preparation and development of the Neighbourhood Plan has been shaped by the opinions and feedback received from a series of public consultation events. Details of the approaches to public consultation will be given in the Statement of Community Involvement document and a summary of work to date is given in Section 3 below.

The Neighbourhood Plan sits alongside the Lottery-funded Big Local project and associated Big Local Plan, which is being progressed to regenerate the Growing Together area and help the local community to achieve its aims.

HOW THE PLAN WAS
PREPARED



2. HOW THE PLAN WAS PREPARED

Growing Together Neighbourhood Forum

This draft Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by the Growing Together Neighbourhood Forum, which comprises the Growing Together Community Partnership plus a number of local stakeholders, including local residents, and also individuals from the voluntary and public sectors.

Throughout the preparation of this draft Neighbourhood Plan, the Neighbourhood Forum has sought the views of those people who live and work within the Plan area. An overview of the community consultation undertaken to inform and underpin the content of this draft Neighbourhood Plan is given below.



Figure 4: The opinions of local people have helped to shape the content of the Growing Together Neighbourhood Plan

Community Consultation

Big Local Plan consultation (2012 and early 2013)

Prior to commencing work on the Neighbourhood Plan, an initial series of consultation events was held as part of the Big Local Plan exercise, the aims of which were to identify areas for the spending of £1million allocated to the area by the Lottery through their Big Local programme.

These initial consultation events were progressed in 2012 and early 2013. A number of approaches were taken to consultation, with the aim being to ensure as many local people as possible were given the chance to express their opinion. Consultation included:

- public consultation events – these were often held alongside other major community events such as the Jubilee celebrations and the passage of the Olympic flame. Others took place at half-term and school holiday events, and in the local shopping centre during the week before Christmas;
- focused consultation events for public and voluntary sector organisations working in the area;
- doorstep engagement and discussion; and
- targeted consultation with young people was undertaken through two local youth organisations, which included both direct engagement at scheduled activities and online via Survey Monkey.

From the feedback gathered through these consultation exercises, themes for investment of the Lottery money were identified. These themes were as follows:

- Tackling crime and making the area feel safer
- Improved facilities, activities and opportunities for children and teenagers
- Enhancing the local environment
- Bringing the community together and encouraging active citizenship

In late 2013 the Forum undertook an exercise of reviewing these broad themes to identify which could be linked to land-use issues and potentially addressed within the Neighbourhood Plan.

From this exercise, they identified six themes:

- Housing
- Green spaces
- Reclaiming underused / derelict buildings and spaces
- Creating safer places
- Transport and movement
- Community facilities

In addition, during this consultation period, there were a number of issues raised which the Forum felt could not be addressed through the Big Local Programme investment, but that should be explored during the Neighbourhood Plan preparation process. These included the issues of fuel poverty in the local area and the need to bring more people into employment.

Neighbourhood Plan consultation (Summer 2014)

Building upon the findings of the Big Local Plan consultation, the Forum undertook a community-wide consultation specifically focused on the Neighbourhood Plan during the summer months of 2014.

Many residents from the Growing Together area have not traditionally been involved in the planning system, and mail or web-based consultation methods have a track record of very poor return rates in this locality. For this reason the Forum agreed that a particularly personal and informal approach to consultation was required, where local people could speak to Forum members face-to-face and articulate their aspirations and concerns.

To facilitate this consultation, stalls were set up at the following key local venues:

- 19 July - Blackthorn Community Centre Fun Day
- 21 July - Blackthorn Children's Centre foyer
- 31 July - Foyer of Lings Forum sports centre and cinema
- 20 August - Weston Favell shopping centre
- 16 and 17 September - Emmanuel Church coffee shop

The above events were arranged to coincide with popular local events or during times when footfall would be highest. In total, these events represented 32 hours of contact time with the public.

At these consultation events, members of the public were asked to provide responses to the following four questions:

1. What areas could to be improved so they can serve their current purpose better?
2. What areas could accommodate alternative uses, and what would these uses be?
3. What additional facilities are required to support new / expanded activities?
4. What buildings and open spaces in the area should be retained and protected?

The responses received to the above four questions highlighted the following issues as being those which people living and working within the Growing Together area wished to see addressed in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan:

- Improvement of existing play spaces, and creation of new play space facilities
- Enhancement of community spaces, including sports and recreation facilities, and creation of new community facilities (in particular a childcare centre)
- Protection and enhancement of green spaces
- Enhancement of retail and community facilities within the existing local centres
- Improved pedestrian and cycle links.
- Redevelopment of key vacant and derelict sites, including the Silver Horse pub and the school sites (Lings Upper & Emmanuel Middle Schools and Blackthorn Middle School). Suggested uses included residential, community and retail.
- Opportunity to replace existing garages with new housing.

Underpinning much of the above feedback was a general desire for the Neighbourhood Plan to contribute to the reduction of crime and anti-social behaviour and to create an environment which is safe, pleasant and functional.

EVIDENCE SUPPORTING THE PLAN



3. EVIDENCE SUPPORTING THE PLAN

Population Profile

The area covers 265 hectares and contains 4,751 households, which are spread throughout the neighbourhood area as follows:

- Blackthorn / Cherry Lodge – 1814 households
- Lings – 1193 households
- Goldings / Overstone Lodge – 910 households
- Lumbertubs – 862 households

The principal source of population profiling data is, of course, the 2011 Census. However, Census data is no longer collated or published by electoral ward, but by Middle layer Super Output Areas (MSOAs), subdivided into Lower layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs).

- The majority of the area is covered by the Northampton 007 MSOA. This MSOA falls entirely within the Growing Together Area and comprises 5,901 residents (i.e. 65% approx. of the total population). It does not include Goldings or Lumbertubs.
- SOA 004A covers Lumbertubs, again falling entirely within the Growing Together area. It has a population of 1,575 residents.
- Goldings falls within LSOA 005E, which also includes a significant part of Southfields. LSOA 005E has 1,854 residents.

On the basis of the above, it is estimated that the Growing Together area has a population of approximately 9,100* (*the 2011 census shows that MOA 007, SOA 004A and LSOA 005E have a combined population of 9,330 residents, however some of LSOA 005E falls outside of the Neighbourhood Plan area).

Census data suggests that, by comparison with Northampton as a whole, the population of the Growing Together area:

- has more teenagers;
- has fewer people in their 70s and 80s; and
- is more ethnically diverse.

Quality of life issues

The principal source of quality of life data for the area is the most recent Index of Multiple Deprivation, compiled in 2010 (IMD2007). This nationwide data-set divides the country into over 33,000 neighbourhoods, known as Super Output Areas (or SOAs) and combines eight sub-sets ("domains") to produce a top to bottom ranking of all 33,000 plus SOAs. The eight domains are also ranked separately. These are as follows:

- Income
- Employment

- Health and disability
- Education, Training and skills
- Crime and disorder
- Quality of living environment
- Barriers to housing and services

The area consists of 6 Super Output Areas (SOAs). The percentage rankings for these according to IMD 2010 are as follows (the lower the percentage score, the more deprived the neighbourhood). The location descriptions are only an indication of the area covered by each SOA and it should be noted that some of them take in streets that are not in the Growing Together area.

| | SOA location | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| | Lumbertubs estate | East Lings | Cherry Lodge | West Lings | Blackthorn | Goldings |
| Income | 19.24 | 22.75 | 22.44 | 14 | 3.97 | 16.35 |
| Employment | 13.6 | 35.32 | 33.09 | 10.73 | 16.74 | 27.88 |
| Health and disability | 14.65 | 40.45 | 36.28 | 9.78 | 15.04 | 21.82 |
| Education, training and skills | 10.91 | 14.51 | 15.99 | 9.06 | 2.2 | 3.18 |
| Crime and disorder | 0.8 | 4.45 | 13.51 | 5.13 | 6.05 | 2.26 |
| Environmental quality | 56.3 | 81.66 | 73.66 | 64.21 | 73.86 | 54.5 |
| Barriers to housing / services | 33.35 | 59.85 | 81.9 | 52.15 | 61.71 | 37.18 |
| Overall | 12 | 26.85 | 29.89 | 11.45 | 8.17 | 13.84 |

Figure 5: Quality of life rankings data

Other than pockets of relative affluence in Cherry Lodge and the eastern part of Lings (predominantly the privately owned Paddocks and Priors Courts), the general picture is of an overall deprivation position ranging from 13.84% in the case Goldings to 8.17% for Blackthorn. Lumbertubs, west Lings, Blackthorn and Golding are all in the bottom 15% nationally, with Blackthorn in the bottom 10%.

Looking at the specific domains, a distinct picture emerges:

- the very low scores under the crime domain, common across most of Northampton East, stand out. Lumbertubs estate falls in the bottom 1% nationally
- income deprivation in Blackthorn and the level of skills and qualifications in Blackthorn and Goldings are of real concern
- generally low scores for educational attainment across the area do not bode well for the social mobility of future generations
- environmental quality is fairly high, reflecting the green spaces and proximity to open countryside

- access to services and housing (a measure of homelessness, access to housing, housing conditions and distance from essential services) is likewise reasonably good
- health and disability scores are good, other than on Lumbertubs and part of the Lings estate, perhaps reflecting the relatively young age profile of the area.

Given the income deprivation levels seen within the Growing Together area, it is not surprising that fuel poverty is also an issue for many local residents. Northampton Borough Council's Affordable Warmth Strategy 2011-2014 estimates that in May 2011 there were 14,5474 households in Northampton suffering from fuel poverty; this is 15.3% of the number of households in Northampton, which is above the national average of 14.6% in England.

The same document identifies the former electoral ward of Lumbertubs, which covers the Growing Together Neighbourhood Plan area, as experiencing an increase in fuel poverty between 2003 and 2011 - in 2003 only 6.3% of households were suffering from fuel poverty, but this figure rose to 15.4% by 2011, exceeding even the average for Northampton as a whole.

Employment opportunities

The IMD data above suggests that unemployment is a serious issue, especially on Blackthorn and Lumbertubs estates and the western part of Lings. The most recent data on household unemployment at this level is from the Census and it confirms much higher levels of unemployment than in Northampton as a whole.

A number of barriers to employment other than qualification levels are also evidenced by Census data on car ownership, lone parent households and households with a full-time carer (i.e. providing 20 hours or more of unpaid care) in the Figure 5 below.

| | Blackthorn and Lings (MSOA 007) | Goldings (LSOA 005E) | Lumbertubs (LSOA 004A) | Northampton as a whole |
|--|--|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Unemployed households | 6.3% | 8.2% | 8.07% | 3.51% |
| Households without a car | 34.8% | 30.6% | 36.7% | 24.4% |
| Households with one car | 41.9% | 47.2% | 42.7% | 43.1% |
| Households with 2 cars | 18.9% | 17.3% | 16.8% | 25.7% |
| Lone parent households | 14.9% | 18.9% | 12.9% | 8.5% |
| Households with a carer providing 20 hours or more of unpaid care per week | 4.3% | 3.7% | 3.0% | 3.3% |

Figure 6: Barriers to employment data

There is poor availability of child care in the local area. The estates also suffer from poor public transport links, which hamper job opportunities for those without access to a car. Whilst bus links to the Weston Favell centre and on into Northampton town centre are adequate, movement between the estates and to other centres of employment can be difficult, involving long journeys and multiple changes. In many cases, what should be a fairly straightforward journey can only be completed by travelling into Northampton town centre and then travelling back out again.

Other than the Weston Favell District centre and public sector provision, there are very few employment opportunities available within or close to the Neighbourhood Plan area.

Quality of housing and mix

Northampton Borough Council's own Stock Condition Survey (2010) found that Council housing in the programme area is in poor condition and, without investment, will not meet nationally recognised 'Decent Home Standards':

- Blackthorn: 427 of the 495 homes were expected to become non-decent by 2013 (86%)
- Lings: 283 of the 303 homes were expected to become non-decent by 2013 (93%)
- Lumbertubs: 163 of the 244 homes were becoming non-decent by 2013 (67%)
- Overstone Lodge: 114 of the 117 homes were expected to become non-decent by 2013 (97%)
- Goldings: 246 of the 284 homes were expected to become non-decent by 2013 (87%)

The two most common reason for properties failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard are poor repair (76%) and poor heating (20%).

The estates were developed as Council housing and Northampton Borough Council remains by far the largest landlord. However, the Right to Buy policies introduced in the 1980s now mean that well over half of the housing is now in owner-occupation or the private rented sector.

In terms of those homes still within Northampton Borough Council housing stock, the area is primarily made up of 3-bed properties, and there is also a large proportion of 1-bed properties. There a much lower proportion of 2-bed properties and few 4-bed and above properties.

However, despite the apparently reasonable proportion of 1-bed properties, there is still a local need for more of these, and also 2-bed properties. Many individuals, couples and those with small families, who currently reside in 3-bed properties, wish to downsize in response to the 'bedroom tax' and the associated financial burden this is placing on them. However, due to the lack of locally available 1 and 2-bed properties, they have limited opportunities to downsize.

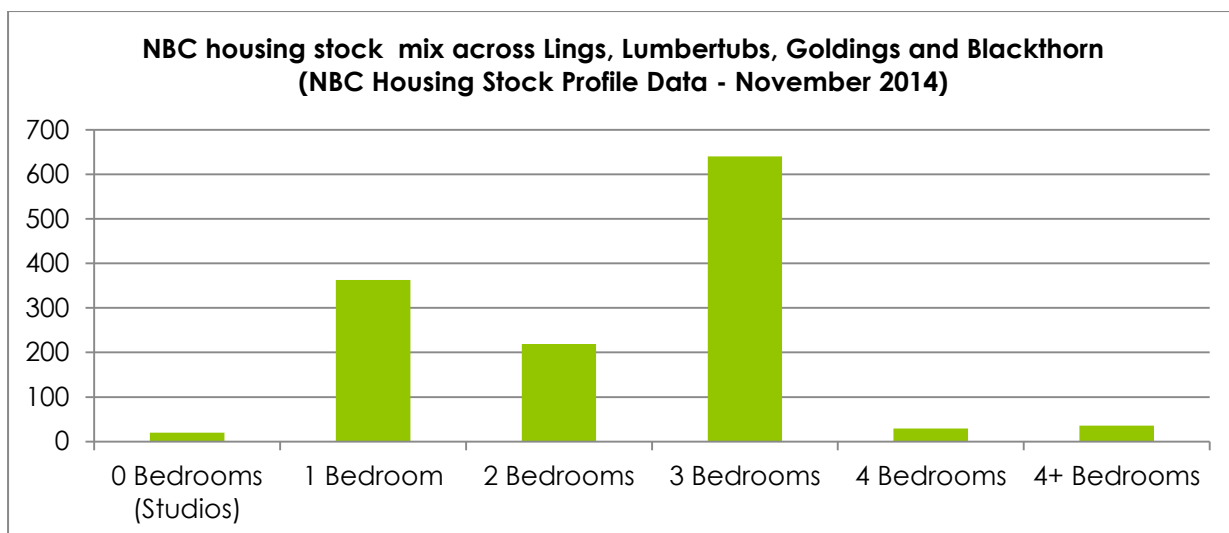


Figure 7: NBC Housing Stock - housing mix (Nov 2014)

POLICY CONTEXT



4. POLICY CONTEXT

Planning Policy context

The policies in this draft Neighbourhood Plan are required to deliver the Vision and Objectives (see page 24) in a manner which is consistent with national planning policies and guidance (including the National Planning Policy Framework) and the strategic policies of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.



Figure 8: Policy context for the Growing Together Neighbourhood Plan

West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS)

The JCS sets out strategic planning policies for Northampton Borough, Daventry District and South Northants district. The JCS seeks to make West Northamptonshire an outstanding location providing diverse employment opportunities, high educational attainment, high quality housing for all and a superb quality of life for its communities. This will include the development of new homes, jobs services, infrastructure and green spaces in Northampton.

Status of Northampton Local Plan 1997 (Saved Policies)

The Northampton Local Plan was adopted in 1997. A number of the policies were 'saved' in 2007 by the Secretary of State to ensure they remained part of the development plan and could continue to be used in determining planning applications. Many of those saved policies have now been replaced by JCS policies. Other remaining saved policies are likely to hold limited weight in decision-taking due to their age and are regarded as non-strategic.

Northampton Borough Council's Planning Policy team will shortly commence work on the *Northampton Related Development Area Local Plan*. Once adopted, the document will replace the remaining saved policies of the Local Plan 1997.

Technical note: Supporting documentation, including a review of Northampton's Development Plan, accompanies the Growing Together Neighbourhood Plan (pre-submission version).

SUMMARY OF ISSUES



5. SUMMARY OF ISSUES

Having reviewed the policy context, relevant evidence and statistics, and the comments and feedback received through consultation with the local community, the issues below have been identified.



Figure 9: Issues to be addressed by the Neighbourhood Plan

VISION AND OBJECTIVES



6. VISION AND OBJECTIVES

In response to the **Issues** identified in the previous chapter, an overarching **Vision** has been prepared and a set of **Objectives** defined.

The Vision

The Growing Together Neighbourhood Plan will conserve what is best about the existing built and natural environment and will encourage development that contributes to making the area a better place in which to live and work for all residents and businesses.

It will ensure that the area's network of green spaces, which offer significant educational, health and recreational benefits to the locality, remain the area's defining characteristic, whilst encouraging development which brings forward quality housing that responds to local need, increased employment opportunities, and a wider range of recreation, retail and community facilities.

The Neighbourhood Plan also recognises that the Growing Together area is not an island, and on this basis, supports development that will enhance the area's reputation and improve links with the wider community of Northampton and beyond.

Objectives

Objectives are more specific than the vision and set out what the Neighbourhood Plan aims to achieve.

1. Built and natural environment

To create and support opportunities for improving the local environment for residents, visitors, and businesses.

2. Open space

To protect key local open spaces and create opportunities for the enhancement of these spaces.

3. Play space and recreation

To create and support opportunities for new play areas and recreation facilities, which cater for a range of age groups and can support a variety of sport and recreation activities.

4. Community facilities

To create and support opportunities for new community facilities, and to support the improvement and enhancement of existing community facilities.

5. Housing

To create opportunities for new high quality housing, and improve the condition, appearance and energy efficiency of existing housing.

6. Movement and connections

To promote the creation of a well-connected community, through supporting the enhancement of the existing network of footpath and cycle routes and the introduction of new links.

7. Employment

To support the creation of new employment generating uses suitable for the local community.



Figure 10: Objective 3 of the Neighbourhood Plan relates to the provision of quality play and recreation facilities

POLICIES

7. POLICIES

The policies detailed in this section stem directly from the Vision and Objectives, which themselves are the outcome of community consultation, a review of relevant evidence and statistics, and an understanding of the policy context for the Growing Together Neighbourhood Plan area.

These policies have been developed to manage future development within the Growing Together Neighbourhood Plan area.

Each policy is contained within a coloured text box, and is supported by supplementary text which outlines both the 'intent' of the policy, and the 'justification' for the policy. The objective(s) which the policy seeks to fulfil is also identified within brackets underneath the policy title.



Figure 11: The policies contained in this section are aimed at ensuring new development meets the needs and aspirations those who live and work in the Growing Together area

Policy section 1: Design quality

Policy DES1: High quality design

(Objective(s): 1, 2, 5 and 6)

New development within the Growing Together area should be designed to:

- a) Recognise and reinforce local character in relation to height, scale, and spacing of buildings.**
- b) Respect and protect local heritage assets and their settings.**
- c) Enhance pedestrian and cyclist connectivity. This can include the improvement and upgrading of existing routes.**
- d) Create well defined, attractive and secure streets and spaces, faced by active frontages and benefiting from good levels of natural surveillance and lighting.**
- e) Retain mature or important trees of good arboricultural and/or amenity value.**
- f) Integrate refuse and recycling storage facilities to mitigate the visual impact they may have on the public realm. The storage and collection of refuse and recycling materials must be considered as part of the initial design process for all new developments, and these facilities should be designed as an integral part of the built form of development proposals.**
- g) Incorporate the principles of 'Secured by Design', or any equivalent standard which might amend or replace it in the future.**
- h) Provide adequate levels of parking taking into consideration the type of development, the accessibility of the location, and the requirements of borough parking standards. Parking should be designed to minimise its visual impact upon the townscape, however developments which propose parking courts will not be supported.**
- i) Respond to and enhance the setting of Local Green Spaces and other valued green spaces.**
- j) Achieve high levels of environmental performance and energy efficiency, minimising reliance on fossil fuels through the progression of renewable energy technologies. Proposals for small scale home energy generation, including wind and solar power, will be supported subject to there being no adverse impacts on local residential amenity.**

Intent

This policy sets out the key design principles new development within the Growing Together area should seek to adhere to. It aims to ensure that development proposals are designed in a manner that contributes towards the enhancement of the local area, and the creation of a neighbourhood which is attractive and functional, as well as safe and secure.

Justification

This policy provides a positive framework for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, as required in the National Planning Policy Framework (Paragraph 57). Through this approach, development will be welcomed where it can be shown that it helps to establish a strong sense of place and contributes positively to the creation of a well-functioning, visually attractive, safe and accessible environment.

Through following these design principles new development will help to eradicate the flaws associated with the existing Radburn-influenced layout, particularly the prevalence of poorly designed pedestrian routes, which lack natural surveillance and do not feel particularly safe to those using them (see Figure 12). In this regard, criterion 'd' of Policy DES1 is particularly key, with the need for more well defined, attractive and secure streets and spaces being critical to overall enhancement of the Growing Together Neighbourhood Plan area.

Much of the Growing Together area suffers from high levels of income deprivation, a consequence of which is that many households struggle with fuel poverty, finding themselves unable to maintain a comfortable and warm home. Criterion 'j' of Policy DES1 seeks to address this issue through ensuring new development achieves high levels of energy efficiency, and by encouraging proposals for local energy generation through renewable technologies. This policy steer will also help the Growing Together area better adapt to the wider issue of climate change.



Figure 12: Back gardens lining pathways is a common feature within the Growing Together area and a key characteristic of estates that were designed under the Radburn principles

Policy section 2: Housing

Policy H1: Housing mix

(Objective(s): 5)

Proposals for new residential development should provide a mix of homes (taking into account identified housing needs and changes in population profile). Housing proposals should seek to maximise the proportion of affordable housing (including social rent properties) having regard to Local Plan policy and subject to viability.

Proposals that will deliver smaller (1 and 2 bed) affordable houses will be particularly welcome.

Intent

This policy seeks to encourage the provision a mix of new high quality housing within the Growing Together Neighbourhood Plan area, which meets the needs of the local population, with a particular focus on ensuring that adequate levels of affordable housing, including social rented properties, are brought forward. On this basis, development by Housing Associations will be particularly welcome within the Growing Together area.

Justification

The Growing Together Neighbourhood Plan area has a shortage of affordable smaller sized homes, in particular 1 and 2 bed dwellings. This is preventing individuals, couples and those with smaller families from down-sizing into more appropriately-sized accommodation. In many cases this has resulted in financial burden to these residents due the recently introduced 'bedroom tax'. More small affordable accommodation is required to address this issue.

Policy H2: Small-scale housing development

(Objective(s): 1 and 5)

Proposals for small-scale housing development (1-10 dwellings), will be supported where they:

- a) are of a scale and form which would be complementary to surrounding properties and would not result in the loss of amenity for existing residents;**
- b) comply with the requirements of Policy H1 'Housing Mix' and Policy OS2 'Outdoor amenity space'; and**
- c) meet the criteria contained in Policy DES1 'High quality design'.**

Suitable sites for such small-scale housing development may include:

- infill sites;**
- redundant garage sites; and**
- low value / underused open space.**

Intent

This policy promotes the efficient use of land within the Growing Together Neighbourhood Planning area by encouraging the introduction of new small-scale housing development on sites and areas of land which are vacant or underused.

Justification

Northampton Partnership Homes, the Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) that manages the Council's housing stock, has identified in their estate profiles for Blackthorn, Lings, Lumbertubs, Goldings and Overstone Lodge a number of opportunities to deliver new housing on underutilised and redundant spaces and buildings. These include a number of Council owned garage sites, which suffer from high vacancy rates – of 671 garages, 282 are vacant, which equates to a vacancy rate of 42%.

Feedback provided through public consultation also suggested local support for the introduction of new housing on poorly utilised spaces, including the garage sites.



Figure 13: Underused garage sites could be redeveloped to provide new housing

Policy section 3: Regeneration opportunities

Policy DEV1: Priority development areas

(Objective(s): 1, 4, 5 and 7)

The redevelopment of the following previously developed sites for mixed use development which meet the needs of the local community* is supported;

- Former Silver Horse Public House
- Blackthorn Middle School
- Lings Upper and Emmanuel Middle School

* Uses which would meet the needs of the local community include:

- housing (C3)
- community facilities (D1 and D2)
- small-scale retail (A1) and restaurants / cafes (A3)
- local employment (B1)

Proposals for the redevelopment of these sites should:

- a) ensure the amenity of nearby residents is protected;
- b) demonstrate that they would not adversely impact upon the vitality or viability of existing neighbourhood centres; and
- c) meet the criteria contained in Policy DES1 (High Quality Design).

Intent

This policy promotes the redevelopment of a number of derelict, previously developed sites within the Growing Together Neighbourhood Plan area (see Figure 14 for locations) for uses which would contribute to the wider regeneration of the local area and meet the needs of the local community.

Justification

Each of the three sites identified in this policy have lain derelict for prolonged periods of time. They represent missed opportunities in their current undeveloped and stagnant state. This policy seeks to bring these sites back into use, for purposes which would meet the needs of the local population and promote the regeneration of the Growing Together Neighbourhood Plan area, in line with the overarching aims of Joint Core Strategy Policy RC1 'Delivering Community Regeneration'.

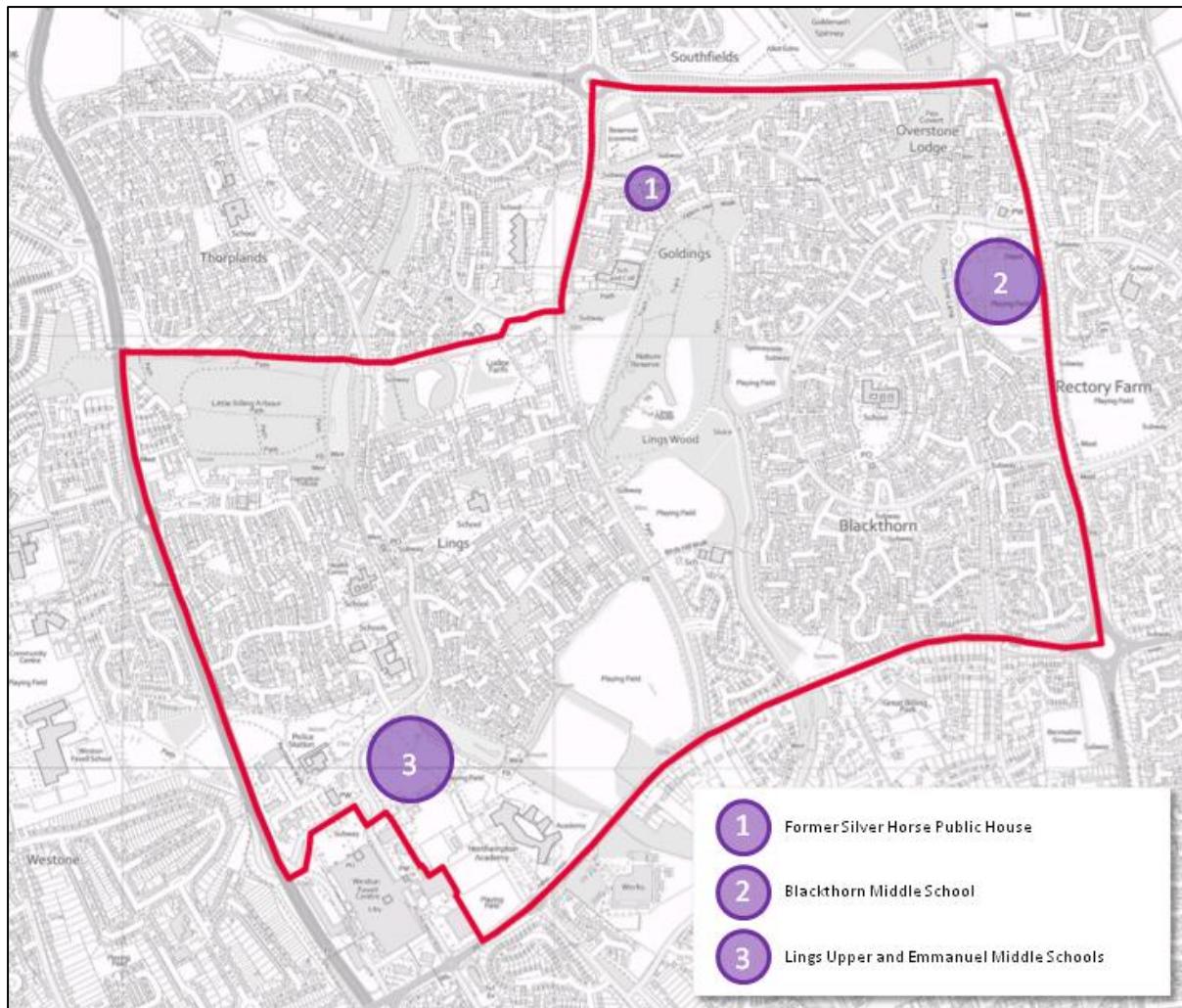


Figure 14: Location of priority development areas

Policy section 4: Community uses

Policy CO1: Provision of community facilities

(Objective(s): 1, 3, 4 and 7)

Proposals for the development of new or improved community facilities will be supported provided that their scale and design would be in keeping with the character of their location and that the impact on the amenity of surrounding residential properties would be acceptable.

Proposals which contribute to the community's play and youth facilities, childcare and educational offer*, will be particularly welcome.

In the context of this policy, community facilities means play areas, sports and recreation facilities, and other non-residential institution (Use Class D1) and Assembly and Leisure (Use Class D2) uses.

*** new educational facilities are encouraged to offer learning opportunities for all age groups.**

Intent

This policy seeks to promote the creation of a mix of new community facilities within the Growing Together Neighbourhood Plan area. It seeks to ensure that such uses are brought forward in a manner which complements the existing area and does not adversely impact the amenity of local residents.

Justification

Community consultation feedback indicated a strong desire for new and improved community facilities within the local area. Specifically, there was a desire to see more community facilities to cater for the Growing Together area's large youth population, and also more learning-orientated facilities, which could help enhance local education and skill levels, leading to greater employment opportunities for local people.

The area suffers from a lack of childcare facilities, which can be seen as an additional barrier to employment, with local people unable to access work due to parenting commitments.

Many existing community facilities are dated and could benefit from investment to enhance their appearance, functionality and overall offer to the local community.

Policy CO2: Loss of community facilities

(Objective(s): 3, 4 and 7)

The loss of community facilities will not be permitted unless:

- **it can be demonstrated that the community facility is no longer viable; or**
- **the proposed alternative use would provide equal or greater benefits to the local community*.**

In the context of this policy, community facilities means play areas, sports and recreation facilities, and other non-residential institution (Use Class D1) and Assembly and Leisure (Use Class D2) uses.

*** see 'Priority Projects' within Section 8 'Next steps and implementation' for a list of community-orientated projects and uses which would be of benefit to and welcomed by the local community.**

Intent

This policy seeks to ensure that existing community facilities are retained within the Growing Together Neighbourhood Plan area.

Justification

Community consultation feedback indicated that in addition to encouraging the introduction of new community facilities, existing community uses should be protected due to the significant role they play in strengthening community cohesion and offering local people essential leisure, recreation and educational opportunities.

Policy section 5: Retail and neighbourhood centres

Policy RE1: Neighbourhood centres

(Objective(s): 1, 4, 5 and 7)

Proposals which contribute to the vitality and viability of the following three neighbourhood centres (as identified in Figure 15) will be supported:

- **Blackthorn**
- **Goldings**
- **Lings/Lumbertubs**

The loss of existing retail floorspace within these recognised Local Centres will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that:

- 1. the existing retail floorspace is no longer viable and alternative users cannot be secured; and**
- 2. that the proposed new use would contribute to the Centre's role as key local destination and provide a tangible community benefit.**

Retail development outside these neighbourhood centres will be only be supported where it can be clearly demonstrated that there would not harm the vitality and viability of any of these existing Centres.

Intent

This policy seeks the enhancement of the three neighbourhood centres of Blackthorn, Goldings and Lings, and the strengthening of their retail offer.

Justification

These neighbourhood centres accommodate the majority of the Growing Together Neighbourhood Plan area's retail and community facilities offer. In addition to providing these essential local services, they also play an important role in maintaining and strengthening community relations, providing residents with central meeting places where they can relax and engage within each other. It is therefore critical that these centres continue to prosper, and that new development enhances their vitality and viability.

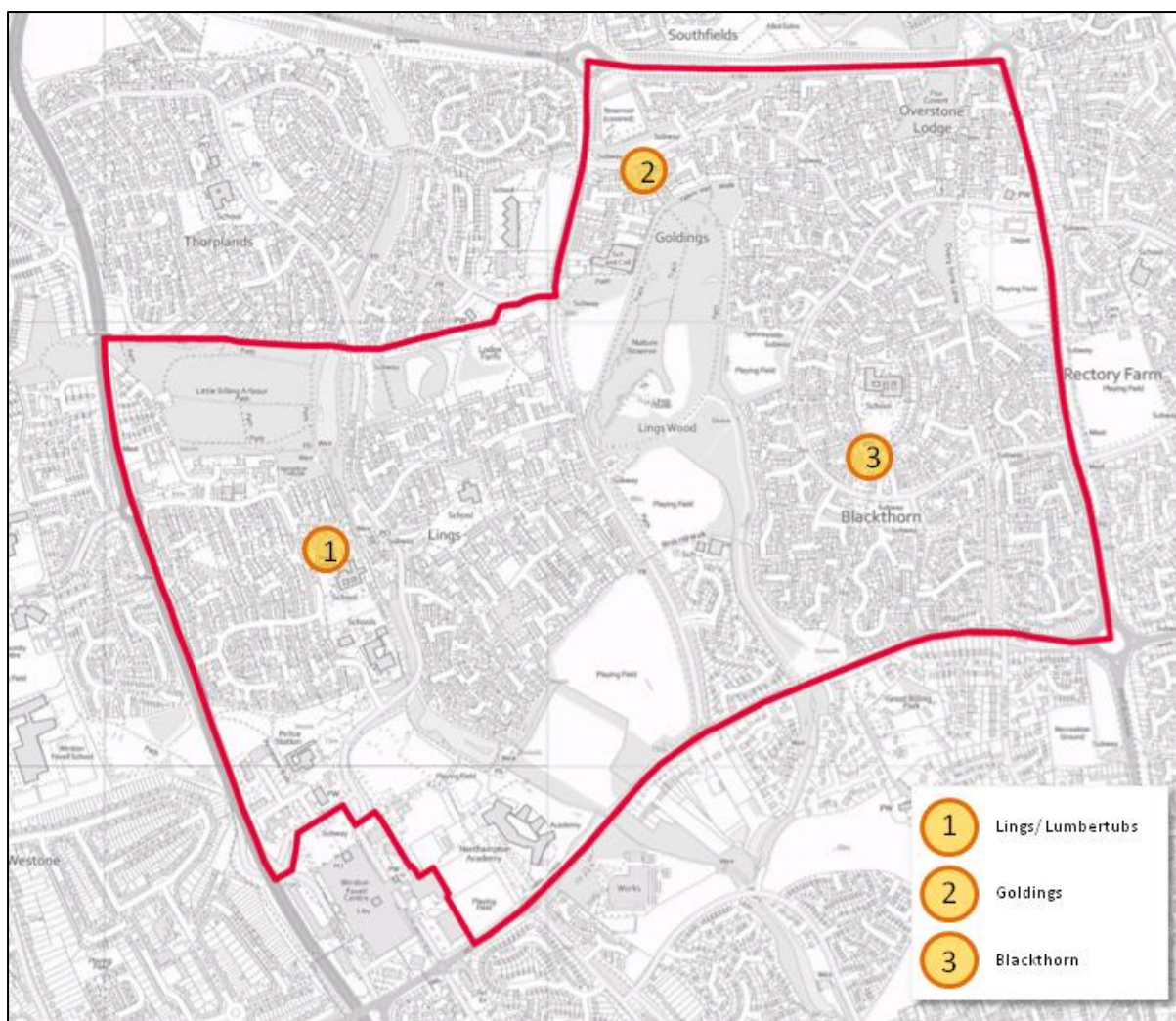


Figure 15: Neighbourhood centres



Figure 16: Policy RE1 seeks to enhance neighbourhood centres within the Growing Together area

Policy section 6: Open space, play and recreation

Policy OS1: Local Green Spaces

(Objective(s): 1, 2, 3, and 4)

The following green spaces, which have been demonstrated to be of significance to the local community, are designated as Local Green Spaces:

1. Billing Arbour
2. Swanhaven Park
3. Lodge Farm Field
4. Pyramid Close green space
5. Birds Hill Road Play Area
6. Lings Playing Fields
7. Lings Wood
8. Foxcovert Wood
9. Overstone Lane Wood
10. Blackthorn Recreation Ground
11. Blackthorn Community Centre Green Space

Development on Local Green Space will be resisted unless the proposals demonstrably enhance the use of the space and safeguard its particular local significance (see Appendix 1).

Proposals which would enhance the quality of a Local Green Space whilst still protecting its local significance will be supported.

The location and extents of the above Local Green Spaces, are shown on the map in Figure 17.

Intent

This policy seeks to protect valued local green spaces from inappropriate development, and ensure that the Growing Together area retains those key local green spaces which offer significant benefits to the local community, which are one of the Neighbourhood Plan area's defining characteristics and greatest assets.

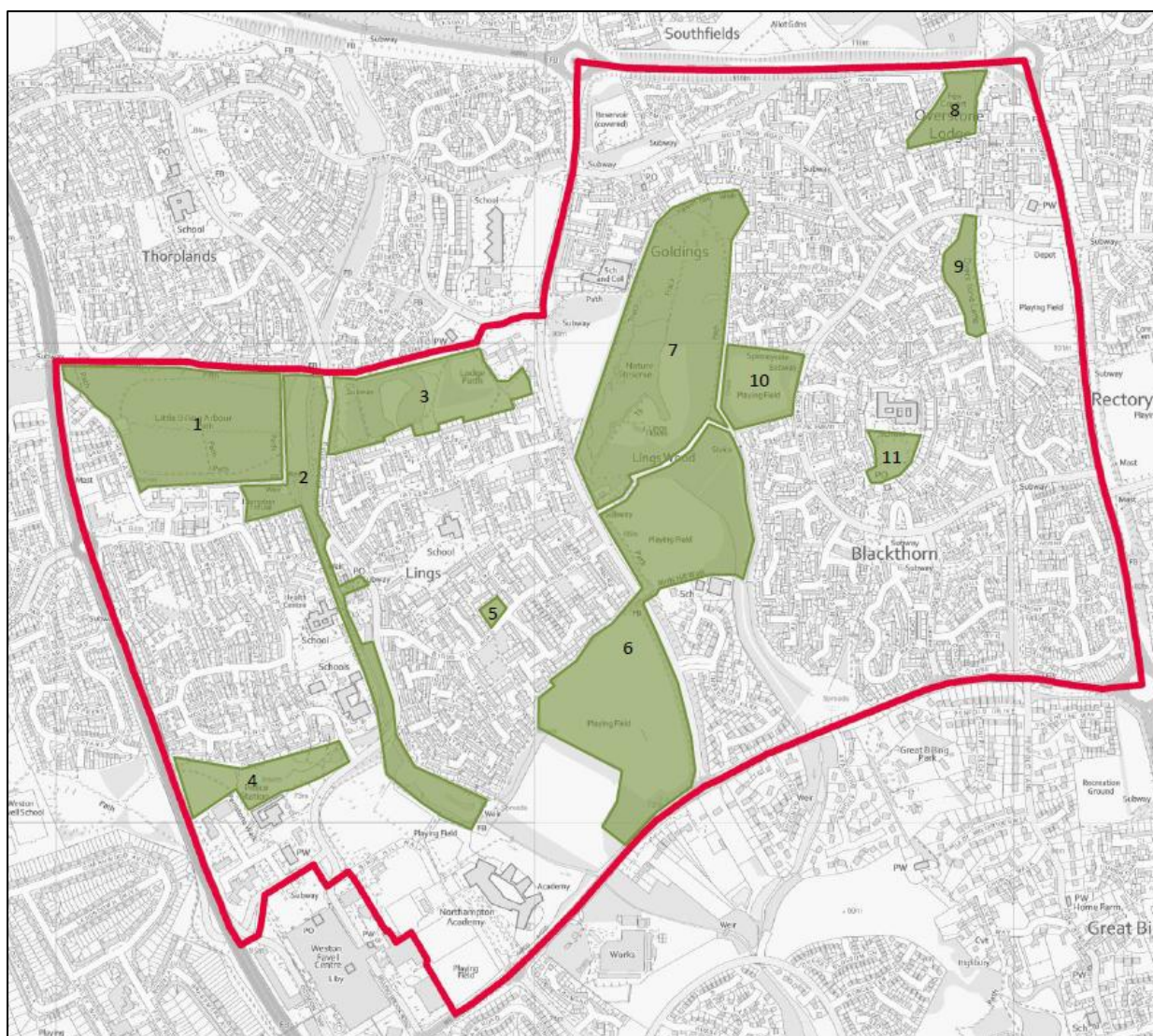


Figure 17: Map of designated Local Green Spaces

Justification

The Growing Together area benefits from a network of valued and well-used local green spaces, which play a significant role in contributing to the character of the local area, and provide residents with a variety of leisure and recreation opportunities.

The NPPF makes provision for neighbourhood plans to identify for special protection green areas of particular importance to local communities and rule out new development other than in very special circumstances. The NPPF sets out the following requirements a green area or open space needs to meet in order to be considered suitable for Local Green Space designation:

- where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;

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

Each Local Green Space designation contained within Policy 1 has been assessed against these criteria, and deemed to meet the requirements of the NPPF. Full details of this assessment are contained in Appendix 1.

Policy OS2: Outdoor amenity space

(Objective(s): 1, 2, 3, and 4)

Proposals for new residential development should provide good quality outdoor amenity space in the form of either private gardens, terraces or balconies, or a shared communal amenity space.

Areas of existing amenity space that provide opportunities for leisure and recreation should be retained and enhanced.

Intent

This policy seeks to ensure that new residential development provides adequate private amenity space to meet the needs of new residents, and that existing amenity spaces of value are retained and enhanced for the benefit of local residents.

Justification

This policy requires that an element of usable private amenity space (excluding parking and turning areas) is provided for occupants. This is particularly important for those likely to spend a large part of their day in their home environment, such as those with young families, the elderly, or individuals with disabilities. Gardens, balconies and terraces provide private outdoor areas which significantly enhance amenity and well-being.

Policy section 7: Movement and connections

Policy T1: Pedestrian and cycle network

(Objective(s): 1 and 6)

Support will be given to proposals which would add to or improve the existing network of cycle routes and footpaths (see Figure 15).

The loss of existing footpaths and cycle routes will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that the particular route is:

- Poorly used and does not play an important role within the wider pedestrian and/or cycle network; and/or
- Poorly designed, facilitating crime / anti-social behaviour ; and/or
- Alternative routes, of better quality, are available or will be provided within the development proposal.

Where the removal of an existing footpath and/or cycle way is proposed, justification must be provided, and it must be adequately demonstrated why the enhancement and retention of the route is either not feasible or desirable.

Development proposals should be designed to create natural surveillance of footpaths and cycle ways, and such routes should benefit from satisfactory lighting to ensure they feel safe and secure.

Intent

This policy promotes the retention and enhancement of key pedestrian and cycle routes, and the expansion of the existing footpath and cycle lane network.

Justification

The Growing Together area currently benefits from a number of well-used pedestrian and cycle routes which allow residents and visitors to easily move between key locations via foot or bicycle. Many of these routes run through valued green spaces and woodland, and their presence in these areas very much enhances the use of these areas and allows easy access to all those

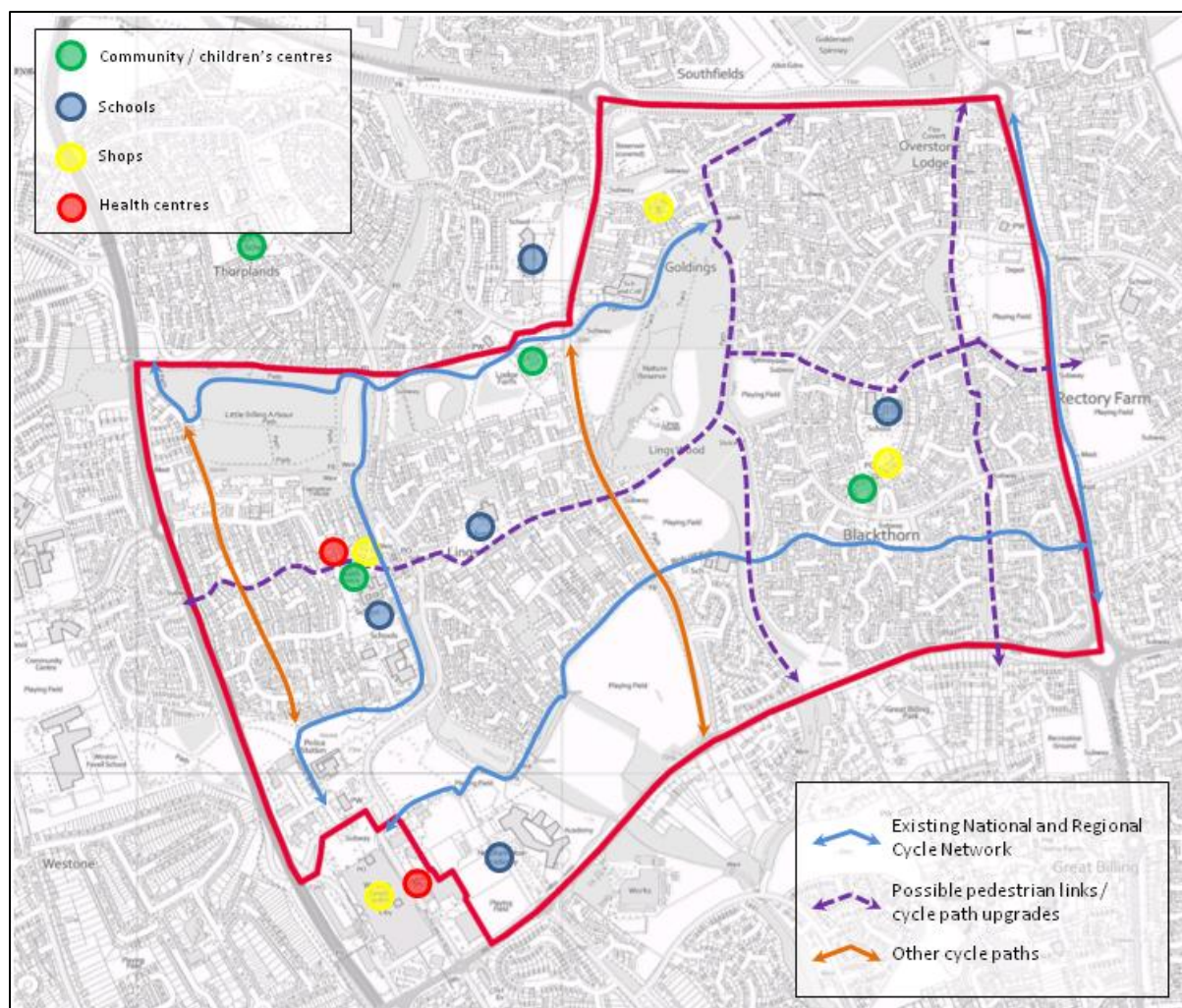


Figure 18: Pedestrian and Cycle routes map

NEXT STEPS AND IMPLEMENTATION



8. NEXT STEPS AND IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation

In addition to influencing decisions on future planning applications by the Borough Council, based on the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan and monitoring their effectiveness, the focus on implementation will include partnership working, seeking external funding, a focus on priority projects and the use of other (planning and non-planning) mechanisms.

Working in Partnership

Partnership working will be a key element in the successful implementation of the Plan. The main organisations and the roles that they can play are summarised below.

- Growing Together Community Partnership – Big Local Plan project delivery.
- Northampton Borough Council - Planning Policy, Development Management, Economic Development, Open Spaces, Recreation and Community Facilities.
- Northampton Partnership Homes - the new arms-length management organisation (ALMO) responsible for the management of council house services.
- Northamptonshire County Council – Highways, Education & Social Services.
- Northamptonshire Local Enterprise Partnership - Infrastructure & business support.
- Homes and Communities Agency – funding for new family housing.

Funding

Funding will be sought from developers through a combination of S106 Agreements and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) for infrastructure and local facilities, linked to new development, focused on assisting the delivery of the specified projects as a priority.

The Forum will also seek to influence other budget decisions by the Borough and County Councils on housing, open space and recreation, economic development, community facilities and transport. In addition, we will work with other organisations (including the Homes and Communities Agency, the Lottery, UK Government and EU Funds and LEP programmes), to obtain funding to help to achieve Neighbourhood Plan objectives.

Priority Projects

Once Northampton Borough Council adopt a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charging schedule, 25% of CIL receipts collected by NBC for development in the Growing Together area will be spent on projects identified as priority by the

local community. The following projects have been identified as potential priority projects for the spending of such CIL monies:

- Enhancement of existing pedestrian and cycle routes and introduction of new connections;
- Provision of new community facilities including:
 - Childcare facilities
 - Education, leisure and recreation facilities
- Enhancement of existing open spaces and provision of new play spaces for children.

Other Mechanisms

The Forum, working with appropriate partners, will also consider the use of other initiatives to achieve Neighbourhood Plan objectives, including Neighbourhood Development Orders, Community Right to Build, Assets of Community Value and community led housing developments. It is recognised, however, that in several cases these measures will require other legal processes to be followed, some of which are outside the planning system and separate to the Neighbourhood Plan.

Appendix 1 – Local Green Space Designations

1. Qualitative assessment by Growing Together Forum

| Map Ref | Site | Proximity to the community | Local significance of site |
|---------|---|---|--|
| 1 | Billing Arbour | Directly adjoins housing on three sides (Lumbertubs and Thorplands estates), with the fourth bordering a well-used footpath along the side of Cygnet Lake, connecting the estates with schools, health facilities and shopping areas. | The woods are a conservation area and highly prized by the local community as a nature reserve and for their wildlife (including bats, woodpeckers and owls). It is also valued by local mountain bike users as a rugged challenge course. |
| 2 | Swanhaven Park | Park is linear and a green thread running between Lumbertubs and Lings estates, immediately bordered by local shopping centre and play facilities. Thorplands estate borders to the north. | Extensive use by dog-walkers, runners and as a route between estates, schools, shopping areas etc. Wildlife on both lakes is very popular with schools and families and includes herons, kingfishers, little egret, swans, Canadian geese, mallard ducks, coots, moorhens, seagulls and bats. Prime location for summer picnics etc. Existing MUGA and toddlers' playground has recently been supplemented by new GT funded play area for 8-13 year olds. Green space outside shops used for summer events and outdoor extension of events in the Community Centre. NBC have adopted it as a Park and recently accredited a Park Management Committee. |
| 3 | Lodge Farm field | Immediately bordered on two longest sides by housing (Lings and Thorplands estates) | Extensive use by dog-walkers, runners and gathering place for young people. Popular location for summer picnics, games etc. Recently accredited Swanhaven Park Management Committee has included it in its area of interest. GT planning investment in dog exercise/training equipment. |
| 4 | Field behind Police Station, up to Penistone Road | Bordered on northern side by Lumbertubs estate and to south by Quartercroft social housing flats (no gardens). Adjacent to major District retail centre with centres of worship, Police station and Health Centre. | Well used by local dog walkers and for summer picnics and games by workers at Weston Favell on the south side and Lumbertubs residents on the north side. The site is prone to flooding during the winter due to underground watercourses. The housing on Lumbertubs estate is some of the densest in the area and so the northern side of this field is of especial value to the communities living in this part of the estate. |

| | | | |
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| 5 | Birds Hill Road Play Area | Surrounded on three sides by housing and very close to local school with footpath to/from school running along one side. | GT have recently installed a play area for 3 - 8 year olds, making this a destination location for local children and families. |
| 6 | Lings playing field | North-west side is bounded by Lings estate and a footpath well used as a route to/from schools. | Widely used by dog walkers and for sports and exercise. NBC built largest play facility in the area there approx. five years ago (Playbuilder funded) – very well used. Main part of field has 6 well-used football pitches. |
| 7 | Lings Wood | Wood is surrounded by Goldings, Blackthorn and (across a road) Lings estates. | A designated Local Nature Reserve, widely used by dog walkers, for family nature walks and by schools. Wildlife Trust have offices in Lings House inside the Wood and arrange a variety of activities for local communities. Sports Trust and various youth groups make use of it too. |
| 8 | Foxcovert Wood | Wood is within Overstone Lodge and surrounded by housing on all but one short side. | Belongs to the Scouts though little used by them as now cut off from their main camping/woodland facility of which it once formed part. Managed by NBC. Well used by local children and dog walkers. GT are about to install a community play area. |
| 9 | Overstone Lane Wood | Wood is adjacent to Blackthorn estate housing | Used by dog walkers and young people. A valued natural barrier between housing and the brownfield site of the former Blackthorn Middle School, which will become even more important if the site is developed for retail or other commercial use. |
| 10 | Blackthorn Recreation Ground | Surrounded on two sides by Blackthorn housing with more across the road (linked by underpass) that forms a third side boundary. | Used for dog walking and informal sports. GT working with Police and NBC to put a youth shelter and outdoor gym equipment here. |
| 11 | Blackthorn Community Centre green space | At the heart of Blackthorn estate with school, shops, Community/Children's Centre and housing forming the boundaries. | Several community events a year during the warmer months. Also a current proposal to develop a community garden here. |

Each of the designated Local Green Spaces are local in character and none are an extensive tract of land. None are larger than 10 acres and most are considerably smaller.

2. Policy context / evidence base assessment by Northampton Borough Council

| NP Site ref | Site Name | Site ID* | Open space type* | Hectares* | Quality %* | Accessibility %* | Related policies Northampton Local Plan 1997 & West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy | Current policy context (March '15) and conclusions |
|-------------|----------------|-------------------------------|--|-----------|----------------|------------------|---|--|
| 1 | Billing Arbour | 267 | Natural / Semi-Natural Open Space | 9.07 | 71 | 67 | <p><u>Northampton Local Plan 1997</u> Existing Recreation/Leisure - L1 (Replaced);</p> <p>Site of Acknowledged Nature Conservation Value - E18 (Replaced);</p> <p><u>West Northamptonshire JCS</u> JCS policy RC2 - Community Needs;</p> <p>BN2 – Biodiversity; and</p> <p>BN4 – Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits.</p> | <p>The OSSR Audit identifies the site as offering natural/semi-natural of good quality and average accessibility. Former and current planning policies suggest the site is a community facility offering open space for recreation/leisure; and is an asset for biodiversity and nature conservation.</p> <p>Former NLP'97 Policy L1 safeguarded the site as a "Larger Public Open Space". This policy has been replaced by JCS policy RC2 which seeks to safeguard existing community facilities but (as a strategic policy) does not identify specific sites or facilities. Former NLP'97 Policy E18 safeguarded the site from development which would cause adverse effects upon its nature conservation value. This policy has been replaced by JCS policies BN2 and BN4. JCS policy BN2 seeks to maintain and enhance biodiversity but does not make site allocations. JCS policy BN4 seeks to protect the integrity of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits European sites and is not directly relevant to this site.</p> <p>Allocation of the site for recreation/leisure and/or biodiversity/nature conservation purposes is likely to be consistent with JCS policies RC2 and BN2.</p> |
| 2 | Swanhaven Park | 989; 720; 495; 510; 268; 1681 | Amenity Green Space; Children's play areas; Facilities for young people; Parks | Unknown | See OSSR audit | See OSSR audit | <p><u>Northampton Local Plan 1997</u> Existing Recreation/Leisure - L1 (Replaced);</p> <p>Site of Acknowledged Nature Conservation Value - E18 (Replaced);</p> <p><u>West Northamptonshire JCS</u> JCS policy RC2 -</p> | <p>The OSSR audit identified a range of typologies within this site, which effectively functions as a linear park. Of the various typologies, there is a range of quality and accessibility scores (refer to OSSR audit or Neighbourhood Plan evidence base). Proposals should seek to ensure all typologies achieve a consistently good standard for quality and accessibility throughout the linear park.</p> <p>NLP'97 Policy L1 safeguarded the site as a "Larger Public Open Space". This policy has been replaced by JCS policy RC2 which seeks to safeguard existing community facilities but does not identify specific sites or facilities. NLP'97 Policy E18 safeguarded the site from</p> |

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|---|-------------------------------|-----|--|------|----|----|---|---|
| | | | and gardens; Natural and semi-natural open space | | | | <p><i>Community Needs;</i></p> <p>BN2 – Biodiversity; and</p> <p>BN4 – Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits.</p> | <p>development which would cause adverse effects upon its nature conservation value. This policy has been replaced by JCS policies BN2 and BN4. JCS policy BN2 seeks to maintain and enhance biodiversity but does not make site allocations. JCS policy BN4 seeks to protect the integrity of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits European sites and is not directly relevant to this site.</p> <p>Allocation of the site for recreation/leisure and/or biodiversity/nature conservation purposes is likely to be consistent with JCS policies RC2 and BN2.</p> |
| 3 | Lodge Farm Field | 332 | Parks and gardens | 7.45 | 76 | 77 | <p><u>Northampton Local Plan 1997</u> Existing Recreation/Leisure - L1 (Replaced);</p> <p><u>West Northamptonshire JCS</u> JCS policy RC2 - <i>Community Needs;</i></p> | <p>The OSSR Audit identifies the site within the "parks and gardens" typology and achieves a good quality and good accessibility standard. Former and current planning policies suggest the site is a community facility offering open space for recreation/leisure. NLP'97 Policy L1 safeguarded the site as a "Larger Public Open Space". This policy has been replaced by JCS policy RC2 which seeks to safeguard existing community facilities but (as a strategic policy) does not identify specific sites or facilities.</p> <p>Allocation of the site for recreation/leisure purposes is likely to be consistent with JCS policies RC2.</p> |
| 4 | Space north of police station | 325 | Amenity Green Space | 2.81 | 75 | 72 | <p><u>Northampton Local Plan 1997</u> Existing Recreation/Leisure - L1 (Replaced);</p> <p>Site of Acknowledged Nature Conservation Value - E18 (Replaced);</p> <p><u>West Northamptonshire JCS</u> JCS policy RC2 - <i>Community Needs;</i> BN2 – Biodiversity; and</p> <p>BN4 – Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits.</p> | <p>The OSSR audit identifies the site as amenity green space. The OSSR audit recognises the important role amenity green spaces can offer in providing informal play opportunities and suggests that such spaces could be 'formalised' and enhanced to improve their recreation value. The site achieves a good standard for both quality and accessibility.</p> <p>NLP'97 policy L1 seeks to safeguard open spaces which offer recreation facilities or offer established amenity/landscape value. This policy has been replaced by JCS policy RC2 which seeks to safeguard existing community facilities but does not identify specific sites or facilities. A small area in the eastern section of the site was safeguarded by NLP'97 policy E18 for its nature conservation value. This policy has been replaced by JCS policies BN2 and BN4. JCS policy BN2 seeks to maintain and enhance biodiversity but does not make site allocations. JCS policy BN4 seeks to protect the integrity of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits European sites and is not directly relevant to this site.</p> <p>Allocation of the site for recreation/leisure; amenity/landscape value and/or biodiversity/nature conservation purposes is likely to be consistent with JCS policies RC2 and BN2.</p> |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|----------|---------------------------|------------|--------|--------|---|---|
| 5 | Birds Hill Road Play Area | 1063 | Amenity green space | 0.25 | 62 | 60 | <p><u>Northampton Local Plan 1997</u> Primary residential area – H6 (Replaced);</p> <p><u>West Northamptonshire JCS</u> H1 – Housing Density and Mix and Type of Dwellings.</p> | <p>The OSSR audit identifies the site as amenity green space. The OSSR audit recognises the important role amenity green spaces can offer in providing informal play opportunities and suggests that such spaces could be 'formalised' and enhanced to improve their recreation value. The site achieves an average standard for both quality and accessibility. Proposals should seek to achieve a good standard.</p> <p>The NLP'97 did not allocate this site as an open space. The site is located within the existing residential area. Policy H6 sought to resist development which would result in the loss of recreational facilities or land of significant amenity value within the primary residential area, where there is a need for such land and facilities. JCS policy H1 has replaced NLP'97 policy H6. JCS policy H1 does not allocate sites, but does require new developments to consider the impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties.</p> <p>The site may potentially be suitable for allocation for recreation/leisure and/or amenity/landscape value. Alternatively other policy measures may be used to protect the site due to the clear relationship between the site and nearby housing.</p> |
| 6 | Lings Park & Lings Wood Playing Fields | 344; 984 | Outdoor sports facilities | 9.09; 6.05 | 62; 71 | 60; 83 | <p><u>Northampton Local Plan 1997</u> Existing Recreation/Leisure - L1 (Replaced);</p> <p>Site of Acknowledged Nature Conservation Value - E18 (Replaced);</p> <p>Site of Acknowledged Local Nature Reserve - E18 (Replaced);</p> <p><u>West Northamptonshire JCS</u> JCS policy RC2 - <i>Community Needs</i>;</p> <p>BN2 – Biodiversity; and</p> <p>BN4 – Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits.</p> | <p>The OSSR audit identifies these sites as providing outdoor sports facilities, achieving a good standard of quality and accessibility.</p> <p>NLP'97 policy L1 safeguards these sites as "Playing Fields". This policy has been replaced by JCS policy RC2 which seeks to safeguard existing community facilities but (as a strategic policy) does not identify specific sites or facilities. The site also includes part of Lings Wood Nature Reserve in the northern part of the site and an area of acknowledged conservation value, as indicated by former NLP'97 policy E18. This policy has been replaced by JCS policies BN2 and BN4. JCS policy BN2 seeks to maintain and enhance biodiversity but does not make site allocations. JCS policy BN4 seeks to protect the integrity of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits European sites and is not directly relevant to this site.</p> <p>Allocation of the site for recreation/leisure and biodiversity/nature conservation purposes is likely to be consistent with JCS policies RC2 and BN2.</p> |

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|---|---------------------|-----------|--|------------|--------|--------|---|--|
| 7 | Lings Wood | 331 | Natural / semi-natural green space | 17.12 | 80 | 83 | <p><u>Northampton Local Plan 1997</u> Existing Recreation/Leisure - L1 (Replaced);</p> <p>Site of Acknowledged Nature Conservation Value - E18 (Replaced);</p> <p>Site of Acknowledged Local Nature Reserve - E18 (Replaced);</p> <p><u>West Northamptonshire JCS</u> JCS policy RC2 - <i>Community Needs</i>;</p> <p>BN2 – Biodiversity; and</p> <p>BN4 – Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits.</p> | <p>The OSSR Audit identifies the site as offering natural/semi-natural of good quality and accessibility. Former and current planning policies suggest the site is a community facility offering open space for recreation/leisure and is an asset for biodiversity and nature conservation.</p> <p>NLP'97 Policy L1 safeguarded the site as a "Larger Public Open Space". This policy has been replaced by JCS policy RC2 which seeks to safeguard existing community facilities but (as a strategic policy) does not identify specific sites or facilities. NLP'97 Policy E18 safeguarded the site from development which would cause adverse effects upon its nature conservation value. This policy has been replaced by JCS policies BN2 and BN4. JCS policy BN2 seeks to maintain and enhance biodiversity but does not make site allocations. JCS policy BN4 seeks to protect the integrity of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits European sites and is not directly relevant to this site.</p> <p>Allocation of the site for recreation/leisure and biodiversity/nature conservation purposes is likely to be consistent with JCS policies RC2 and BN2.</p> |
| 8 | Foxcovert Wood | 394; 1941 | Amenity Green Space; Facilities for young people | 1.27; 0.02 | 53; 55 | 77; 80 | <p><u>Northampton Local Plan 1997</u> Existing Recreation/Leisure - L1 (Replaced);</p> <p><u>West Northamptonshire JCS</u> JCS policy RC2 - <i>Community Needs</i>;</p> | <p>The OSSR audit identifies the site as amenity green space and includes a small parcel of land offering facilities for young people. The OSSR audit recognises the important role amenity green spaces can offer in providing informal play opportunities and suggests that such spaces could be 'formalised' and enhanced to improve their recreation value. The site is of average quality and good accessibility. Proposals should seek to achieve at least a 'good' quality standard and maintain accessibility.</p> <p>NLP'97 policy L1 seeks to safeguard open spaces which offer recreation facilities or offer established amenity/landscape value. This policy has been replaced by JCS policy RC2 which seeks to safeguard existing community facilities but does not identify specific sites or facilities.</p> <p>Allocation of the site for recreation/leisure or amenity/landscape value is likely to be consistent with JCS policy RC2.</p> |
| 9 | Overstone Lane Wood | 395 | Amenity Green Space | 1.39 | 55 | 60 | <p><u>Northampton Local Plan 1997</u> Existing Recreation/Leisure - L1 (Replaced);</p> | <p>The OSSR audit identifies the site as amenity green space. The OSSR audit recognises the important role amenity green spaces can offer in providing informal play opportunities and suggests that such spaces could be 'formalised' and enhanced to improve their recreation value. The site is of average quality and accessibility. Proposals should seek to</p> |

| | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|----------|--|------------|--------|--------|---|--|
| | | | | | | | <p><u>West Northamptonshire JCS</u> JCS policy RC2 - <i>Community Needs</i>;</p> | <p>achieve a 'good' quality standard for both quality and accessibility.</p> <p>NLP'97 seeks to safeguard open spaces which offer recreation facilities or offer established amenity/landscape value. This policy has been replaced by JCS policy RC2 which seeks to safeguard existing community facilities but does not identify specific sites or facilities.</p> <p>Allocation of the site for recreation/leisure or amenity/landscape value is likely to be consistent with JCS policy RC2.</p> |
| 10 | Blackthorn Recreation Ground | 422 | Children's play areas | unknown | 33 | 60 | <p><u>Northampton Local Plan 1997</u> Existing Recreation/Leisure - L1 (Replaced);</p> <p><u>West Northamptonshire JCS</u> JCS policy RC2 - <i>Community Needs</i>;</p> | <p>The OSSR audit identifies the site as a Children's play area. The site is of poor quality and average accessibility. Proposals should seek to achieve a good standard for quality and accessibility.</p> <p>NLP'97 policy L1 seeks to safeguard open spaces which offer recreation facilities or offer established amenity/landscape value. This policy has been replaced by JCS policy RC2 which seeks to safeguard existing community facilities but does not identify specific sites or facilities.</p> <p>Allocation of the site for recreation/leisure is likely to be consistent with JCS policy RC2.</p> |
| 11 | Blackthorn Community Centre Green Space | 715; 185 | Outdoor sports facilities; Amenity green space | 0.43; 0.23 | 76; 66 | 70; 80 | <p><u>Northampton Local Plan 1997</u> School/College site – L2 (Limited weight); Primary residential area – H6 (Replaced);</p> <p><u>West Northamptonshire JCS</u> H1 – Housing Density and Mix and Type of Dwellings.</p> | <p>The OSSR audit identified the site as an outdoor sports facility and amenity green space, of average and good quality and good accessibility. Proposals should seek to achieve a good quality standard.</p> <p>NLP'97 identifies the site predominantly as part of a school/college site by policy L2 which recognises the recreational value of such sites. In an assessment of saved policies by Northampton Borough Council, the policy was considered to hold limited weight in decision-taking.</p> <p>The southern part of the site is located within the primary residential area (H6). Policy H6 sought to resist development which would result in the loss of recreational facilities or land of significant amenity value within the primary residential area, where there is a need for such land and facilities. JCS policy H1 has replaced NLP'97 policy H6. JCS policy H1 does not allocate sites, but does require new developments to consider the impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties.</p> <p>The site may potentially be suitable for allocation for recreation/leisure and/or amenity/landscape value. Alternatively other policy measures may be used to protect the site due to the clear relationship between the site and other nearby uses.</p> |

