WELLAND NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

Market Harborough Welland Neighbourhood Plan 2025 – 2041



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Foreward

The Localism Act 2011 gives communities the opportunity to shape their future at a local level through the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan. Residents of Welland ward chose to take up this opportunity, and on 18 July 2023 Harborough District Council approved Welland ward as a Designated Area for the purposes of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan.

Prepared by the community

The Plan has been produced by community representatives. Alongside the work of gathering evidence and reviewing strategic documents, the Welland Neighbourhood Forum has spent many hours consulting residents and listening to local views.

We are grateful to everyone who contributed their time, knowledge and ideas during the development of the Plan. YourLocale was commissioned to help shape the Plan into a format suitable for examination, and officers of Harborough District Council have provided valuable support throughout the process.

This work has shaped a Plan with a clear vision for Welland ward: to support a vibrant, sustainable community while preserving the character that residents value for future generations.

What the Plan will do

Once the Plan has been 'made' following a favourable referendum, the Welland Neighbourhood Plan will sit alongside the Harborough Local Plan as a key reference point for determining planning applications in Welland ward. The Plan covers the period 2025–2041, in line with the emerging Local Plan.

It considers the built environment, environmental issues, community facilities and services, transport and employment. These matters will all be important to the quality of life in Welland during the years up to 2041 and beyond.

The Plan includes both policies and recommendations:

- **Policies** will be used by Harborough District Council to help determine future planning applications in Welland ward.
- **Recommendations** identify projects or community actions. They are not subject to Examination but reflect future work involving a range of partners to improve the area in line with community consultation.

Bob Bellm – Chair, Welland Neighbourhood Forum

Chapter 1

Introduction

Purpose of the Plan

1.1 This Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared under the powers introduced by the Localism Act 2011. It has been written by the Welland Neighbourhood Forum, which was established in March 2023 and formally recognised by Harborough District Council in July 2023.

1.2 A Neighbourhood Plan gives local people a greater say in how their community develops. It helps shape decisions about where new development should take place, how buildings and extensions should be designed, and which areas of land should be protected for the future.

1.3 As the Government's plain English guide to the Localism Act explains, local communities should have genuine opportunities to influence the future of the places where they live. This Plan provides that opportunity for Welland ward.

Plan area and policy context

1.4 The Plan covers the whole of the Welland Neighbourhood Area, shown in Figure 7.1, within the town of Market Harborough. It has been prepared to support sustainable development and has regard for the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF (August 2026)).

1.5 The Market Harborough - Welland Neighbourhood Plan is one of four neighbourhood plans being prepared to cover the whole of Market Harborough. Each plan reflects the distinctive characteristics, opportunities and priorities of its respective neighbourhood area, while recognising the town's shared infrastructure, services, communities and wider planning needs.

1.6 The four neighbourhood forums have worked closely together in preparing their plans, seeking to ensure that their policies are broadly consistent and complementary. This collaborative approach supports a coherent planning framework for Market Harborough, while allowing each neighbourhood plan to respond to its own local circumstances and community aspirations.

1.7 The Plan has also been prepared so as not to conflict with relevant local planning policies, including:

- Harborough Local Plan 2011–2031 (Harborough District Council, 2019).
- Harborough Local Plan 2020–2041 (Harborough District Council, 2026).
- Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (Leicestershire County Council, 2019).

Prepared with the community

1.8 The Plan has been prepared by people who live and work in Welland ward, for the benefit of current and future residents, businesses and community organisations. Harborough District Council has been closely involved throughout the process, and the Forum has sought to engage the wider community at each stage.

1.9 The Plan has been shaped by extensive discussion, engagement and consultation. This work has helped ensure that the Plan reflects local priorities and has broad community support.

Policies, recommendations and delivery

1.10 The Plan covers the period 2025 to 2041. It provides a framework for how planning decisions should be made in the neighbourhood area and sets out clear policies to guide future development.

1.11 The Plan includes:

- **Policies**, shown in green boxes, which will be used to help determine planning applications in the neighbourhood area. The supporting text explains how the policies were formed and provides guidance on how they should be applied. The policies themselves take precedence when decisions are made, and

- **Recommendations**, shown in blue boxes, which identify complementary actions and projects that support the Plan's Vision, Objectives and Policies. The Recommendations are community-led actions and delivery priorities rather than statutory planning policies. They identify matters that the community wishes to see progressed in support of the Plan's objectives. Some may be delivered directly by local organisations, while others will require discussion and partnership working with the relevant responsible bodies, including Harborough District Council, Leicestershire County Council, a future Town Council, landowners, developers and infrastructure providers. Where delivery rests with another authority or organisation, the recommendations express the community's priorities and provide guidance for future decision-making, funding bids and collaborative action.

1.12 The **Delivery Plan** sets out how both the Policies and Recommendations will be pursued. Where appropriate, eligible development may be expected to contribute towards site-specific requirements through Section 106 Agreements, financial contributions, design measures or in-kind improvements, where these are necessary, directly related to the development, and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind.

Review and next steps

1.13 The Plan will be reviewed periodically so that it can respond to changing needs, priorities and planning policy requirements.

1.14 The Plan is now ready for Regulation 14 Pre-Submission Consultation. Comments received during consultation will be considered before the Plan is revised, approved for submission and sent to Harborough District Council. Once validated, it will then be put forward for further consultation. It will then be subject to Independent Examination. Any modifications proposed by the Examiner will be incorporated before the final Plan proceeds to Referendum.



Chapter 2

How the Plan fits into the planning system

2.1 Once made, the Welland Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the statutory development plan for Harborough. Planning applications in Welland ward must therefore be determined in accordance with the Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

2.2 Before it can be made, the Plan must satisfy the basic conditions and other legal requirements, which are tested through an independent examination. Under the NPPF (August 2026), Policy PM17 sets out the examination requirements for neighbourhood plans. These include having regard to national planning policies and guidance and ensuring that the Plan accords with the Framework's plan-making policies.

2.3 NPPF (August 2026) Policy PM5 recognises the role of neighbourhood plans in enabling communities to plan positively for their areas, addressing local priorities through policies and, where appropriate, allocating land for development. It also requires that neighbourhood plans do not result in less development than is specified in other parts of the development plan covering the same area.

Chapter 3

How the Plan supports sustainable development

3.1 The NPPF (August 2026) places sustainable development at the heart of the planning system. For Welland ward, this means supporting development that meets local needs and contributes positively to the area's future, while protecting and enhancing the qualities that make it a valued place to live.

3.2 The Plan's policies and recommendations seek to balance social, environmental and economic priorities. These priorities are interrelated and should be considered together when planning decisions are made.

Social sustainability

3.3 The Plan supports social sustainability by helping Welland remain a healthy, inclusive and well-connected community. It seeks to:

- safeguard open spaces that are important to residents' wellbeing and recreation;
- protect and improve community facilities;
- support a mix of housing types that meets the needs of current and future residents; and
- improve access to services, facilities and opportunities for people of all ages and abilities.

Environmental sustainability

3.4 The Plan supports environmental sustainability by guiding development so that it respects Welland's character, landscape setting and natural assets. It seeks to:

- ensure new development is appropriate in scale, type and location;
- protect important open spaces and green infrastructure;
- encourage good design that reflects local character and identity;
- conserve and, where possible, enhance biodiversity and habitats; and
- support safer and more attractive walking and cycling routes.

Economic sustainability

3.5 The Plan supports economic sustainability by recognising the importance of local employment, services and small-scale enterprise. It seeks to:

- protect existing employment uses where they remain appropriate and viable;
- support small-scale business development that is compatible with the character of the area;
- enable home working and local enterprise where impacts on neighbours and the wider area can be managed; and

Overall contribution of the Plan

3.6 Taken together, the Plan's policies provide a local framework for sustainable development. They support positive change where it meets local needs, improves quality of life, protects valued places and helps Welland ward remain resilient, distinctive and sustainable over the Plan period.



Chapter 4

Welland Neighbourhood Area

4.1 The Welland Neighbourhood Area covers the whole of Welland ward, which lies on the south-western side of Market Harborough. It is an established residential part of the town, with neighbourhoods extending from the older streets around Northampton Road and Welland Park Road through to the Southern Estate and more recent development at Farndon Fields. The ward is bounded to the north by Logan ward and to the east by Little Bowden ward. The southern boundary follows the boundary between Leicestershire and West Northamptonshire, beyond which lie the parishes of Great Oxendon and East Farndon. To the west lies the parish of Lubenham.

4.2 The neighbourhood area was agreed by the Welland Neighbourhood Forum in March 2023 and designated by Harborough District Council on 18 July 2023.

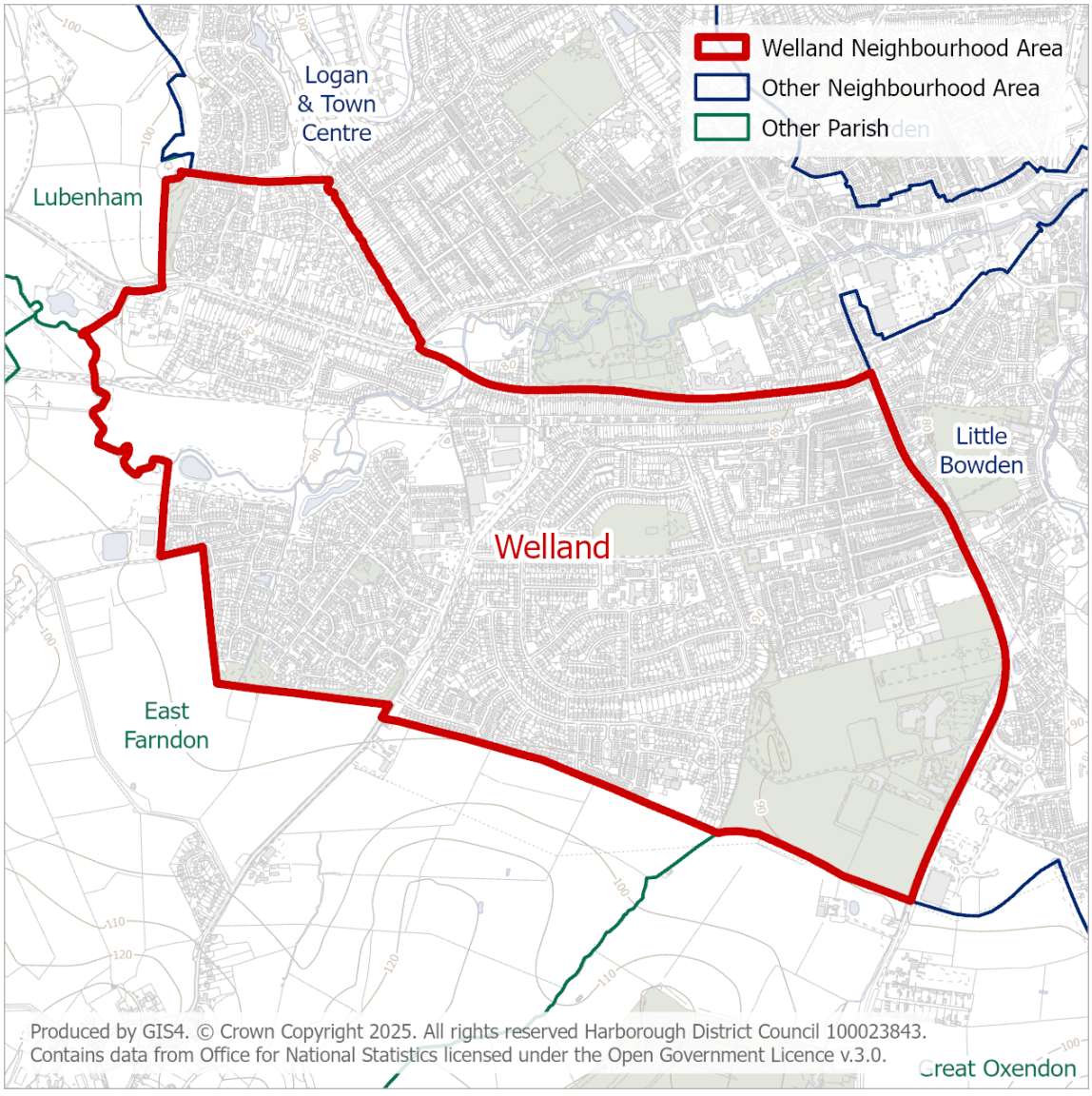


Figure 7.1: Welland Neighbourhood Plan Area designated on 18th July 2023

4.1 - Historical Development & Heritage of Welland Ward

4.1.1 Although Welland ward was established as an electoral ward in 2019, the area it encompasses has a much longer history that has played an important role in the growth of Market Harborough. From medieval farmland and nationally significant Civil War events to Victorian industrial expansion and post-war housing development, successive phases of change have shaped the distinctive character of the ward. Understanding this evolution provides valuable context for the Neighbourhood Plan and helps explain the landscape, streets, community facilities and heritage that define the area today.

Agricultural Origins and Civil War Heritage

4.1.2 For centuries the land that now forms Welland ward was predominantly agricultural, supporting grazing and arable farming on the southern edge of Market Harborough. Its national significance emerged in 1645 during the English Civil War, when King Charles I marched from Harborough to the Battle of Naseby and, following Parliament's decisive victory, Oliver Cromwell's forces returned through the area. William Lenthall, Speaker of the House of Commons, became closely associated with this pivotal moment in English history. Today, the legacy of these events survives through local place names, including Lenthall Square and its memorial, reinforcing a strong sense of place and providing a tangible link between the ward and one of the defining events of the seventeenth century.



Victorian Expansion

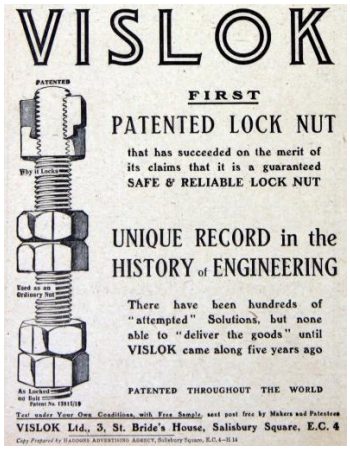
4.1.3 The nineteenth century transformed the area. The first National Hunt Steeplechase Challenge Cup was held on land west of Farndon Road in 1860, establishing a sporting legacy reflected in modern street names on the Farndon Fields estate. Rapid industrial growth across Market Harborough increased demand for housing and community facilities. Northampton Road Cemetery opened in 1878 as an important civic response to the town's expanding population, while St Hugh's Church was established to serve the growing residential community. These developments marked the transition from a rural landscape to a planned urban neighbourhood.



Industry and Innovation

4.1.4 Industrial enterprise became central to the ward's identity. Walter Haddon's Caxton Type Foundry introduced innovative manufacturing techniques before evolving into Tungstone Products, whose batteries and Vislok engineering products gained an international reputation. Nearby, the Looms factory became a major employer in the footwear supply industry. Although these industries have largely disappeared, their influence remains visible in surviving industrial premises, redevelopment sites and street names, illustrating how manufacturing shaped employment, housing growth and the physical form of the ward.





Twentieth-Century Growth

4.1.5 Following the Second World War, the Southern Estate was developed to meet urgent housing needs. New homes, schools, shops, community facilities and recreational spaces established the framework of the modern neighbourhood. The opening of the shopping centre on Western Avenue, community facilities and later the Market Harborough Leisure Centre created focal points that continue to serve residents. These planned investments strengthened community cohesion and remain fundamental to Welland Ward's character.



Welland ward today

4.1.6 Recent decades have seen continued growth through the Farndon Fields development, alongside investment in employment sites and sports facilities. While the ward continues to evolve, its historic development remains evident in its landscape, buildings, open spaces and street names. The combination of agricultural origins, nationally important Civil War associations, Victorian expansion, industrial innovation and planned residential growth has created a distinctive place with a strong local identity. This rich heritage provides an important context for the Welland Neighbourhood Plan and supports its aim of ensuring that future development respects and enhances the character, history and sense of place that make Welland ward a distinctive part of Market Harborough.

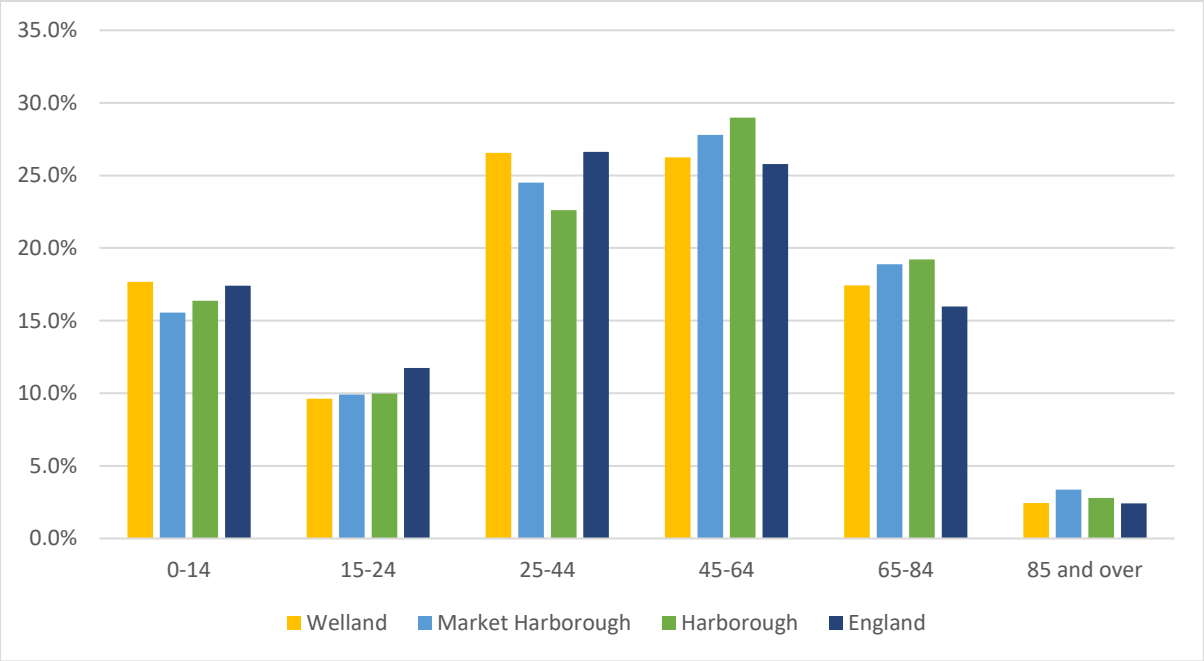


4.2 - Census Data

Population and Age

4.2.1 The 2021 Census recorded a population of **8,856 residents** within the Welland ward, representing an increase of **1,726 people (24.2%)** since 2011. Welland accounted for approximately **34% of the population of Market Harborough**, reflecting its role as the town's largest residential neighbourhood.

4.2.2 Unlike many neighbourhoods experiencing ageing through declining younger populations, Welland experienced growth across all age groups between 2011 and 2021. The largest age group remained those aged **25–44**, while the most significant proportional growth occurred amongst residents aged **85 years and over**, indicating a steadily ageing population alongside continued family growth.



4.2.3 Population projections suggest this trend will continue throughout the Plan period. Households headed by someone aged 65 or over are projected to increase substantially by 2041, with older households accounting for over 43% of all households.

Housing Tenure

4.2.4 The 2021 Census shows that **73% of households** in Welland owned their own home, a higher proportion than both Market Harborough and England, although slightly below the Harborough District average. Around **10% of households** occupied socially rented housing, with a further **2%** living in shared ownership accommodation. Private rented housing accounted for approximately **15%** of households.

4.2.5 Between 2011 and 2021 there was a significant increase in **shared ownership** homes, alongside growth in both social rented and private rented housing. This reflects recent delivery of affordable housing within the neighbourhood but also demonstrates continuing diversity in local housing needs.

4.2.6 Despite this, the Housing Needs Assessment concludes that **affordability remains a significant challenge**. Average income households are generally unable to purchase even entry-level market housing without substantial deposits, whilst private rented housing is also beyond the reach of many lower income households. The Assessment identifies a **continuing need for affordable rented housing** together with shared ownership and other affordable home ownership products.

4.2.7 Although owner occupation is relatively high, increasing house prices and affordability pressures demonstrate an ongoing need for affordable housing. This **evidence supports policies seeking an appropriate mix of affordable housing tenures**, particularly affordable rented and shared ownership homes, to meet identified local needs.

Dwelling Type

4.2.8 Detached dwellings form the largest element of Welland's housing stock, accounting for just over one-third of all homes. Semi-detached properties comprise a further third, whilst almost one-quarter of households occupy terraced housing. Flats make up a relatively small proportion of the housing stock compared with Market Harborough as a whole. In addition, approximately **19% of dwellings are bungalows**, significantly above both district and national averages.

4.2.9 Overall, Welland exhibits a varied housing stock, although it contains relatively few smaller flatted developments compared with other parts of Market Harborough.

4.2.10 The existing housing stock provides an attractive family environment but offers relatively **limited choice for smaller households**. Future development should therefore contribute towards a broader range of dwelling types whilst respecting the established suburban character of Welland.

Dwelling Size

4.2.11 Three-bedroom properties represent the largest proportion of homes within Welland, accounting for approximately 42% of all dwellings. Four-bedroom and larger homes comprise around 28%, whilst one-bedroom properties account for fewer than 5% of dwellings. Two-bedroom homes are also less common than across Market Harborough and England generally.

4.2.12 The Housing Needs Assessment concludes that Welland currently contains relatively few smaller homes and recommends that future development should broaden housing choice rather than simply replicate the existing stock. It also notes that **housing mix should be considered alongside the wider Market Harborough housing market** rather than in isolation.

4.2.13 Providing a wider choice of dwelling sizes would help meet the needs of younger households, first-time buyers and older residents wishing to downsize whilst maintaining opportunities for family housing. This supports policies seeking a balanced housing mix across Welland and the wider town.

Household Composition and Occupancy

4.2.14 Households with dependent children form the largest household group within Welland, accounting for almost 29% of households. At the same time, Welland has the highest proportion of households without children amongst the four Market Harborough neighbourhood areas.

4.2.15 The Census also shows significant levels of **under-occupation**, with over **81%** of households occupying homes with at least one additional bedroom beyond their assessed needs. Under-occupation is particularly common amongst older households and couples whose children have left home. Whilst there is evidence of some overcrowding, this affects only a relatively small proportion of households.

4.2.16 These patterns suggest that much of the larger housing stock is occupied by households who may wish to remain within their community but have limited opportunities to move into suitably designed smaller accommodation.

4.2.17 High levels of under-occupation, together with an ageing population, indicate that **increasing the availability of attractive smaller and accessible homes could improve the efficient use of the existing housing stock while allowing residents to remain within their community**. This supports policies encouraging adaptable homes, accessible design and accommodation suitable for older people.

Census Data - Summary

4.2.18 The Census evidence demonstrates that Welland is an established and attractive residential neighbourhood that has experienced significant population growth whilst retaining a strong family character. It also reveals an ageing population, rising housing affordability pressures, high levels of owner occupation and a housing stock dominated by larger family homes.

4.2.19 Taken together, this evidence provides a strong justification for the Neighbourhood Plan's housing policies. It supports the need to deliver a balanced mix of housing, improve affordability, increase the provision of accessible and adaptable homes, encourage opportunities for downsizing within the neighbourhood to enable residents to remain within Welland throughout different stages of their lives.

Chapter 5

Consultations

5.1 Extensive consultation with residents and other stakeholders was undertaken between 2023-2026 during the formation of this Plan. This included:

- Neighbourhood Forum meetings held every month from May 2023.
- Specialist sub-groups focussed on built environment, transport, social & community and the natural environment.
- Stalls at multiple events and locations including Market Harborough Carnival, Market Harborough Indoor Market, Farndon Fields School and outside the shopping precinct on Western Avenue and the Community Church on Bath Street.
- A survey of businesses in January 2025.
- A Facebook page with almost 500 members.
- Regular community events – sweeping alleyways, removing tree guards around landscape areas, clearing allotments, litter picking - which provided an opportunity to speak to residents.

5.2 Further details of consultations and research conducted by the NHF can be found in the Consultation Statement which will be appended to this Plan as Appendix A1 following Regulation 14 consultation.

5.3 Members of the Welland Neighbourhood Forum, residents, businesses and other stakeholders discussed the needs of the neighbourhood and were invited to identify the priorities that should inform the Plan. The main community priorities identified through consultation were:

- Protect existing green spaces, open countryside and agricultural land, particularly to the south and west of the ward, so that Welland retains its green edges and separation from neighbouring settlements.
- Identify areas at risk of flooding, prevent inappropriate development in flood-prone locations, and support practical flood mitigation and resilience measures.
- Increase biodiversity through measures such as tree and hedgerow planting, wildlife areas, habitat creation and better management of open spaces.
- Improve access to open spaces, parks, play areas and allotments, while ensuring they are safe, clean, well maintained and accessible to all.
- Improve road safety across the ward by managing traffic speeds, addressing school-run traffic, discouraging pavement parking and delivering safety improvements at key locations.

- Make walking, cycling and wheeling safer and more attractive by creating connected, accessible routes and improving crossings, dropped kerbs, alleyways and other links.
- Maintain and improve bus services and strengthen public transport connections within Welland and to the wider town.
- Protect, improve and make better use of community facilities, and support the development of new or improved facilities where local needs are not currently met.
- Strengthen community identity and awareness of local groups, including those supporting children, young people, older residents and people with additional needs.
- Improve the public realm, including seating, signage, pocket parks and other small-scale improvements that make the ward more attractive and welcoming.
- Ensure the timely adoption and proper maintenance of roads, sewers and communal infrastructure in new developments.
- Support appropriate local enterprise and small-scale commercial development in suitable non-residential locations.

5.4 The findings of the NHF's extensive engagement, consultation and research, including the documents that make up the evidence base (including drafts of the Plan published before this final version), form the basis for the Vision, Objectives, Policies and Recommendations that follow.

Chapter 6

The Vision

6.1 **By 2041 the Welland ward will remain a safe and desirable place to live and work, where well-designed development meets local needs, supports local services and employment, and respects the character of existing streets, open spaces and green edges. Better walking, cycling and public transport links, improved community facilities, and stronger access to nature will help residents of all ages and abilities feel connected, involved and able to shape the future of their neighbourhood.**

6.2 Although the Vision is specific to Welland, the ward forms part of the wider town of Market Harborough and shares many of its objectives for sustainable growth, better movement, improved access to services, environmental protection and strong community life.

Achieving the Vision: Objectives for Welland

6.3 The following objectives explain how the Vision will be delivered in practical terms. They are grouped under the five main policy areas of the Plan. Together, they identify the priorities for managing change, meeting local needs, protecting the qualities residents value and contributing positively to the wider town.

Built Environment

- Support well-designed, proportionate development that reflects Welland's character, settlement pattern and green edges.
- Direct development to suitable locations within the ward and protect open countryside from inappropriate development.
- Encourage a housing mix that responds to local needs, including smaller homes, family housing, affordable housing and accessible homes for older and disabled residents.
- Promote affordable housing that is accessible to local people, including those on average and lower incomes.
- Require high-quality sustainable design that follows the Welland Design Guidance (Appendix A3) and supports energy efficiency, low-carbon construction and renewable energy where appropriate.
- Make effective use of previously developed or underused land where this can be achieved without harm to local character, infrastructure or community needs.

Transport

- Make walking, cycling and wheeling safe, convenient and attractive choices for short journeys within Welland and Market Harborough.

- Improve connections between homes, schools, shops, the town centre, the railway station, healthcare, leisure facilities and open spaces.
- Support a joined-up active travel network, including safer crossings, improved footways, cycle routes and links to a wider Market Harborough Green Wheel.
- Ensure new development prioritises pedestrians, cyclists and public transport before private car use.
- Address local concerns about traffic speed, congestion, pavement parking, rat-running, school-run traffic and road safety.
- Support better bus services, improved waiting facilities, stronger links to the railway station.

Natural and Historic Environment

- Protect and enhance valued open spaces, green infrastructure, habitats, landscape setting and the remaining green edges of the ward.
- Designate and safeguard Local Green Spaces and other open spaces that are special to the community.
- Improve access to good-quality open space within walking distance of residents.
- Protect biodiversity, wildlife corridors and habitat connectivity, and secure measurable biodiversity net gain from development.
- Protect locally significant historic buildings, archaeological features, heritage assets and important views.
- Reduce flood risk by supporting sustainable drainage, flood resilience measures, tree planting, hedgerow protection and habitat creation.

Healthy Communities, Local Services and Wellbeing

- Protect and improve existing community facilities, including places for worship, sport, recreation, youth activity and informal gathering.
- Support new or replacement community facilities, including a community centre for Welland ward.
- Strengthen Burford Green and the Western Avenue area as a recognisable local hub and community focal point.
- Improve access to play areas, pocket parks, seating, allotments and inclusive open spaces for residents of all ages and abilities.
- Support schools, health facilities and local services where improvement or expansion is needed and impacts can be managed.
- Promote an inclusive, connected neighbourhood that supports residents' health, wellbeing and participation in community life.

Economy and Employment

- Protect existing employment areas where they remain suitable and viable, supporting local jobs and economic activity.
- Support small businesses, local enterprise and appropriate small-scale commercial development in suitable locations.
- Enable home working and flexible workspace where compatible with residential amenity and local character.
- Encourage economic activity that meets local needs while respecting the residential character and wider environment of the neighbourhood.

6.4 Taken together, these objectives provide the link between the Vision and the policies that follow. The policies and recommendations translate the Vision into practical outcomes, guiding development, investment and community action so that change strengthens Welland's identity, protects what residents value, supports local needs and contributes to sustainable development across the Plan period.

Chapter 7

Policies

Chapter 7.1

Built Environment

7.1.1 The Welland Neighbourhood Plan is a key part of achieving sustainable development in the Plan area. The NPPF (August 2026) establishes that the planning system should be genuinely plan-led and allow people to influence development in their area, including directing growth to the most appropriate and sustainable locations, mitigating and adapting to climate change, supporting regeneration and conserving and enhancing the quality of the built and natural environment.

7.1.2 When considering development proposals, this Neighbourhood Plan takes a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The Plan seeks to ensure that future development is proportionate to the character of Welland, contributes positively to the wider town of Market Harborough, and responds to the needs of existing and future residents.

7.1.3 Preparation of the Plan has been informed by extensive community consultation together with evidence including the 2021 Census and the Welland Housing Needs Assessment (Appendix A2). This evidence demonstrates that Welland has experienced significant housing growth over the past two decades and now represents the largest residential neighbourhood within Market Harborough, with almost 9,000 residents. The population continues to grow whilst also ageing, creating increasing demand for a wider choice of housing, including homes suitable for older people, smaller households and first-time buyers. At the same time, housing affordability remains a significant issue, despite comparatively high levels of owner occupation.

7.1.4 The Housing Needs Assessment concludes that future development should diversify the existing housing stock by providing a balanced mix of dwelling sizes and tenures, together with accessible and adaptable homes that enable residents to remain within the neighbourhood throughout different stages of life. This evidence forms the basis of the housing policies contained within this Plan.

Market Harborough Context

7.1.5 The adopted Harborough Local Plan (2019) and the emerging Local Plan (2025-2041) identify Market Harborough as the principal focus for growth within the district. Welland forms part of the Market Harborough urban area and is therefore recognised as a sustainable location for development.

7.1.6 However, whilst Welland has accommodated a substantial proportion of the town's recent housing growth, the emerging Local Plan does not allocate any additional strategic housing sites within the neighbourhood area up to 2041. Major developments at Farndon Fields have largely completed the planned expansion of the neighbourhood.

7.1.7 Only limited opportunities now remain for further development. Consequently, the Housing Needs Assessment confirms that there is no strategic housing allocation for Welland during the Plan period, although small-scale windfall development is expected to continue.

7.1.8 The Neighbourhood Plan therefore focuses on ensuring that any future development responds to identified local housing needs whilst protecting the established character of the area. This Plan provides a clear framework for directing small-scale development to the most sustainable locations, supporting existing services and reducing the risk of speculative development that would harm the character of the neighbourhood.

Issues and Concerns

7.1.9 Community engagement has identified several recurring themes regarding the future development of Welland.

7.1.10 Residents expressed a clear desire to retain the distinctive suburban character of the neighbourhood whilst accommodating modest, well-designed development that meets genuine local need. There was strong support for ensuring that the scale and density of future development remain proportionate to the existing character of the area.

7.1.11 Consultation also highlighted concerns regarding housing affordability and the limited choice of accommodation available for younger households, first-time buyers and older residents wishing to downsize. Evidence from the Housing Needs Assessment reinforces the need for a broader range of dwelling sizes and tenures, together with increased provision of accessible and adaptable homes.

7.1.12 The quality of design was identified as another priority. Respondents consistently supported development that reflects the established character of Welland, follows high standards of sustainable design, and contributes positively to local identity through the application of the Welland Design Guidance.

7.1.13 Finally, residents emphasised that future development should contribute towards genuinely sustainable communities by supporting walking, cycling and public transport, improving environmental performance, and ensuring that local infrastructure keeps pace with development.

Vision and Objectives

7.1.14 The vision for the built environment in the Welland Neighbourhood Area is that, by the end of the Plan period, carefully planned and genuinely sustainable development will reinforce Welland's character as an attractive residential neighbourhood within Market Harborough. New development should provide a balanced mix of homes that responds to local need, improves affordability, supports healthier lifestyles and contributes positively to the quality of the built and natural environment.

7.1.15 The objectives for the built environment are therefore:

- To maintain the distinctive landscape setting and suburban character of Welland.
- To ensure that redevelopment and infill development respect and enhance local character.
- To secure a balanced housing mix that reflects the identified needs of Welland and the wider Market Harborough housing market.
- To increase opportunities for affordable housing and accessible homes suitable for all stages of life.
- To ensure that all new development achieves high standards of design, sustainability and energy efficiency.
- To encourage development that supports active travel, community cohesion and climate resilience.

Policy BE1 - Settlement Boundary

7.1.16 Welland has experienced significant residential growth during the past twenty years, particularly through the Farndon Fields development. As a consequence, there are now very few remaining opportunities for significant residential development.

7.1.17 The emerging Harborough Local Plan allocates no strategic housing sites within the Welland Neighbourhood Area up to 2041. Future development is therefore expected to comprise primarily windfall sites and redevelopment opportunities within the existing built-up area.

7.1.18 The Settlement Boundary identifies the extent of the existing built form and provides clarity regarding the appropriate location for future development. It also helps safeguard the River Welland corridor, floodplain and surrounding open countryside, which make an important contribution to the landscape setting, biodiversity and recreational value of the neighbourhood area.

7.1.19 **Objective:** To maintain the landscape character and setting of Welland, and protect the open countryside as an attractive, accessible and distinctive, finite natural resource.

Policy BE1

Settlement Boundary

Development proposals within the defined Settlement Boundary, as shown in Figure 7.2, will be supported in principle where they:

a. accord with the policies of this Neighbourhood Plan;

b. are of an appropriate scale, design and character;

c. safeguard the amenity of existing and future occupiers; and

d. do not conflict with environmental, landscape or heritage designations.

Land outside the defined Settlement Boundary will be regarded as open countryside where development will be carefully controlled in accordance with national and strategic local planning policies.

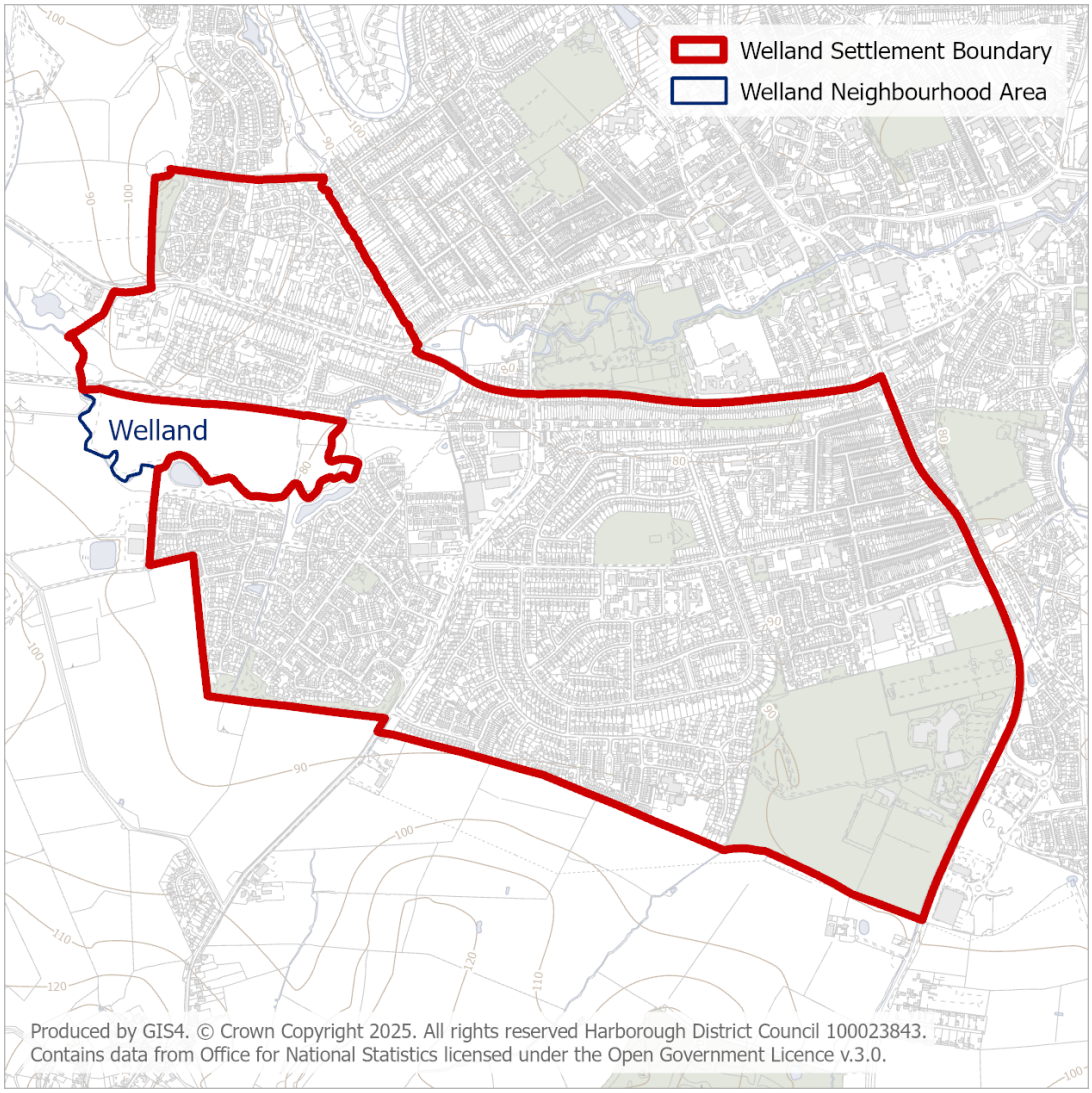


Figure 7.2 Settlement Boundary

Policy BE2 - Housing Mix

7.1.20 The Harborough Local Plan (2019) and the emerging Local Plan seek to provide a choice of housing to meet the needs of all sections of the community. The Welland Housing Needs Assessment (Appendix A2) provides the evidence base for determining the most appropriate housing mix within the neighbourhood area.

7.1.21 The 2021 Census recorded a population of 8,850 residents in the Welland Neighbourhood Area, an increase of 1,726 people (24.2%) since 2011. Whilst population growth has occurred across all age groups, projections indicate that future growth will increasingly be driven by older households, with households headed by someone aged 65 or over projected to increase by 104% between 2011- 2041 (Welland Housing Needs Assessment Para 5.5.6). At the same time, Welland continues to attract younger families and remains the largest residential neighbourhood in Market Harborough.

7.1.22 The Welland Housing Needs Assessment also identifies that Welland has a housing stock dominated by detached, semi-detached and three-bedroom homes, together with relatively high levels of under-occupation. There is comparatively limited provision of smaller homes suitable for first-time buyers, younger households and older residents wishing to downsize. The Assessment therefore concludes that future development should diversify the housing stock by providing a broader range of dwelling sizes and tenures whilst maintaining opportunities for family housing.

7.1.23 Given the limited availability of development land within Welland, achieving the recommended housing mix will require small-scale windfall developments to contribute positively wherever opportunities arise. The Neighbourhood Plan therefore seeks to ensure that new housing responds to identified local needs whilst recognising the role of the wider Market Harborough housing market.

7.1.24 **Objective:** To ensure that the future housing mix meets the needs of the neighbourhood area and wider town of Market Harborough.

Policy BE2

Housing Mix

Development proposals for new housing should contribute towards a balanced mix of dwelling sizes and types, having regard to the Welland Housing Needs Assessment (Appendix A2) and other relevant evidence of local housing need.

Particular support will be given to proposals that:

a. provide an appropriate proportion of one and two-bedroom homes suitable for first-time buyers, younger households and smaller households;

b. provide family housing that contributes to a balanced housing stock;

c. provide accessible and adaptable homes meeting Building Regulations Part M4(2), where appropriate;

d. include single-storey accommodation or other homes suitable for older people wishing to downsize whilst remaining within the neighbourhood;

e. support opportunities for self-build and custom-build housing where compatible with the character of the surrounding area; and
f. demonstrate how the proposal contributes towards creating lifetime neighbourhoods by enabling residents to remain within Welland throughout different stages of life.

Policy BE3 – Affordable Housing

7.1.25 The Housing Needs Assessment identifies affordability as one of the principal housing issues facing Welland. House prices have increased significantly over the past decade and average income households are generally unable to purchase even entry-level homes without substantial deposits. Affordable rented housing remains the tenure most accessible to lower-income households, whilst shared ownership provides an important route into home ownership.

7.1.26 Although the Housing Needs Assessment identifies a substantial need for additional affordable housing, it also recognises that this cannot realistically be delivered entirely within Welland because of the limited supply of development land. Delivery will therefore need to be considered across the wider Market Harborough area in partnership with Harborough District Council and the other Neighbourhood Forums.

7.1.27 **Objective:** To ensure that a proportion of new housing is affordable and is prioritised for people with a local connection.

Policy BE3

Affordable Housing

Development proposals that provide affordable housing will be supported where they:

a. contribute towards meeting identified local housing needs;

b. provide a range of affordable housing tenures, including affordable rented and affordable home ownership products;

c. include smaller homes suitable for younger households, first-time buyers and older residents wishing to downsize;

d. integrate affordable housing throughout the development so that it is indistinguishable from market housing in appearance and design; and

e. comply with the affordable housing requirements of the Harborough Local Plan. Where lawful and appropriate, priority should be given to meeting the needs of people with a local connection to Market Harborough.

Policy BE4 - Design

7.1.28 The distinctive character of Welland has developed over many decades through incremental growth, creating an attractive suburban neighbourhood with a varied range of architectural styles, materials and landscape features.

7.1.29 Community consultation consistently identified the quality of design as a key priority. Residents supported development that respects local character, reinforces the identity of the neighbourhood and incorporates high standards of sustainability.

7.1.30 To assist applicants and decision-makers, the Welland Neighbourhood Forum helped prepare the Welland Design Guidance (Appendix A3), drawing on policy development and engagement by its steering group. The report provides guidance on layout, scale, massing, materials, landscaping, streetscape and how new development relates to existing character.

7.1.31 The guidance set out in this report will provide a detailed framework that should be followed by any future design proposals that come forward within the Welland Neighbourhood Forum area to ensure it meets a consistent and high-quality standard of design and positively contributes to the unique characteristics of Welland. It is important to read this design guidance in tandem with the supplementary planning documents produced by Harborough District Council.

7.1.32 **Objective:** To ensure that new developments are of high quality, follow sustainable design best practice and meet the requirements of the Welland Design Guidance.

Policy BE4

Design

Development proposals should demonstrate high standards of design that reinforce and enhance the distinctive character of the Welland ward.

As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, proposals should:

a. demonstrate how they have responded to the Welland Design Guidance (Appendix A3);

b. respect the prevailing scale, massing, layout and building line of the surrounding area;

c. use high quality materials that reflect local character;

d. create attractive, safe and accessible streets and public spaces;

e. protect the amenity of neighbouring occupiers; and

f. contribute positively to local biodiversity and green infrastructure.
Development that fails to respond positively to the character of the Neighbourhood Area or the Welland Design Guidance will not be supported.

Policy BE5 – Sustainable Design

7.1.33 The Neighbourhood Forum recognises that new development has an important role to play in addressing climate change, reducing carbon emissions and improving resilience to its effects. Sustainable design should therefore be an integral consideration from the earliest stages of the development process.

7.1.34 The NPPF (August 2026) Policy W3: Renewable and low carbon energy development and electricity network infrastructure, places significant emphasis on supporting the transition to a low-carbon future. Within Welland, this means encouraging development that minimises energy use and environmental impact, supports renewable and low-carbon energy, and incorporates measures to improve resilience to climate change, while respecting the area's distinctive character and landscape setting.

7.1.35 **Objective:** To ensure that new development contributes to climate change mitigation and adaptation through energy-efficient, low-carbon and climate-resilient design, appropriate to Welland's local character.

Policy BE5

Sustainable Design

Development proposals should demonstrate how they contribute towards climate resilience and the transition to a low-carbon future.

As appropriate to their scale and nature, proposals should:

a. minimise energy demand through building orientation and passive design;

b. achieve high standards of energy efficiency;

c. incorporate renewable or low-carbon technologies where these do not adversely affect local character, heritage assets or residential amenity;

d. incorporate sustainable drainage systems where appropriate;

e. maximise opportunities for biodiversity enhancement, tree planting and urban greening; and

f. demonstrate resilience to future climate change, including reducing overheating and managing surface water.
Development that demonstrates exemplary environmental performance whilst respecting the character of the Neighbourhood Area will be particularly supported.

Recommendations

7.1.36 These recommendations are community-led actions and delivery priorities rather than statutory planning policies. They identify matters that the community wishes to see progressed in support of the Plan's objectives. Some may be delivered directly by local organisations, while others will require discussion and partnership working with the relevant responsible bodies, including Harborough District Council, Leicestershire County Council, a future Town Council, landowners, developers and infrastructure providers. Where delivery rests with another authority or organisation, the recommendations express the community's priorities and provide guidance for future decision-making, funding bids and collaborative action.

7.1.37 In support of the Policies for Built Development, the following recommendations are made.

Recommendation BE1

Derelict Garage Sites

Harborough District Council and/or the (future) Market Harborough Town Council and local landowners should investigate opportunities for the redevelopment of underutilised and semi derelict garage sites for community facilities, small-scale housing or other uses that would benefit the local community.

1. Pride Place (photo below)
2. Skippon Close
3. Bath Street
4. Harrison Close
5. At the rear of the shops on Western Avenue



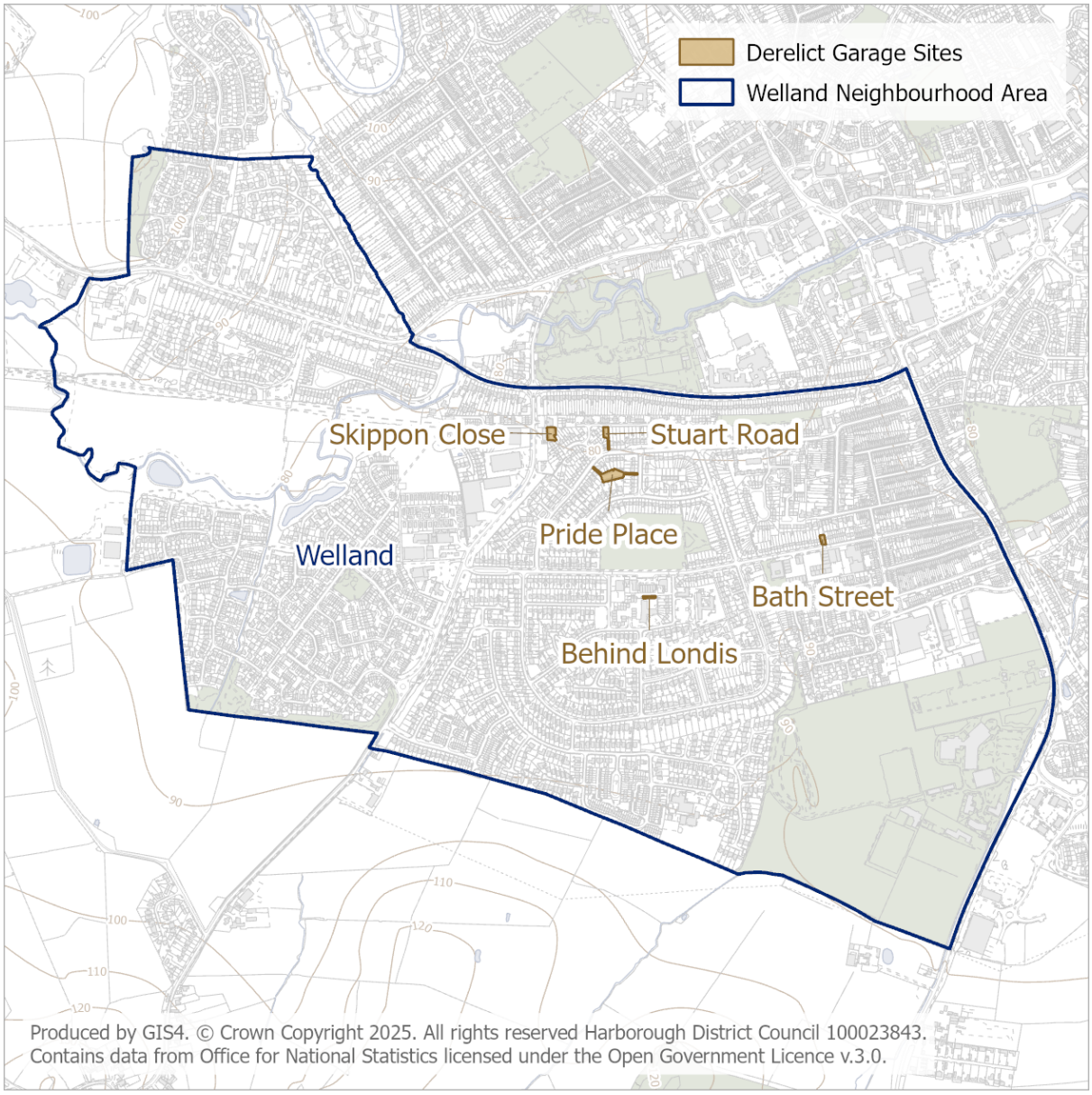


Figure 7.3 Derelict Garage Sites

Recommendation BE2

Affordable Housing

Harborough District Council and the four Market Harborough Neighbourhood Forums should continue to work collaboratively to coordinate the delivery of affordable housing across the town in accordance with identified housing needs.

Chapter 7.2

Transport

7.2.1 Transport plays a fundamental role in the quality of life, health and economic prosperity of Welland. It influences how easily residents can access employment, education, healthcare, shops, community facilities and open spaces, whilst also affecting road safety, air quality, climate resilience and the attractiveness of the neighbourhood.

7.2.2 The Welland Neighbourhood Plan supports the wider transport objectives of Harborough District Council and Leicestershire County Council by promoting a transport network that is safe, inclusive and sustainable, and which gives greater priority to walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport alongside appropriate provision for private vehicles.

7.2.3 The Market Harborough Transport Strategy (2017) identified the significant transport challenges associated with the town's planned growth, forecasting substantial increases in traffic volumes and recommending a comprehensive package of measures including improvements for walking and cycling, highway junction improvements, parking and traffic management measures, and restrictions on heavy goods vehicles where appropriate. Whilst many of these proposals have yet to be delivered, the Strategy continues to provide an important strategic framework for transport investment within the town.

7.2.4 More recently, Leicestershire County Council has published Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for Market Harborough and commenced work on a Multi-Modal Area Investment Plan, both of which will help shape future transport investment. This Neighbourhood Plan complements these wider initiatives by identifying the transport issues that matter most to Welland residents and setting out planning policies and community priorities that support their delivery.

7.2.5 The following sections consider the principal transport themes affecting Welland: Roads; Cycling, Walking and Wheeling; Public Transport; Rail; and Greenways.

7.2.6 Preparation of this chapter has been informed by the Market Harborough Transport Strategy, community consultation, transport evidence gathered by the Welland Neighbourhood Forum, and emerging strategic transport work being undertaken by Leicestershire County Council.

Roads

7.2.7 Welland is served by a well-established road network that connects the neighbourhood with the wider Market Harborough area and the strategic highway network. Western Avenue, Bath Street, Northampton Road, Welland Park Road and

Farndon Road are the principal routes through the neighbourhood, providing access to residential areas, schools, employment, community facilities and the town centre.

7.2.8 During the past twenty years Welland has experienced substantial housing growth through developments including Farndon Fields. Whilst these developments have strengthened the role of Welland as the town's largest residential neighbourhood, they have also increased pressure on the local highway network, particularly at peak periods and during the school run.

7.2.9 The adopted and emerging Harborough Local Plans support growth within Market Harborough whilst encouraging a gradual shift towards more sustainable travel. The Welland Neighbourhood Plan supports this approach by recognising that new development should not simply accommodate additional vehicle traffic but should also create opportunities for residents to make more journeys by walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport.

Cycling, Walking and Wheeling

7.2.10 Market Harborough is compact enough for many everyday journeys to be made without a car. Schools, local shops, community facilities, parks, healthcare, employment areas and the town centre are all within reasonable walking or cycling distance for many residents.

7.2.11 Welland already benefits from a number of footpaths, shared-use paths, alleyways and traffic-free routes. However, these routes are often fragmented, poorly connected or inaccessible to some users. Missing links, inadequate crossings and inconsistent standards discourage active travel and reduce opportunities for people to choose healthier and more sustainable ways of travelling.

7.2.12 National planning policy and Local Transport Note 1/20 emphasise that walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure should be coherent, direct, safe, comfortable and attractive. The Neighbourhood Plan supports these principles and seeks to improve connectivity throughout Welland whilst integrating with the wider Market Harborough active travel network.

Public Transport

7.2.13 Welland is served by local bus services that provide connections with the town centre, railway station, neighbouring villages and larger centres. These services are particularly important for older residents, young people, people with disabilities and households without access to a private car.

7.2.14 Although bus services are generally well used, consultation identified concerns regarding service frequency, reliability, waiting facilities and integration with other forms of transport. Improving public transport remains an important element of creating a more sustainable neighbourhood.

Rail

7.2.15 Market Harborough Railway Station is one of the town's most important transport assets, providing direct services to Leicester, Nottingham, Kettering, London and destinations beyond.

7.2.16 Despite its proximity, access from Welland is not always convenient. Walking and cycling routes are indirect and bus services do not always provide convenient interchange with rail services. Improving sustainable access to the station would reduce car dependency and encourage greater use of public transport.

Greenways

7.2.17 Greenways are traffic free, fully accessible paths available to walkers, cyclists and horse riders. Welland benefits from proximity to attractive green corridors including the National Cycle Network Route 6: Brampton Valley Way, the River Welland corridor and surrounding public rights of way. These all provide opportunities for recreation, healthier lifestyles and sustainable travel.

7.2.18 The long-term aspiration is to develop a connected Green Wheel around Market Harborough. This would supplement existing footpaths and bridleways listed below and link schools, employment areas, parks, countryside and the surrounding villages.

- Footpath A118, AdamsSmile, from Farndale View to Lubenham
- Bridleway A105 from the Farndon Fields Farm Shop
- Footpath A58, from the end of Angell Drive to East Farndon
- Footpath A59, from the Leisure Centre playing fields to East Farndon

7.2.19 The Neighbourhood Plan supports this ambition and seeks to safeguard opportunities to improve greenway connections as opportunities arise.

Issues and Concerns

7.2.20 Community consultation consistently identified transport as one of the highest priorities for residents. Whilst Welland is generally well connected, many residents considered that the transport network remains overly dependent on private cars and does not yet provide sufficiently attractive alternatives.

7.2.21 The principal transport issues identified through consultation are:

- congestion during peak periods on **Northampton Road**, particularly northbound towards the **Welland Park Road / Springfield Road junction**;
- increasing traffic associated with the school run around **Farndon Fields Primary School** and **Welland Park Academy**;

- excessive vehicle speeds on some residential roads, despite generally complying with posted speed limits;
- rat-running along **Western Avenue**, **Bath Street** and **Lathkill Street**;
- pavement parking, particularly within the older Victorian streets off **Northampton Road**, where narrow carriageways create conflicts between parked vehicles, pedestrians and emergency access, together with similar issues on some newer residential developments;
- concerns about road safety at key locations, including the **Farndon Road / Western Avenue junction**, where turning movements, access to Farndon Fields Farm Shop, pedestrians, cyclists and Bridleway A105 converge;
- fragmented walking, wheeling and cycling routes, including the shared-use path on **Farndon Road**, the sub-standard advisory cycle lane on **Northampton Road**, and narrow alleyways that provide useful links but are unsuitable for cycling;
- limited accessibility caused by uneven footways, trip hazards, obstructed pavements, inadequate dropped kerbs and insufficient seating for people who need to rest during journeys;
- poor sustainable access to **Market Harborough Railway Station**, with no direct bus service and no continuous, well-signed walking or cycling route;
- limited opportunities to reach the surrounding countryside safely on foot or by cycle, despite existing routes such as **Bridleway A105**, **Footpaths A58 and A59**, and the emerging **Green Wheel** concept; and
- concerns about air quality, particularly near busy roads and schools, and the absence of local monitoring outside **Farndon Fields Primary School**;

7.2.22 Residents consistently expressed support for a transport network that enables more people to walk, wheel, cycle or use public transport safely whilst maintaining appropriate access for those who rely upon the private car.

Vision and Objectives

7.2.23 The vision for transport is that, by 2041, Welland will be a neighbourhood where walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport are the natural choice for short local journeys. Safe, attractive and accessible streets will connect homes with schools, shops, community facilities, employment, open spaces, the town centre and Market Harborough Railway Station.

7.2.24 Future transport investment should improve health, reduce congestion and air pollution, support climate resilience and enable residents of all ages and abilities to travel safely and independently.

7.2.25 The objectives are therefore:

- to prioritise walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport in accordance with the transport hierarchy;
- to improve connectivity throughout Welland and with the wider Market Harborough area;
- to improve highway safety for all road users;
- to reduce dependence on private car travel for short journeys;
- to ensure that new development contributes positively towards sustainable transport infrastructure;
- to improve accessibility for people of all ages and abilities;
- to support improved air quality and healthier streets; and
- to safeguard opportunities for the future delivery of the Market Harborough Green Wheel.

Policy TR1 - Sustainable Transport

7.2.26 Future development should contribute positively to a transport network that gives greater priority to sustainable modes of travel while recognising that many residents will continue to rely on private cars. Development provides an opportunity to improve connectivity, reduce unnecessary car journeys and ensure that transport infrastructure keeps pace with growth.

7.2.27 Transport considerations should be addressed from the earliest stages of planning, using a vision-led approach that integrates movement, access and infrastructure into the design of development. Within Welland, this means ensuring that new development is well connected to existing streets, walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport networks, provides safe access for all users and contributes to a healthier, lower-carbon neighbourhood.

7.2.28 **Objective:** To ensure that all new development contributes towards a safe, accessible and sustainable transport network that reduces reliance on private cars and supports healthier travel choices.

Policy TR1

Sustainable Transport

Development proposals shall demonstrate how they contribute towards a sustainable transport network and support a genuine choice of travel modes. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, proposals should:

a. prioritise walking, wheeling and cycling, followed by public transport, before private car use;

b. be located and designed to reduce the need to travel by private car and support sustainable patterns of movement;

c. integrate with existing streets, public transport services and active travel networks, and contribute to improved connectivity within and between neighbourhoods;

d. provide safe and suitable access for all users, including people with disabilities and reduced mobility;

e. incorporate transport infrastructure and movement patterns as an integral part of the design of development, avoiding unnecessary conflict between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles;

f. provide secure, convenient and well-designed cycle parking appropriate to the scale and nature of the development;

g. provide a Travel Plan where required by national or local policy; and

h. ensure that any significant impacts of development on the transport network or highway safety are appropriately addressed and mitigated.
Development that supports sustainable travel, improves connectivity and reduces reliance on private cars will be particularly supported.

Policy 7.2 - Walking, wheeling and cycling

7.2.29 Walking, wheeling and cycling provide significant opportunities to improve public health, reduce congestion, improve air quality and reduce carbon emissions. Consultation consistently identified safer and more convenient routes to schools, shops, community facilities, parks and the town centre as a high priority for the community.

7.2.30 Welland already contains a number of footpaths and off-road links, but the network is fragmented and does not always provide continuous, convenient, safe or accessible routes. Future development should therefore help to complete missing links, improve existing routes and create a coherent network connecting homes with everyday destinations and neighbouring communities.

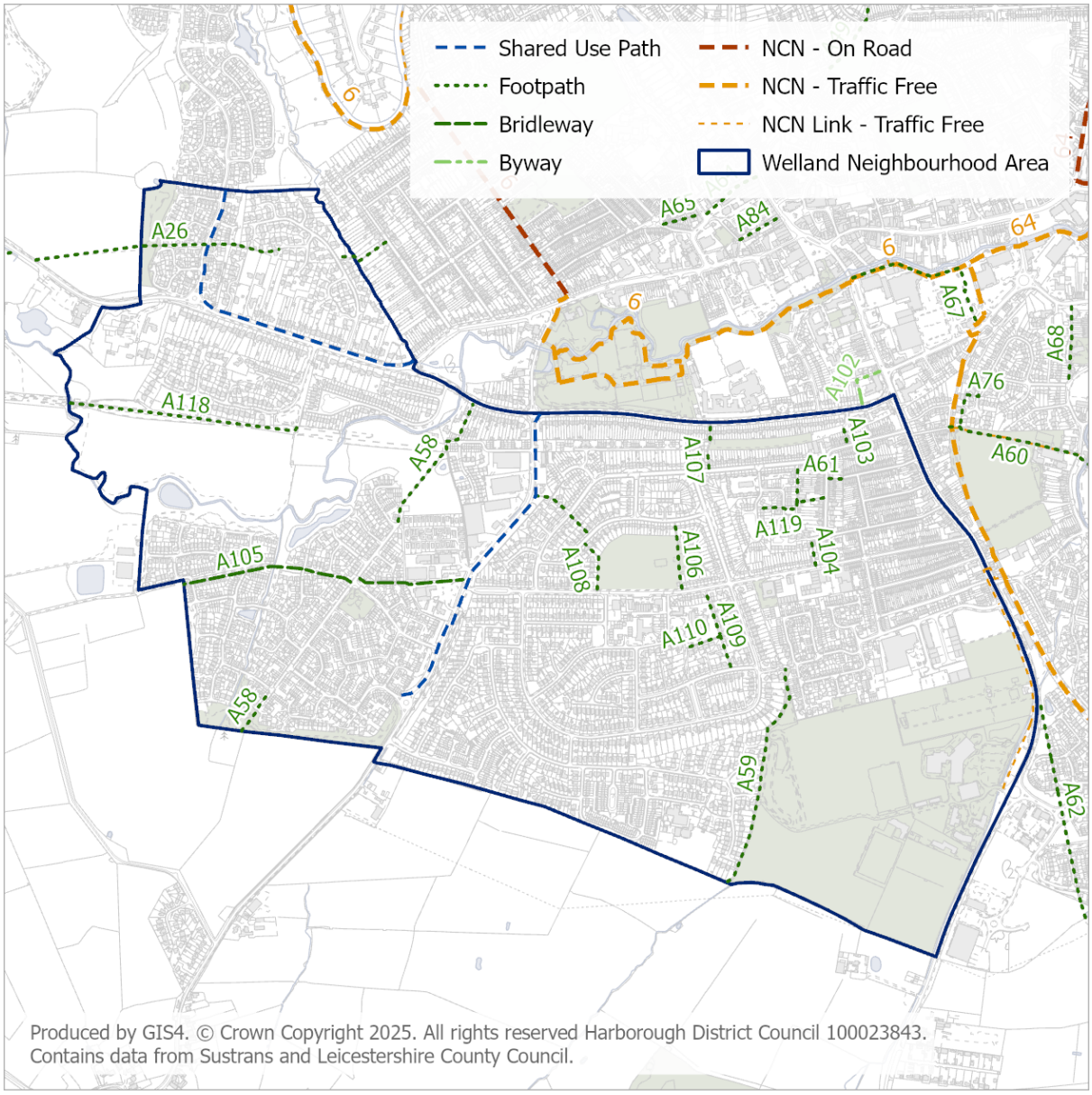


Figure 7.4 Active Travel Links

7.2.31 The Plan seeks to create a network which is coherent, direct, safe, comfortable and attractive, enabling walking, wheeling and cycling to become practical choices for everyday journeys.

7.2.32 **Objective:** To create a coherent, direct, safe, comfortable and attractive network for walking, wheeling and cycling that connects homes with everyday destinations and integrates with the wider active travel network.

Policy TR2

Walking, Wheeling and Cycling

Development proposals shall protect, provide and, where appropriate, enhance opportunities for walking, wheeling and cycling, contributing to a coherent, direct, safe, comfortable and attractive active travel network.

As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, proposals should:

a. create or improve safe, direct and convenient walking, wheeling and cycling routes within the development and to surrounding streets and existing active travel routes;

b. remove or help to address missing links and other barriers within the existing active travel network;

c. provide convenient and safe connections to schools, healthcare, shops, employment areas, community facilities, open spaces and Market Harborough Railway Station; and

d. provide safe and convenient crossing facilities where required to enable continuous and accessible routes;

e. ensure that routes are accessible to users of all ages and abilities, including people with disabilities and reduced mobility;

f. connect new development to existing and planned active travel infrastructure, including the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and, where relevant, the Rights of Way network;

g. protect opportunities to improve and extend the active travel network where identified routes or connections may be required in the future; and

h. safeguard opportunities for development to contribute towards the future Green Wheel network.

Where development would result in the loss or obstruction of an existing walking, wheeling or cycling route, proposals should provide a suitable alternative route which is at least as convenient, safe and accessible.

Policy TR3 – Cycle parking and Storage

7.2.33 Secure, convenient and weather-protected cycle parking is an essential part of supporting active travel. Cycle storage should be accessible and appropriately located and should accommodate the range of cycles and mobility equipment used by residents and visitors.

7.2.34 Community consultation identified the need for improved cycling infrastructure and facilities throughout Welland, including at schools, shops, community buildings, employment areas and transport interchanges.

7.2.35 **Objective:** To ensure that development provides secure, accessible and convenient storage for cycles and other mobility equipment, supporting active travel and inclusive access.

Policy TR3

Cycle Parking and Storage

Development proposals for new residential, commercial, leisure and community development should provide secure, convenient and weather-protected cycle parking and storage appropriate to the scale and nature of the development.

As appropriate to the development, proposals should:

a. provide cycle parking that is secure, covered, conveniently located, easily accessible and, where possible, overlooked to provide natural surveillance;

b. ensure that cycle storage is conveniently accessible for everyday use, with step-free access wherever practicable;

c. provide sufficient space to accommodate a range of cycles and mobility equipment, including adapted cycles, e-bikes, mobility scooters, powered wheelchairs and children's buggies, with charging facilities where appropriate; and

d. ensure that cycle storage is well designed and integrated into the development without detracting from the character or appearance of the street scene.

For commercial, employment, leisure and community development, cycle parking should be supported by appropriate facilities for changing and secure storage of clothing and equipment, including lockers and showers where justified by the scale and nature of the development.
Development that fails to provide cycle parking and storage reasonably required to support the proposed use will not be supported.

Policy TR4 – Public Transport

7.2.36 An effective public transport network enables residents to access employment, education, healthcare and leisure opportunities whilst reducing dependence on private cars. Bus services are particularly important for older residents, young people and those without access to a car.

7.2.37 Consultation identified opportunities to improve bus infrastructure, passenger facilities and connections with Market Harborough Railway Station. New development should therefore support public transport wherever practical and avoid compromising existing or future services.

7.2.38 **Objective:** To improve access to public transport and encourage greater integration between walking, cycling, buses and rail.

Policy TR4

Public Transport

Development proposals will be supported where they:

a. improve access to bus stops;

b. provide or enhance passenger waiting facilities;

c. facilitate convenient interchange between walking, cycling, buses and rail services;

d. improve sustainable access to Market Harborough Railway Station; and

e. avoid development that would prejudice existing or future public transport services.

Policy TR5 – Healthy Streets

7.2.39 The quality of streets influences not only how people travel but also the attractiveness, safety and environmental quality of neighbourhoods. Streets that prioritise pedestrians, include street trees and provide attractive public spaces encourage active lifestyles whilst helping reduce the impacts of climate change.

7.2.40 Community consultation identified concerns about traffic speed, pavement parking, air quality and the overall quality of the public realm. Addressing these issues will help create healthier and more inclusive neighbourhoods.

7.2.41 **Objective:** To improve the quality, safety and environmental performance of Welland's streets whilst creating attractive places that encourage healthy lifestyles.

Policy TR5

Healthy Streets

Development proposals will be supported where they contribute towards healthier streets and improved environmental quality. Where appropriate, proposals should:
a. reduce transport-related air pollution;

b. incorporate street trees and green infrastructure;

c. support electric vehicle charging infrastructure;

d. improve the quality and attractiveness of the public realm; and

e. create streets that are safe, inclusive and attractive for all users.

Recommendations

7.2.42 The following projects and actions were identified through community consultation but fall outside the scope of the Plan's land use policies. They should be pursued by the relevant organisations and partners as opportunities and funding permit:

Recommendation TR1

Roads

- Work with Leicestershire County Council to introduce area-wide 20 mph limits in appropriate neighbourhood areas.
- Improve car parking and pedestrian crossings around the Western Avenue shopping centre
- Improve the Farndon Road / Western Avenue junction, including a safe pedestrian and cycle crossing and improved access to Farndon Fields Farm Shop.
- Continue to address speeding, pavement parking and rat-running, particularly on Western Avenue, Bath Street and Lathkill Street.

Recommendation TR2

Cycling, Walking and Wheeling

- Complete the Market Harborough Green Wheel.
- Improve the shared-use path along Farndon Road, including upgraded crossings at Western Avenue and Welland Park Road; and a new entrance into Welland Park linking with National Cycle Network Route 6.
- Improve crossing points on the Farndon Fields perimeter path, including those at Charley Close and Measham Close.
- Provide improved active travel links on Welland Park Road, particularly serving Welland Park Academy.
- Upgrade alleyways by improving surfacing, lighting, accessibility and permeability for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Increase secure cycle parking at schools, shops, community facilities and transport interchanges.

Recommendation TR3

Public Transport

- Improve bus shelters, seating and real-time passenger information.
- Improve integration between local bus services and Market Harborough Railway Station, including investigating a direct bus connection if feasible.
- Work with operators to improve awareness of the Centrebus HC4 service serving the Southern Estate and Farndon Fields.
- Improve interchange between buses, walking and cycling.

Recommendation TR4

Healthy Streets

- Introduce additional street trees where opportunities arise.
- Provide seating, pocket parks and resting places along principal walking routes.
- Expand electric vehicle charging infrastructure.
- Monitor air quality near schools, particularly Farndon Fields Primary School, to inform future interventions.
- Improve the public realm around Burford Green and the Western Avenue shopping centre.

Chapter 7.3

Natural and Historic Environment

7.3.1 The natural and historic environment contributes significantly to the character, identity and quality of life of the Welland neighbourhood. The Plan seeks to conserve and enhance the area's natural assets, landscapes, green spaces and biodiversity, alongside its historic buildings, heritage assets and local character.

7.3.2 The natural environment makes a significant contribution to the character, identity and quality of life of the Welland Neighbourhood Area. Parks, recreation grounds, allotments, mature trees, hedgerows, watercourses and informal green spaces provide opportunities for recreation, support biodiversity, improve health and wellbeing, help manage flood risk and contribute to climate resilience.

7.3.3 These green spaces and wildlife habitats are often fragmented and lack strong ecological and recreational connections. This reduces their overall value for both nature and people. The Plan therefore seeks not only to protect important environmental assets, but also to enhance and better connect them to create a more resilient and accessible green infrastructure network. This approach reflects national and local policy, including the Environment Act 2021, mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain and the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Local Nature Recovery Strategy, all of which promote nature recovery and stronger ecological networks.

7.3.4 The policies in this chapter address the protection and enhancement of the natural and historic environment, ensuring that new development responds positively to the distinctive characteristics of the area and contributes to the creation of attractive, sustainable and well-designed places.

Issues and Concerns

7.3.5 Consultation undertaken during preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan demonstrated strong community support for protecting and enhancing the natural environment. Residents consistently identified the importance of accessible green spaces, mature trees, recreational land, biodiversity, landscape character and opportunities to experience nature close to home. These assets are valued not only for their environmental importance but also for the contribution they make to health, wellbeing and community identity.

7.3.6 At the same time, residents recognised that continued development presents significant challenges. Unless carefully planned, new development can reduce biodiversity, increase pressure on recreational facilities, fragment wildlife habitats, remove mature landscape features and increase flood risk.



7.3.7 The principal challenge for the Plan is therefore to accommodate future growth whilst ensuring that environmental quality is maintained and, wherever possible, enhanced. This requires environmental considerations to influence the earliest stages of site selection, masterplanning and detailed design rather than being treated as mitigation once development proposals have been prepared.

7.3.8 The policies in this chapter are intended to provide a positive planning framework that balances sustainable development with long-term environmental stewardship.

Vision and Objectives

7.3.9 The vision is that, by 2041, Welland will be a neighbourhood recognised for the quality of its natural environment. Development will protect and enhance valued green spaces, strengthen biodiversity, conserve landscape character, improve access to nature, increase climate resilience and reinforce the distinctive identity of the neighbourhood, ensuring that environmental quality improves alongside future growth.

7.3.10 The objectives of this chapter are therefore to:

- protect valued Local Green Spaces and other important open spaces;
- safeguard and strengthen the green infrastructure network;
- conserve and enhance biodiversity and ecological connectivity;
- protect landscape character, important views and the separate identity of neighbouring settlements;
- conserve and enhance the historic environment;
- improve resilience to climate change through sustainable water management and nature-based solutions;
- ensure that development delivers measurable environmental enhancement alongside sustainable growth.

Policy NE1 – Local Green Spaces

7.3.11 Local Green Spaces perform an important role within the Welland Neighbourhood Area. They provide opportunities for informal recreation, children's play, dog walking, exercise, relaxation and community events whilst contributing significantly to landscape character, biodiversity and local identity. All are within easy walking distance of residential neighbourhoods and are valued as everyday places rather than destination parks.

7.3.12 The NPPF (August 2026) enables neighbourhood plans to designate land as Local Green Space where the land concerned is :

a) In close proximity to the community it serves;
b) 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
c) Local in character and not an extensive tract of land.

7.3.13 Designation provides long-term protection for those spaces that make a distinctive contribution to the character of the area.

7.3.14 The Welland Neighbourhood Forum has undertaken an assessment of candidate sites using criteria derived from the National Planning Policy Framework. The assessment demonstrates that the designated sites are demonstrably special to the local community, satisfy the relevant requirements and are worthy of long-term protection.

7.3.15 This Plan uses the additional protection afforded in the NPPF (August 2026) to designate two sites as Local Green Space.

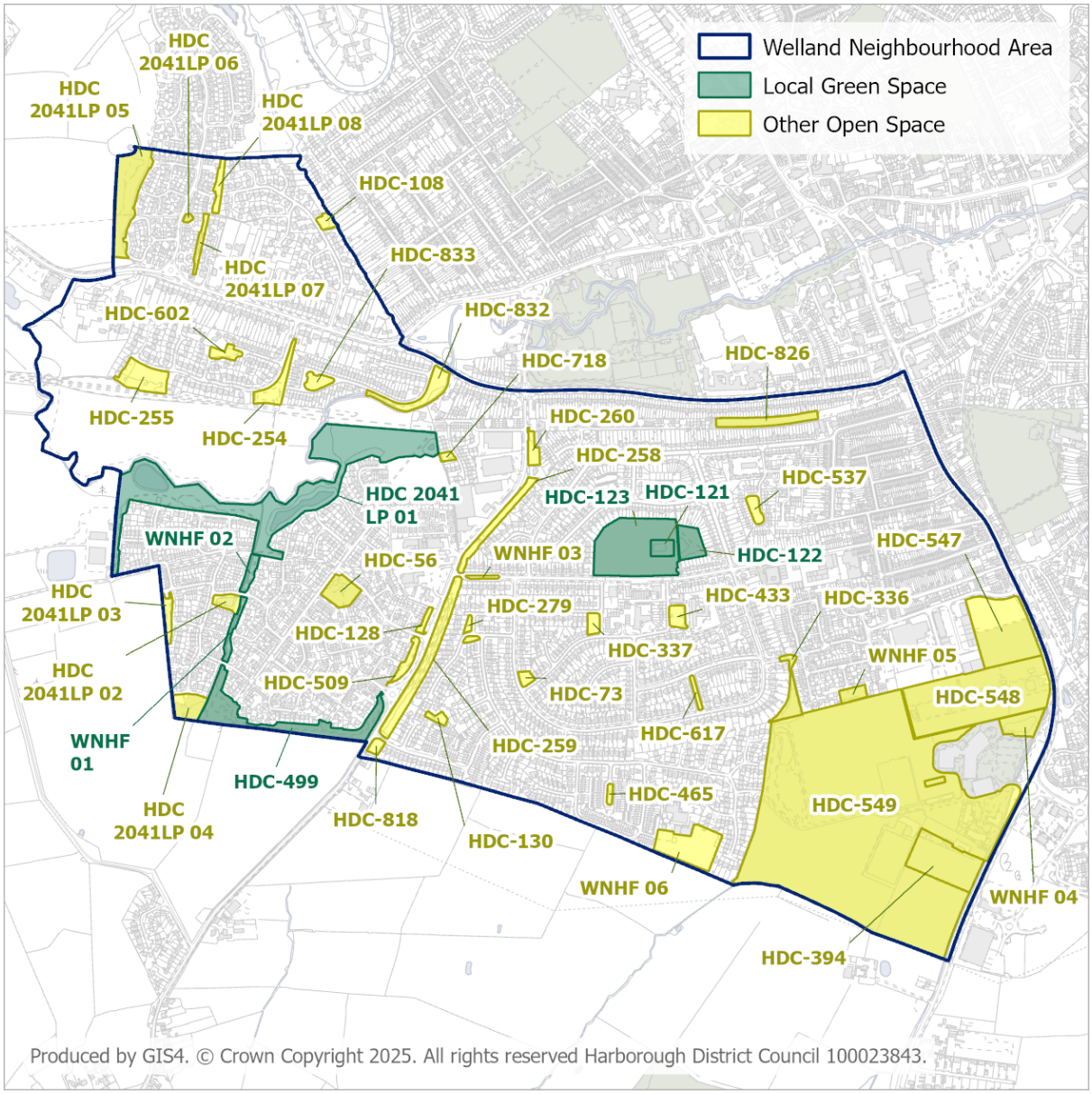


Figure 7.5 – Local Green Space and Open Space

Policy NE1

Local Green Spaces

The sites identified in Figure 7.5 with details listed in Appendix A4 are designated as Local Green Space.

- LGS1 – Burford Green
- LGS2 – Farndon Fields

Development proposals that would result in the loss of, or substantial harm to designated Local Green Space will only be supported in very special circumstances consistent with national planning policy.

Development associated with the ongoing management, enhancement or appropriate recreational use of a designated Local Green Space will be supported where it:

a. conserves its openness and community value;

b. enhances biodiversity, landscape quality or public accessibility; and
c. does not conflict with the purpose of the designation.



Policy NE2 – Open Space, Sport and Recreation

7.3.16 The Welland Neighbourhood Area contains a range of open spaces, sports facilities, recreation grounds, play areas, allotments and informal green spaces which are important to the health and wellbeing of the community. They provide opportunities for formal and informal recreation, children's play, outdoor activity and access to nature.

7.3.17 Community consultation identified the protection and improvement of open space and recreational facilities as important priorities. The Plan therefore seeks to protect existing provision, ensure that new development does not reduce opportunities for recreation, and secure improvements where additional development creates increased demand.

7.3.18 The following locally identified open spaces, together with existing Open Space, Sport and Recreation sites identified through the Harborough District Local Plan, are shown in Figure 7.5 and listed in Appendix A5:

- Farndon Fields perimeter path – Measham Close to Charley Close (WNHF 01)
- Farndon Fields perimeter path – Charley Close to Bridleway A105 (WNHF 02)
- Western Avenue central reserve (WNHF 03)
- Northampton Road storm attenuation pond (WNHF 04)
- Vislock Way Local Play Area (WNHF 05)



Policy NE2

Open Space, Sport and Recreation

Development proposals should:

a. protect existing open spaces, sports facilities, recreation grounds, play areas, allotments and other identified Open Space, Sport and Recreation sites;

b. retain and, where appropriate, enhance the recreational, amenity and community value of these sites, including opportunities for formal and informal recreation;

c. provide appropriate new or improved open space, sport and recreational facilities to meet the needs arising from new development, having regard to the scale and nature of the development and the standards of the local planning authority;

d. ensure that new or improved facilities are conveniently accessible by walking, wheeling and cycling and are well integrated with the surrounding community;

e. protect the amenity, usability and accessibility of open spaces and recreational facilities, including by ensuring that development does not unreasonably compromise their function or setting; and

f. where appropriate, incorporate multifunctional green infrastructure, including planting and sustainable drainage, which complements the recreational function of the site.

Development proposals that would result in the loss of an identified Open Space, Sport and Recreation site shown in Figure 7.5 or listed in Appendix A5 will not be supported unless:

i. the site is no longer required to meet current or future community needs; or

ii. alternative provision of at least equivalent quantity, quality, accessibility and recreational value is provided in a suitable location; or
iii. the proposal is for development that would enhance the recreational value of the site and deliver a clear overall community benefit.

Policy NE3 - Nature Recovery, Biodiversity and Habitat Connectivity

7.3.19 The Welland Neighbourhood Area contains a range of habitats and natural features that support biodiversity and contribute to the character and environmental resilience of the area. These include the River Welland and its associated habitats, mature trees, hedgerows, grassland, woodland, watercourses, ponds and other areas of natural and semi-natural habitat.

7.3.20 Some of these sites are of particular biodiversity significance, while others provide opportunities for habitat creation, restoration and ecological connectivity. The Plan seeks to protect existing biodiversity assets and ensure that new development contributes to the nature recovery by improving the quality, extent and connectivity of habitats.
7.3.21 Several sites within the neighbourhood area have been identified as being of local or greater significance for biodiversity. These include Local Wildlife Sites, Priority Habitats and other sites identified through preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan.

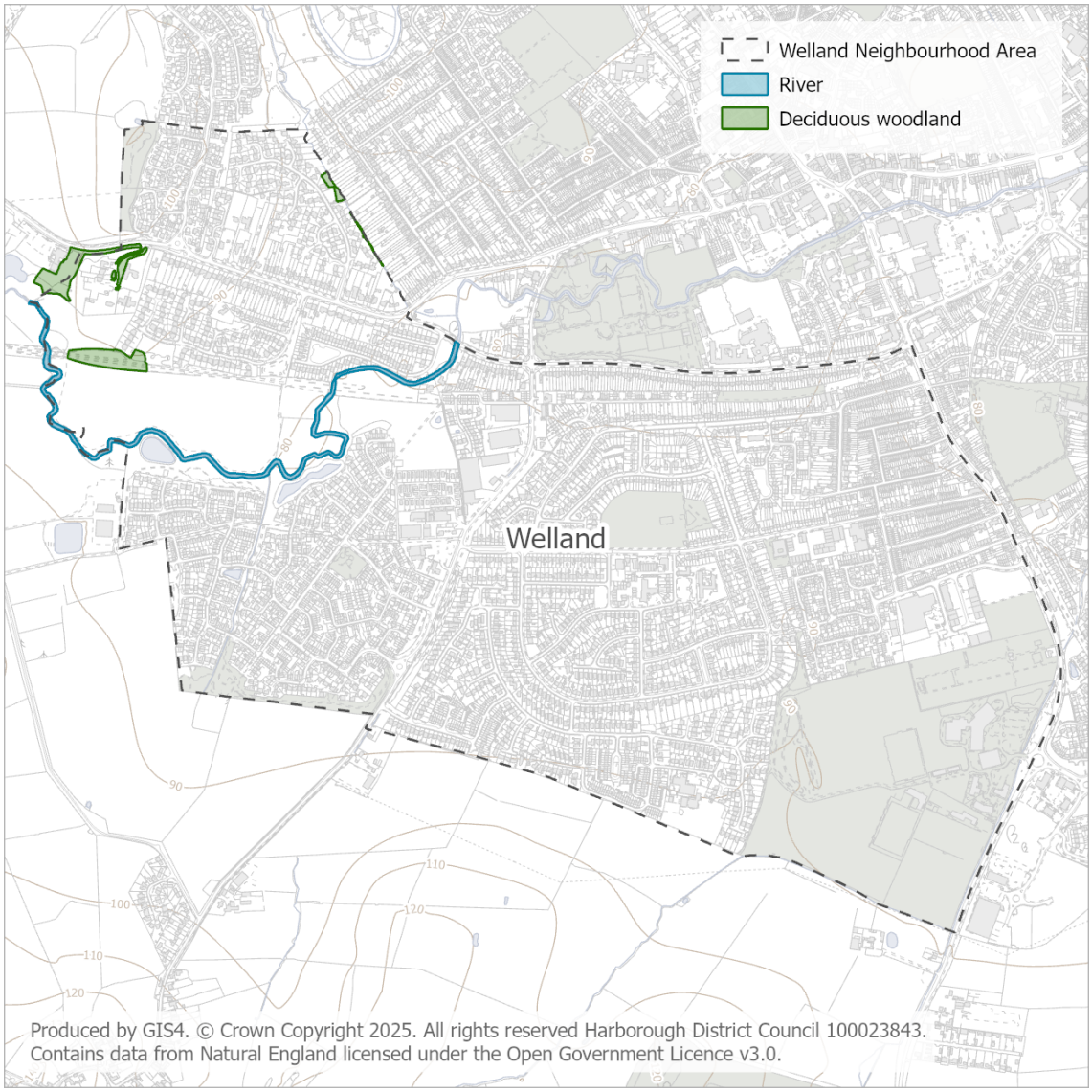


Figure 7.6 Biodiversity Sites

7.3.22 The identified sites include:

- the River Welland (LWS 90033);
- Rugby Close embankment grassland (LWS 91514);
- areas recorded by Natural England as Priority Habitat – Deciduous Woodland, including sites 307729, 307825, 307835, 307853, 307857, 308314 and 308379.

7.3.23 The Plan also recognises the importance of maintaining and improving ecological connections between these and other habitats. The Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Local Nature Recovery Strategy identifies opportunities for habitat creation, restoration and enhancement and provides a strategic framework for improving the size, quality and connectivity of habitats.

Policy NE3

Nature Recovery and Biodiversity

The biodiversity sites and wildlife corridors identified on Figure 7.6 will be protected and, where appropriate, enhanced as part of the wider ecological network of the neighbourhood area. Development proposals should:

a. avoid the unnecessary loss, degradation or fragmentation of habitats and features of biodiversity value, including mature trees, hedgerows, watercourses, ponds, grassland and woodland;

b. conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the biodiversity sites identified on Figure 7.6, having regard to their ecological value and their contribution to the wider ecological network;

c. retain existing natural features within development sites wherever practicable and incorporate them into the design and layout;

d. maintain and, where appropriate, strengthen the wildlife corridors and ecological connections identified on Figure 7.6, including through the creation, restoration or enhancement of habitat;

e. provide new or enhanced native habitats, including species-rich grassland, native hedgerows, trees, woodland, ponds, wetlands and other features appropriate to the location and the objectives of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy;

f. deliver at least 10% Biodiversity Net Gain, prioritising the retention and enhancement of existing habitats and the delivery of biodiversity gains on-site wherever practicable; and

g. incorporate measures to support wildlife appropriate to the site and its surroundings, such as pollinator-friendly planting, bird and bat boxes, green roofs, living walls and sustainable drainage features designed to provide ecological benefits.
Development proposals that would result in significant harm to an identified biodiversity site or wildlife corridor should only be supported where the harm cannot reasonably be avoided or adequately mitigated, and appropriate compensation is provided as a last resort.

Policy NE4 - Historic Environment

7.3.24 The historic environment of the Welland Neighbourhood Area includes a small number of identified heritage assets, comprising one listed building and three locally identified historic buildings. Although limited in number, these assets contribute to the area's local history and character and provide tangible links to its past.

7.3.25 The significance of heritage assets depends not only on their physical fabric but also on their setting and relationship with surrounding features. Where relevant, development proposals should have regard to the contribution made by associated open spaces, mature vegetation, historic routes, views and other features that help to explain or reinforce the significance of the asset.

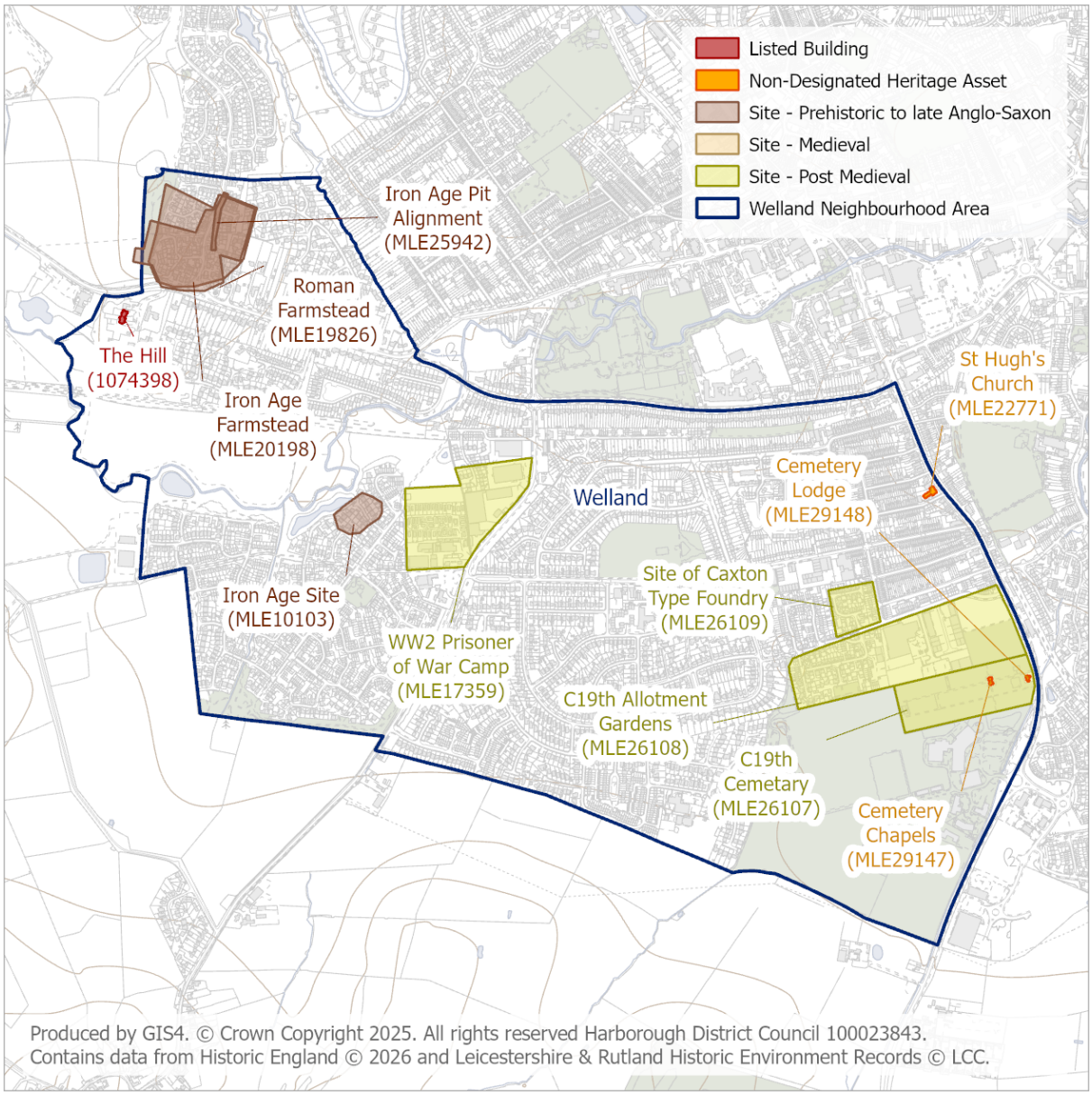


Figure 7.7 Historic Sites and Buildings

Listed Buildings

7.3.26 One Listed Building (Historic England designation) is located in the Welland Neighbourhood Area:

- Entry Number 1074398 The Hill (109, 111 and 113 Lubenham Hill)

Historic Buildings

7.3.27 Three Non-Listed buildings in the Welland Neighbourhood Area are in the Leicestershire Historic Environment Record (HER) as 'historic buildings (Non-Designated Heritage Assets).

- MLE29147 Cemetery chapels, Northampton Road Cemetery
- MLE29149 Cemetery Lodge, Northampton Road Cemetery
- MLE22771 St Hugh's Church, Northampton Road

7.3.28 Two sites in the Leicestershire Historic Environment Record (HER) have proven or suspected buried archaeological features. These surviving sites are an important component of the Welland Neighbourhood Area's heritage, as well as having at least County level significance for historical research and understanding.

7.3.29 As the neighbourhood continues to evolve, it is important that new development respects its historic context. Sensitive contemporary design can sit comfortably alongside historic buildings provided it responds positively to local character, scale, materials and landscape setting. Conserving heritage does not mean preventing change; rather it means managing change in a way that sustains and, where possible, enhances the significance of heritage assets for future generations.

7.3.30 The Neighbourhood Plan therefore seeks to ensure that proposals affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets, together with their settings, are informed by an understanding of local history and make a positive contribution to the character of the area.

Policy NE4

Historic Environment

Development proposals affecting designated or non-designated heritage assets, or their settings, will be supported where they conserve or enhance the significance of those assets and make a positive contribution to local character.

Development proposals should:

a. conserve the significance, setting and special interest of heritage assets, including important views to and from those assets;

b. retain landscape features, boundary treatments, mature trees and other elements that contribute to the historic character of the area;

c. respond positively to the established pattern of streets, spaces, plots and landscape features where these contribute to local distinctiveness;

d. demonstrate, where appropriate, how archaeological interest has been taken into account in the design of development; and

e. use materials, landscaping and design that complement the character of the surrounding historic environment without discouraging high-quality contemporary architecture.

Development proposals that would result in substantial harm to the significance of heritage assets, including harm arising from inappropriate development within their setting, will not be supported unless clearly justified in accordance with national planning policy.

Policy NE5 - Landscape Character and Important Views

7.3.31 The landscape surrounding the Welland Neighbourhood Area provides an important setting for the town and contributes significantly to its distinctive character. Open countryside, mature hedgerows, tree belts, watercourses and long-distance views create a strong sense of place and help define the transition between the built-up area and the surrounding rural landscape.

7.3.32 Whilst the neighbourhood has experienced considerable growth in recent years, it remains important that future development respects the landscape framework within which the town has evolved. The remaining areas of open land perform a number of important functions. They soften the urban edge, provide opportunities for recreation and biodiversity, maintain visual connections with the surrounding countryside and help preserve the separate identity of neighbouring settlements.

7.3.33 Consultation undertaken during preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, including with East Farndon and Lubenham Parish Councils, demonstrated strong support for protecting the landscape setting of the neighbourhood and maintaining the physical and visual separation between Market Harborough and the villages of East Farndon and Lubenham. Residents consistently identified the importance of retaining the individual character of both communities and avoiding incremental coalescence.

7.3.34 The Important Views identified through community consultation are shown in Figure 7.8 and described in Appendix A6.

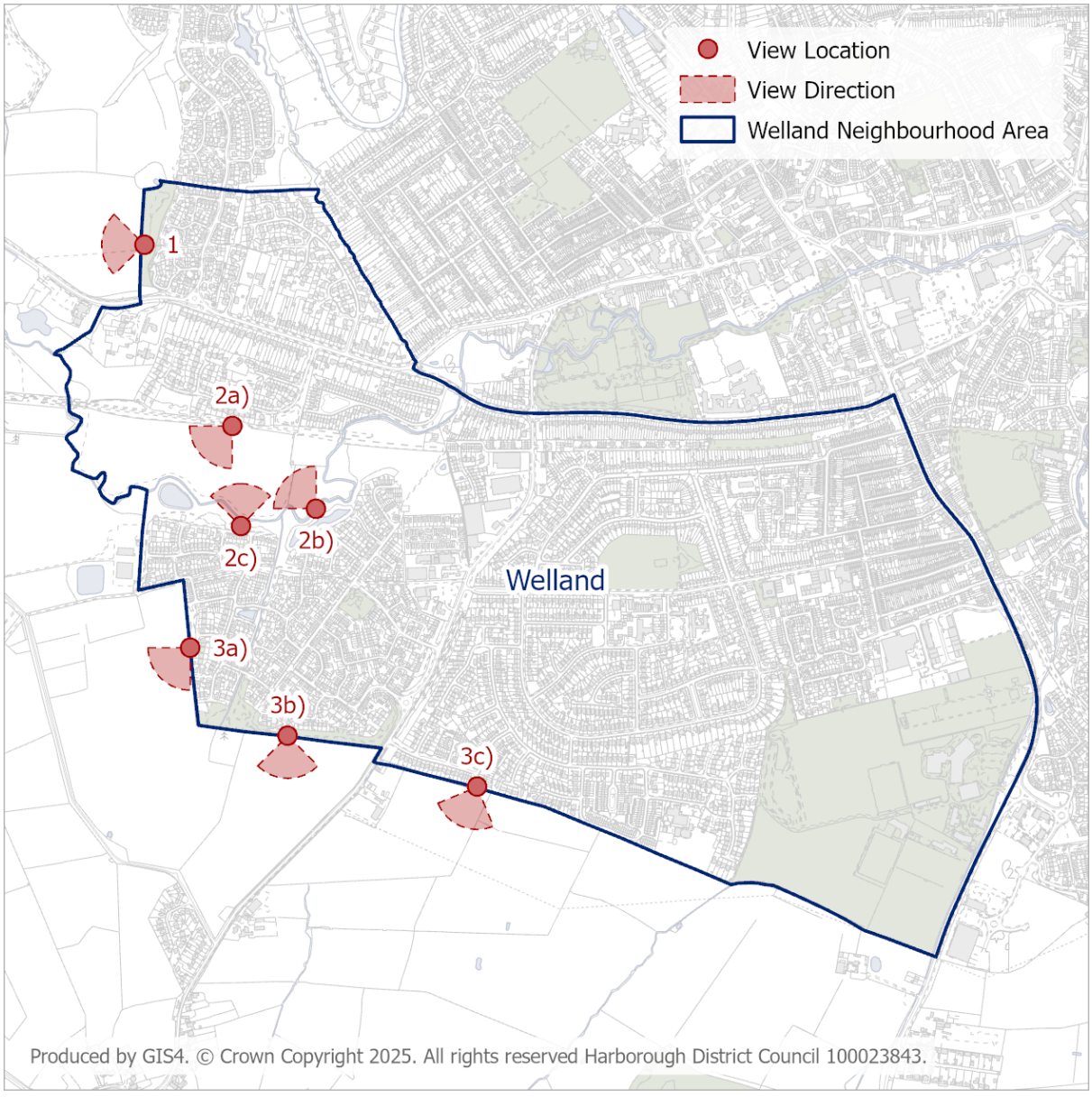


Figure 7.8 Important Views

7.3.35 The Important Views are described in Appendix A6 (including photos):

Reference	Location
1	Footpath A26 from the ridgeline looking west towards Lubenham
2a	Footpath A118 (AdamSmile) looking south and west towards open farmland
2b	Farndon Fields perimeter path from the storm attenuation pond looking west
2c	Avant development looking north towards open farmland
3a	Avant development looking southwest towards open farmland
3b	Farndon Fields perimeter path looking south towards East Farndon
3c	Watson Avenue / Maurice Road looking south towards East Farndon

7.3.36 The purpose of this policy is not to prevent appropriate development but to ensure that proposals respond positively to landscape character, protect valued views and maintain the distinctive identity of neighbouring settlements.

Policy NE5

Landscape Character and Important Views

Development proposals should conserve and enhance the landscape character of the Neighbourhood Area and demonstrate how the design has responded positively to the site's landscape context. Development proposals should:

a. retain and reinforce the existing landscape structure, including mature trees, hedgerows, woodland, watercourses and other natural features wherever practicable;

b. conserve the Important Views identified in Figure 7.8 by ensuring that development does not result in unacceptable harm to the qualities that make those views significant;

c. incorporate structural landscaping, native planting and green infrastructure that strengthens local landscape character and enhances biodiversity; and

d. demonstrate that the scale, siting, layout and landscape treatment of development have been informed by an understanding of local landscape character. Where development adjoins the countryside, proposals should provide a well-designed transition between the urban area and the rural landscape through appropriate landscape design, habitat creation and long-term management.

Policy NE6 - Flood Risk and Climate Resilience

7.3.37 Climate change is increasing the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, including periods of prolonged rainfall, flooding, drought and high summer temperatures. Development therefore needs to be designed to remain resilient to future climate conditions while avoiding increases in flood risk.

7.3.38 The Welland Neighbourhood Area contains watercourses, low-lying land and areas susceptible to surface water flooding. Local experience demonstrates that flooding can affect properties, gardens and roads, with blocked drainage infrastructure and surcharging sewers contributing to local problems.

7.3.39 While strategic flood risk is addressed through national policy and the Local Plan, neighbourhood planning has an important role in ensuring that new development does not exacerbate existing problems. Development should respond to the site's natural drainage characteristics and manage surface water at source, taking account of the effects of climate change and the potential for increased runoff elsewhere.

7.3.40 Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), permeable surfaces, trees, wetlands and other forms of green infrastructure can help reduce surface-water runoff while providing wider benefits, including biodiversity, water quality, urban cooling and attractive public spaces. Where SuDS or other drainage infrastructure is required, its long-term management and maintenance are important to ensure that these benefits and their flood-management function are sustained. This approach is consistent with the Plan's wider objective of using green infrastructure and nature-based solutions to strengthen climate resilience.

7.3.41 The Plan also recognises opportunities for natural flood management and the restoration or enhancement of watercourses and drainage features. Runoff from East Farndon and the hills to the south presents opportunities for natural flood management, including protecting existing field-dyke culverts along the southern boundary at Hopton Fields and Barnard Gardens.

7.3.42 For larger developments, an appropriate Surface Water Drainage Strategy will be important in demonstrating how runoff will be managed, how climate change has been taken into account, and how the development will avoid increasing flood risk to people, property, watercourses and habitats.

7.3.43 The **objective** of Policy NE6 is therefore to ensure that new development contributes positively to flood resilience rather than adding to existing risks, while making the most of opportunities for multifunctional green infrastructure and natural flood management.

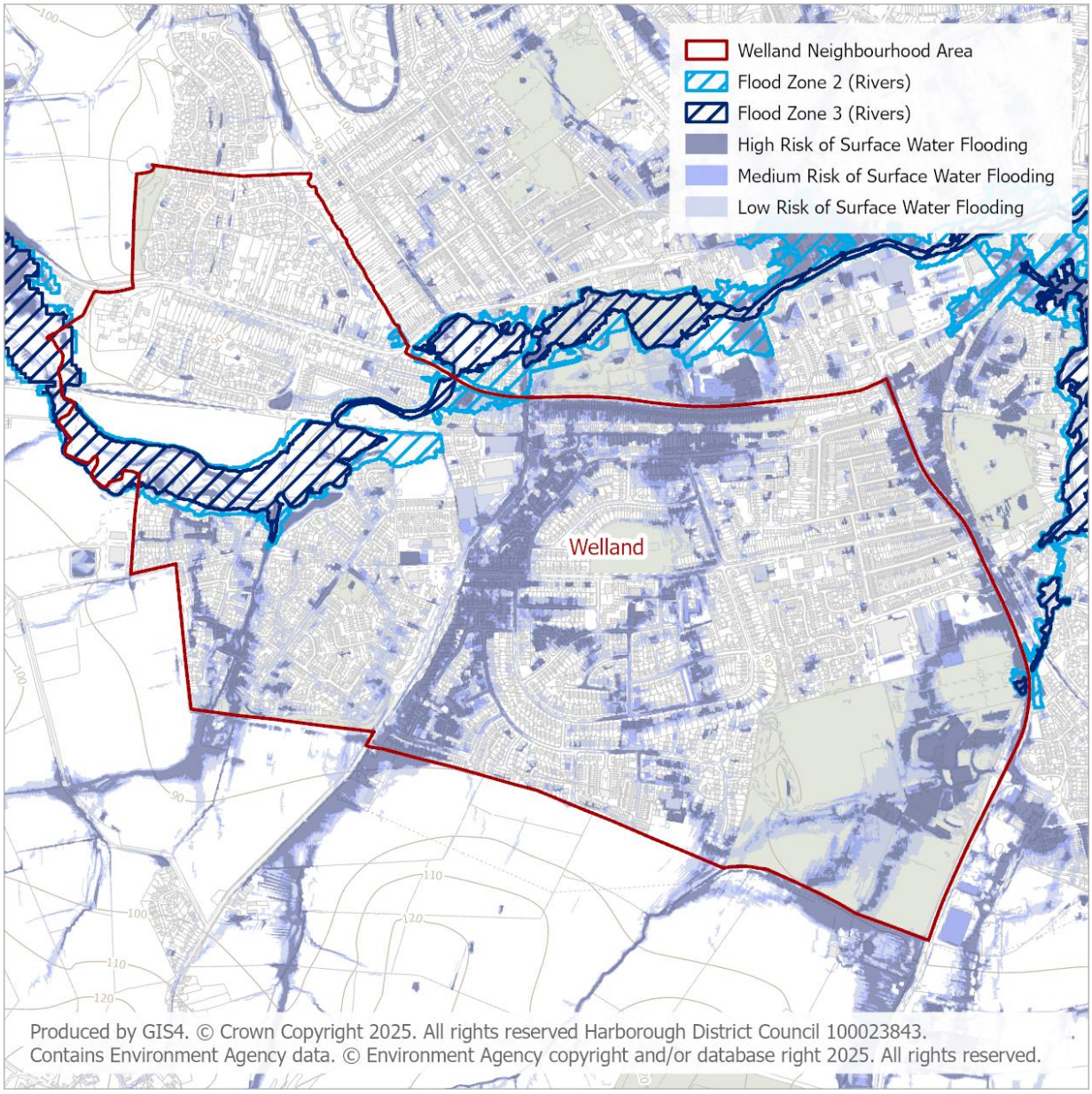


Figure 7.9 Flood risk from rivers and surface water

Policy NE6

Flood Risk and Climate Resilience

Development proposals should demonstrate that flood risk and climate resilience have informed the design of the development from the outset.

Development proposals should:

a. avoid increasing flood risk on-site or to third parties, taking account of the effects of climate change, and, where practicable, reduce existing flood risk through betterment;

b. incorporate sustainable drainage systems as integral landscape features, designed to control surface water runoff and provide multiple benefits including biodiversity, water quality and public amenity;

c. maximise the use of permeable surfaces, tree planting, green infrastructure and other nature-based solutions that contribute to climate adaptation;

d. protect existing watercourses and drainage features and incorporate opportunities for their restoration, naturalisation and enhancement wherever practicable;

e. ensure that, where sustainable drainage or other surface water management measures are required, appropriate arrangements are made for their long-term management and maintenance; and

f. ensure that new development is safe from flooding for its lifetime and does not increase flood risk elsewhere.

For major development, proposals should be supported by an appropriate Surface Water Drainage Strategy demonstrating how surface water will be managed, including the effects of climate change, and how the proposed drainage arrangements will avoid adverse impacts on people, property, watercourses and habitats.

Where opportunities exist, development should contribute towards wider catchment-based approaches to natural flood management and climate resilience. Proposals to construct or modify floodwater management infrastructure, including ditches, swales, attenuation areas and other measures, will be supported where they reduce flood risk and do not adversely affect important open spaces or sites and features of natural or historic environment significance.

Policy NE7 - Sustainable Drainage and Hard Surfacing

7.3.44 Surface water runoff can be increased by the extensive use of impermeable hard surfacing, including driveways, parking areas and other hardstandings. This can place additional pressure on drainage systems, contribute to localised flooding and increase the risk of runoff affecting highways and neighbouring properties. Sustainable drainage and appropriately designed permeable surfaces can help manage rainfall close to its source, reduce runoff and provide wider environmental benefits. The Plan therefore seeks to ensure that hard surfacing is carefully designed and that surface water is managed effectively at both individual sites and larger developments.

7.3.45 The **objective** is to reduce surface water runoff and flood risk by promoting sustainable drainage, permeable hard surfacing and effective long-term management of surface water associated with new development and alterations to existing properties.

Policy NE7

Sustainable Drainage and Hard Surfacing

A. Development proposals involving new or replacement driveways, parking areas or other hardstandings should:

a. Minimise the extent of impermeable surfacing;

b. Incorporate permeable or porous surfaces, or provide for surface water to drain to a suitable permeable area or sustainable drainage feature within the site;

c. Demonstrate that the proposed surface and its underlying construction will provide effective management of surface-water runoff; and

d. Avoid directing surface water onto the highway, adjoining properties or other land where this could cause flooding, nuisance or damage.

B. For major development and other proposals where appropriate, details of construction, drainage performance, maintenance and long-term management should be secured through planning conditions or other suitable mechanisms.

Recommendations

7.3.46 The following projects and actions were identified through community consultation but fall outside the scope of the Plan's land use policies. They should be pursued by the relevant organisations and partners as opportunities and funding permit:

Recommendation NE1

Natural Environment

The Forum will work with its partners to:

- promote community tree planting, habitat creation and biodiversity enhancement projects and identify opportunities to expand tree cover using appropriate native species;
- strengthen ecological corridors linking parks, open spaces, watercourses and the wider countryside;
- implement the priorities of the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Local Nature Recovery Strategy where they apply to the neighbourhood;
- improve public access to nature through enhanced walking and cycling connections to parks, open spaces and surrounding countryside;
- seek funding to improve sports facilities, children's play areas, recreation grounds and allotments;
- support the work of local conservation organisations, volunteer groups and schools in improving biodiversity;
- work with the Environment Agency, Lead Local Flood Authority, Flood Action Groups and local communities to improve flood resilience and natural flood management including natural flood management schemes to the South of the Plan area, and protect culverts in field ditches along the southern boundary at Hopton Fields and near Barnard Gardens.
- encourage the establishment and continued support of community Flood Action Groups and Screen Teams where appropriate;
- monitor the condition of designated Local Green Spaces, Open Space, Sport and Recreation sites and other important environmental assets throughout the lifetime of the Plan; and
- protect the landscape setting of the neighbourhood and maintain the physical and visual separation between Market Harborough and the villages of East Farndon & Lubenham.

Chapter 7.4

Healthy Communities, Local Services and Wellbeing

7.4.1 Healthy, inclusive and resilient communities depend upon more than housing. They need accessible community facilities, schools, healthcare, local services, recreation and attractive public spaces that support wellbeing, social interaction and everyday life.

7.4.2 Welland has experienced substantial housing growth, but consultation has highlighted concern that investment in community infrastructure has not always kept pace. This chapter seeks to protect and enhance existing community assets, support healthy lifestyles and ensure that future development contributes towards the needs of a growing population.

A Growing and Changing Community

7.4.3 The 2021 Census recorded a population of 8,856 in the Welland ward, an increase of 24.2% since 2011. Further housing growth will place additional demands on schools, healthcare, recreation and community facilities. Consultation has consistently identified the need for infrastructure and services to keep pace with development.

Community Facilities

7.4.4 Welland does not have a single civic centre or village hall serving the whole neighbourhood. Instead, community life is supported by a network of churches, schools, sports clubs, meeting places and other facilities. The closure of Naseby Square Community Centre and St Hugh's Church Hall has reduced the availability of flexible community meeting space, increasing the importance of protecting and making best use of those that remain.

7.4.5 Important community assets include:

Sports facilities

Market Harborough Leisure Centre

Harborough Town Football Club

Market Harborough RUFC

Harborough Athletic Club

Factory Padel, Farndon Road

Community Groups

3rd Market Harborough Scouts

Market Harborough and Bowden Girl Guides

1084 (Market Harborough) Squadron Royal Air Force Air Cadets

Churches

Harborough Community Church

Parish Church of St Hugh, Granville St

Food & Drink

The Royalist

Farndon Fields Farm Shop Café

Other

Farndon Fields Primary School

Stamford Close allotments

Post Office, Western Avenue

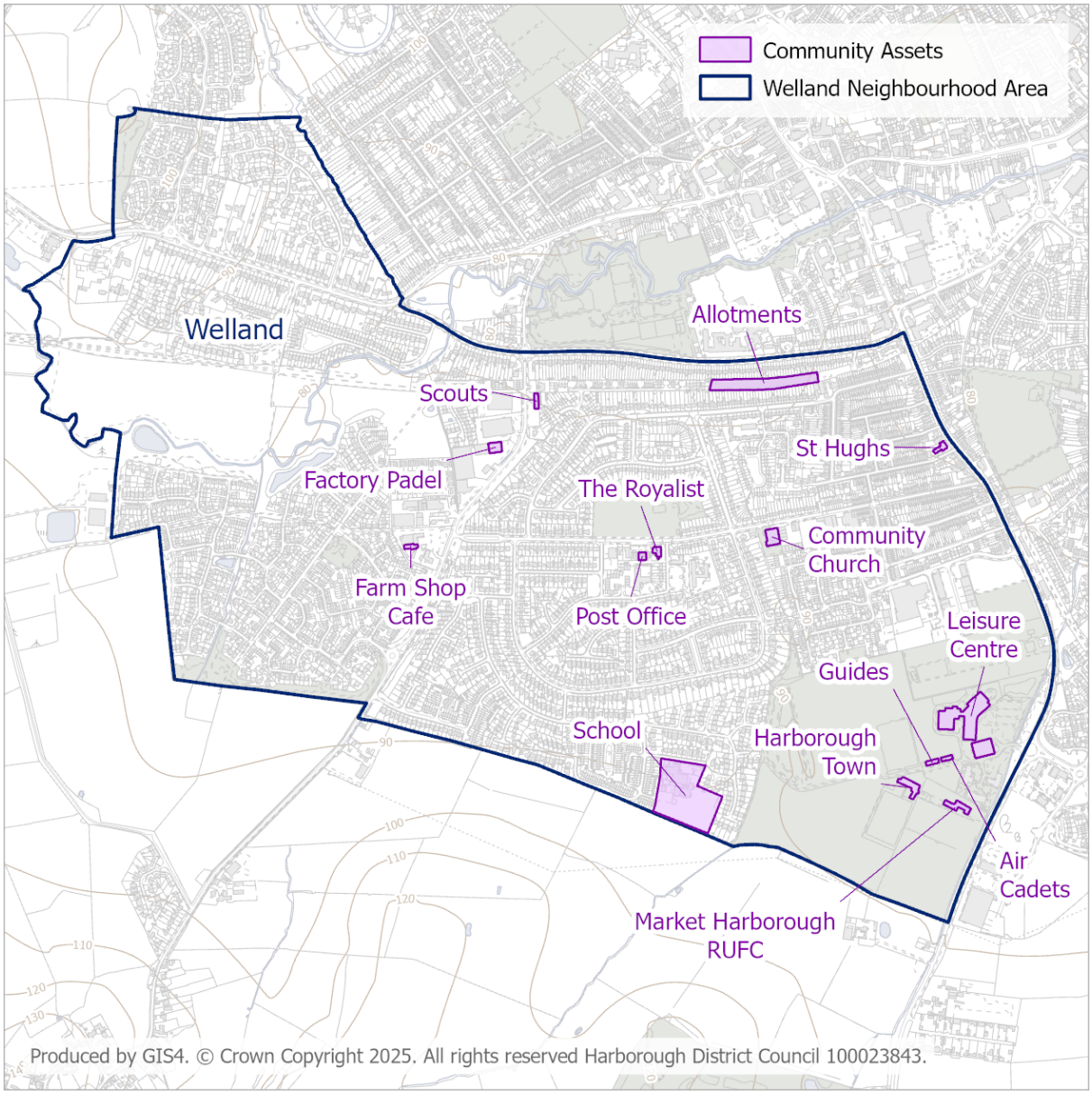


Figure 7.10 Community Assets

A Network of Local Destinations

7.4.6 Community life is organised around a number of complementary destinations rather than a single centre. Western Avenue provides local shops and services, while Burford Green is an important recreational and social space. Schools, churches and sports facilities also serve the neighbourhood. Improving the connections between these places, particularly for walking, wheeling and cycling, will make them more accessible and reduce reliance on the private car.

Health and Wellbeing

7.4.7 Health and wellbeing are influenced by access to healthcare, opportunities for physical activity, green space and social interaction. Consultation identified concern about pressure on local healthcare services, alongside strong support for better recreation and healthier neighbourhood environments. Although healthcare provision is largely outside the scope of neighbourhood planning, the Plan can support healthier lifestyles and seek appropriate contributions towards infrastructure required by growth.

Education

7.4.8 Farndon Fields Primary School is an important educational and community asset. Safe walking, wheeling and cycling routes to schools are essential to reducing congestion and supporting children's independence. Opportunities for wider community use of school facilities outside normal hours should also be encouraged.

Recreation, Sport and Public Open Space

7.4.9 Welland benefits from a range of recreational assets, including Burford Green, Market Harborough Leisure Centre, the Rugby Club, Football Club, play areas and informal green spaces. Consultation strongly supported protecting these facilities and improving their accessibility, inclusiveness, biodiversity and opportunities for informal recreation.

Burford Green – Welland's Community Green Space

7.4.10 Throughout the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, no location generated more community interest than Burford Green.

7.4.11 Residents consistently identified Burford Green as one of the neighbourhood's most valued assets. It performs multiple functions simultaneously: an important area of public open space, an informal recreation area, a destination for walking and relaxation, a biodiversity resource, a visual break within the urban area and a place where community events can take place.

7.4.12 Community consultation demonstrated a clear preference for retaining Burford Green as an open green space rather than introducing significant new built development. Residents supported sensitive investment that would improve the quality of the space without fundamentally changing its character.

7.4.13 The community's views on the future of Burford Green were further explored through HDC's Burford Green Visioning exercise. A petition to 'Save Burford Green' gathered 1200 signatures and a public meeting with 100 residents reinforced the concerns about loss of the open space, and the traffic problems on Western Avenue. The Welland Neighbourhood Forum submitted a detailed response on behalf of the community, identifying strong support for retaining the Green as open space and setting out a range of potential improvements. The response is available as part of the evidence base supporting the Neighbourhood Plan.

7.4.14 Suggested improvements included:

- enhanced biodiversity and habitat creation;
- additional tree planting where appropriate;
- improved paths and accessibility;
- better seating and informal gathering spaces;
- upgraded children's play opportunities;
- interpretation of local history and nature; and
- improved landscape management.

7.4.15 Collectively these measures would reinforce Burford Green's role as the neighbourhood's principal community green space whilst respecting its open character and recreational function.

7.4.16 The Plan identifies improvements to enhance the quality, accessibility and biodiversity of Burford Green as a community priority, and designates it as Local Green Space (see Policy NE1 and Appendix A4). Proposals that would undermine its openness or diminish its value as an important community asset should be resisted.

Local Services and Neighbourhood Centres

7.4.17 Western Avenue is the principal neighbourhood centre within Welland, providing shops and services as well as opportunities for informal social interaction. Improving its appearance, accessibility and connections with surrounding residential areas would strengthen its role as a local destination. Protecting valued shops and services is also important: their loss can reduce local convenience, increase the need to travel and weaken community identity.

Vision

7.4.18 By 2041, the Welland Neighbourhood Area will be a healthy, inclusive and resilient community where residents of all ages have convenient access to high-quality community facilities, local services, recreation, sport and public open space. Existing community assets will be protected and enhanced, new development will contribute towards the infrastructure required by a growing population, and neighbourhood centres will continue to provide attractive places where people can meet many of their everyday needs close to home. Safe walking, wheeling and cycling routes will connect homes with schools, recreation facilities, green spaces and local services, supporting healthier lifestyles and reducing reliance upon the private car.

Policy HC1 - Community Facilities

7.4.19 Community facilities perform a vital role in creating healthy, resilient and inclusive neighbourhoods. They provide places where residents meet, volunteer, learn new skills, participate in sport, celebrate local events and support one another. Their value extends well beyond the buildings themselves by strengthening social networks, reducing isolation and fostering community cohesion.

7.4.20 Consultation highlighted residents' concern over the gradual loss of community meeting spaces within the neighbourhood. The closure of facilities such as Naseby Square Community Centre and St Hugh's Church Hall has reduced the availability of flexible community accommodation and increased reliance upon the remaining facilities.

7.4.21 National planning policy recognises that planning should guard against the unnecessary loss of valued community facilities. This policy therefore seeks first to retain existing provision wherever possible whilst supporting investment that enables facilities to evolve to meet changing community needs.

7.4.22 Improvements that increase accessibility, flexibility, energy efficiency or capacity will help ensure these facilities continue serving future generations.

7.4.23 **Objective:** Protect and enhance valued community facilities and support their continued use for the benefit of existing and future residents.

Policy HC1

Community Facilities

The loss of existing community facilities that contribute to the social, recreational, cultural, educational, sporting, health or spiritual wellbeing of the community will not be supported unless it can be clearly demonstrated that:

a. the facility is no longer required to meet current or foreseeable community needs; or

b. the existing use is no longer viable and all reasonable opportunities to retain the facility, including alternative community operators or funding mechanisms, have been fully explored; or

c. equivalent or enhanced replacement provision is secured within the neighbourhood in a location that is equally accessible to the community it serves.

Development proposals that improve, extend, modernise or increase the accessibility, flexibility or environmental performance of existing community facilities will be supported, provided they are compatible with the character of the surrounding area and the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

Policy HC2 - Community Infrastructure

7.4.25 Welland has accommodated a substantial proportion of Market Harborough's recent housing growth. However, community consultation has highlighted concern that the provision of supporting infrastructure has not always kept pace with development, leaving existing and new residents facing increased pressure on local services and facilities.

7.4.26 There have been particular concerns about the use of developer contributions secured for community infrastructure in Welland, with some contributions being spent elsewhere in the town rather than on facilities directly serving the communities affected by development. This has raised questions about the extent to which growth is delivering the improvements needed locally.

7.4.27 The timing of infrastructure provision is also important. The new primary school originally proposed on the Farndon Fields development was not delivered as planned. Other new schools, including the Wellington Place Primary School, opened after a significant number of homes were occupied; in the meantime, families have had to seek school places further afield, often requiring journeys by car. Local GP services are also under considerable pressure, and further housing growth will add to demand unless healthcare capacity is addressed.

7.4.28 Planning obligations and other forms of developer contribution have an important role in ensuring that development makes a fair and proportionate contribution towards the infrastructure it requires. However, it is equally important that the need for additional provision is properly assessed, that contributions are directed towards appropriate local priorities, and that essential infrastructure is delivered at a time when it can support the growing community.

7.4.29 **Objective:** To ensure that community infrastructure is sufficient, accessible and delivered in step with new development, with developer contributions used effectively to address the additional needs arising from growth.

Policy HC2

Community Infrastructure

Development proposals should provide, or make proportionate contributions towards, community infrastructure reasonably required to meet needs arising from the development, where supported by appropriate evidence and in accordance with national and local planning policy. This may include contributions towards:

a. education facilities, including additional school places and new or expanded school provision where justified by the impact of development;

b. healthcare facilities, including primary care provision, where additional capacity is required to meet increased demand;

c. community meeting, cultural and other facilities and services where there is clear evidence of additional demand arising from development.

Contributions should:

i. be proportionate to the scale and nature of the development and take account of existing infrastructure capacity and other contributions required by planning policy;

ii. where secured to address the local impacts of development, be directed towards appropriate improvements serving the locality affected, having regard to the relationship between the development and the infrastructure provided; and

iii. support the timely provision of necessary infrastructure, with the phasing of development and occupation taking account of the availability of essential facilities where this is justified by the evidence and secured through appropriate planning mechanisms.

Policy HC3 - Neighbourhood Centres and Local Services

7.4.30 Neighbourhood centres and local services enable residents to meet many of their day-to-day needs locally, reducing the need to travel and supporting sustainable and inclusive communities.

7.4.31 The Western Avenue shopping parade performs an important role within the Welland Neighbourhood Area, providing shops, services and opportunities for informal social interaction. The Plan therefore seeks to protect and enhance its role as a local centre.

7.4.32 **Objective:** To protect and strengthen neighbourhood centres and local services that meet the day-to-day needs of local communities.

Policy HC3

Neighbourhood Centres and Local Services

Development proposals that maintain or enhance local shops, services and community facilities which meet the day-to-day needs of residents will be supported.

Particular support will be given to proposals that maintain or increase the range of shops, services and community uses available locally.

The loss of valued local shops or services will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that:

i. there is no reasonable prospect of continued use for the existing or another suitable local service; or
ii. equivalent provision will be made in an equally accessible location.

Recommendations

7.4.33 The following projects and actions were identified through community consultation but fall outside the scope of the Plan's land use policies. They should be pursued by the relevant organisations and partners as opportunities and funding permit:

Recommendation HC1

Burford Green

The Plan identifies Burford Green as the neighbourhood's principal community green space and a valued asset for recreation, relaxation and community activity. The following improvements should be explored by HDC, community organisations and partners as opportunities and funding permit:

- prepare a long-term improvement and management programme for Burford Green;
- improve accessibility, paths and seating while retaining its open character;
- enhance biodiversity and habitat, including additional tree planting where appropriate;
- improve children's play and opportunities for informal recreation;
- provide appropriate interpretation of the site's local history and natural environment; and
- support community events and activities that make positive use of the space.

Any improvements should respect the open character and existing recreational function of Burford Green.

Recommendation HC2

Community Facilities

- Encourage shared use of school facilities outside normal school hours.
- Work with community organisations to identify opportunities for additional flexible meeting space where future need is demonstrated.
- Support initiatives that improve the accessibility and energy efficiency of existing community buildings.

Recommendation HC3

Western Avenue Neighbourhood Centre

- Work with HDC, LCC, local businesses and community representatives to identify opportunities to improve the public realm around Western Avenue, including pedestrian accessibility, landscaping, seating and cycle parking.
- Encourage initiatives that support the long-term vitality of neighbourhood shopping areas.

Chapter 7.5

Economy and Employment

7.5.1 A strong and resilient local economy is fundamental to creating sustainable communities. Businesses provide employment, support local services, contribute to community life and reduce the need for longer journeys by enabling people to work closer to home.

7.5.2 The nature of employment has changed significantly in recent years. Advances in digital technology, together with changing working practices accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, have resulted in increasing numbers of people working from home, operating small businesses or combining home working with travel to conventional workplaces. These changes have created new opportunities to reduce commuting, support local services and strengthen neighbourhood economies.

7.5.3 Whilst Welland is predominantly residential, it accommodates a diverse range of businesses, employment sites, neighbourhood shops, leisure facilities and home-based enterprises that make an important contribution to the local economy. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to protect these assets, encourage sustainable economic growth and support enterprise whilst ensuring that employment development remains compatible with the residential character of the neighbourhood.

A Changing Local Economy

7.5.4 Welland has developed primarily as a residential neighbourhood serving Market Harborough, but it also contains a diverse range of employment opportunities. These include established business premises, neighbourhood shopping, healthcare, education, leisure facilities, hospitality, community organisations and an increasing number of home-based businesses.

7.5.5 The 2021 Census illustrates how patterns of employment are changing. Of the 4,515 Welland residents in employment, 1,514 (33.5%) worked mainly from home, whilst 2,159 (47.8%) travelled by car or van. Walking accounted for 487 journeys (10.8%) and cycling for 119 journeys (2.6%). Although these figures reflect travel patterns during the COVID-19 pandemic, they also demonstrate that home working has become an established feature of the local economy.

7.5.6 The occupational profile reinforces this picture. More than 40% of economically active residents are employed in managerial, administrative or professional occupations, while almost 800 residents are self-employed or small business owners, indicating a workforce well suited to flexible working and entrepreneurship.

7.5.7 The challenge for the Neighbourhood Plan is therefore not simply to protect employment land, but to support a flexible and resilient local economy capable of adapting to changing patterns of work whilst contributing positively to community life.

Issues and Opportunities - Existing Employment

7.5.8 The Neighbourhood Area contains three established employment areas which support local employment whilst reducing the need for residents to travel elsewhere for work:

- Sovereign Park, Lathkill Road;
- Courtyard Workshops, Bath Street; and
- Farndon Road Business Centre/Industrial Estate.

7.5.9 Protecting these employment opportunities contributes not only to economic prosperity but also to wider sustainability objectives by reducing commuting distances and supporting more balanced patterns of development.

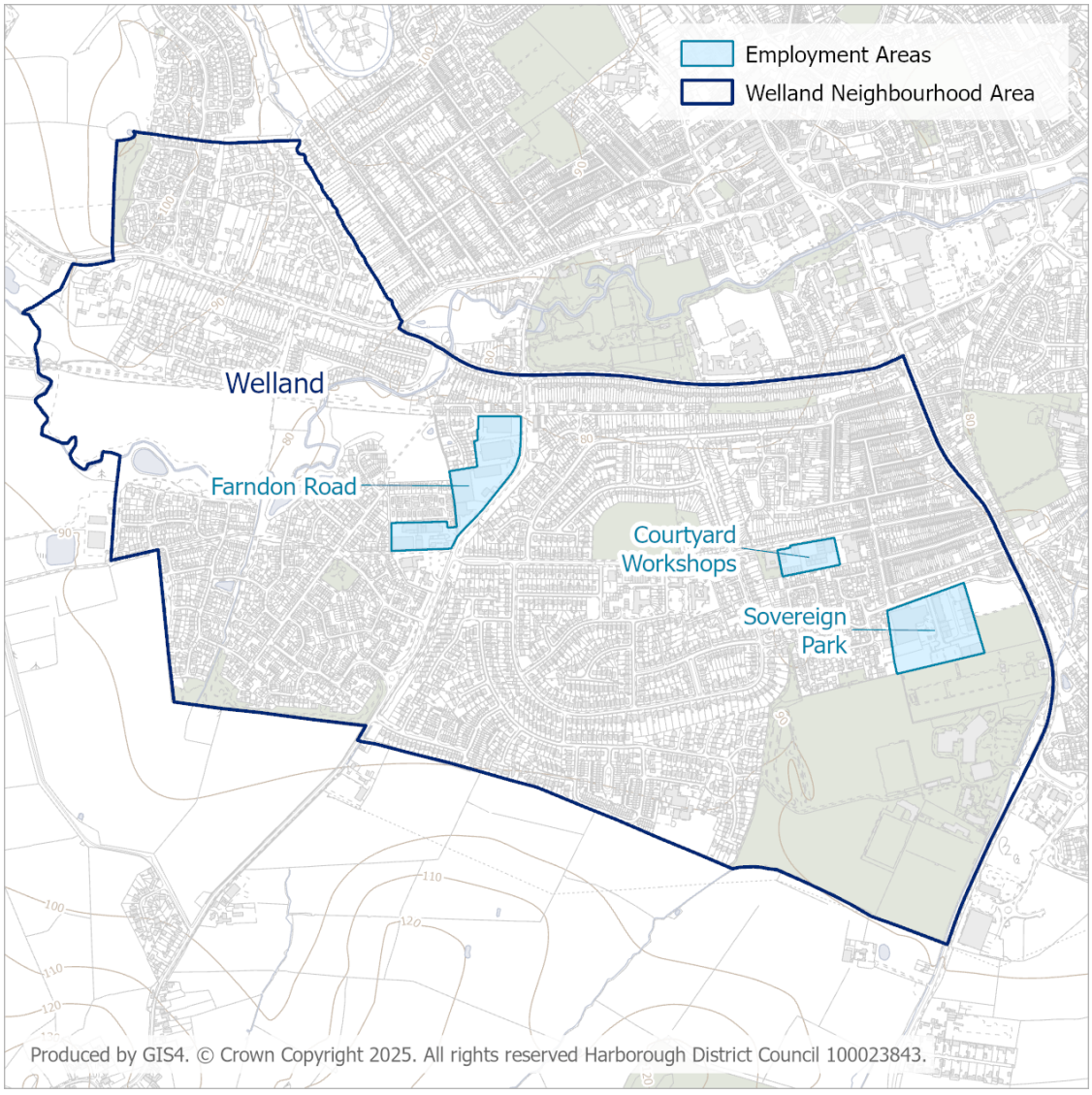


Fig 7.11 Employment Areas

Local Businesses and Services

7.5.10 Small businesses play an essential role in the everyday life of the neighbourhood.

7.5.11 The Western Avenue shopping parade provides convenience shopping and a range of local services that are easily accessible on foot or by cycle. Together with the public spaces surrounding Burford Green, it forms one of the neighbourhood's principal destinations, contributing to both economic activity and community life.

7.5.12 Elsewhere, independent businesses, the Farndon Road Farm Shop, public houses, leisure facilities and community enterprises provide employment whilst also helping to create a distinctive local identity.

7.5.13 Supporting these businesses is important not only for economic reasons but because they reduce the need to travel, encourage active travel and contribute towards the vitality of the neighbourhood.



Home Working and Flexible Employment

7.5.14 One of the most significant economic changes affecting Welland has been the growth of home working. The 2021 Census recorded that one in three employed residents worked mainly from home, one of the defining characteristics of the modern local economy.

7.5.15 This shift has implications that extend well beyond employment. Increased home working reduces commuting, supports local shops and services throughout the day, encourages greater use of neighbourhood facilities and strengthens demand for high-quality walking and cycling routes. It also increases the importance of reliable digital infrastructure and creates opportunities for small businesses, professional services and flexible working arrangements to flourish within the community.

7.5.16 The Neighbourhood Plan therefore recognises home working as an integral component of a resilient and sustainable local economy rather than simply an alternative to traditional employment.

Digital Connectivity

7.5.17 Reliable high-speed digital infrastructure has become essential economic infrastructure. Businesses increasingly depend upon fast and reliable broadband, whilst home working, education, online services and digital healthcare all require resilient communications networks.

7.5.18 The availability of high-quality digital connectivity can influence business investment, support entrepreneurship and reduce the need for travel. It should therefore be regarded as infrastructure that underpins both economic competitiveness and community wellbeing.

Enterprise and Innovation

7.5.19 Small businesses have long been an important feature of Market Harborough's economy. The Neighbourhood Plan supports opportunities for entrepreneurship, start-up businesses, creative industries and flexible working practices that contribute positively to the local economy without adversely affecting residential amenity.

7.5.20 Subject to appropriate planning considerations, opportunities to create flexible workspace, adapt existing buildings for business use and support live-work accommodation can all contribute towards a more diverse and resilient local economy.

Vision

7.5.21 By 2041, Welland will support a resilient, innovative and sustainable local economy that provides employment opportunities close to where people live, encourages enterprise and investment, supports thriving local businesses and enables flexible patterns of working. Existing employment areas and neighbourhood centres will continue to evolve to meet changing economic needs, whilst high-quality digital infrastructure and attractive local environments will enable businesses and residents to prosper.

Policy EE1 - Existing Employment Areas

7.5.22 Welland has an important role in providing local employment opportunities and supporting the town's small and medium-sized businesses. The Neighbourhood Area contains three established employment areas: Sovereign Park, Lathkill Road; Courtyard Workshops, Bath Street; and Farndon Road Business Centre/Industrial Estate.

7.5.23 The Harborough Local Housing & Employment Land Evidence Final Report (February 2025) identifies all three as General Employment Areas (GEAs) and recommends their retention for employment use.

https://www.harborough.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/8769/harborough_local_housing_and_employment_land_evidence_report.pdf

7.5.24 The assessment recognises that, although parts of these sites contain older or under-utilised premises, they remain important sources of local employment and provide opportunities for investment, renewal, redevelopment and intensification. In particular, Courtyard Workshops provides affordable premises for small businesses, while Sovereign Park and Farndon Road provide a range of office, light industrial and other employment premises.

7.5.25 The Neighbourhood Plan therefore seeks to protect existing employment land and premises where there remains a reasonable prospect of employment use, while supporting their modernisation, redevelopment and more efficient use.

7.5.26 **Objective:** To protect and enhance Welland's existing employment areas, supporting their continued use, modernisation and intensification to provide a diverse range of local employment opportunities, particularly for small and medium-sized businesses.

Policy EE1

Existing Employment Areas

Development proposals that retain, enhance or provide employment opportunities within the Neighbourhood Area will be supported.

The loss of existing employment premises or land to non-employment uses will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that:

a. the site or premises are no longer suitable or viable for continued or alternative employment use; and

b. there is no reasonable prospect of continued or alternative employment use following continuous and appropriate marketing for a period of at least 24 months; or

c. equivalent or improved employment opportunities, in terms of floorspace, employment capacity and suitability for employment use, will be provided elsewhere within the town as part of the proposed development or within an agreed timescale. Where the loss of employment use is proposed under criteria **a)** and **b)**, the applicant must provide appropriate evidence demonstrating that the site or premises have been properly marketed for employment use at a realistic market price or rent and that there is no reasonable prospect of continued or alternative employment use.

Development proposals that modernise, intensify or diversify existing employment areas will be supported where they:

- improve the quality and efficiency of employment accommodation;
- are compatible with neighbouring uses;
- promote sustainable travel; and
- enhance the appearance and environmental performance of employment sites.

Policy EE2 - Local Centres and Neighbourhood Services

7.5.29 Neighbourhood centres such as the Western Avenue shopping parade perform both an economic and a social function. They provide employment, support local businesses, reduce the need to travel and contribute to community life. As patterns of home working continue to evolve, these centres are likely to become increasingly important destinations for local shopping, services and informal social interaction.

7.5.31 **Objective:** Protect and enhance neighbourhood shopping, local services and public spaces that contribute to the vitality, convenience and resilience of the local economy.

Policy EE2

Local Centres and Neighbourhood Services

Development proposals that support the vitality and viability of neighbourhood centres, including the Western Avenue shopping parade, will be supported. Proposals should, where appropriate:
a. retain and encourage active ground-floor commercial uses that contribute to the vitality of neighbourhood centres;

b. support the establishment and growth of local businesses and services;

c. enhance the quality of the public realm and the attractiveness of neighbourhood centres; and
d. safeguard the amenity of neighbouring residents.

Policy EE3 - Enterprise, Home Working and Flexible Workspace

7.5.27 The evidence demonstrates that Welland has a highly skilled workforce and a significant proportion of residents now work mainly from home. Supporting flexible patterns of employment can reduce travel demand, strengthen local services and contribute to a more resilient local economy. This policy recognises that economic development increasingly takes place within neighbourhoods as well as traditional business parks and town centres.

7.5.28 **Objective:** Encourage entrepreneurship, home working, flexible employment and high-quality digital connectivity to enable businesses and residents to adapt to changing patterns of work.

Policy EE3

Enterprise, Home Working and Flexible Workspace

Development proposals that support entrepreneurship, home working and flexible employment will be supported where they are compatible with the surrounding residential environment.

Support will be given to proposals that:

a. enable home working, including the adaptation of existing dwellings where residential amenity is maintained;

b. provide live-work accommodation or flexible workspace;

c. create opportunities for small businesses, start-up enterprises and creative industries;

d. improve digital connectivity and communications infrastructure;

e. enable the re-use of suitable buildings for employment purposes; and
f. do not result in unacceptable impacts arising from traffic, parking, noise or servicing.

Chapter 8

Delivery Plan

8.1 Delivering the Plan

8.1.1 The Welland Neighbourhood Plan provides a framework for managing change and securing improvements that will benefit the neighbourhood and its residents. Its successful delivery will depend upon the effective implementation of its planning policies, together with the promotion of projects and initiatives that support the Plan's wider Vision and Objectives.

8.1.2 Responsibility for delivering the Plan will be shared between a number of organisations. Harborough District Council, as the Local Planning Authority, will have a key role in applying the Plan's policies when determining planning applications and securing appropriate contributions from development. Leicestershire County Council will be an important delivery partner, particularly in relation to highways, transport, education and public rights of way. Other partners will include developers, landowners, infrastructure providers, community organisations and, potentially, a future Market Harborough Town Council.

8.1.3 The Welland Neighbourhood Forum will continue to play an active role in promoting the Plan's objectives, working with these organisations to identify opportunities, develop proposals and secure funding for improvements. It will also seek to ensure that the priorities identified through community consultation remain central to decisions about investment and the future development of the neighbourhood.

8.1.4 The Plan distinguishes between statutory planning policies and non-statutory recommendations:

- **Planning policies** provide the framework against which development proposals will be assessed. Their implementation will principally be through planning decisions, development management and, where appropriate, planning conditions and obligations.
- **Recommendations** identify projects and other actions which the community wishes to see progressed in support of the Plan's objectives. They are not statutory planning requirements and will need to be taken forward by the relevant organisations and partners as opportunities and funding permit.

8.1.5 The projects and actions arising from the Plan are summarised in the tables below. They are not presented in order of priority or against fixed timescales. Their delivery will depend upon available resources, the cooperation of relevant organisations and the opportunities that arise through development and other investment.

8.2 Projects and Delivery Priorities

8.2.1 The following table brings together the principal projects and actions identified through the Plan's policies and recommendations. They provide a reference for the Neighbourhood Forum and its partners when considering future investment, funding opportunities and opportunities for collaborative working.

Table 8.1 – Projects arising from the Plan's policies and recommendations

Theme	Project or action	Relevant policy / recommendation
Built Environment	Investigate opportunities to redevelop underused and semi-derelict garage sites at Pride Place, Skippon Close, Bath Street and Harrison Close for community facilities, small-scale housing, or other beneficial uses.	Recommendation BE1
	Continue collaborative working between the four Market Harborough Neighbourhood Forums to coordinate the delivery of affordable housing in response to identified housing needs.	Recommendation BE2
Transport – Roads	Work with Leicestershire County Council to introduce 20mph limits in appropriate neighbourhood areas and address speeding, pavement parking and rat-running.	Recommendation TR1
	Improve the Farndon Road / Western Avenue junction, including safer pedestrian and cycle crossings and improved access to Farndon Fields Farm Shop.	Recommendation TR1
	Improve parking arrangements, pedestrian crossings and the surrounding public realm around the Western Avenue shopping centre.	Recommendation TR1
Transport – Walking, Wheeling and Cycling	Complete the Market Harborough Green Wheel, improving connections between Welland ward, the town and the surrounding countryside.	TR2; Recommendation TR2
	Improve the Farndon Road shared-use path, including upgraded crossings at Western Avenue and Welland Park Road, and a new entrance to Welland Park linking with National Cycle Network Route 6.	TR2; Recommendation TR2

Transport – Walking, Wheeling and Cycling (cont)	Improve crossing points on the Farndon Fields perimeter path, including at Charley Close and Measham Close.	Recommendation TR2
	Improve active travel links along Welland Park Road, particularly routes serving Welland Park Academy.	TR2; Recommendation TR2
	Upgrade alleyways where feasible through improved surfacing, lighting, accessibility and permeability for pedestrians and cyclists.	TR2; Recommendation TR2
	Increase secure cycle parking at schools, shops, community facilities and transport interchanges.	TR3; Recommendation TR2
Transport – Public Transport	Improve bus shelters, seating and real-time passenger information.	TR4; Recommendation TR3
	Improve integration between local bus services and Market Harborough Railway Station, including investigating a direct bus connection where feasible.	TR4; Recommendation TR3
	Work with operators to improve awareness of the Centrebus HC4 serving the Southern Estate and Farndon Fields, and improve interchange between buses, walking and cycling.	TR4; Recommendation TR3
Transport – Healthy Streets	Introduce additional street trees, seating, pocket parks and resting places along principal walking routes.	TR5; Recommendation TR4
	Expand electric vehicle charging infrastructure.	TR5; Recommendation TR4
	Monitor air quality near schools, particularly Farndon Fields Primary School, to inform future interventions.	TR5; Recommendation TR4
Natural and Historic Environment	Expand tree cover using appropriate native species, strengthen ecological corridors and implement relevant priorities of the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Local Nature Recovery Strategy.	NE3; Recommendation NE1

Natural and Historic Environment (cont)	Improve public access to nature through better walking and cycling connections to parks, open spaces and the surrounding countryside.	NE2; Recommendation NE1
	Seek funding to improve sports facilities, children's play areas, recreation grounds and allotments.	NE2; Recommendation NE1
	Promote community tree planting, habitat creation and biodiversity enhancement, working with conservation organisations, volunteer groups and schools.	NE6; Recommendation NE1
	Work with the Environment Agency, Lead Local Flood Authority, Flood Action Groups and local communities to develop natural flood management measures, including schemes south of the Plan area.	NE6; Recommendation NE1
	Protect existing culverts in field ditches along the southern boundary, particularly at Hopton Fields and near Barnard Gardens.	NE6; Recommendation NE1
	Support community Flood Action Groups and Flood Screen Teams, and monitor the condition of Local Green Spaces, open spaces and other important environmental assets.	NE1, NE2, NE6; Recommendation NE1
Healthy Communities and Local Services	Prepare and pursue a programme of improvements to Burford Green, including better accessibility, paths and seating, enhanced biodiversity, children's play, informal recreation, interpretation and community activities.	Recommendation HC1
	Encourage the shared use of school facilities outside normal school hours.	Recommendation HC2
	Work with community organisations to identify opportunities for additional flexible meeting space and support improvements to the accessibility and energy efficiency of existing community buildings.	HC1, HC2; Recommendation HC2
	Improve the public realm around Western Avenue, including landscaping, seating, pedestrian accessibility and cycle parking.	HC3; Recommendation HC3
Healthy Communities and	Encourage initiatives that support the long-term vitality of neighbourhood shopping areas.	HC3;

Local Services (cont)		Recommendation HC3
Economy and Employment	Protect existing employment areas and support appropriate opportunities for business development, home working, flexible workspace and local services.	EE1, EE2, EE3

8.2.2 The policy references above identify the relevant planning policies and/or recommendations in the Plan. The recommendations are community priorities rather than commitments by the organisations identified to deliver them.

8.3 Funding and Partnership Working

8.3.1 Delivering the improvements identified in this Plan will require a combination of public investment, developer contributions, grant funding and community-led initiatives. The Neighbourhood Forum will work with the relevant organisations to identify and pursue appropriate funding opportunities.

Developer contributions

8.3.2 New development should contribute towards the infrastructure and facilities needed to support growth. Where justified by the impact of development, Section 106 planning obligations can secure contributions towards specific infrastructure requirements, provided that the statutory tests for such obligations are satisfied.

8.3.3 Harborough District Council is currently exploring the introduction of a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) scheme. Should a scheme be introduced, it could provide an additional source of funding for improvements to local infrastructure and facilities. The Forum will seek to ensure that the priorities identified in this Plan are taken into account when decisions are made about the allocation and expenditure of any CIL receipts.

8.3.4 In considering the use of developer contributions, particular regard should be given to the relationship between the development generating the contribution and the improvement being funded. Where contributions are secured to address the local impacts of development, the Forum will seek to ensure that they are applied to appropriate improvements in the locality affected, rather than being diverted to unrelated projects elsewhere.

8.3.5 Transparency over the collection, allocation and expenditure of developer contributions is also important. The Forum will seek to work constructively with Harborough District Council to understand what contributions have been secured, the purposes for which they are intended, when they are expected to become available and the progress made in committing and spending them.

Other funding opportunities

8.3.6 The Forum will also work with Harborough District Council, Leicestershire County Council, a future Market Harborough Town Council and other partners to identify opportunities for funding through:

- Local authority capital programmes and infrastructure investment;
- Government and other public-sector grants;
- Active travel, transport and road safety funding;
- Environmental, biodiversity and nature recovery programmes;
- Community facilities and public realm improvement programmes;
- Contributions from developers and landowners; and
- Community organisations, local businesses and other sources of private funding.

Working together

8.3.7 The Welland Neighbourhood Forum will seek to maintain constructive relationships with the organisations responsible for delivering the projects identified in this Plan. It will promote the community's priorities, encourage partnership working and seek to ensure that opportunities to improve the neighbourhood are not missed.

8.3.8 The Delivery Plan is intended to provide a continuing reference point for this work. It will be reviewed periodically to reflect progress, changes in local circumstances, new funding opportunities and the emergence of additional projects that support the Vision and Objectives of the Welland Neighbourhood Plan.

Chapter 9

Monitoring and Review

9.1 The Neighbourhood Plan will last until 2041. During this time, it is likely that the circumstances which the Plan seeks to address will change.

9.2 Welland Neighbourhood Forum will review the Plan on a regular basis, commencing 5 years from the date the Plan is made to make sure that it considers any changes in National Planning Policy and the Harborough Local Plan. If it is considered by the Neighbourhood Forum that changes are necessary to the Neighbourhood Plan, it will commence a formal review in conjunction with the Local Planning Authority.

9.3 Further reviews will be undertaken regularly when consideration will be given, and if necessary, processes commenced, to develop an updated Neighbourhood Plan for the benefit of the residents of Welland ward.

Chapter 10

Supporting Documents

10.1 The Welland Neighbourhood Plan is supported by a series of separate evidence base and supporting documents. These provide the background information, assessments and technical evidence which have informed the preparation of the Plan and its policies.

10.2 These documents are published separately and are not part of the statutory Neighbourhood Plan. They provide supporting evidence and context for the Plan and are available as standalone documents.

Reference	Title
Appendix A1	*Consultation Statement [following Regulation 14 consultation]*
Appendix A2	Welland Housing Needs Assessment (March 2025)
Appendix A3	Welland Design Guidance (March 2025)
Appendix A4	Local Green Space Assessments
Appendix A5	Inventory of Open Space, Sports and Recreation Sites
Appendix A6	Important Views
Appendix A7	Plans (A3 Size)

Chapter 11

Acknowledgements

11.1 This Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared with the help and support of many people.

11.2 The main thanks go to the members of the Forum, in particular Susan Garon, Roy Saint, Linda Pentland, Halina Pasiecznik, Kerry Ward and Alex Shelton but also many others.

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11.4 We would like to thank the Harborough District Council members and officers who have assisted the work on this Plan, particularly Cllr Darren Woodiwiss and Matt Bills.

11.5 Thanks also go to John Fannon for the maps.

11.6 Finally, we appreciate the advice and assistance given by our planning consultants, Gary Kirk and John Martin of YourLocale.

Bob Bellm

Chair, Welland Neighbourhood Forum

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