



medbourne neighbourhood plan



2017-2031

Referendum Version - May 2018

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FOREWORD

Neighbourhood Plans were introduced under the Localism Act (2011) and give members of the community and Parish Councils greater influence over planning matters and how the Parish will develop. Following extensive community consultation, the Medbourne Neighbourhood Plan covers the following 'themes':

- Housing
- Employment
- Environment
- Transport
- Community facilities

Neighbourhood Plans have their origins in the Government's determination to ensure that local communities are closely involved in the decisions that affect them. The Medbourne Neighbourhood Plan has been developed to establish a vision, set of objectives and policies to help deliver the community's needs and ambitions for the period 2017 to 2031.

Unlike the Medbourne Parish Plan (2004), this Plan will become an essential part of the overall Development Plan for Harborough District and one of the key documents for determining land-use planning decisions in the Parish for that period.

This document is the Referendum version of the Neighbourhood Plan. This means that the Neighbourhood Plan has passed Examination and is ready to be put to the community in a referendum. If more than 50% of those who take part in the referendum are in support, the Plan will then, with the new Harborough Local Plan, become the statutory Development Plan for Medbourne Parish for the next 14 years.

This is a vital time for residents to agree broadly what is important, so we can set out to secure Medbourne's future as a sustainable rural community. No plan can solve every problem and satisfy everyone, but we have set out to protect what is good in the Parish and to manage change carefully and in line with community wishes.

Bernadette Lee

Chair
Medbourne Neighbourhood Plan
Advisory Committee

Tim Gidley-Wright

Chair
Medbourne Parish Council

May 2018

1. INTRODUCTION

This is the Neighbourhood Plan for Medbourne parish. It represents one part of the development plan for the parish over the period 2017 to 2031, the other part being the Harborough District Local Plan which is yet to be formally adopted.

Harborough District Council, as the local planning authority, designated a Neighbourhood Area for the whole of the Medbourne Parish on 16 April 2015 to enable Medbourne Parish Council to prepare the Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan has been prepared by the community through the Medbourne Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee and a range of Theme Groups looking into aspects such as housing, the environment, employment, transport and community facilities.

The map below shows the boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan area, which is contiguous with the boundary of Medbourne Parish.

Fig. 1 Designated Area



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The Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared in accordance with the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (as amended 2015). The Parish Council, through the Advisory Committee has prepared the plan to establish a vision for the future of the parish and to set out how that vision will be realised through planning and managing land use and development change over the Plan period 2017 to 2031.

The purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to guide development within the parish and provide guidance to any interested parties wishing to submit planning applications for development within the parish. The process of producing the Plan has sought to involve the community as widely as possible and the different theme groups that have been established are reflective of matters that are of importance to Medbourne, its residents, businesses and community groups as identified through initial consultation events.

Each section of the Plan covers a different theme. Under each heading there is the reason for the policies which provides a narrative about the policy and what it is seeking to achieve. The policies themselves are those against which planning applications will be determined. It is advisable that, to understand the full context for any individual policy, it is read in conjunction with the supporting text. Compliance with local, national and EU policies is confirmed through the Basic Condition Statement (Appendix 1).

There are also a number of 'Community Actions'. These are not policies and will not be subject to examination, but represent issues to be taken forward by the Parish Council through the community in support of the policies themselves, where the community prioritises such action.

It is intended that the Parish Council will establish a 'Neighbourhood Plan Delivery Committee' to progress the Community Actions depending on community support for such an initiative.

National Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states:

"Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and deliver the sustainable development they need. Parishes ... can use neighbourhood planning to set planning policies through neighbourhood plans to determine decisions on planning applications (para. 183).

Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure that they get the right types of development for their community.

The ambition of the neighbourhood should be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area.

Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. To facilitate this, local planning authorities should set out clearly their strategic policies for the area and ensure that an up-to-date Local Plan is in place as quickly as possible. Neighbourhood plans should reflect these policies and neighbourhoods should plan positively to support them. Neighbourhood plans and

orders should not promote less development than set out in the Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies (para. 184).

Outside these strategic elements, neighbourhood plans will be able to shape and direct sustainable development in their area. Once a neighbourhood plan has demonstrated its general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and is brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in the Local Plan for that neighbourhood, where they are in conflict. Local planning authorities should avoid duplicating planning processes for non-strategic policies where a neighbourhood plan is in preparation (para. 185)".

The Harborough District Core Strategy was adopted in 2011 and therefore, under the guidance provided by the NPPF, is no longer up to date. A new Local Plan is currently in preparation and the Neighbourhood Plan has taken the provisions within this emerging document into account.

Sustainable Development

The NPPF states that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: social, environmental and economic, all of which are important and interrelated.

Social

We are seeking to protect existing community facilities, the local shop and community and sporting facilities and to deliver a mix of housing types so that we can meet the needs of present and future generations and ensure that we support the community's needs and its health, social and cultural wellbeing.

Environment

In order to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment, we are seeking to ensure that:

- Housing development is of the right quantity and type in the right location, so that it does not harm but instead positively reflects the existing and historic character of the area;
- The most important open spaces within Medbourne are protected from development, to safeguard the village identity and to retain the rural nature of its surroundings;
- Development recognises the need to protect and, where possible, improve biodiversity and important habitats.

Economy

While the community of Medbourne is primarily residential, there is also a small commercial and retail element within the parish and a desire to ensure that

appropriate economic activity is maintained as long as the local infrastructure grows to support it. We therefore wish to retain and encourage small scale employment opportunities in our area by:

- Protecting existing employment sites;
- Supporting small scale business development and expansion where the local infrastructure would not be adversely affected by the proposals; and
- Encouraging start-up businesses and home working. Improved community-based support would be particularly welcome.

Consultation

Although the Parish Council had considered undertaking a Neighbourhood Plan for many years, the increasing level of developer interest in the Parish through 2014 led to the Parish Council distributing a questionnaire in December 2014 to test the appetite for undertaking a Neighbourhood Plan amongst the community.

With strong support from the community, in early in 2015 the Parish Council took the decision to undertake a Neighbourhood Plan, and the Plan Area was approved and designated by Harborough District Council in April 2015.

A logo competition was held amongst local children.

An **Advisory Committee** was established involving residents and Parish Councillors:

Bernadette Lee (Chair)

David Nance (Secretary)

Tim Gidley-Wright (Parish Councillor)

Lynne Easton (Parish Councillor)

Trevor Pemberton (Committee Member)

Martin Delaney (Committee Member)

Meriel Godfrey (Committee Member)

Bill Barrie (Committee Member)

Caroline Jack (Committee Member)

Paul Griffiths (Committee Member)

The Advisory Committee has developed the Neighbourhood Plan through extensive engagement with the community and an initial open event took place in June 2016. A community questionnaire was distributed to all households between February and March 2017. It was available to complete electronically and as a paper copy. The

level of response from the community was good, there being 166 returns. This represents a return from 44% of the adult population.

Consideration of the main issues affecting Medbourne commenced in the winter of 2016, where the process of shaping the Neighbourhood Plan continued through the establishment of 'Theme Groups' where members of the community came together to consider issues such as housing, the environment, transport, employment and community facilities in greater detail.

Web-pages on the Parish website were designed to promote feedback and notifications were made via the village email distribution list.

In April 2017, 15 people aged between 10 and 18 attended a consultation event geared specifically towards young people in the village.

A further consultation event took place in May 2017 where the emerging policies were presented to the community and received overwhelming support.



The result of this work and responses to comments made through Pre-Submission consultation has enabled the Advisory Committee to draft the policies and actions in this Neighbourhood Plan.

A full chronology of the consultation undertaken is provided in the Consultation Statement (Appendix 2).

2. LOCAL CONTEXT

History of Medbourne

It could be said of almost every parish in England that its history is what makes it unique. Medbourne residents certainly do believe this to be the case – and with good reason. It has been a Roman settlement, a ‘Dark Ages’ survivor, an Anglian estate, a feudal Norman manor and a prosperous medieval market town based on local agriculture. The signs may sometimes be subtle, but Medbourne today looks the way it does because of its richly layered history.

Medbourne lies in a natural valley running north to south bisected by the Medbourne Brook, a tributary of the River Welland. The village has an extremely rich and diverse history and has been a continuous settlement for 8,000 years which is remarkable in Leicestershire. There are detailed records and archaeological finds from Palaeolithic to post Medieval. During the Roman period there was a highly important settlement to the north west of the modern village, on the line of the Roman Gartree road which ran from Colchester to Chester via Leicester. Remains of a high status Roman villa, a bathhouse, a hypocaust and burial ground have been discovered as well as pottery in the surrounding fields. There was an early windmill near the corner of Slawston Road and a later 18th century mill which was demolished in 1902. The mound is still in evidence today. There are many fine and interesting houses and buildings in the village, thirty-one of which are listed, including The Manor House which is the oldest house in the village and probably in Leicestershire, dating from the late 13th century. The stone walls associated with two listed houses are also a feature of the village, two of which have water conduits for the use of villagers in the past. There is also a rich heritage of cottages and houses which add to the special character of Medbourne. Medbourne is also defined by the central siting of the Parish Church of St Giles with the surrounding burial ground. Medbourne is bounded by agricultural land, including good examples of ridge and furrow, with a mix of pastureland and crops.

Profile of the Community Today

According to the 2011 Census, the Medbourne Parish had an estimated population of 473 residents living in 199 households dispersed across 750 hectares. There were 6 unoccupied houses representing a 2.9% vacancy rate. Since 2001 the number of residents has increased by around 29 (+6.5%) and the number of households by 26 (+15%).

Around 65% of residents are aged between 16 and 64 which is above the district (62.6%), regional (64.5%) and national (64.8%) rates. Older people (aged 65+)

represent some 18% of residents which is in line with the district (18%) but higher than the regional (17%) and national (16%) rates. The median age of people living in the Parish is 47 which is older than the district (43), regional (40) and national (39) rates.

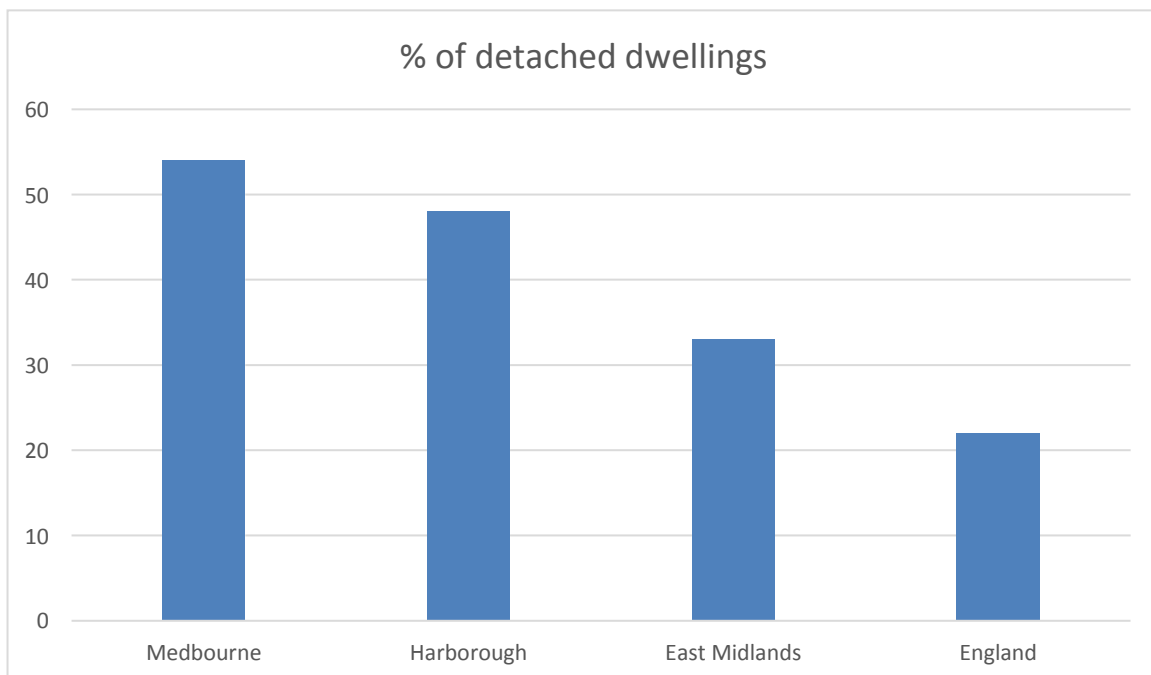
In Medbourne Parish 74% of the population are 16-74-year olds. At 73% Medbourne Parish's economic activity rate is slightly lower than the district (74%) but above the regional (69%) and national (70%) rates. Around 14% of 16 to 74-year olds are retired which is in line with the national average but slightly below the district and regional (15%) rates. At 27% the parish self-employment rate is very high when compared with the district (13%), regional (9%) and national (10%) rates.

At the time of the 2011 Census, the average household size in the Medbourne Parish was 2.4 people which is in line with the district and national rate and slightly above the regional (2.3) rate. However, the average number of rooms per household at 7.0 is higher than the district (6.3), regional (5.6) and national (5.4) rates.

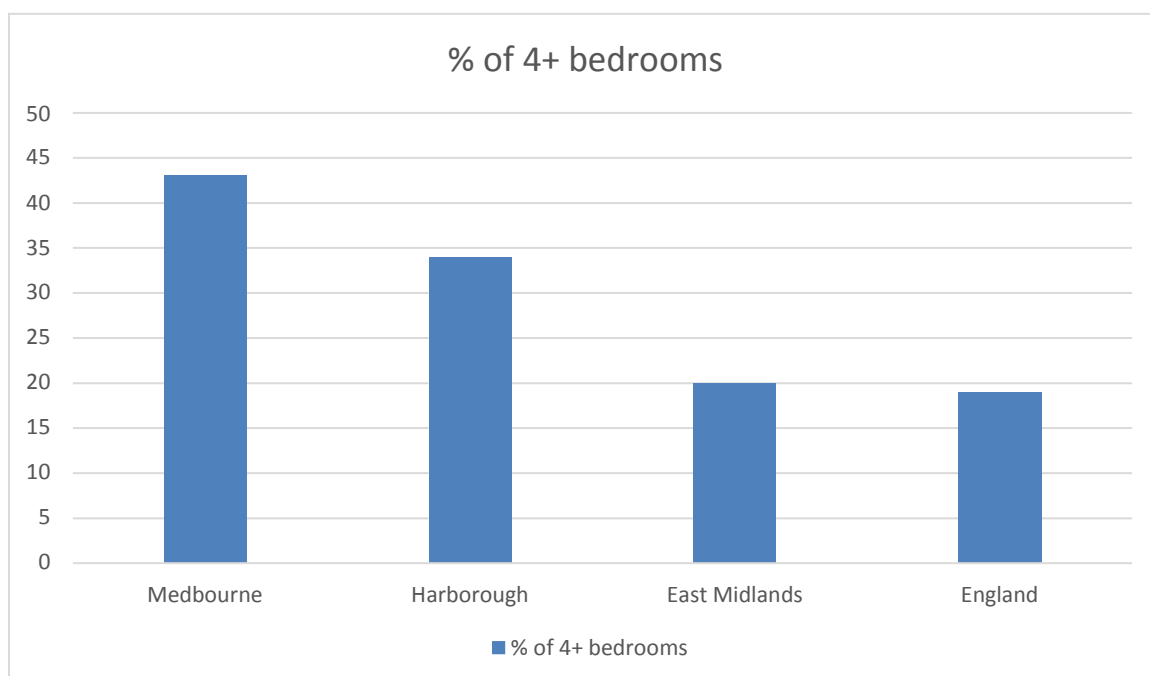
People living in the Medbourne Parish are also more likely to live in homes with a high number of bedrooms with the average number of bedrooms per household standing at 3.4 which is higher than the district (3.1), region (2.8) and national (2.7) rates.

Home ownership levels are relatively high with over 42% of households owning their homes outright. This is higher than the district (38%), regional (33%) and national (31%) rates. Social rented properties account for around 11% of residential properties which is higher than the district average (8%) but lower than the region (16%) and England (18%) rates. Around one in ten homes are privately rented representing 10% of the housing stock which is close to the district (11%) average but lower than the regional (15%) and national (17%) rates.

The majority (54%) of residential dwellings are detached which is somewhat higher than the district (48%), regional (33%) and national (22%) share. Semi-detached housing accounts for 28% of residential housing stock which is close to the district rate (29%) but below the region (36%) and England (31%) averages. Detached and semi-detached dwellings account for 82% of the total housing stock in the Medbourne Parish whereas terraced housing and flats provide just 18% of accommodation spaces.



People living in the parish are more likely to be living in dwellings with 4 or more bedrooms. Results from the 2011 Census show that around 43% of households live in housing with more than 4 bedrooms which is above the district (34%), regional (20%) and England (19%) averages. There is also an under representation of smaller type housing units with around 19% of dwellings having 2 or fewer bedrooms against 29% for the district, 35% for the region and 40% for England as a whole.



There is evidence of widespread under occupancy in the parish (having more bedrooms than the notional number recommended by the bedroom standard). Analysis of the 2011 Census shows that over three fifths (62%) of all households

in the Medbourne Parish have two or more spare bedrooms and over a quarter (26%) have one spare bedroom. Under occupancy is higher than both regional and national rates. Under occupancy is particularly evident in larger properties with over a half (51%) of dwellings with 4 or more bedrooms occupied by just one or two people.

The Census data suggests that older person households are more likely to under-occupy their dwellings. Data from the Census allows us to investigate this using the bedroom standard. In total, some 70% of pensioner households have an occupancy rating of +2 or more (meaning there are at least two more bedrooms than are technically required by the household) and is somewhat higher than the 60% non-pensioner household rate.

The publication of middle layer super output area (MSOA) level income estimates for 2011/12 presents an opportunity for detailed housing affordability analysis. In England and Wales in 2014, the average MSOA had an average house price equal to 380 times net weekly household income. The MSOA (E02005368) which covers the Medbourne Parish was 542 times the net weekly household income which is the highest rate in the district suggesting it would be difficult for those on lower income such as first-time buyers to enter the current housing stock.

In the East Midlands, the lowest house price to income ratio was in Bolsover 003 MSOA where the average house price for all dwelling types was equal to 151 times the average net weekly income and the highest was the Derbyshire Dales 002 MSOA with 574 times.

3. VISION AND OBJECTIVES

Vision for Medbourne

In consultation with the community, the established vision for Medbourne is as follows:

Our vision for Medbourne is that by 2031 it will remain an attractive, thriving and sustainable place for people to live and work, while keeping its character as a beautiful rural village of historic significance.

We will protect the open spaces and heritage assets of our parish. Housing developments will be in accordance with local need, and design will be sympathetic to the character of the village and will have minimal environmental impact.

Existing and new small businesses will be supported, and local employment encouraged. Community amenities will be preserved, and recreational activities promoted to enhance the well-being of Medbourne residents.

Neighbourhood Plan Objectives

The objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan as identified through engagement with the community are as follows:

Housing

- Allocations will meet the minimum housing requirements detailed in the evidence base of the draft Harborough Local Plan and provide a buffer for the future should housing need increase over the Plan period;
- Proposed sites have been subject to a rigorous sustainability analysis;
- Chosen sites reflect the expressed needs of the community in terms of size and location;
- Housing to be provided is of a size and type that meets local need and reflects the outcome of community consultation;
- There is provision of affordable housing that reflects the views expressed during community consultation;
- There is an effective interface with the environmental and heritage needs of the community including the protection of wildlife and provision of footpaths;
- Housing design requirements are in keeping with existing housing and support green technology where appropriate.

Environment and Heritage

- Protect local green spaces of value to the community;
- Protect the historic character with sensitive and appropriate development;
- Protect local and open green spaces of value to the community;
- Ensure new housing development takes biodiversity into account.

Community Facilities

- Protect, preserve and retain Medbourne's existing community facilities where viable;
- Improve and enhance the amenity, capacity and diversity of Medbourne's community facilities to serve population growth;
- Ensure that community facilities are inclusive, accessible and managed for the benefit of Medbourne Parish residents;
- Secure and preserve the status of recreation activity facilities so they continue to benefit the health and wellbeing of Medbourne residents.

Employment

- Retain existing businesses, encourage new small businesses and local employment opportunities, support farm diversification, homeworking and the visitor economy;
- Support developments that improve mobile telecommunication and broadband networks throughout the Parish and ensure that new developments have access to high speed broadband.

Transport

- Improve, create new and extend the network of footpaths, cycle-ways and bridleways as leisure activity amenities and to provide safe and sustainable travel options within the Parish.
- Address transport roads and parking issues through policies to ensure that development does not have any adverse effect and other initiatives that will implement improvements.

4. POLICIES

4.1 Sustainable Development

The principal aim of the UK Planning System as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF - 2012) is to achieve sustainable development. The Medbourne Neighbourhood Plan is the key local planning document to deliver sustainable development for the Parish.

The current Core Strategy for Harborough District Council indicates that new house building will take place to meet the District wide target of at least 2,420 new homes between 2006 and 2031.

The emerging Local Plan for Harborough is currently updating the housing need across the District and the distribution of housing sites to meet this need. The Executive Report on the preferred Housing Distribution Option (September 2016) states that there is a substantially increased requirement to provide for at least 11,000 new dwellings between 2011 and 2031 across the District, effectively 550 units per calendar year.

In considering development proposals, the Neighbourhood Plan will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Where there are no policies in this Plan relevant to a planning application or development proposal, the provisions of relevant national and District-wide planning policies will apply.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT WHEN USING THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN TO DETERMINE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT, ALL THE POLICIES CONTAINED IN THE PLAN MUST BE CONSIDERED TOGETHER IN FORMING A VIEW.

4.2 Housing and the built environment

Introduction

The draft Local Plan Proposed Submission (June 2017) established a hierarchy of settlements to determine the most appropriate locations for residential development. On the basis of this hierarchy, Medbourne is classified as a 'Selected Rural Village' (SRV). SRVs benefit from two or more of six key services - a food shop, GP surgery, library, post office, primary school and public house. As Harborough District Council have a statutory duty to provide adequate housing throughout the District, they have calculated a minimum requirement for each Parish based upon a housing distribution strategy agreed by the Executive Committee. This approach has set Medbourne a housing target of a minimum of 30 residential units to be approved to 2031. Any planning approvals since April 2017 will count towards this target.

In order to prevent the need to review the Neighbourhood Plan as soon as levels of housing need increase, to retain control over housing development throughout the Plan period and to demonstrate the commitment to securing sustainable development in the Parish, the Neighbourhood Plan proposes adding a buffer to this housing requirement and incorporating a target of 39 new residential dwellings up to 2031.

Housing Allocations

Devising a land use plan for residential development is an important element of the Neighbourhood Plan.

In progressing the Neighbourhood Plan, the Medbourne Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee established 3 'Theme Groups' to develop specific policy areas. One of these was the Housing Theme Group who were tasked with assessing potential sites put forward by landowners, developing key design principles and other housing related policies. Every Landowner in Medbourne was written to and asked whether they had plans to develop their land over the Plan period and those that responded positively were offered a visit by the Chair and/or Secretary to confirm the extent of their plans and the timescale for delivery.

YourLocale, our independent consultants, undertook a Sustainability Analysis of each site (Appendix 3) with input from the Theme Group. The analysis followed a formula that measured 26 criteria covering a wide range of issues including capacity, current use, Topography, Visual Impact, Wildlife considerations, impact on the Conservation area, vehicular access, flooding, heritage and distance to community facilities.

In total, 16 potential housing development sites were assessed. The results are shown in the supporting information.

The result of this exercise has enabled the group to recommend that specific sites are allocated for residential development that are deliverable, meet the housing target and are sensitive to the character of the village of Medbourne. Where appropriate, conditions are attached to the development and these have been agreed with the landowner and are deliverable.

At a well-attended Open Event in the Village Hall in May 2017, Villagers were asked to indicate their 3 most favoured sites of those available. The results of this exercise confirmed the independent assessment ranking of site suitability.

The draft Local Plan requires a range of affordable and market homes which meet local housing needs and recognises the 'specific accommodation requirements of the ageing population and the need for starter homes to help first time buyers'.

The need to provide affordable housing is an important element of this Neighbourhood Plan. The Parish Council recognises the importance of meeting local housing demand and providing affordable housing opportunities especially for young people as well as considering the growing housing requirements for older people.

The Neighbourhood Plan particularly supports low cost starter homes, along with a small number of shared ownership properties.

Again, the results of the community questionnaire reinforce the socio-economic data as responses to the question of housing tenure was as follows;

"Almost all respondents (96%) believe that home ownership is the preferred form of tenure for new housing. There is support for shared ownership, reflecting again the view that there should be affordable homes in the parish. However rented accommodation is much less strongly supported".

In view of the current imbalance in the local housing market in Medbourne and the high cost of housing generally, a local connection policy will help young families and the older population to secure appropriate housing in the Parish. A 'local connection' in this context involves people who are either current residents of the parish or have a strong local connection.

POLICY H1: RESIDENTIAL SITE ALLOCATIONS - The plan makes provision for about 39 new dwellings in Medbourne between 2017 to 2031. This is met by land being allocated for five residential development sites at the following locations as shown in figures 2.1/2.2.

Site 1. Station House Livery Yard – Buildings only

Development will be supported subject to the following criteria:

- a) The development will provide for a minimum of 12 dwellings;
- b) 40% of the units will be affordable, made available where possible to people with a local connection and incorporating, where possible, accommodation suitable for older people. Low cost home ownership products which include starter homes and shared ownership (offered at a 25% to 75% initial share) will be supported;
- c) A footpath, in keeping with the rural nature of the setting, is to be provided from the site entrance to Station House and around the perimeter to the new development providing safe pedestrian access from the site to the village amenities. The proposal must, subject to a viability assessment, include a contribution to achieve the continuation of this footpath as a permissible footpath to Leviathan Wood;
- d) A new vehicular entrance will be provided direct to the site from Uppingham Road subject to Highways requirements;
- e) At least seven dwellings are three-bed or smaller.

Site 2. Land off Main Street

Development will be supported subject to the following criteria:

- a) The site will provide for about 6 dwellings;
- b) At least four dwellings are three-bed or smaller

Site 3. Manor Farm Hallaton Road

Development will be supported subject to the following criteria:

The development will provide for about four dwellings, taking into consideration the immediate proximity to the remains of the Roman Villa (proposed local listing) and its setting, and the visual impact on, and proximity to, the associated listed buildings;

- a) An archeological study and an Impact Assessment on the heritage assets are undertaken and the recommendations implemented;
- b) At least three dwellings are three-bed or smaller.

Site 4. Hallaton Road site.

Development will be supported subject to the following criteria:

- a) The development will provide for a minimum of 12 dwellings;
- b) 40% of the units will be affordable, made available where possible to people with a local connection and incorporating, where possible, accommodation suitable for older people. Low cost home ownership products which include starter homes and shared ownership (offered at a 25% to 75% initial share) will be supported;

- c) The development shall have regard for the aspects of environmental significance described in policies Env 2 and Env 6;
- d) The development along the Hallaton Road shall be of a form and scale which safeguards the residential amenity of, and visual impact on, neighbouring properties;
- e) The ancient hedge along Hallaton Road should be retained other than the provision of a vehicular entrance and an entrance for a permitted footpath;
- f) A Footpath will be provided opposite the Sports field to provide a circular walk around the border of Home field with a hand gate exit onto Paynes Lane and a further exit onto Hallaton Road adjacent to site 3;
- g) At least seven dwellings are three-bed or smaller.

Site 5. Rear of 7 Ashley Road

Development will be supported subject to the following criteria:

- a) The development will provide for about 5 dwellings;
- b) At least three dwellings shall be single storey housing to reduce visual impact including any building abutting the road;
- c) At least three dwellings are three-bed or smaller

Figure 2.1 Housing allocations - location map

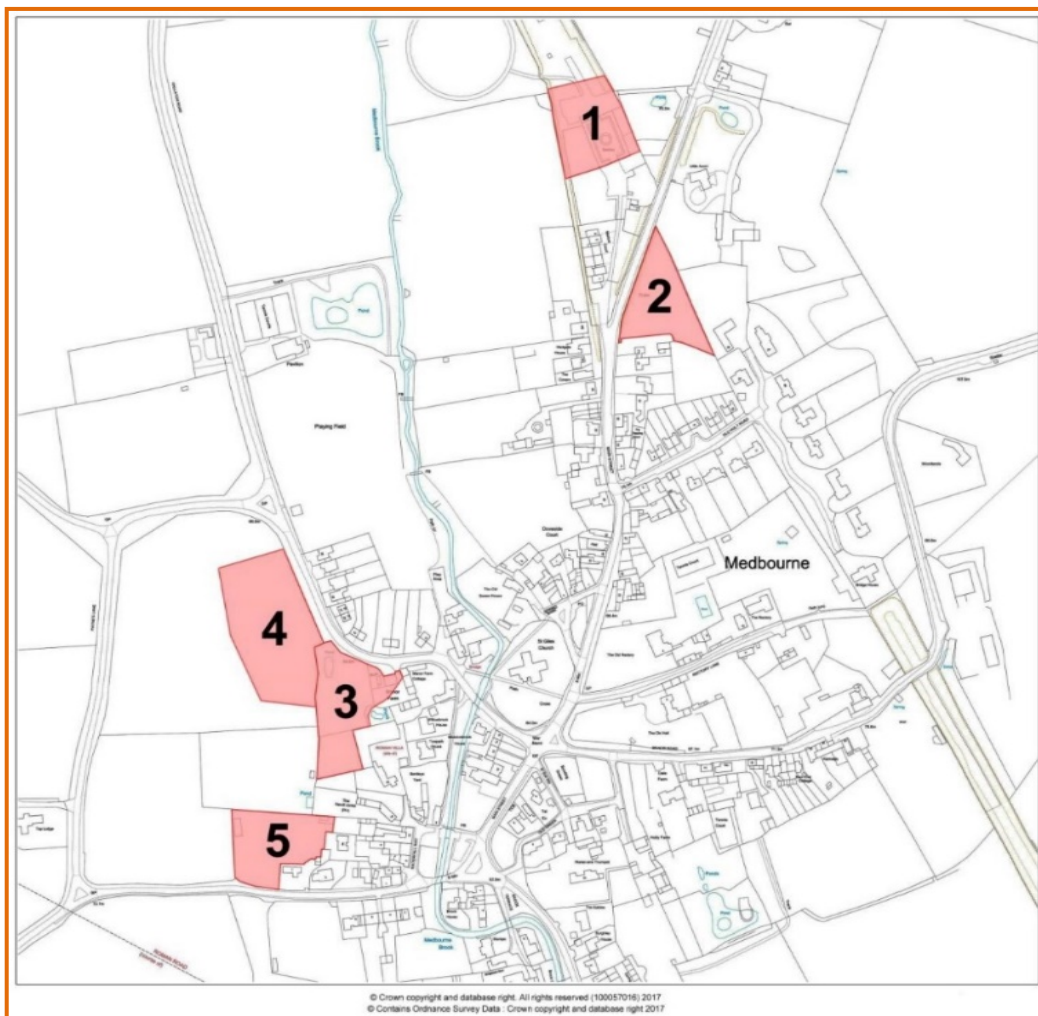
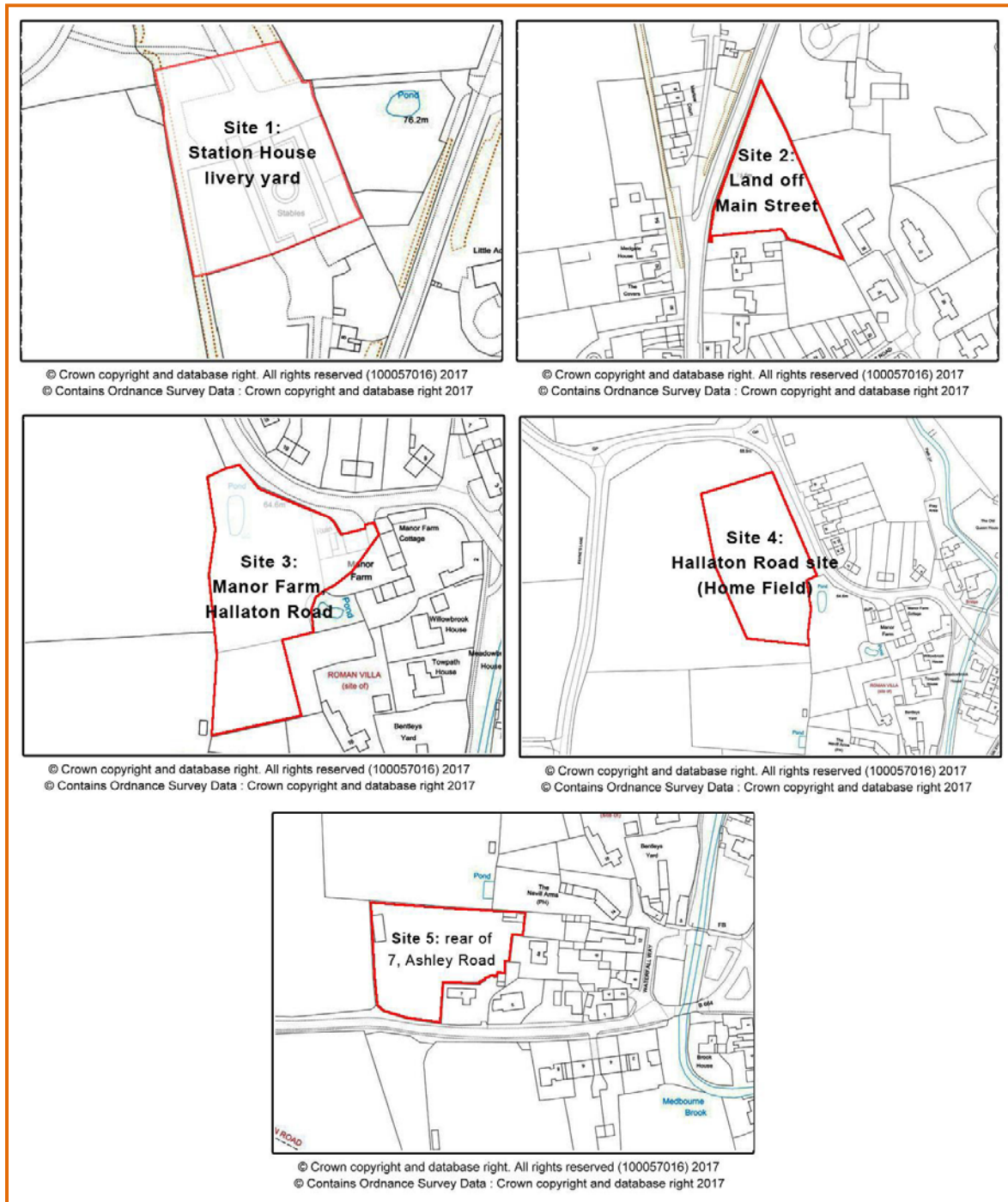


Figure 2.2 Housing allocations – site plans (different scales)



Limits to Development

Historically, communities like Medbourne have been protected against unsustainable or insensitive development by the designation of a village envelope (or settlement boundary). The settlement boundary was originally defined by Harborough District Council in consultation with the relevant Parish Council through a statutory Local Plan designation. With the settlement boundary in place, development was only permitted within the red-line area. Only in

exceptional circumstances (for example - to provide affordable housing) was development allowed outside of the envelope and it was therefore strictly controlled. In the current emerging Local Plan consultations, Harborough District Council is considering removing settlement boundaries to be replaced by criteria based policies.

Having considered these issues within the Housing Theme Group, the Neighbourhood Plan is proposing new Limits to Development to protect the Parish from unsustainable development proposals. The Limits to Development policy will also ensure that sufficient land to meet residential and commercial need is available in the right locations. The future land uses will be supported by existing transport and services infrastructure and will therefore be able to avoid encroaching into the countryside.

The new Limits to Development are shown in Figure 2, updating and superseding the existing Limits to Development previously used by Harborough District Council as it takes into account recent planning approvals, housing allocations through the Neighbourhood plan and business developments.

Within the defined Limits to Development boundary, an appropriate amount of suitably designed, and located development is acceptable in principle, although some sites are protected from development and development proposals will need to meet the policies of this Neighbourhood Plan and District-wide and national strategic policies. Focusing development within the agreed Limits to Development will support the existing services within the village and protect the open countryside area surrounding the current built form from inappropriate and/or unsustainable development.

The Methodology

- a) The development sites with an extant planning permission for residential, community use or employment land on the fringes of the settlement have been incorporated.
- b) The residential sites allocated within the Neighbourhood Plan have been included.
- c) Defined physical features such as walls, fences, hedgerows, gardens, streams, brooks, allotments, formal leisure uses and roads have been used to define boundaries.
- d) Non - residential land which is countryside, agricultural, paddock, meadow, woodland or another green-field use has been excluded.

The community has expressed a clear desire to protect what is special about Medbourne for future generations. Its setting in an area of exceptional landscape

quality is perceived as being of very high importance and an important consideration in meeting the long-term vision for the Parish.

In statutory planning terms, land outside a defined Limits to development boundary, including any individual or small groups of buildings and/or small settlements, is classed as open countryside.

It is national and local planning policy that development in the countryside should be carefully controlled. Development will only be allowed where it is appropriate to a rural location, such as for the purposes of agriculture, including (in principle) farm diversification, or if needed for formal sport and recreation uses or for affordable housing provision where there is a proven need.

This approach to development in the open countryside is strongly supported through the Neighbourhood Plan to help maintain the unique landscape character setting of Medbourne and retain the open countryside surrounding the village as an attractive, accessible, distinct and non-renewable natural resource.

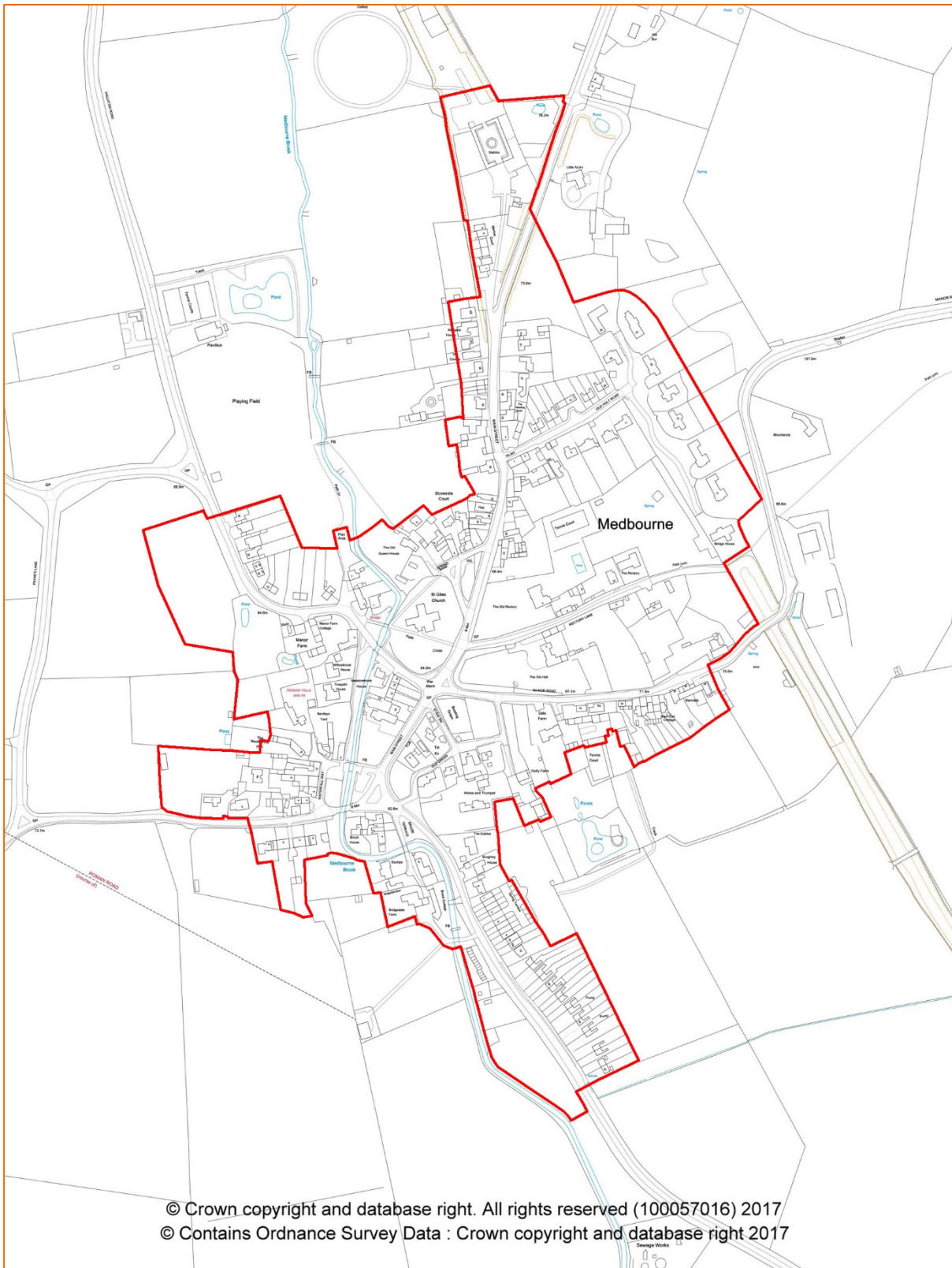
POLICY H2 – THE LIMITS TO DEVELOPMENT - Development proposals in the Plan area will be supported within the Limits to Development as identified in Figure 3.

Land outside the defined Limits to Development will be treated as open countryside, where development will be carefully controlled.

Appropriate development in the countryside includes:

- a) For the purposes of agriculture – including farm diversification and other land-based rural businesses;**
 - b) For the provision of affordable housing through a rural exception site, where local need has been identified;**
 - c) For the provision of a formal recreation or sport use or for rural tourism that respects the character of the countryside;**
 - d) New isolated homes in the countryside will not be supported except in the special circumstances in paragraph 55 of the Framework.**
-

Figure 3: Limits to Development



Housing Mix

A wide range of evidence has been considered to establish the types of housing required in the Parish to 2031. This has been supplemented by community consultation on residents' preferences.

Several key points from the census data 2011 and the housing needs survey produced through the preparation of this Neighbourhood Plan (both in the supporting information as Appendices 4 and 5) were summarised in the section headed 'profile of the community today'.

Policy CS2 of the Adopted Harborough Core Strategy calls for a housing mix based on the latest Housing Market Needs Assessment or local evidence.

The Neighbourhood Plan therefore seeks to provide family houses of two and three bedrooms as the majority of housing to be developed, along with a smaller number of larger houses and some two bedroomed bungalows for older residents to allow them to stay in the community. These policies on housing type directly reflect the need identified through the evidence gathered and mirrors the wishes of local people. In the community questionnaire, responses favoured a more balanced housing stock.

POLICY H3: HOUSING MIX - New housing development proposals should provide a mixture of housing types specifically to meet the latest assessment of identified local needs in Medbourne.

Applications for small family homes (2 or 3 bedrooms) or homes suitable for older people will be supported. Larger homes (4 or more bedrooms) can feature in the mix of housing but will be expected to provide a minority on any single site.

Windfall Development

Windfall sites are small infill or redevelopment sites that come forward unexpectedly and which have not been specifically identified for new housing in a planning document. These sites often comprise redundant or vacant buildings including barns, or a gap between existing properties in a built-up street scene. This Neighbourhood Plan defines windfall sites as developments of four units or less in one location.

Such sites have made a small but regular contribution towards the housing supply in the Parish for a considerable time. As there remain only limited opportunities for windfall development, there is evidence that windfalls will continue to make a small contribution to housing provision in the Parish over the next fifteen years.

POLICY H4: WINDFALL DEVELOPMENT - Development proposals for infill and redevelopment sites (individual dwellings or small groups of dwellings) will be supported where:

- a) The site is within the LTD boundary for Medbourne;**
- b) The site retains existing important natural boundaries such as gardens, trees, hedges and streams;**
- c) The site provides for a safe vehicular and pedestrian access to the site;**
- d) The proposal avoids negative impact on the Conservation area and its setting;**
- e) The site does not reduce garden space to an extent where it adversely impacts on the character of the area, or the amenity of neighbours.**

Design

A largely agricultural settlement, the village's population peaked in the 1860's, declined, and has gradually increased again in recent years. Harborough District Council comments (Medbourne Settlement Profile 2015) that this increase is as a result of Medbourne's reputation for being the most beautiful village in the Welland Valley.

Almost the entire village is now designated as a conservation area, with many original structures dating back to the 16th century and further. The beauty of the built environment of the village is largely attributed to this sense of history and to its eclectic mix of design and architecture, with snapshots of Medieval, Jacobean, Neo-Gothic and Victorian design, all creating a vernacular to the village that is as catholic as it is beautiful. In addition to this there are modern additions such as Drayton Road, Marlow Court, parts of Main Street and Rectory Lane adding to this already broad mix of styles.

As the village is already made up of a good deal of ironstone, red brick, brick or limestone and render, there is no one theme that is prevalent in the village. Therefore, this design statement does not aim to promote or prohibit one particular style of design.

The NPPF (paragraph 58) encourages Neighbourhood Plans to develop robust policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected in the area. However, the NPPF also includes a requirement that development should not be overburdened by policy requirements that threaten viability and guards against imposing architectural styles, although it does seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.

Taking all this into account, we are aiming through the design policy to capture the essence of Medbourne and to reduce the potential negative visual impact of new development, particularly if within the conservation area of the village, and also if adjacent to open countryside or other properties. All development proposals will be encouraged to have regard to the design principles detailed in the supporting information accompanying this Neighbourhood Plan.

The design principles in the supporting information seek, amongst other things, to have regard for local character and recognise the historic importance of listed and ancient buildings. They aim to reflect the importance of new technologies and product design that integrates well into the character of the village.

A set of design requirements provide detail of materials and construction standards and guidelines to help meet the principles.

POLICY H5: BUILDING DESIGN PRINCIPLES - Development proposals including one or more houses, replacement dwellings and extensions should respect local character, having regard to scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout, materials and access, as appropriate. It should take into account the amenity of neighbouring occupiers. Where appropriate, development proposals should provide safe and attractive public and private spaces, and well defined and legible spaces that are easy to get around for all, including those with disabilities.

Development proposals are encouraged to have regard to the building design principles and requirements in Appendix 6 to a degree that is proportionate to the development.

4.3 Natural and Historic Environment

Introduction

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out a number of core planning principles. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment and conserving and enhancing the historic environment are two such principles. Section 11 indicates that the planning system should contribute to, and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils;
- Recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services;
- Minimising impacts on biodiversity and, where possible, providing net gains in biodiversity.

Section 12 highlights that the planning system should positively set out policies for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats by:

- Sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- Recognising the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
- Recognising the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
- Enhancing the opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

The NPPF highlights the importance of the design of the built environment and indicates that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. In order to achieve this neighbourhood plans can set out robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for an area, including the need to respond to local character.

The Medbourne Neighbourhood Plan seeks to protect and enhance buildings and features of importance to the community to guide decisions and put broader strategic heritage policies from the Local Plan into action at a neighbourhood scale (see Policy ENV 5 Built Environment and ENV 6 Ridge & Furrow). This approach is in accordance with Planning Practice Guidance Reference ID: 18a-007-20140306 and in accordance with the guidance contained in paragraphs 109 – 125 (Natural Environment) and 128-141 (Historic Environment) of the National Planning Policy Framework.

The buildings and features identified, which may not be of sufficient architectural or historic merit to justify listing, are an important part of the character of Medbourne Parish and were highlighted as such through consultation during the preparation of the Medbourne Neighbourhood Plan. The policy will ensure they are recognised when planning decisions are made and help ensure they are retained for the community in the future. Works to buildings and structures affecting non-designated local heritage assets should be designed sensitively, with careful regard to the historical and architectural interest and setting.

Larger size versions of the maps are available in Appendix 13.

Landscape, Geology and Setting

Medbourne is situated in the southeast corner of Leicestershire near its border with Northamptonshire, and separated from it on the south by the River Welland.

Medbourne lies in a valley to the west of the 150m hill on which Nevill Holt stands. The northern and western slopes of the hill belong to Medbourne Parish. The steeper slopes up to Nevill Holt are a mixture of trees and pasture land, forming a pleasant backdrop to the village when approached from Slawston, Ashley or Market Harborough. Land to the west of Medbourne rises to 75m. Lying in a natural valley running north to south, the village is bisected by the Medbourne Brook, a tributary of the river Welland. This tributary also forms part of the parish boundary on the north.

Geologically, the parish is underlain by Jurassic sedimentary rocks, mostly clays and shales in the Charmouth and Whitby Mudstone Formations, but with two locally important layers of building stone under the high ground toward Nevill Holt: Northampton Sand Formation and Lower Lincolnshire Limestone Formation. These rocks provided much of the building stone used in the village. The Welland valley and its tributary in Medbourne are floored with alluvium, while higher ground in the northeast is covered by till ('boulder clay') deposited in the ice ages.

Historic Environment

As noted earlier, Medbourne parish has an especially rich historic heritage. While many other Leicestershire parishes are likely to have origins in prehistory and more or less continuous occupation for 8,000 years, Medbourne has solid evidence to prove it. Known sites of Roman, Saxon, Danish and medieval can still be seen and have been excavated and described in the academic literature. Community interest in local history is correspondingly high, with a large amount of locally-published information and records. Consequently, the historic environment has been valued highly in the consultations undertaken for this Plan, and the identification of sites with extant, visible historic evidence for protection is a key component of the

following environmental policies (the range of designations is described in Appendix 8).

The village of Medbourne was designated a conservation area in 1973, with revisions to the boundary in 2005. The historic stone cottages, large elegant houses and leafy walks combine to make the village one of the most picturesque in the Welland Valley.

Natural Environment

Land use history in Medbourne over the centuries has shaped the distribution of what little remains of natural habitats. By the late 16th century, when the parish was largely owned by a few yeoman families, the typical medieval Midlands pattern of three open fields had already been converted into a mosaic of smaller hedged grazing fields, meadow, unenclosed arable areas and common land. By the time of the Parliamentary Enclosure in 1844 – Medbourne was the last parish in Leicestershire to be Enclosed – only the arable areas remained to be redistributed among the landowning families. The result of five centuries of quite intensive mixed farming is a relative lack of ‘natural’ areas; there is very little deciduous woodland or wetland, for example.

Existing Environmental Designations

The parish is located on the boundary between two National Character Areas (Natural England landscape areas, defined for Planning purposes): NCA 93 *High Leicestershire* and NCA 89 *Northamptonshire Vales*. There are 31 Listed Buildings and other historic features, four areas of *Priority Habitat* (as defined by Natural England) and one *Regionally Important Geological Site* (RIGS).

The residents of Medbourne appreciate the contribution their Neighbourhood Plan can make to sustainable development, in particular to the balance between development and the environment that is the foundation of sustainable development as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (2012). The environmental inventory conducted for the Plan, and the following Policies, provide a template for strategic land use planning (including development site allocation) in the Plan Area.

Environmental Inventory

An environmental inventory (Appendix 7) of Medbourne was carried out between October 2016 and February 2017. The work comprised two elements:

- Review of all existing designations and available information, and
- Fieldwork to identify sites and features of natural and historic environment significance in the context of the Plan Area.

The review compiled information from many sources, including DEFRA, Natural England, Historic England, Leicestershire & Rutland Historic Environment Records, Leicestershire & Rutland Environmental Record Centre records (biodiversity and geology), Environment Agency, British Geological Survey, old maps (Ordnance Survey, manuscript), British History Online, local history and archaeology publications, local knowledge

Fieldwork reviewed open land in the Plan Area, and significant species, habitats, landscape characteristics, earthworks and other extant features were checked.

These data, along with all relevant site-specific information from the existing information review, were mapped and tabulated, and each site was scored and evaluated using the nine criteria for Local Green Space selection in the *National Planning Policy Framework 2012*:

Fig. 4. Environmental inventory scoring system used in the Plan

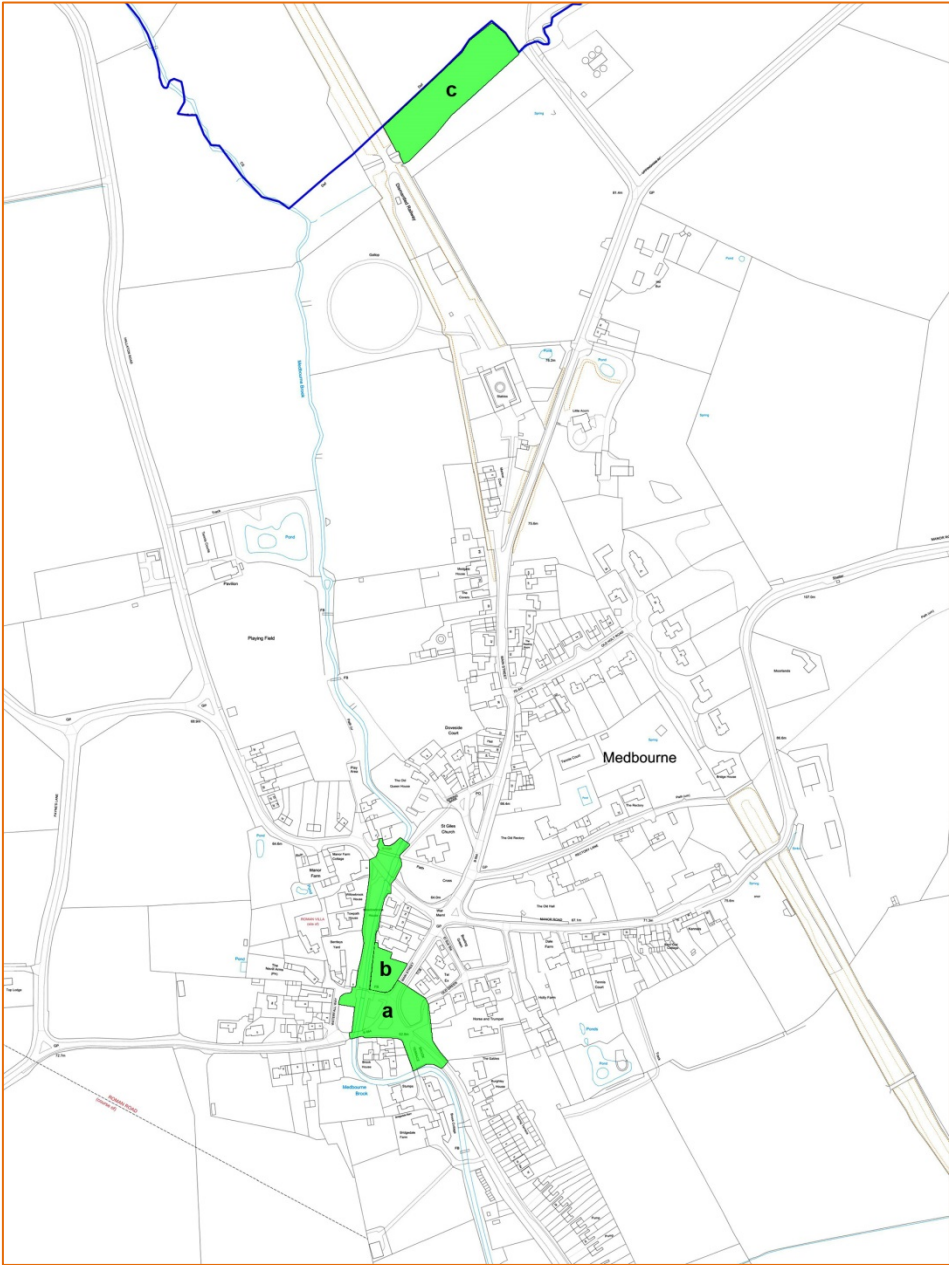
Criterion (NPPF 2012)	Score range			Notes
ACCESSIBILITY	0	1-3	4	e.g. private, no access (0) – could be made accessible – accessed via PRow – fully open to the public (4)
PROXIMITY / LOCAL	0	1-3	4	Distant (0) --- fairly near to --- adjoins (3) or is within (4) settlement
BOUNDED	0	1-3	4	Individual parcel of land (not an undefined or large area)
SPECIAL TO COMMUNITY	0	1-3	4	Opinion of local people via questionnaire or at consultation events
RECREATIONAL / EDUCATIONAL USE	0	1-3	4	Actual or potential, informal sports, dog-walking, Forest School use, informal or official open space, etc.
BEAUTY (including views)	0	1	2	Subjective, relative (give justification); use consultation map results
TRANQUILITY	0	1	2	Subjective, relative (give justification)
HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE	0	1-3	4	Extant, visible evidence. Number of periods/features/records etc. / Relevant existing designations (Historic Environment Records)
WILDLIFE SIGNIFICANCE, GEOLOGY	0	1-3	4	Richness of species and habitats (Priority (BAP) spp. / Priority habitats) / relevant existing designations (Habitat Survey, Local Wildlife Sites / site of geological/industrial history significance)
[Maximum possible score]	32			

Local Green Spaces

Of the approximately 160 inventoried parcels of open land in the parish, 49 were identified as having notable environmental (natural, historic and/or cultural) features. These sites were scored, using the nine criteria for Local Green Space designation noted in the *National Planning Policy Framework 2012* (see table above for the criteria and scoring system adopted for this Plan).

Three sites score 75% (24/32) or more of the maximum possible and meet the essential requirements for designation as Local Green Space as outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF paragraph 77). Their statutory protection will ensure that these most important places in Medbourne’s natural and human environment are protected.

Fig. 5 Local Green Spaces.



POLICY ENV 1: PROTECTION OF LOCAL GREEN SPACE – The sites listed below and shown on the accompanying plans (map Figure 5, detailed in the supporting information, Appendix 9), are designated as Local Green Space, where new development is ruled out other than in very special circumstances.

a	The Towpath
b	Village Hall grounds
c	Leviathan Wood (Medbourne part)

Other sites of environmental significance

A second group of inventory sites scores highly for 'history' and 'wildlife' (scoring at least 4 / 8 under these two criteria) but, because their community value scores are not high enough they are not eligible for Local Green Space designation. The features for which the identified sites have been selected and notified are listed in the environmental inventory (see supporting information). The map (Fig. 6) shows their locations.

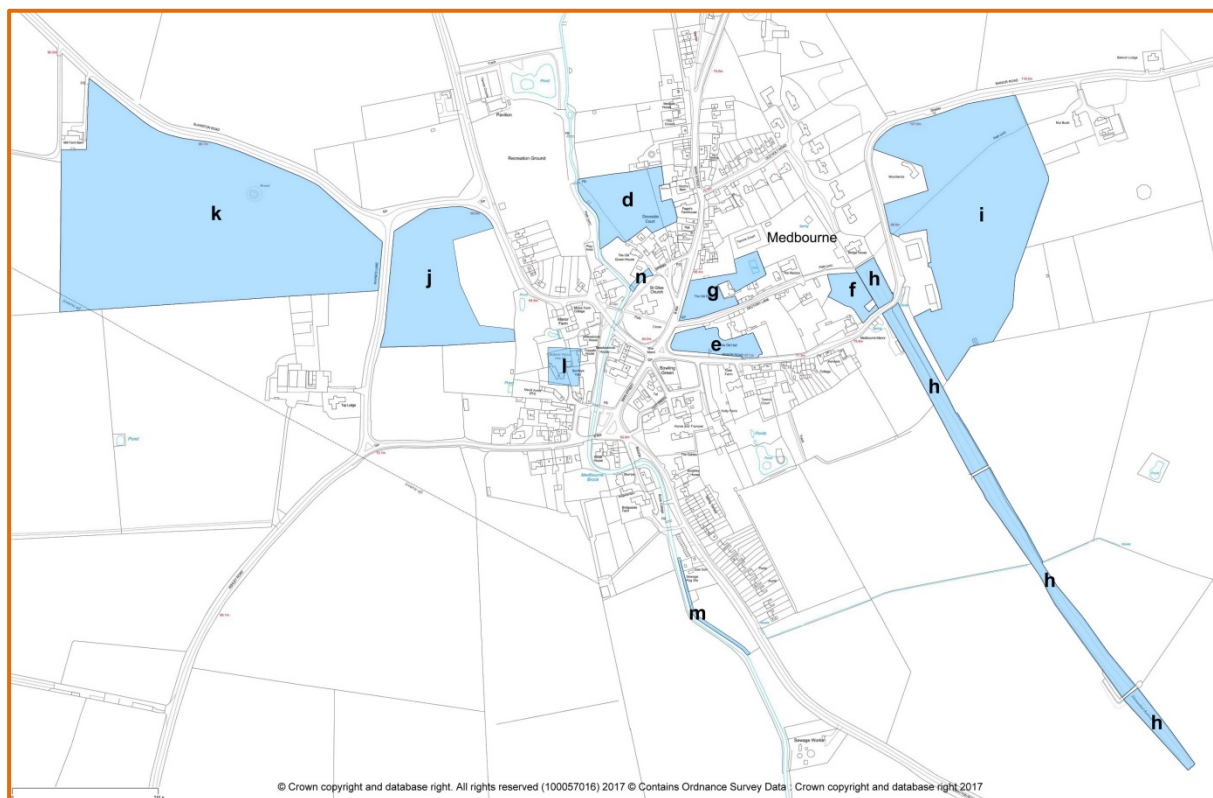
The **historic environment** sites comprise a) sites with *extant and visible* archaeological or historic features recorded in the Leicestershire & Rutland Historic Environment Records database; b) good-quality ridge and furrow fields (for details see Policy ENV 6); and c) other sites of historic and social significance identified in local records and during the inventory process.

The **natural environment** sites comprise a) those where *priority habitats* occur (Natural England mapping) or where *biodiversity action plan (BAP) species* have been recorded as breeding or as regular visitors; and b) sites identified during the inventory process as being of high biodiversity significance in the context of the Plan Area.

POLICY ENV 2: PROTECTION OF OTHER SITES AND FEATURES OF ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE – To be supported development proposals that affect the following sites must:

- a) in the case of heritage assets, demonstrate how they balance any harm or loss with the significance of the feature/s, and the benefits of the proposal;
- b) in the case of biodiversity assets, demonstrate how avoidance of harm, or mitigation, or compensation have been considered.

Fig. 6: Other sites of natural and/or historic environment significance



Reference	Feature / location	Reason for inclusion
d	Pagets Farm, Main Street, paddocks to rear.	Biodiversity
e	Old Hall grounds, Rectory Lane	Biodiversity / Heritage
f	Manor House grounds, Manor Road	Biodiversity / Heritage
g	The Old Rectory, grounds and paddock, Rectory Lane	Biodiversity / Heritage
h	Disused railway line	Biodiversity / Heritage
i	The Moors, east of Manor Road	Biodiversity
j	Top of field to south of Slawston Rd and Paynes Lane junction	Heritage asset (Ridge and Furrow)
k	Mill Field, south Slawston Road	Heritage asset (Ridge and Furrow)
l	Saddlers Cottage grounds, Waterfall Way	Heritage asset
m	Medbourne Brook Buffer Zone, Drayton Road	Biodiversity
n	Old Highway adjacent to Riverside House, Springbank	Heritage

For further detail please refer to the Environmental Inventory in Appendix 7.

Important Open Spaces

A further group of sites scored highly in the inventory (scoring at least 75% of the possible total under the relevant criteria) for their outstanding community value. They have been identified in fieldwork, community consultations and in Parish records; some are existing Open Space, Sport & Recreation (OSSR) sites (e.g. in Harborough District Council (HDC) Consultation documents for *Local Green Space, Open Spaces Strategy* and *Provision for Open Space, Sport and Recreation (2015-2016)* carried out in preparation for the draft Harborough Local Plan.

In Medbourne these sites comprise outdoor sports facilities (recreation grounds), play areas, paddocks and other open spaces among buildings whose open nature preserves the historic layouts of the settlements and provides village views, village greens and wide roadside verges of historic and aesthetic value, green lanes, 'drifts' (old droving routes), informal open spaces, and Community nature reserves and woodland.

The value of all these sites as open space within and close to the built-up areas and/or their current, or potential, value, as community resources are recognised in the following Policy and Community Action.

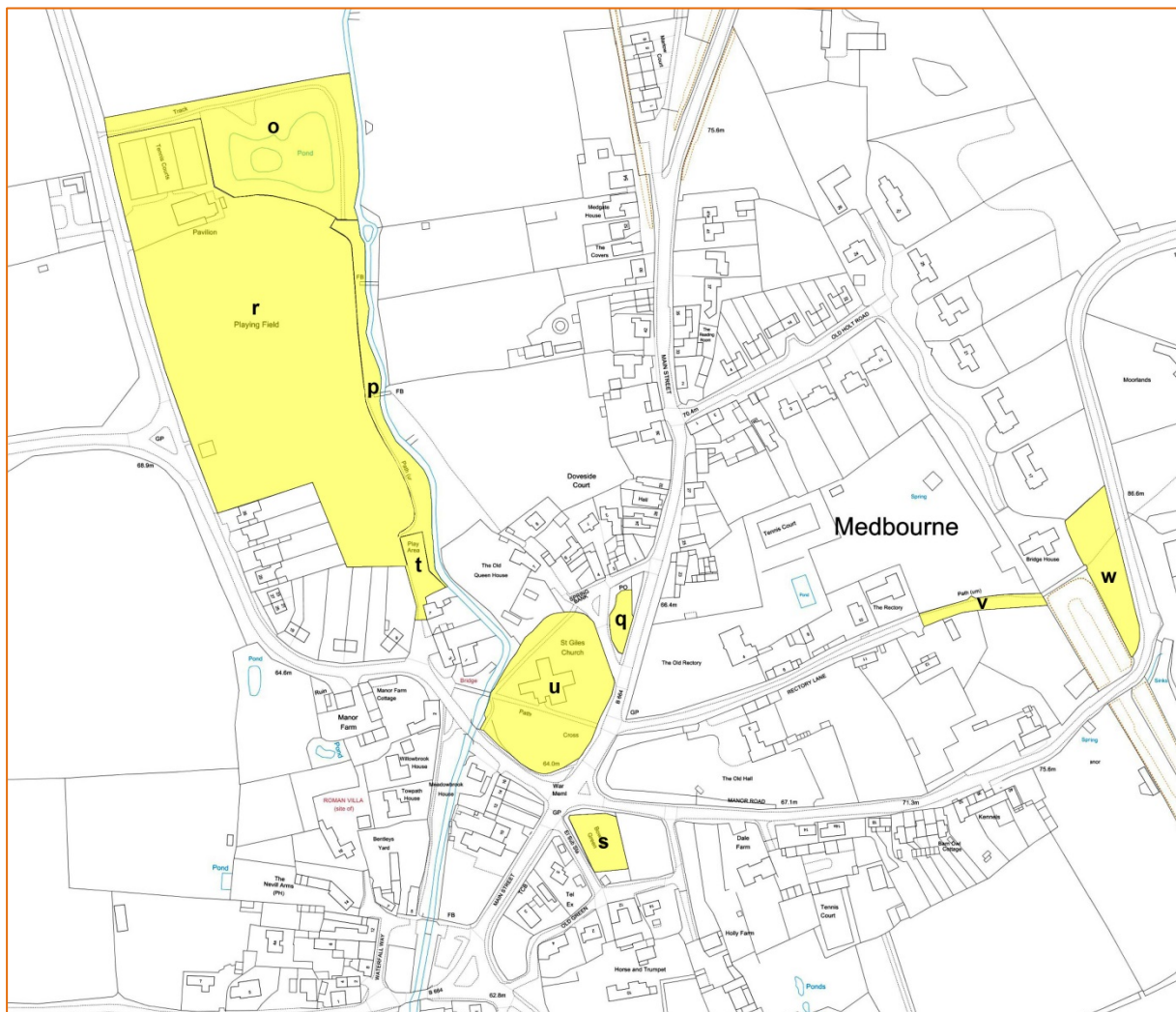
POLICY ENV 3: OTHER IMPORTANT OPEN SPACES – Development proposals that would lead to loss of, or harm to, the following important open spaces will not be supported except where sports or recreation facilities are being replaced by equivalent or better provision in a no less convenient location for users. Proposals to enhance the amenity of the open spaces will be supported.

Reference	Feature / location	Reason for inclusion
o	The Hollow	Natural and semi-natural greenspace
p	Walk leading to the Hollow	Natural and semi-natural greenspace
q	Open space, Springbank (recommended as Local Green Space LGS/MED/8 by HDC 2015)	Amenity Greenspace
r	Sports Ground and tennis courts	Outdoor Sports facilities

s	Bowling Green	Outdoor Sports facilities
t	Play Area	Provision for children and Young People
u	St Giles Churchyard	Cemeteries and other burial grounds
v	The Driftway (grassed area) top of Rectory Lane	Green corridors or greenways
w	Paddock by Kissing Gate, Manor Road	Greenways

For further detail please refer to the Environmental Inventory in Appendix 7.

Figure 7: Important Open Spaces



COMMUNITY ACTION ENV 1: The Parish Council will work with Harborough District Council and other interested parties to seek designation of new OSSR sites as appropriate

Biodiversity and Wildlife Corridors

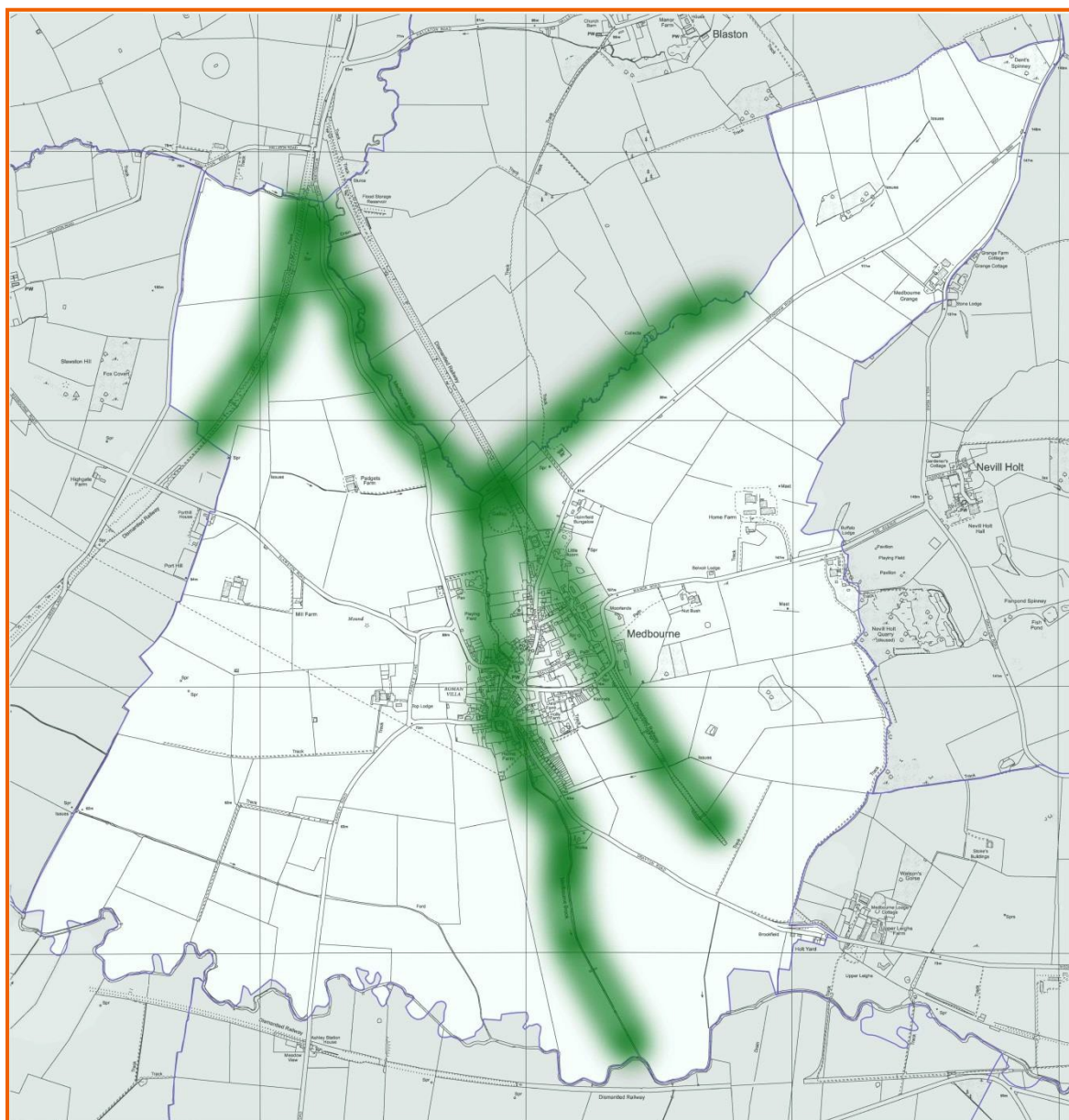
Medbourne has relatively few substantial sites of importance for wildlife, meaning that biodiversity overall is relatively low. The need for every community to make its own contribution to reversing the current threats to and loss of priority habitats and species is recognised in the parish.

Biodiversity enhancement (species and habitats) is supported by the National Planning Policy Framework, which is itself compliant with the European Habitats Directive 1992 (*Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora*) and the UK *Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations, 2010, Amended 2012*.

The Policy and Community Action here provide for four proactive measures: protection in the planning system for the wildlife corridor(s) identified as important elements in the connectivity of species and habitats; having up-to-date information about Parish wildlife; requiring developers to take biodiversity into account in their proposals; and mobilising the community to create new, and manage existing, habitats to enhance biodiversity.

POLICY ENV 4: BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE CORRIDORS - To be supported development proposals must safeguard locally significant habitats and species and demonstrate they take opportunities to create new habitats for wildlife. Proposals must demonstrate they will not harm the integrity and effectiveness of the wildlife corridors identified on Figure 8 and must not create barriers to the permeability of the landscape for wildlife in general, nor fragment populations of species of conservation concern.

Fig. 8: Wildlife corridors



COMMUNITY ACTION ENV 2: BIODIVERSITY

- a) The Parish Council in conjunction with other bodies will, when this Plan is reviewed, update the environmental inventory list of known sites of biodiversity interest prepared for this Plan;
- b) The Parish Council will work with community groups, landowners, funders and other organisations to enhance the biodiversity of the Parish by creating and/or managing habitat sites (e.g. wildflower meadows, woodland, wetland) on suitable parcels of land.

Historic Environment: buildings and structures of local significance

LISTED BUILDINGS

31 buildings and structures in the Plan Area have statutory protection through Listing at Grade II* or II. The Neighbourhood Plan lists them for reference, and to note that new development will be required to take into account their *settings* as defined, on a case by case basis, by Historic England. Their location within, or close to, sites designated or noted for protection in the Plan's Policies and Community Actions, contributes to these sites' evidence of significance.

The Statutorily Listed Buildings are listed in the supporting information, Appendix 10.

LOCAL LIST –buildings and structures of local significance

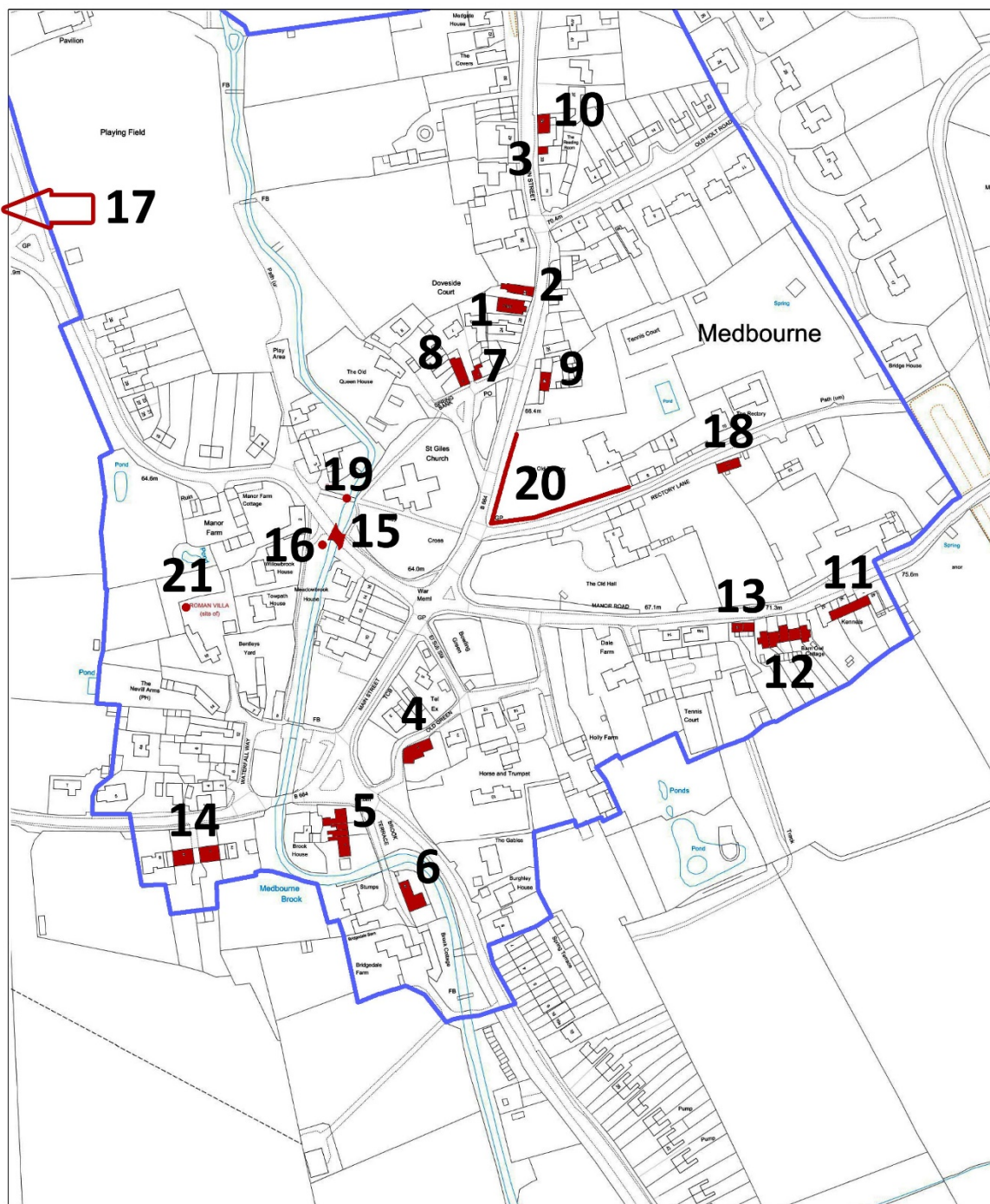
The Neighbourhood Plan identifies a number of other buildings and structures in the built environment of Medbourne that are considered to be of local significance for architectural, historic or social reasons (details in supporting information, Appendix 11). Their inclusion here records them in the Planning system as *non-designated heritage assets*.

The map below shows the location of the local list and shows the Conservation Area (Marked with a blue line).

Development proposals will be expected to safeguard the settings of Listed Buildings in the Plan Area.

POLICY ENV 5: BUILT ENVIRONMENT: NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS – Development proposals that affect an identified non-designated building or structure of local historical or architectural interest or its setting will be expected to conserve or enhance the character, integrity and setting of that building or structure.

Fig. 9: Local Heritage List for Medbourne: buildings and structures of local significance



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COMMUNITY ACTION ENV 3. BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The following buildings are identified as potential non-designated heritage assets.

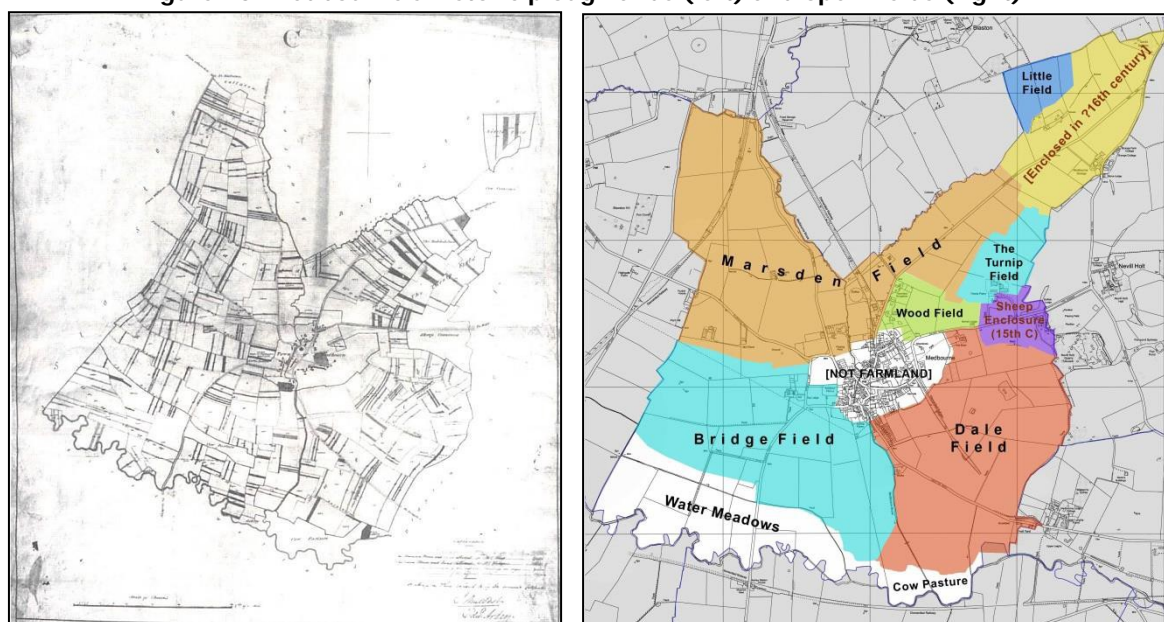
1.	Mission Hall, Main Street
2.	Chapel School House, Main Street
3.	Reading Room, Main Street
4.	Cobblers Cottage, Old Green
5.	Brook Terrace, Drayton Road
6.	Burnside, 8 Brook Terrace
7.	Village Stores and Post Office, Springbank
8.	Springbank cottages
9.	Old Forge Cottage, Main Street
10.	Old Co-Op, 35 Main Street
11.	Old Fernie Hunt Kennels, Manor Road
12.	Row of 5 cottages, 22-30 Manor Road
13.	Spring Cottage and Nevill Cottage, Manor Road
14.	Old Fernie Hunt Stables, Ashley Road
15.	'Irish Bridge' (ford), Hallaton Road
16.	Millenium Plinth, (towpath)
17.	Mill Mound, Slawston Road
18.	The Cottage, Rectory Lane
19.	Plaque on Medieval Packhorse Bridge, Hallaton Road.
20.	Brick wall around the Old Rectory, Rectory Lane and Main Street
21.	Roman Villa site, Saddlers Cottage, Waterfall Way.

Ridge and Furrow

A characteristic and very important feature of Medbourne is the survival of a significant area of ridge and furrow remaining in the modern fields. A desk- and field-based study was undertaken for this Plan, using old maps, LIDAR and conventional aerial imagery and published and unpublished research. Fig. 10, below provides an inventory of the results and represents the current situation.

The historic parish of Medbourne, with the village at its centre, was farmed using the open '3-field' field system for over thousand years, certainly from the Early Medieval Period and possibly from soon after the end of the Roman occupation. Cultivation – cereals, legumes and fallow/pasturage - was rotated on a 3-year basis. Ploughing was by oxen; the medieval plough did not have a reversible coulter, so as the plough team went up and down the furlongs the soil was always thrown to the same side, cumulatively forming strips of ridges and furrows with a height difference of up to two metres.

Figure 10: Medbourne's historic ploughlands (left) and open fields (right)



The 'typical' medieval three-field pattern was not followed throughout this period in Medbourne, however: from the 15th century on, parts of the three fields were 'enclosed' and converted from arable to permanent grazing or parkland. The Estate map above left shows the surviving furlongs of ploughland in 1835, while that above right is an interpretation, based on this, of the distribution of surviving open fields, previous enclosures and meadowland before the Enclosure Award of 1844.

Probably because of these early enclosures and the pattern of land ownership, the Parliamentary Enclosure of Medbourne in 1844 was the last in Leicestershire (where most parishes' open fields were enclosed in the late 18th century). At enclosure, the fields were subdivided with hedges or fences and almost all were

converted to rectangular parcels of permanent grazing land, thus 'fossilising' all the features of the medieval farmed landscape, including the furlongs, headlands, sikes and baulks.

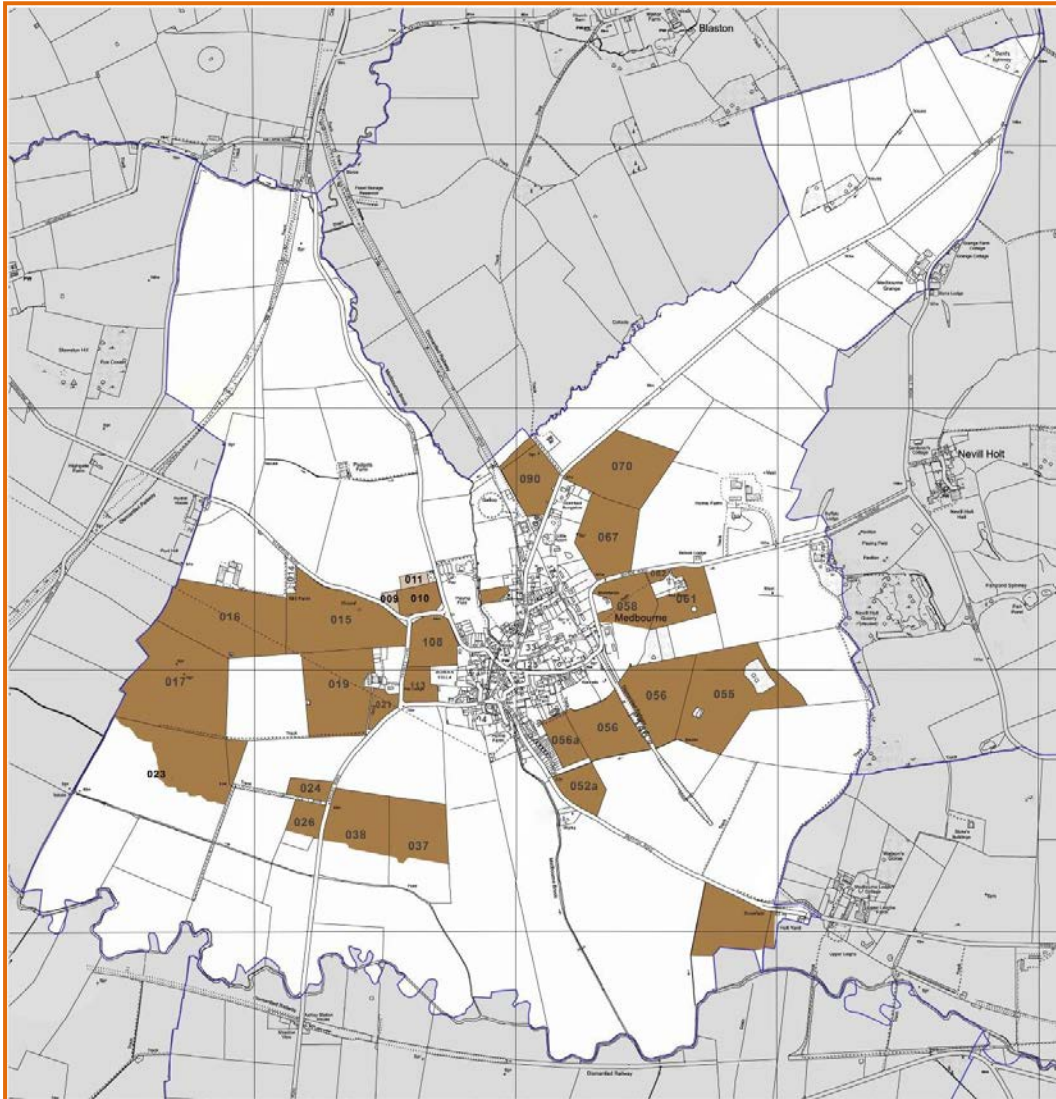
A return to arable farming, using modern ploughs, during the late 20th century caused the destruction of most ridge and furrow across the Midlands (Hall, D 2001, *Turning the Plough. Midland open fields: landscape character and proposals for management*. English Heritage and Northamptonshire County Council). The national trend has been a loss of between 85% and 100% per parish, most since 1947. Medbourne has seen a similar, significant decline in ridge and furrow fields, although as noted above some of the loss took place in earlier centuries. Of the agricultural fields in the parish, 21 (17.5%) still retain traces of ridge and furrow (roughly 110 hectares of the c. 750 hectares of open land, 15% by area).

In English legislation (except for the few that coincide with Scheduled Monuments) ridge and furrow fields are not statutorily protected, despite a recognition that "*as the open field system was once commonplace in NW Europe, these [surviving] sites take on an international importance*" (English Heritage, 2012).

While individual fields in Medbourne are not claimed to be of international importance, the well-preserved groups are important in their own right and valued by the local community; any further, avoidable, loss would be irreversibly detrimental. Historic England strongly recommends treating all surviving ridge and furrow as *non-designated heritage assets*, and this is the approach taken in this Plan. However, involvement with local farmers and agricultural landowners on a case-by-case basis will be necessary to achieve a sustainable balance between the historic environment heritage and viable agriculture.

POLICY ENV 6: RIDGE AND FURROW – The areas of ridge and furrow earthworks identified on Figure 11 are identified as potential Non-Designated Heritage Assets.

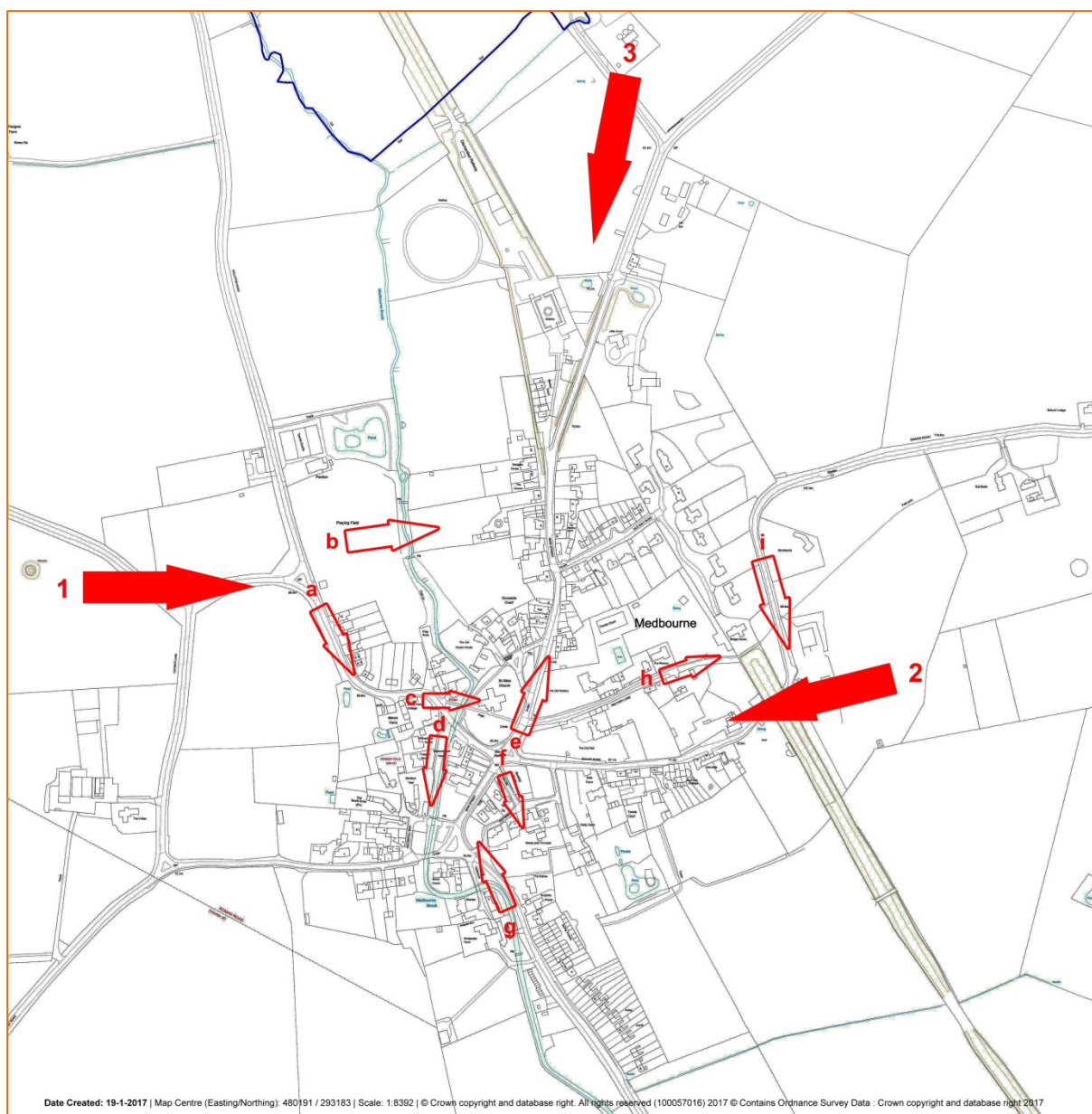
Fig. 11: Surviving Ridge and Furrow in Medbourne is a *non-designated heritage asset*



Important Views

Consultation during the Neighbourhood Plan's preparation identified a widely-held wish to protect Medbourne's rural setting, and its relationship with the surrounding farmland and the wider landscape, including its position in a gap between high ground to the west and east and the wide Welland valley to the south.

Fig. 12: Important views. See text for explanation



One of the main ways in which residents expressed this wish was by describing a number of highly-valued views within the village and toward it from the surrounding countryside. These consultation findings were supported by the environmental inventory, which although principally aimed at identifying sites of environmental significance also confirmed the sight-lines of the suggested views

and mapped them (Figure 12). The three principal views (solid red arrows) should be protected by careful siting of all development in the Parish in the lifetime of the Plan. Ten other views around the village are essential for defining the spaces within the village and interrelationships of the buildings and other features, both of which are the irreplaceable result of centuries of the human history that defines Medbourne.

POLICY ENV 7: PROTECTION OF IMPORTANT VIEWS – Views into and out of the village (Fig 12) are important to the setting and character of the village. To be supported development proposals must not significantly harm these views where seen from publicly accessible locations and should include the treatment of views in any design statement.

Renewable Energy Generation Infrastructure

Medbourne straddles two National Character Areas (as defined by Natural England for planning purposes), with NCA 93 *High Leicestershire* in the north and NCA 94 *Northamptonshire Vales* in the Welland valley. NCA 93 is deeply rural, while NCA 89 has both urban and rural landscapes, but with the distinction between them very strong; the section in Medbourne Plan Area is distinctively rural. The position of Medbourne, where High Leicestershire falls steeply into the Welland valley, provides extensive, uninterrupted views, with only scattered nucleated villages, church spires and woodland copses surrounded by arable fields and pasture.

The parish also straddles two Landscape Character Areas as defined by Harborough District Council in 2007 (they approximately coincide with the NCAs): *High Leicestershire* and *Welland Valley*.

By both landscape character assessments, the Plan Area is part of an intensely rural landscape that would be extremely sensitive to large turbines or badly-sited solar panels.

POLICY ENV 8: RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATION INFRASTRUCTURE - Renewable energy generation infrastructure will be supported where proposals demonstrate that they will not have an unacceptable adverse impact on:

- a) the health, wellbeing or amenities of residents and visitors with respect to noise, visual impact, reflections, glare, shadow flicker, water pollution, smell, air quality, gaseous or particulate emissions.
- b) the character of the surrounding landscape and biodiversity.

And that it:

- a) represents small-scale, local resident, business, amenity or community-initiated, solar and wind generation infrastructure of an appropriate scale for the size, character and level of other facilities, the built environment and services in the village.
 - b) is supported by appropriate and relevant assessments and documentation in respect of, transport, heritage, archaeology, landscape visual impact, environmental impact, flood impact, ecological mitigation, arboriculture (impact and method) and tree reference and protection.
-

Ground stability, Springs and Groundwater

A relatively narrow strip of land on the rising ground east of the village is susceptible to the effects of a combination of three geological and topographical factors. These are:

- A series of stratigraphic and lithological boundaries (bedding planes) between layers of clay, siltstone, ironstone and limestone in the Jurassic Whitby (Upper Lias) and Dyrham (Middle Lias) Formations.
- Cambering (valley-directed tilting and shifting of the rock units, believed to be the result of glacial 'over-deepening' of the Welland valley and its tributaries.
- Cutting of the railway line and associated works through the rock unit boundaries into the hillside in c. 1883, and subsequent neglect of the drains that were part of these works after abandonment of the line in c. 1927.

The effects comprise mass movement (slow landslides), general ground instability (where removal of substrate material is likely to trigger movement or slumping), a broad area of issues and springs (where groundwater seeps or flows from the ground to create sheet or stream flow at the surface) and areas where groundwater is close to, or at, the surface. These effects appear to be exacerbated along the line of the old railway.

Buildings in this zone – both old (Victorian railway cottages) and new (1980s development) are known to have been affected by subsidence and waterlogging. Future development site allocation should avoid this zone, which constitutes only a small proportion of the developable area of the village and thus has no significant restrictive impact on the growth of the village to accommodate the number of dwellings likely to be required in the lifetime of the Plan.

POLICY ENV 9: GROUND STABILITY, SPRINGS AND GROUNDWATER – There will be a presumption against new development in areas of Medbourne known to be susceptible to or at risk of natural ground condition issues (substrate and slope instability, springs and issues, high groundwater levels), as mapped in Fig. 13. Proposals will include a survey for ground stability whose recommendations must be implemented.

Figure 13: Zone of instability, springs / issues and groundwater problems (indicative only).



Blue dots are springs and issues mapped by the Ordnance Survey

4.4 Community Facilities and Amenities

Introduction

Community facilities and amenities provide important infrastructure for the residents of Medbourne, supporting and enhancing the quality of daily life and contributing to the vitality of the village.

Some of these facilities and amenities offer local employment opportunities whilst others provide a focal point for social interaction and support important services; thereby reducing the need to travel, which is particularly important for those who do not have access to a car.

The loss and threatened closure of facilities and services is, however, a common dilemma for rural communities. The viability of many rural services is likely to be challenged further in future as a consequence of squeezed local authority budgets and more car owning residents commuting to work, driving to retail centres and accessing leisure facilities and other amenities further afield.

Medbourne village has a reasonably good range of facilities which include the church, village shop & post office, Village Hall, a pub/restaurant, a café, B&B establishments, children's playground, bowls green and sports club with tennis courts and playing field, as follows:

Village Stores & Post Office

Medbourne Village Stores and Post Office are two separate, but co-dependent businesses based on the same premises. The shop offers a wide range of goods including daily staples (bread, milk, eggs, fresh vegetables, newspapers, etc.) and is also a "Cob Shop" serving visitors, passing trade and builders working locally with tea and coffee, hot and cold rolls, soup, home-baked cakes and other freshly prepared food. The Post Office offers all the usual counter services and together with the shop is an essential amenity for many in the community particularly the elderly and those without their own transport.

Community consultation clearly shows the importance of this amenity to Medbourne residents with over three quarters of questionnaire respondent using the facility once or more every week and only 7% less than once a month. The viability of the Village Stores and Post Office would be strengthened by new developments in Medbourne, through increased trade from those involved in delivering the developments in the short term and, in the longer term, by increased patronage from new residents.

Medbourne Village Hall

Medbourne Village Hall is the Old Village School which is joined to the Old School House and the combined property, built in 1868, is Grade 2 listed. The buildings and land are owned by 'Medbourne Free School Trust' on behalf of the village. The hall and grounds are leased to 'Medbourne Village Hall' a UK registered charity which manages the property on behalf of the village through a committee of volunteers drawn from Medbourne residents.

The Village Hall is an important asset for the community and is ideally located in the centre of the village. The Medbourne Pre-School is currently based there for three mid-week days; there is a nurse-led clinic on Monday afternoons; the 1st Welland Valley Scouts meet on Thursday evenings and there is Pilates on Friday mornings. The hall is used for regular meetings by the Parish Council, the Village Hall Committee and other groups such as the Medbourne W.I. and is also available for private hire functions such as parties and weddings. The hall has a high-speed fibre broadband connection which is provided by Gigaclear.

Consultation clearly shows how important an asset the Village Hall is for the community with over one third of questionnaire respondent using the facility at least once every month and only 12% not using it on a regular basis.

The Nevill Arms

Medbourne is fortunate in having a thriving pub which is frequented by local residents and attracts customers from further afield. The Nevill Arms is an old coaching inn (Grade 2 listed) which offers accommodation and has a café in addition to the bar and restaurant.

Being the only pub, this is an important facility for the Parish, providing employment and attracting visitors as well as being a venue for social interaction.

Community consultation confirms the importance of the village's only remaining pub in defining the character of the village and fostering community cohesion. There is a clear consensus view that it should remain a pub to meet the needs of the community.

St. Giles Church & Burial Ground

St. Giles Church dates back to the 12th Century and is Grade 2* listed. Sited in the heart of the village on raised ground beside the Medbourne Brook it is thought that the site may have been moated at some time. Along with the neighbouring Pack Horse Bridge, the church is a defining element in the character of Medbourne.

St. Giles is part of the Church of England Parish of Six Saints Circa Holt which is served by a Rector and falls within the Dioceses of Leicester. The church holds regular religious services and special Christian services for weddings, baptisms and funerals. The church and grounds are consecrated as a place of worship and burial ground. It was established in the late 1980's that the graveyard would be sustainable for a further 90 years although, as regulations have changed and the time scale for double burying reduced, it is likely that the graveyard could continue to accept new burials beyond 2070.

Recreation Activity Facilities

Medbourne is fortunate in having excellent recreation activity facilities which include the Children's Playground, the Bowling Green, the Sports Club and playing fields. The land used by these facilities is owned by two entities. A registered charity, Medbourne Educational Foundation Trust (MEFT) owns the southerly part of the playing fields and the Children's Playground and Medbourne Parish Council owns the northerly part of the playing fields including the land on which the Sports Club and Tennis Courts are built. The Parish Council also owns the Bowling Green which is located in the centre of the village.

The Children's Playground is managed and maintained by the MEFT. Medbourne Sport Club manages and maintains the other facilities and owns the built infrastructure (clubhouse, tennis courts and carpark). Separate activity clubs (Football, Cricket, Tennis and Bowls) organise their own use of the facilities and club membership.

The Hollow

'The Hollow' is a nature conservation area north of the Sports Club which is accessible to the public as a leisure amenity. The site is owned by Medbourne Parish Council and maintained for them by a volunteer warden. The community values this local amenity with 96% of questionnaire respondents confirming it as important to them.

POLICY CF1: RETENTION OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND AMENITIES
- Development leading to the loss of any of the following community facilities or amenities: village stores and post office; Medbourne Village Hall; the Nevill Arms; St Giles Church and Burial Ground; Recreation Activity facilities; and The Hollow, will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that any of the below apply:

- a) There is no longer any need or demand for the existing community facility or amenity;**

- b) The existing community facility or amenity is no longer economically viable;**
 - c) The proposal makes alternative provision for the relocation of the existing community facility to an equally or more appropriate and accessible location within the Parish which complies with the other general policies of the Neighbourhood Plan.**
-

Community consultation confirmed the importance of enhancing the range and quality of community facilities and amenities in the parish, recognising their value to the local community.

The village hall is in need of substantial renovation, in particular internal decoration, rewiring and removal of the suspended ceiling. The committee has ambitious plans to refurbish and extend the building to include a new kitchen, toilets, and additional meeting rooms. The proposed extension could provide, for example, office facilities and a business meeting room that could also make use of the high-speed broadband connection. Additional youth activities, community meetings/events and a permanent history room are also supported by the community.

Similarly, the Sports Club has undergone expansion in 2016/17 and seeks to ensure that its services and facilities meet the needs of the parish and a wider community.

Whilst visitors and participants from outside of the Parish are very welcome, the primary purpose of these recreation facilities is for the enjoyment of Medbourne residents. For this reason, there is a desire to ensure that residents of the Parish are adequately represented in the management committees of the Sports Club, and this is recognised in a community action.

POLICY CF2: NEW AND IMPROVED COMMUNITY FACILITIES - Proposals that improve the quality and range of community facilities, will be supported provided that the development:

- a) Is of a scale appropriate to the needs of the locality and conveniently accessible for residents of the village wishing to walk or cycle**
 - b) Will not result in unacceptable traffic movements that generate increased levels of noise, fumes, smell or other harmful disturbance to residential properties including the need for additional parking which cannot be catered for within the curtilage of the property.**
-

Community Action CF1: The Parish Council will work with clubs and community groups to provide a framework and the support that will keep groups, clubs, societies, facilities and amenities managed for the benefit of the Parish, so they remain sustainable, vibrant and inclusive whilst focused on serving the Medbourne community.

Assets of Community Value

The designation of a community facility as an Asset of Community Value provides the opportunity to give it added protection from inappropriate development.

The Localism Act 2011 defines an 'Asset of Community Value' as "a building or other land (whose) main use has recently been or is presently used to further the social well-being or social interests of the local community and could do so in the future". The Localism Act states that "social interests" include cultural, recreational and sporting interests.

Where an asset is 'Listed' the Parish Council or other community organisations will be given the opportunity to bid to purchase the asset on behalf of the local community, if it comes up for sale on the open market. Its 'Listing' can also be taken into consideration when determining a planning application for a development proposal which would affect the reason why it was listed.

Assets of special importance to the well-being of the Parish and to which local people have a strong affinity and wish to protect include the village hall, the Nevill Arms Pub and the village stores and Post Office. Others may come forward over the lifetime of the Plan.

Community Action CF2: Assets of Community Value - The Parish Council will support the listing of Assets of Community Value and once listed, will work to support their longevity.

Pavements and Rights of Way

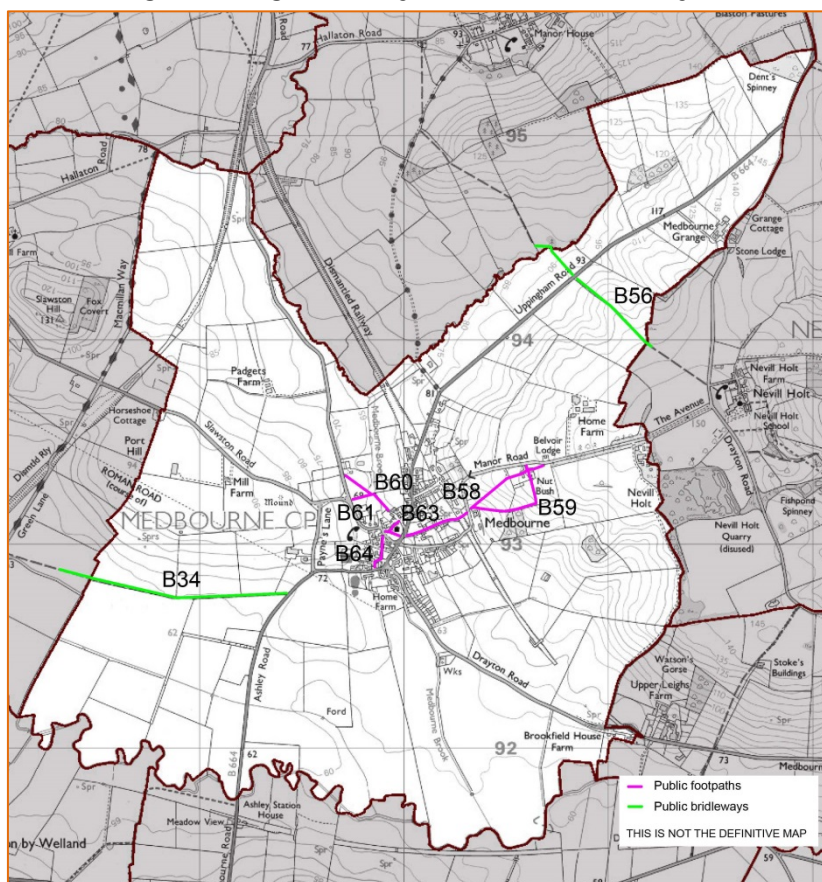
Pedestrian pavements in the village are generally sited on one side of the highway. The exceptions are Main Street south of the Hallaton Road/Manor Road junction and a short stretch of Ashley Road which have pavements on both sides of the road. Pedestrian pavements in Medbourne do not extend beyond the housing settlement area except for Ashley road where the footpath reaches the bend at Paynes Lane. There is no roadside footpath on Uppingham Road as the pedestrian

pavement ends at the entrance to Marlow Court, which is where Main Street becomes Uppingham Road. Medbourne has relatively few non-highway public rights of way as further explained in the narrative. Figure 13 shows the existing network of public rights of way in Medbourne parish.

Public footpaths and bridleways in England are mostly historic rights of way, remnants of the network of 'ways' established by use, over perhaps 14 centuries, as people walked or rode to the fields to neighbouring villages or to local markets. Medbourne has an unusually limited surviving network of these rights of way compared with other parishes in Leicestershire, probably because of the early end to the open field system here and the very late Enclosure Award, which in other parishes allocated responsibility for maintaining the old tracks to new landowners, whereas in Medbourne many rights of way had already lapsed.

The direct routes between Medbourne and nearby villages are now mostly taken by roads, only the bridleway (B34) to Welham remaining vehicle-free. The few public footpaths close to or in the built-up area are mostly the village ends of 'ways' that now lead nowhere. Figure 15 below shows the public rights of way within Medbourne Parish.

Figure 15: Existing Public Rights of Way (Leicestershire County Council mapping)



A popular path along the eastern boundary of the sports field between Hallaton Road and The Hollow is not a public right of way but a permissive path across land owned by Medbourne Educational Foundation Trust and the Parish Council.

Community consultation has identified that existing public footpaths and bridleways are used very frequently (60% of questionnaire respondents use more than weekly and 85% more than monthly). Medbourne residents regard them as important for their recreational (as a contribution to physical and mental health and wellbeing) and socio-historic values.

The community has expressed a strong desire for improvement and additions to the local footpath network. Better links to long-distance routes such as the Macmillan Way would benefit the tourism economy of Medbourne.

Some local landowners are known to be sympathetic to the community aspiration to further extend the existing network by permissive footpaths (using, for example, farm tracks, field margins, old railway land, etc.) and all such opportunities will be pursued through Policies and Community Actions.

The most pressing need is for a public footpath linking the village to Leviathan Wood which would be of great community benefit and avoid the need for pedestrians (and accompanying dogs) to walk in the carriageway or on the verges of Uppingham Road where there is no pedestrian pavement, a blind hump over the old railway bridge and current speed limit of 40 mph which combine to making this a very dangerous route. Two options for a footpath have been identified:

- a) From Marlow Court driveway passing along the back of the gardens and along part of the old railway embankment to reach the southerly corner of the wood.
- b) From the northeast corner of The Hollow following the west bank of Medbourne Brook then crossing the brook and heading east to reach the wood via the underpass in the embankment.

Preliminary discussions with the relevant landowners have indicated a positive attitude to the possibility of a permissive footpath across their land. Follow up and implementation of either one or both options will be pursued by Community Action and, for option b, by a condition of housing development in respect of Site 1 (Policy H1).

Pedestrian footpaths that form part of the public highway are maintained by LCC. Community consultation has highlighted some specific issues and proposals that can be addressed through the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Neighbourhood Plan objectives for this theme are broadly summarised as follows: To retain, improve, create new and extend the network of pedestrian pavements, footpaths and bridleways as leisure activity amenities and to provide safe and sustainable travel options within the Parish between residential housing and community facilities.

References:

- i) Leicestershire Rights of Way Improvement Plan - Action Plan 2011-16, Leicestershire County Council.
- ii). Guidance available at: <http://www.ramblers.org.uk/advice/rights-of-way-law-in-england-and-wales/basics-of-rights-of-way-law.aspx>).

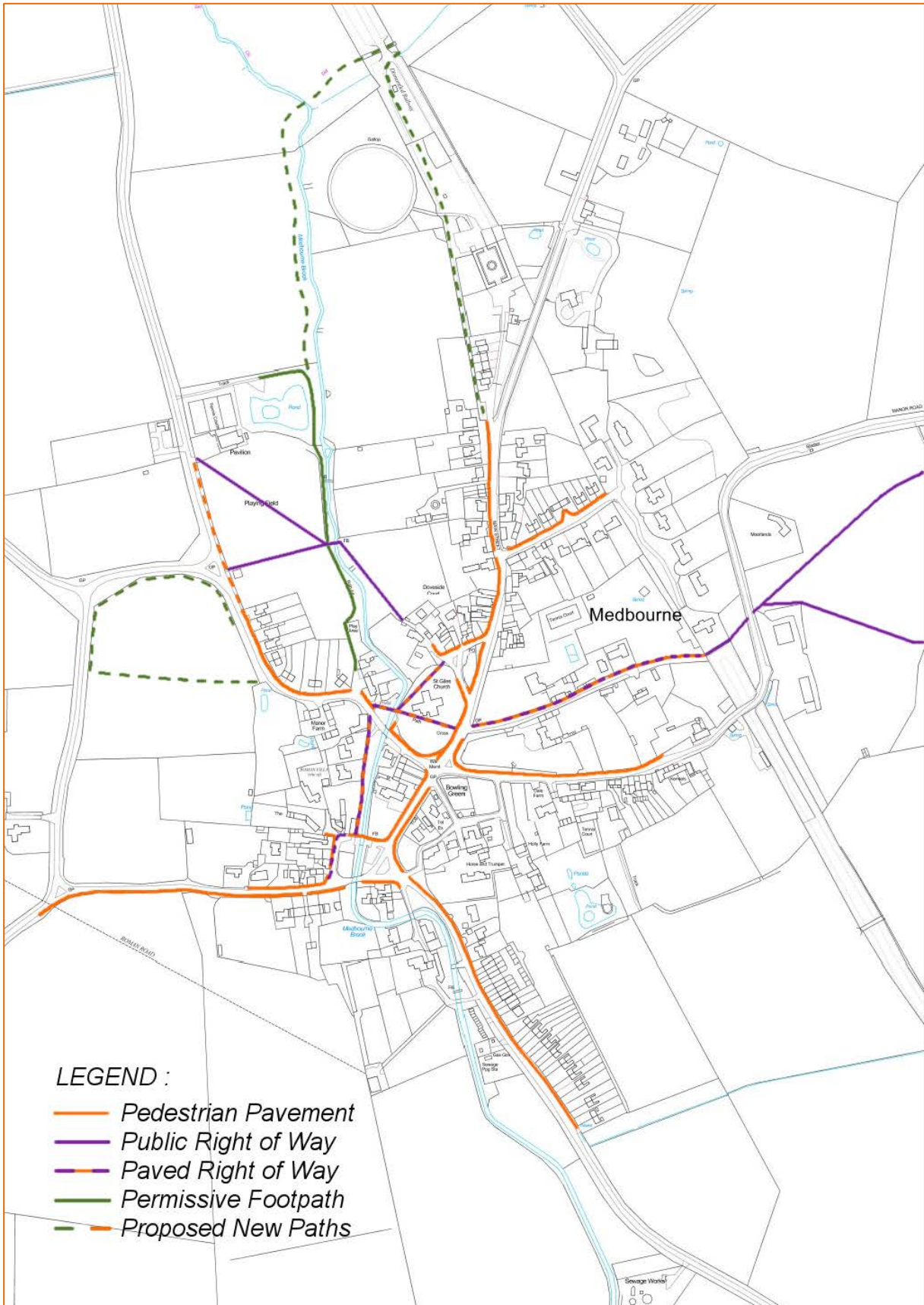
POLICY CF3: PEDESTRIAN PAVEMENTS & FOOTPATHS – Developments that result in the loss of, or have a significant adverse effect on, footways, footpaths and bridleways will not be supported.

The maintenance, upgrading and extension of the existing pedestrian footway network will be supported including:

- a) Extension of the pedestrian pavement on the east side of Hallaton Road to the Sports Club.
- b) Provision of a new footpath route linking existing paths in the village to Leviathan Wood.
- c) New and/or upgraded pedestrian pavements to serve new housing developments and connect them to the existing pedestrian path network.
- d) A pedestrian crossing of Main Street (possibly where kerb lowering already exists at the Village Hall and telephone exchange).

COMMUNITY ACTION FP-03 FOOTPATHS AND BRIDLEWAYS: The Parish Council will work with landowners, community groups, Leicestershire County Council and other bodies to pursue opportunities to improve and extend the network of footpaths and bridleways in the Parish.

Figure 16: Pavements and Rights of Way in Medbourne– existing and proposed



4.5 Transport, Roads and Parking

Introduction

Medbourne is bisected by the B664 road which passes through the Parish and the centre of the village as Ashley Road, Main Street and Uppingham Road. Leicestershire County Council Lorry Restrictions Policy sets no vehicle weight limit on any roads within the Parish and the B664 is designated as part of its "Main Lorry Route Network". This means that all Medbourne roads may be used by Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) of any size and weight up to UK national limits (44 tonnes). Being a rural parish, farm tractors, trailers and other agricultural machinery also use the roads in the area and through the village.

It is a concern that many Medbourne roads and side streets are unsuitable for large heavy traffic which exacerbates deterioration of the road surfaces, causes damaging vibrations in roadside properties and adds significantly to road safety issues, pollution, noise and dirt. The large dimensions of such vehicles additionally cause damage to verges, kerbstones and pedestrian pavements.

There are two particular problem areas in the village where the combined effect of road layout, carriageway width and roadside parking of cars forces larger vehicles driving through to leave the road thereby damaging verges, kerbstones and pedestrian pavements:

- Area 1 – Main Street between Spring Bank and Old Holt Road.
- Area 2 – Manor Road between house numbers 20 and 30.

Parking in the village is highlighted as an issue of concern by over 60% of Medbourne residents. Parking at and around principal village facilities including the Nevill Arms, Village Hall, Church, Shop/PO and the Sports Club is considered inadequate for demand at particular times and when events are on.

Traffic speeding is an issue that concerns most Medbourne residents (86% from the community questionnaire) and there is overwhelming support for traffic calming measures to be implemented on the B664 through the village and on Drayton Road.

The car is the predominant mode of transport used by Medbourne residents with walking also being used for local journeys and leisure. Cycling is mainly a leisure activity rather than used for transport.

Privately contracted bus services run via Medbourne to several schools including Bringhurst Primary School, Uppingham Community College, Leicestershire Grammar, Oakham School and Stamford School.

Medbourne has very limited Public Transport provision with Leicestershire County Council operating 'Demand Responsive Transport' (DRT) taxi services to Leicester and Market Harborough (on limited days) at standard bus fares with passenger places needing to be booked in advance.

Consultation highlighted of primary concern the presence of large vehicles on unsuitable roads; insufficient off-road parking in the village and speeding.

Questionnaire responses reveal that 90 percent of residents never use these public transport services and opinion on the importance/unimportance of bus transport is equally balanced. Paradoxically, 76% of respondents expressed concern over poor public transport and made comments regarding the need for improvement. Public transport also ranked as the highest priority for services associated with new housing development.

There is a dilemma that Rural Rider bus services were withdrawn in May 2015 due to lack of use and there is such low use of the DRT services that they are under threat of withdrawal. The Medbourne community must be realistic about an aspiration for increased public transport when demand is not demonstrated.

A realistic objective for the Neighbourhood Plan is to address transport, roads and parking issues by policies that prevent exacerbation of the identified problems as a result of new housing developments and seek to improve the current situation.

POLICY TR1: TRANSPORT, ROADS AND PARKING – Proposals for improvement of the active travel network, or for a car park convenient for village centre users, will be supported. Proposals that reduce availability of off-road vehicle parking facilities or which generate additional on-road vehicle parking will not be supported.

Community Action TR1: Transport, roads and parking - Medbourne Parish Council will, in conjunction with others, undertake the following actions to help address traffic and parking issues that have been identified through the Neighbourhood Plan including:

- a) **Lobbying LCC to include Medbourne in their Lorry Restrictions Policy of blanket vehicle weight restriction of 7.5 tonnes except on the designated 'Main Lorry Route Network' and as required locally for access;**

- b) Monitoring the problem of damage to verges, kerbs and pedestrian pavements caused by vehicles driving off the road at pinch points for through traffic;
 - c) Support the possible improvement of car parking provision for the village residents and visitors; and
 - d) Discussing with LCC Highways Department appropriate traffic calming measures for the village and extensions of the 30 MPH limits to incorporate new development.
-

4.6 Economy - Business and Employment

Medbourne is a rural parish some distance from major employment centres and, as the village is predominantly a residential settlement; employment opportunities within the Parish itself are limited. Small scale employers located in the Parish include the Nevill Arms pub and café, the Village Stores/Post Office, the Pre- school and some nearby farms. Many Medbourne residents therefore commute to work outside the parish or work from home. The effect of limited local employment opportunities combined with high property values impacts particularly on young people who often move away from the area.

The questionnaire analysis indicates that of those in employment (55% of respondents), 31% of are employed locally (within 10 miles of Medbourne) on a full or part time basis and 27% commute to employment further afield. Census data reveals that 49% travel to work by car, which is above the rates for the East Midlands (46%) and England (40%).

A notably high 11.5% work at home, double Harborough-wide levels and more than three times those for the East Midlands and England. This information supports findings from earlier research that Medbourne has a higher than average proportion of home workers many of whom are professionals in independent practice and/or company executive level employees. The diverse mix of self-employment is also made up by a significant number of artisans, crafts and skilled trades in fields as diverse as glass, carpentry, furniture making and other fields. It is evident that with improving telecommunications and changing employment patterns nationally, this trend is likely to continue.

There are a number of equestrian businesses in and around the Parish. These include several livery yards and stables that offer horse rides and lessons. Medbourne is within the area of the Fernie Hunt, which has several local meets per season. These equestrian activities provide some local employment opportunities and bring visitors to other Medbourne facilities including the café, shop, accommodation and campsite.

The strength of the local economy and vitality of the community go hand in hand so support for the local economy and encouragement for its growth are important themes of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Support for Business & Employment

Where there are buildings dedicated to business use in the Parish it is recommended that they be protected against loss to other uses by restricting the premature demolition or conversion of existing commercial premises (B class uses) for non-commercial purposes. Only if it is clearly demonstrated that there is little

prospect of the existing building or land being used for employment-generating purposes should this be supported.

In order to demonstrate that commercial land or property can be redeveloped for non-commercial uses, the land or buildings must not have been in active use for at least twelve months and it must be clear that there is little or no prospect of the premises or land being reoccupied by an employment-generating user in the future. This must be demonstrated by a sustained marketing campaign lasting at least six months, undertaken through an appropriate commercial agent, to show that all reasonable steps have been taken to market the property and that there has been no interest from a credible party.

POLICY E1: SUPPORT FOR EXISTING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES – Development proposals that will result in the loss of employment land or premises will only be supported where:

- a) The commercial premises or land in question has not been in active use for at least 12 months; and**
- b) The commercial premises or land in question has no potential for either reoccupation or redevelopment for employment-generating uses and as demonstrated through the results both of a full valuation report and a marketing campaign lasting for a continuous period of at least six months.**

New Employment Opportunities

New employment initiatives in the right location can help to boost and diversify the local economy and provide more local employment opportunities.

78% of those responding to the questionnaire would welcome more business to the Parish, specifically cottage industry, homeworking, smaller workshops and, possibly, further retail outlets (although it is recognised that sustaining one shop is challenging enough for a community the size of Medbourne and supporting existing businesses should be a priority). Any new business should be appropriate and the questionnaire revealed unanimous opposition to larger scale industrial units as not be in keeping with the character of the Parish and the traffic capacity of local roads.

Any new employment initiatives should be sensitive to the character of the parish. Employment proposals should only be seen as acceptable if they avoid harmful

impacts such as increased traffic, parking, residential amenity, the preservation of historic/heritage assets and the local environment.

The Neighbourhood Plan recognises and supports the increasing numbers of people who conduct their businesses from home. This is reflected through policies to encourage a diverse range of housing types and support for proposals to extend or convert suitable buildings to accommodate such businesses.

POLICY E2: SUPPORT FOR NEW EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES –To be supported new employment development proposals (including live/work units) must:

- a) Be located within the limits to development identified in Figure 3, unless it relates to development and diversification of agricultural and other land based rural businesses or sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities, and visitors, and which respect the character of the countryside;**
- b) Not adversely affect residential amenity or the character of the surrounding area; and**
- c) Not result in on-street parking of vehicles.**

Farm diversification and Re-use of agricultural and commercial buildings

There are several working farms in the Parish, managed directly or farmed on a contract basis. Given potential challenges facing the agricultural economy, the Neighbourhood Plan will seek to support farming businesses within the Parish as they are considered essential to maintaining a balanced and vibrant rural community.

The conversion of farm buildings can enable diversification through sustainable re-use to provide opportunities for new businesses which can generate income and offer employment opportunities for local people. Subject to the proper consideration of residential amenity, visual impact on the countryside, heritage, environmental and highway safety issues, Neighbourhood Plan policies will support farm businesses by:

- Promoting a sustainable farming and rural economy in Medbourne Parish
- Promote the diversification of rural businesses
- Encourage businesses to provide a wider range of local produce, services and leisure facilities, to provide local employment and attract visitors to the

Parish;

- Maintain and enhance the local environment of rural and agricultural lands.

The change of use of some rural buildings to new uses is already permitted under the General Permitted Development Orders. The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment and Consequential Provisions) (England) Order 2014 allows, under certain circumstances, the change of use of agricultural buildings to residential use and change of use of agricultural buildings to registered nurseries providing childcare or state-funded schools, under the prior approval system.

POLICY E3: Re-use of Agricultural and Commercial Buildings - The re-use, conversion and adaptation of farm buildings for small businesses, recreation, or tourism purposes will be supported where:

- a) The conversion/adaptation works do not adversely affect the local character of the surrounding area;**
- b) The building is structurally sound and capable of conversion without substantial reconstruction;**
- c) The proposal will not result in on-street car parking.**

Visitor Economy

Medbourne is attractive as a destination for rural leisure activities which include cycling and walking as well as less strenuous pastimes and just relaxing in pleasant surroundings. Medbourne supports several businesses that facilitate this economy by providing accommodation (the Nevill Arms and two B&B establishments), food (Village Stores, the Nevill Arms and Café) and a Camp Site (Rural Relaxing).

Leicestershire's tourism strategy recognises the importance of tourism in providing 'sustained and sustainable growth and playing an increasingly significant role in the success of the economy, creating a strong sense of place and improved quality of life for Leicestershire people'. (Draft tourism strategy for Leicestershire, 2016). This is also in accordance with Section 3 of the NPPF which encourages planning policies that support sustainable rural tourism.

The questionnaire responses confirmed that visitors are welcomed with 78% in agreement that more should be done to attract visitors to Medbourne and 72% in support of developing facilities to enhance this business activity

POLICY E4: VISITOR ECONOMY - Tourism and visitor economy development proposals will be supported where they do not have adverse residential or visual amenity impacts.

The loss of tourism and leisure facilities will not be supported unless they are no longer viable or alternative provision is made available.

Home based working

In rural areas such as Medbourne with limited employment opportunities, the benefit of supporting home based working is that it helps to promote employment whilst reducing the dependency of the car for long journeys to employment sites outside the Parish.

Currently, 11.5% of village inhabitants work from home. Greater connectivity through technology and increasing self-employment suggest this growing trend is likely to continue.

The Questionnaire elicited a significant number of comments calling for improved community support for homeworkers, sole traders and small businesses. The Neighbourhood Plan proposes a Community Action to support these measures:

Community Action E1: Home based working – The Parish Council will support the objective of delivering improved community-based support to homeworkers, sole traders, small businesses and start-up enterprises within the Parish; including the following:

- a) Light Industrial / workshop units for trades, artisans, etc.**
 - b) Enterprise centre / small office facilities / incubator services**
 - c) Networking opportunities / events / collaboration / mutual support.**
-

Communications Infrastructure

Medbourne is fortunate for a rural village in having relatively good high-speed broadband provision with competing services available via the BT Openreach network (ADSL and FTTC 'Fibre to the Cabinet') and Gigaclear (FTTP 'Fibre to the Premises'). 66% of questionnaire respondents rated their broadband service as good or very good.

By contrast, the mobile network signal is extremely patchy throughout the Parish. Based on data from OpenSignal, the signal strength is generally weak although the O2 4G signal strength appears to be better in some parts of the village. 70% of questionnaire respondents rated their mobile phone service poor or very poor.

It is expected that the good broadband provision could act as a draw for homeworkers and small businesses and assist such enterprise already in the village to flourish. However, the poor mobile phone service could negate this positive effect and so is addressed by the Neighbourhood Plan.

POLICY E5: COMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE - Proposals to provide increased access to a super-fast broadband service and improve the mobile telecommunication network that will serve businesses and other properties within the parish will be supported.

Proposals for above ground communications cabling will only be supported where it is demonstrated underground installation is not possible and installation will not have a detrimental visual impact on the landscape.

All new developments should have access to superfast broadband (of at least 30Mbps) Developers should take active steps to incorporate superfast broadband at the pre-planning phase and should engage with telecoms providers to ensure superfast broadband is available as soon as build on the development is complete.

5. INFRASTRUCTURE

All development has the potential to impact on the environment and place pressure on local infrastructure and services. It is recognised that the planning system should be used to ensure that new development contributes positively to the local environment and helps to mitigate against any adverse impacts on infrastructure.

Appropriate infrastructure is therefore critical to support the provision of development. This is not only to ensure that the new development is properly served in respect of essential day-to-day infrastructure required by the occupants of any new development but also to minimise the impact upon existing infrastructure.

The NPPF stresses, however, that the need for infrastructure accompanying development must have regard for the viability of that development. Planning Practice Guidance (PPG 46) also recognises the ability of The Plans to identify the need for new or enhanced infrastructure, but requires the Plan to prioritise the infrastructure requirements.

Provision of the necessary physical and community infrastructure arising from proposed development is therefore a critical component of the Plan, which has identified a wide range of potential infrastructure requirements through its production.

Funding for new infrastructure is currently provided through a legal agreement (often referred to as a Section 106 Agreement) between the District Council and the applicant, along with other parties involved in the delivery of the specific infrastructure improvement (such as the County Council Education Department in relation to the impact on school places).

Once the new Local Plan has been adopted, however, HDC will be considering the introduction of what is known as a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) where charges will be applied according to the scale and type of development, and these funds used to contribute towards the infrastructure requirements of development.

The provision of these diverse elements of infrastructure needs to be timely if deficiencies are to be avoided.

COMMUNITY ACTION INF 1: DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS – The Parish Council will seek to prioritise the use of financial contributions, whether from Community Infrastructure Levy or negotiated obligations, for improvements to and enhancement of community facilities; improvements to traffic management; and enhancement of footpaths and cycleways.

6. MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Neighbourhood Plan will last until 2031. During this time it is likely that the circumstances which the Plan seeks to address will change.

Medbourne Parish Council will review the Plan on a regular basis, commencing in year 5 (2022) to make sure that it takes into account any changes in National Planning Policy and the Harborough District Council Development Plan. If it is considered by the Parish Council that changes are necessary to the Neighbourhood Plan, it will commence a formal review in conjunction with the Local Planning Authority.

A further review will be undertaken in 2027, at which point consideration will be given, and if necessary processes commenced, to develop a further Neighbourhood Plan for the benefit of the residents of Medbourne.

7. APPENDICES

The Appendices referred to in the text are as follows:

- Appendix 1 – Basic Conditions Statement
- Appendix 2 – Consultation Statement
- Appendix 3 – Housing Site Assessment
- Appendix 4a – Census Data
- Appendix 4b – Land Registry Data
- Appendix 5 – Housing Needs Report
- Appendix 6 – Design Guide
- Appendix 7 – Environmental Inventory
- Appendix 8 – Environmental Designations
- Appendix 9 – Local Green Space Designations
- Appendix 10 – Listed Buildings in Medbourne
- Appendix 11 – Local Heritage Assets
- Appendix 12 – Important Views Descriptions
- Appendix 13 – Larger Size Maps



Logo design by Alis Iacob, DyannDesign

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Thanks to Dyann Design for the Medbourne Neighbourhood Plan logo and to the organisations below for their input and financial support

