

Arnesby Neighbourhood Plan Review

2011 – 2031

Referendum version



Foreword

Arnesby is an attractive place in which to live and work and is surrounded by open countryside. Residents wish to maintain these qualities but recognise that the Parish must continue to grow to reflect the need for development across the District.

We embarked on the process of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan in 2016 to give us control over these important matters and to help address other issues that have been raised through the process. The Arnesby Neighbourhood Plan passed Referendum on 28 February 2019 with a 90% 'yes' vote and a turnout of 46.7%. The Plan was Made (became a part of the Local Development Plan for Harborough District), by Harborough District Council on 8 March 2019 and has been used since then to help determine planning applications in the Parish based around the Plan's commitment to ensuring that any new housing meets a local need, that the important environmental areas in the parish are protected and that business development remains appropriate to the community.

In the time since the Neighbourhood Plan was Made there have been a number of important legislative changes which impact upon the neighbourhood planning process. The new Harborough Local Plan was adopted in April 2019 and the UK has left the EU. Meanwhile, Planning Practice Guidance in relation to neighbourhood planning was updated in the summer of 2021 and updates to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) have taken place in 2018, 2019, 2021 and 2023. These changes to the NPPF have reinforced the range of powers that Neighbourhood Plans have where they undertake residential site allocations.

As a result, the Parish Council took the decision to review the Neighbourhood Plan in summer 2022 to see how the policies were working and whether any needed to be updated or added to. This Neighbourhood Plan reflects the outcome of that review with all of the changes from the first Neighbourhood Plan summarised in section 1 headed 'What has changed from the Made Neighbourhood Plan?'

I would like to thank Officers from Harborough District Council for their support as we have undertaken this work, to YourLocale for the preparation of this Neighbourhood Plan based on community aspirations and for the grant funding received from Locality, without which the preparation of this Neighbourhood Plan would not have been possible.

David Johnson
Chair, Arnesby Parish Council

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1 What changes have been made?

The following changes have been made to the Neighbourhood Plan (other than planning policy updates and formatting amendments) which was Made by Harborough District Council on 8 March 2019:

The Chair of the Parish Council and the Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group has updated the Foreword to reflect the additional work that has been undertaken and the changed circumstances which led to the decision to undertake the Review.

The introductory chapters have been updated to reflect changes since the Made Neighbourhood Plan was prepared, including updating the socio-economic data to reflect 2021 Census data and the results from an updated Housing Needs Assessment.

Section 6 on Consultation has been updated to incorporate the results from two open events that took place in February and November 2023 and the process that was followed in reviewing the Neighbourhood Plan.

Section 5.1 in the Made Neighbourhood Plan has become Section 8 in the Review Neighbourhood Plan.

Policy S1: Limits to Development has been updated to incorporate the Mixed-Use Allocation for light industrial use and 4 small residential dwellings.

A new policy S2: Design has replaced the old Policy D1: Design from the Made Neighbourhood Plan. It has drawn on a comprehensive Design Guide and Codes which was commissioned specifically for the Neighbourhood Plan Review.

A new policy HBE1: Residential Allocation replaces Policy H1: Residential Allocation from the Made Neighbourhood Plan and allocates a small site for residential development.

Section 9 is titled Housing and the Built Environment which was Section 5.2 in the Made Neighbourhood Plan. The introductory section to this chapter contains updated house price information.

Policy HBE2: Housing Mix replaces Policy H2 from the Made Neighbourhood Plan. The only change in this policy is to reference the new Housing Needs Assessment which was commissioned by the Qualifying Body to update the evidence base to the 2021 Census.

Policy HBE3: Windfall sites is the same as Made Neighbourhood Plan Policy H3.

Policy HBE4: Affordable Housing Exception Site is a new policy to ensure that local circumstances are taken into consideration should an Exception Site be put forward.

Policy Env1: Local Green space has an additional, small, local green space added, which is a LGS in the Harborough Local Plan (2019).

Policy Env 2 Important Open Spaces is new –the policy provides a comprehensive audit of open spaces (OSSRs, as distinct from Local Green Spaces) in the Plan Area and gives them appropriate protection.

Policy Env 3 Protection of sites and features of natural environment significance and Policy Env 5 Protection of sites of historical environment significance were formerly a single policy, (old Env 2 Protection of other sites and features of environment significance) in the Made Neighbourhood Plan. The policy has been split for clarity, to add further local detail, to incorporate the latest Leicestershire Environmental Records Centre (LERC) and Historic Environment Record (HER) data and to update the policy having regard to the updated current relevant paragraphs of the NPPF and the recent changes to the national approach to biodiversity protection and enhancement (e.g. Environment Act 2021).

Policy Env 4: Biodiversity across the Plan Area (previously Biodiversity and wildlife corridors) – takes into account the updated current relevant paragraphs of the

NPPF (2023) and the recent changes to the national approach to biodiversity protection and enhancement (e.g. Environment Act 2021). No wildlife corridors have been identified in the Plan area.

Policy Env 6: Heritage assets of local historical and architectural interest – has been renumbered Policy Env 7 and renamed non-designated heritage assets (NDHA) – buildings and structures in line with NPPF terminology. The building and structure identified is the same as in the Made Neighbourhood Plan, and the two NDHAs within the Leicestershire Historic Records added for completeness.

Policy Env 7: Ridge and Furrow – has been updated with a more comprehensive evidence base and to record (2023 re-survey) the changes since 2018.

Policy Env 9 Rights of Way – renamed Footpaths and Bridleways to avoid confusion with the definitive list of statutory rights of way.

Policy Env 10: Managing Flood Risk has been strengthened following advice from the Environment Agency.

Policy 8 (Views) remains the same as in the Made Neighbourhood Plan.

Policies in Section 11 – Community Facilities and Amenities; Section 12: Transport and Section 13: Business and Employment (with the exception of Policy BE3) are the same as in the Made Neighbourhood Plan, with the evidence base updated where necessary to reflect 2021 Census data and consultation findings.

Policy BE3 is an allocation of a commercial site to help enhance local employment opportunities.

Section 14 – Monitoring and Review – the time period covered by the Neighbourhood Plan has changed and therefore the monitoring cycle has been amended too from what was in Section 10 of the Made Neighbourhood Plan.

2 About this Neighbourhood Plan

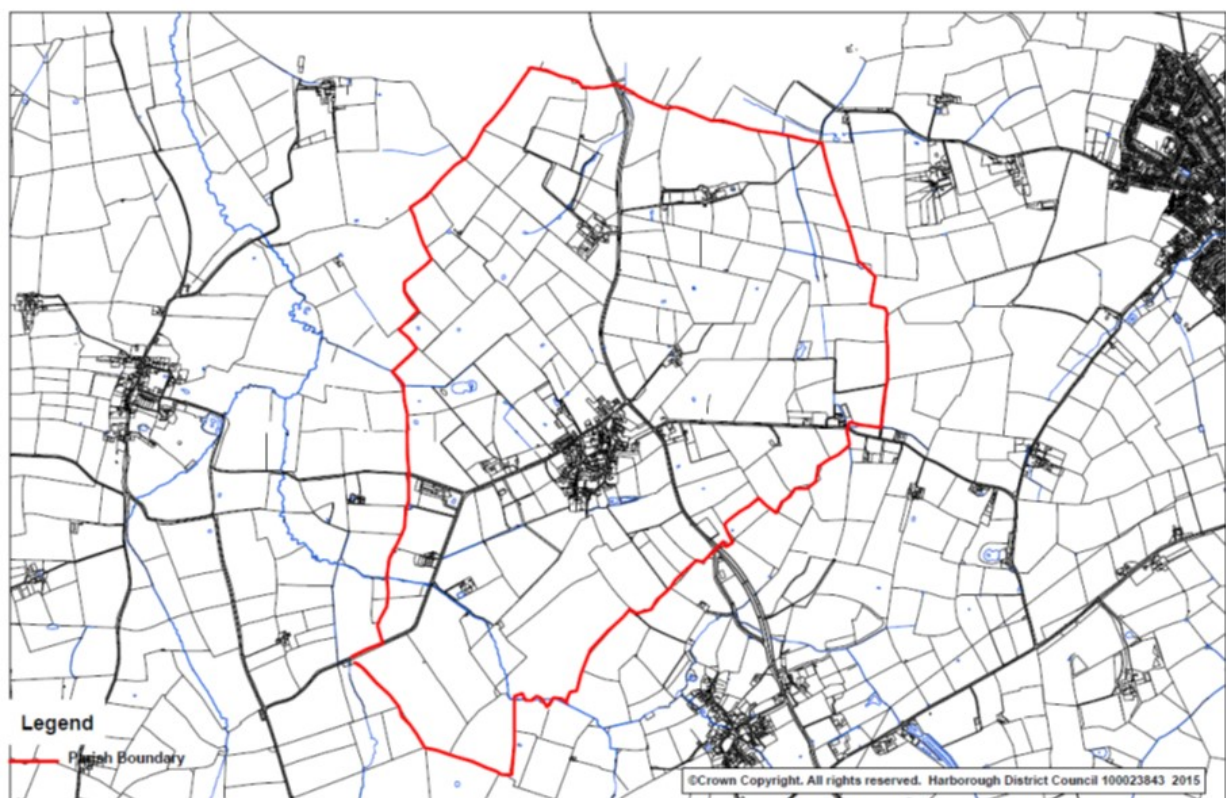
Background

The Localism Act of 2011 introduced the concept of Neighbourhood Plans. These plans give local communities a much greater opportunity to influence future development in their areas. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is the Government's 'bible' on planning issues. It states that:

'Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan'. (NPPF, December 2023, paragraph 29).

On 4 August 2016, Harborough District Council approved our application for designation as a Neighbourhood area. The area to be covered by our Plan is defined by the Parish boundary (see Figure 1). The Plan period is 2011 to 2031.

Figure 1 – Designated Neighbourhood Area



Our Neighbourhood Plan sits alongside, and is aligned with, Harborough District Council's Local Plan. We can't promote less development than in the Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies. Other than that, our Neighbourhood Plan is able to shape and direct sustainable development in the Parish. Once the Review document is approved, the policies it contains will take precedence over non-strategic policies in the Local Plan.

This Neighbourhood Plan has been written in line with the Basic Conditions:

- Having regard for national planning policy and guidance
- Contributing to sustainable development
- General conformity with strategic policies in Harborough's Local Plan
- Compatibility with EU and human rights requirements, implemented in England
- Conservation of habitat and species regulations.

Before being made, this Neighbourhood Plan Review must pass a local, community referendum if the Examiner determines that the changes are significant.

Neighbourhood Plan Group

The Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee was re-established by the Parish Council and began meeting in September 2022. This group continues to comprise both Parish Councillors and volunteers from the community.

The Group has worked hard to drive the process forward, assisted by YourLocale consultancy. The preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan must conform to guidelines laid down by central Government and involves consultation with not only the local community, but also the District Council and local businesses and landowners. There is a prescribed procedure with appropriate checks and consultations, which we have observed.

3. Why Neighbourhood Plans are important.

A Neighbourhood Plan is an opportunity for local people to create a framework for delivering a sustainable future for the benefit of all who live, work or visit our area.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023 states that ‘Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan’ (NPPF para 29). It enables us to ensure we get the right types of development in the right locations; and to set planning policies that will be used in determining decisions on planning applications across the Parish of Arnesby.



A Neighbourhood Plan is part of the statutory Development Plan for the area and this statutory status gives Neighbourhood Plans far more weight than other local documents such as Parish Plans or Village Design Statements. But a Neighbourhood Plan must also comply with European (now consolidated into UK law) and National legislation and be in general conformity with local strategic planning policy. Whilst every effort has been made to make the main body of this Plan easy to read and understand, the wording of the actual policies is necessarily more formal so that they comply with these statutory requirements.

Robust evidence is the foundation on which a Neighbourhood Plan has to be based. This includes evidence of community engagement and consultation and how the views, aspirations, wants and needs of local people have been taken into account alongside stakeholder comment and statistical information to justify the policies contained within the Plan. A detailed Statement of Consultation has been produced to support this Neighbourhood Plan.

4. Why we need a Neighbourhood Plan in Arnesby

The Parish Council is very keen to promote the village of Arnesby and to take the decisions locally that will serve the best interests of the community in the years to come.



There is recognition that sustainable development is not only necessary but desirable, as without it our village and economy will stagnate, but we want to influence and direct the shape and nature of the development and where within our Neighbourhood Plan area it takes place.

A Neighbourhood Plan cannot be used to prevent development and we have been very clear from the outset that we will work within the broad housing requirements specified by Harborough District Council. Having a Neighbourhood Plan gives us the opportunity to identify the best ways to deliver development, directing it towards what the local community needs and wants, while protecting our natural environment and social and leisure assets and ensuring a more sustainable future for ourselves and future generations.

This Plan has been prepared by members of the community with these goals in mind. We have embraced the NPPF's core principle of "a presumption in favour of sustainable development" and have approached our task to achieve a Plan that is *"prepared positively, in a way that is aspirational but deliverable"* (NPPF para 16).

5. Arnesby Parish - A brief history

Memories of Arnesby by Stella Elliott

The brief history of the Parish was put together for the Made Neighbourhood Plan and remains relevant today.

Stella came to the village in 1946. Her father was asked to take over the Shoulder of Mutton by the brewers, Mitchell and Butler in 1946. There was a pump over the sink for washing and there was a very bad snowfall in the year of their arrival. It covered hedges and took some time to clear paths and roads for normal service to be resumed. Her father used to work behind the bar in the Conservative Club and felt he would like to run a pub himself.

The Shoulder of Mutton was the main Arnesby pub and was licensed from 6:00pm to 10:00pm. Many of the farmers went there after work for a drink with their dogs. The pub enjoyed the loyalty of the local farmers as well as attracting people from Leicester, many years before drink-driving was even spoken about.

The local Bobby used to call occasionally into Stella's in-laws for a cup of tea and at 10:00p.m. he would leave and check that the pub had stopped serving and that a tea towel had been placed over the hand-pumps. Stella would inform her father just before he finished his cup of tea!

The Reverend Spooner from the Baptist Chapel used to visit the Shoulder one morning each week and would buy the OAP's a drink and sit and chat to them, notwithstanding the popular view that Baptists frowned on alcohol.

The first Baptist Manse was built in 1701 and a single storey Meeting House/Chapel added in 1702. Robert Hall arrived in Arnesby as a pastor in 1753 and the Trustee who lived in the Manse was something of a rebel and refused to allow Robert to preach in the Meeting Hose! Accordingly, Robert used preach in people's houses. He had quite a following from the Fens, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire and people came from miles around to hear him preach. He lived in the Homestead Farmhouse for some time. Robert was the pastor in Arnesby for 38 years.

A new Meeting House was constructed in 1798. In the 1950's, the gravestones were removed for easier maintenance and were placed around the perimeter of the plot.

Permission was granted to flatten the original Meeting House and construct a new two storey Manse which was completed in 2002.

The Old Cock Inn was another pub in Arnesby and was deemed a Roadhouse attracting passing trade from those on the A50 whilst the Shoulder of Mutton was the village pub. The Bluebell Inn had closed sometime before 1946 and was renamed Bell Cottage.

Stella recalled that the Night soil man use to come weekly in his vehicle to empty the toilets before mains sewerage was introduced to Arnesby.

There was a house in the village up the Bank which had a toilet which could accommodate two people using it simultaneously side-by-side! It was a brick built, wooden seated toilet with a tin bucket underneath.

In the Shoulder of Mutton, there were two public toilets for both ladies and gents as well as a private toilet for the family.

Every day there was a road sweeper from Kilby who cleared roads of cowpats, etc.

The water, used for washing, was collected off the roof from the rainfall and the drinking water was from the wells with a number of pumps scattered around the village, such as at Kemp's Yard in St Peters Road, previously known as Main Street.

Other street name changes include Robert Hall Road which was previously known as Baulk Lane, Mill Hill Road was School Hill and Oak Lane which was known as Factory Lane.

Broughton's factory in Factory Lane produced two types of knitwear — Cut and Sew and Fully Fashioned. Because of the high cost of fully fashioned production, it was decided to concentrate on the cut and sew method and to sell the fully-fashioned machines which involved the removal of a wall from the factory!

Staff for the factory came from Wigston, Mowsley, Saddington and Shearsby as well as from Arnesby itself.

Mr Broughton used to live in the house next to the Church (Herbies.) He had no children of his own but his two nephews and niece worked in the office. Mr Broughton was a real gentleman and was involved with the local Fox Hunting meetings. His wife was keen on cooking, Church and W.I.

Arnesby had a Co-op shop but there were also other grocery shops here, too. Mrs Kemp had a grocery shop between Walnuts and Well House. The houses here were eventually demolished being deemed unfit for human habitation. In addition, where the Geary's live at the moment, there was another grocery shop. There was another grocery shop situated at this time at Manor House in a building at the side of the main house with a post office operated out of this building as well.

There were regular deliveries of green groceries and other items from Fleckney as well as a local (weekly) haberdashery delivery service from Wigston including made to measure curtains, etc. There were few cars in the village at this time.

Fortunately, there was a bus service – on Wednesday and Saturday. In addition to this there was a workers bus which travelled from Shearsby to Leicester calling at Arnesby, Kilby Bridge, etc., arriving in Arnesby at 7:50am and leaving Leicester for the return at 5:36pm. This service was brought in as the result of one of the two local teenagers who used to bike into Wigston and then get on the bus into Leicester, being attacked on her way back to Arnesby one evening. The workers bus was so popular that it was standing room only by the time it left Wigston.

There was a German Prisoner of War, Ernst Eichmann, who worked on Brian Eales farm. He was from Gdansk and worked in the forest there. As the eldest son of his family, he was taken to Germany and joined the S.S. He was a skilled wood carver and joiner and made Stella's sister a chair. He told her he missed his children and after the war, he returned home with the intention of bringing his family back to live in Arnesby, which he ultimately did bringing his wife and two daughters. He lived in the Farmhouse for three years and worked on the farm. He moved around the County as a builder and carpenter. Brian & Christine Eales kept in touch and they saw each other a couple of times a year until Ernst's death.

There was an active Girl Guides group as well as a Scouting group in the village and meetings were held either at the school or in the chapel. There were more boys than girls at that time. There were dances in the school and since central heating was yet to become commonplace, the dancing took place at the side of the old coke stove!

There was a Men's Institute which had their meetings in the tin shack playing snooker, darts, dominoes and cards. There was no kitchen and no toilets. There was a Women's Institute as

well and their meetings were held in the Adult School. Also, a Christian Endeavour group used to meet at the Chapel which was also the venue for Sunday School.

The setting up of the May Fair was with the prime purpose of establishing a Village Hall. There was a music teacher who lived in a house just off the Jitty. Stella had piano lessons with him.

Stella's father was informed by Mitchell and Butler in 1956 that the Shoulder of Mutton pub was going to have its licence withdrawn. It had decided to open a new pub, the Foxhunter, and in order to get agreement from the council, it had to remove four licences in the county — two licences from pubs and two from off-licences. Although there was a petition for the Shoulder of Mutton, ultimately this did no good and the pub closed down.

Stella remembered from her youth, fields, open spaces, jolly good fun — connected to the chapel — concerts also held in the school. Westfield — Garden fetes — dancing on the lawns and Bromells farm. There was lots of play, walking and chatting. Many of the children were around the same age.

There was a Cricket Club which used to play in the field that is now used as the Arnesby Village Playing Fields and Village Hall carpark. Arnesby had a Feast Week each year commencing on 29 June which consisted of an annual day cricket game with the Prentices XI, a team from Leicester. Also, there was a mechanical roundabout which was installed on the green in front of the Shoulder with fairground music (which kept Stella awake so must have gone on till the evening!) as well as side shows. The football team used to play in one of Brian Eales' fields. They used a shed for changing!

Arnesby today

The 2021 Census data records 351 individuals living in Arnesby, indicating a decrease of 6 individuals between 2011 and 2021 (-1.6%).

There has been some development in Arnesby in recent years. Four new homes have been built since 2011. Of these, none of were delivered as Affordable Housing. The current total number of dwellings in the neighbourhood area is therefore estimated to be 137. As of April 2022, outstanding commitments (dwellings on sites with planning permission) totalled three homes.

In 2021, 87.4% of households in Arnesby owned their own home. The proportion is significantly higher than both Harborough (75.8%) and England as a whole (61.3%). The Neighbourhood Area has a notably small proportion of households living in affordable tenures, with households social renting accounting for 6.3% of the NA's tenure mix and no households living in shared ownership dwellings.



Neighbourhood Area prices are higher than the house prices across Harborough, with the median Harborough house price in 2021 being £312,500 compared to £535,000 in the Neighbourhood Area. This suggests that the NA is a particularly high-value area (as noted by the Steering Group) and reflects the high number of larger and detached homes in the NA. Using ONS's annual estimates of UK employee earnings, it is clear that there is a large gap between the spending power of average earning households and those earning the lowest 25% of incomes, particularly where the household in question has one earner only.

Detached dwellings were the most common dwelling type in both 2011 and 2021, clearly representing the majority of housing in the Neighbourhood Area. There was a marginal increase in the proportion of semi-detached and terraced dwellings over the last decade, however the proportion of flats remained notably very low at only 0.7%.

Valuation Office Agency data also illustrates that bungalows made up approximately 12.2% of accommodation types in the Neighbourhood Area in 2021. Turning to dwelling size, the

proportion of 4+ bedroom dwellings increased over the time period 2011-2021, whilst the proportion of 2- and 3-bedroom dwellings decreased. The Neighbourhood Area exhibits a significantly lower proportion of 1-bedroom dwellings than the district and England, with significantly higher proportion of 4+ bedroom dwellings.

In 2011, the greatest proportion of the population was aged 45-64 in Arnesby, at 40.6% of the population, followed by those aged 65-84 at 16.5%. These age categories remain the greatest in 2021, at 37.9% and 21.1% respectively. There was a notable increase (of 25.4%) in the number of residents aged 65-84 between 2011 and 2021, and also notable declines in the number of people aged 0-64, indicative of an aging population.

The issue of an ageing population is a key concern for residents, who perceive that action needs to be taken to encourage younger households to remain in (or move to) the area. Targeting future delivery towards smaller-sized dwellings will be the best approach from a housing perspective to attract younger households, many of whom are perceived to be forced out of the Parish due to concerns over affordability and availability of appropriate housing stock. In addition to appropriately sized dwellings, the Parish should also consider the necessary improvements to local infrastructure that supports younger households (such as education services) in their Neighbourhood Plan to encourage a sustainable, well-balanced community.

This chapter identified an overall trend of under-occupancy in Arnesby, with 90.1% of households living in a dwelling with at least one extra bedroom compared to their household size. This is most common in families aged 65+, families under 65 with no children, and single persons aged under 65. This may suggest that larger housing within Arnesby is being occupied by households with the most wealth rather than the largest households.



6. Consultation

At the start of the process of preparing the Made Neighbourhood Plan, after the establishment of an Advisory Committee involving Parish Councillors and residents, the community were invited to an open event which took place on 1 October 2016. This event set out the context and stages of the Neighbourhood Plan and asked questions about people's thoughts about the Parish – what was good and what needed to be improved.

The event was a great success with 70 people in attendance. The views expressed by the residents were used to shape the strategy in preparing the Neighbourhood Plan for Arnesby.

A Community Questionnaire was delivered to all households in the Parish and posed questions relating to housing, community facilities, transport, business etc. 74 responses represented 52% of households and over 25% of the adult population.

In early December 2016, there was a launch of the three 'Theme Groups' that were to be the vehicle through which the Neighbourhood Plan policies were to emerge. The Theme Groups were established to explore the detail of the Neighbourhood Plan; to build the evidence base and to lay the foundation for the draft Neighbourhood Plan. An environmental Theme Group was established, along with a theme group on housing and the built environment and another group looking at community facilities; transport and employment. The Theme Groups continued to meet until late 2017.

With the emerging policies well advanced, a further open event was held on 3 June 2017. The purpose of this event was to share the draft policies with the local community and to seek their support for the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.

This served to demonstrate a high level of support from the wider community for the draft policies. Following this event, the policies were refined, and the Neighbourhood Plan amended accordingly.

The major area where the community was divided was in relation to the proposed development of around 11 houses on a site to the north of the village.

In order to gain more information about the community's thoughts about this site and the proposed number of houses, a further questionnaire was produced and distributed to all

households, with a single subject.

There were 135 responses to the questionnaire, representing a return from over 46% of the adult population of 292. The responses to the questionnaire confirmed that the community's views are mixed in relation to the numbers of new housing needed in the Parish.

As a consequence of the responses to the Questionnaire the Parish Council amended the Neighbourhood Plan to better reflect the community's aspirations within the strategic framework of the then proposed Submission Local Plan.

Once the decision had been taken to commence a review of the Made Neighbourhood Plan, the Advisory Committee was keen to hear the thoughts of the community. An open event was held in February 2023. 41 people attended.

The event successfully brought the review of the Neighbourhood Plan to the attention of the community, engaging them in the process and recording views on the key issues to be addressed in the Review.

A further open event was held in November 2023 which shared the emerging policies with the community. 33 people attended. Concern was expressed in relation to the proposed commercial development, but there was strong support for all other policies.



Full analyses of these events are available in the Consultation Statement to be submitted with the Neighbourhood Plan.

7. Vision

Arnesby is surrounded by beautiful countryside and numerous scenic walking areas through open fields. The village features a diverse range of attractive houses and other buildings with strong historical traditions. It has a keen sense of place that local people wish to see maintained and enhanced wherever possible.

Many local people believe that the planning system is too remote and are keen to establish a local vision and clear objectives for the future.

The vision for this Neighbourhood Plan is the same as with the Made Neighbourhood Plan, namely to put in place a policy framework that ensures that land use, development and potential changes are consistent with the following key objectives:

- To reflect the wishes of Parishioners;
- To maintain the character and the community of the village;
- To protect Arnesby's built and social heritage;
- To protect and enhance the outstanding landscape and open countryside setting of the village, including rural views, vistas, open spaces and walkways;
- To ensure appropriate residential development in the right place consistent with this vision;
- To ensure that development is compliant with the strategic planning policies of Harborough District Council.

The vision for Arnesby is to maintain and enhance the good quality of life, community spirit and attractive natural and built environment in Arnesby Parish now and through to 2031, the whole Plan period.

The objectives flowing from this vision are as follows:

- Ensure that development takes place in the most sustainable locations;
- Encourage the right types of development that meets local needs;
- Protect and wherever possible enhance important buildings and structures;
- Protect important community facilities that are special to the local community;
- Promote good design;
- Ensure that the community continues to have good access to the surrounding countryside and green spaces;

- Protect open spaces that are important to the community and/or wildlife;
- Seek ways of addressing the problems of traffic speed on our roads; and
- Improve pedestrian and cycle connections within the Plan area and into the surrounding areas.

The objectives will be realised by a small number of planning policies specific to Arnesby grouped around the key objectives identified by the community as being of special importance to them.

The Plan will be kept under review.

Meeting the requirement for sustainable development

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

a) Social

Specific sites are allocated for housing and economic development. The addition of a site for economic development is a significant change from the Made Neighbourhood Plan.

We are also seeking to protect existing community 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.

b) 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 type and design so that it does not harm but instead positively reflects the existing and historic character of the area;
- The important open spaces within Arnesby is protected from development, to safeguard the parish's identity and retain the rural nature of its surroundings;

- Local Green Spaces and important views are maintained for the enjoyment of future generations;
- Development recognises the need to protect and, where possible, improve biodiversity and important habitats; and
- Provision is made for improved pedestrian and cycling facilities.

c) Economic

Whilst the communities in the Parish of Arnesby are primarily residential, there is a desire to ensure that appropriate economic activity is maintained as long as the local infrastructure supports it and it does not impact detrimentally on the amenity of neighbours or the road network. We therefore wish to encourage small scale employment opportunities in our area by:

- Supporting small scale business development and expansion where the local infrastructure would not be adversely affected by the proposals, including a mixed-use development;
- Encouraging start-up businesses and home working; and
- Protecting existing employment in appropriate locations.

This document sets out local considerations for delivering sustainable development across the Parish of Arnesby. Development proposals should meet the requirements of all relevant policies in this Neighbourhood Plan and be in line with Harborough District and national policies.

Neighbourhood Plan Policies

8 The Strategic Framework

The Arnesby Neighbourhood Plan is a key part of securing sustainable development as described in Section 2 of the NPPF (2023) which states that all plans should provide a positive vision for the future of its area and provide ‘a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities; and a platform for local people to shape their surroundings’. (Paragraph 15).

When considering development proposals, the Plan takes a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Through the process of developing a Neighbourhood Plan, consideration has been given to the type and extent of new development required to meet the needs of the local community, where it should be located in the Parish, and how it should be designed.

As the Harborough Local Plan (2019) states ‘The full objectively assessed housing need for the Leicester and Leicestershire HMA is 4,829 dwellings per annum between 2011 and 2031 (96,580 total) and for Harborough District is 532 dwellings per annum between 2011 and 2031 (HEDNA), giving a total plan requirement across the 20-year plan period of 10,640 dwellings’. (Paragraph 5.1.3).

The Local Plan incorporates a 20% buffer and therefore makes provision for 12,800 dwellings from 2011 to 2031. Of this, 8,150 dwellings have already been built or committed (through the granting of planning permission, or through allocation in neighbourhood plans) leaving a residual requirement of 4,650 dwellings up to 2031.

The Harborough District Authority Monitoring Report 2021/22 (published March 2023) updated these figures as follows ‘During the 2021/22 monitoring period 1,026 new dwellings were completed, of which 231 were Affordable Homes: 66 Social Rented, 68 Affordable Rented and 97 Shared Ownership’ (Paragraph 4.2).

The Local Plan (April 2019) establishes a hierarchy of settlements to help to determine the most appropriate locations for development. On the basis of this hierarchy, Arnesby is classified as an 'Other Village or Rural Settlement' which the Local Plan describes as 'the least sustainable locations for growth and are covered by housing in the countryside policy. New housing will be limited to small sites to meet a locally identified need (either through a housing needs survey or neighbourhood plan), housing to meet the needs of a rural worker, isolated homes in the countryside in accordance with NPPF paragraph 55, and replacement dwellings'.

Through the Neighbourhood Plan, the opportunity has been taken to positively plan for development within Arnesby that meets a local need and helps to support local services. The Limits to Development (see below) have therefore been extended in order to accommodate the potential for housing growth to meet a local need and to support the existing services up to 2031, and to direct development to the most suitable locations.

This will enable the Parish to secure the growth that is recognised as being necessary through small-scale developments in locations that are favoured by the community, avoiding the uncertainty that comes with speculative development proposals that threaten the character of the village into the future.

After community consultation, there was a clear preference to keep the special nature of the village intact for future generations to enjoy, therefore any new sites and density of development will be kept proportional to the size and character of the Parish.

The Neighbourhood Plan supports one small residential site as part of a mixed-use scheme and small-scale residential windfall development whilst also supporting limited business and commercial development that does not adversely impact on residential amenity. The Neighbourhood Plan also states how new housing should be designed with an updated design guide and code, the housing mix and tenure required based on an updated Housing Needs Assessment which utilizing Census data from 2021 as well as promoting the improvements to infrastructure that are needed locally.

The Neighbourhood Plan is not intended to replace the policies contained in the Harborough Local Plan or the requirements of the NPPF. It works in conjunction with these strategic requirements to give additional, more detailed, Parish-wide specific policies that help to clarify and achieve the Community's vision. Where suitable District-wide policies already exist in the Harborough Local Plan or NPPF, they are not duplicated in this Neighbourhood Plan.

In considering development proposals, the Neighbourhood Plan takes a positive and supportive approach with a presumption in favour of the sustainable development contained in the NPPF and Harborough Local Plan.

Where there are no specific policies in this Neighbourhood Plan which are relevant to a planning application or a development proposal, the full 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 OF THE POLICIES CONTAINED IN THE PLAN MUST BE CONSIDERED TOGETHER IN FORMING A VIEW.

Limits to development

In historical terms rural communities like Arnesby have often been protected by the designation of a village envelope (or settlement boundary) adopted in a statutory Local Plan. With a settlement boundary in place development was only permitted inside of the envelope or outside of the envelope in exceptional circumstances (for example to provide affordable housing).

The purpose of the new Neighbourhood Plan Limits to Development policy is to ensure that sufficient land to meet residential and commercial need is available in the right locations. The identified land uses will be supported by the current and proposed transport links and services infrastructure and will therefore be able to avoid encroaching into the local open countryside.

Limits to Development were established by Harborough District Council in order to clarify

where new development activity is best located. They are used to define the extent of a built-up part of a settlement and distinguish between areas where, in planning terms, development would be acceptable in principle, such as in the main settlements, and where it would not be acceptable, generally in the least sustainable locations such as in the open countryside. Such unfettered and/or unsustainable growth would risk ribbon or piecemeal development and the merging of distinct settlements to the detriment of the community and visual amenity of the built-up area.

The Neighbourhood Plan has therefore designated a Limits to Development policy for the built form of Arnesby – as shown below in figure 2. Figure 2 updates and supersedes the existing Limits to Development within the Made Arnesby Neighbourhood Plan as it takes into account site allocations proposed through the Neighbourhood Plan.

Within the defined Limits to Development an appropriate amount of suitably designed types of development in the right location is acceptable in principle, although some sites within the Limits to Development boundary are protected from development through environmental designations and all development will be required to take into account the policies within this Neighbourhood Plan.

Methodology:

In designating the Limits to Development, the Arnesby Neighbourhood Plan has applied the following methodology:

- 1 The small mixed-use site allocated within the Neighbourhood Plan has been included within the boundary;
- 2 Defined physical features such as walls, fences, hedgerows, gardens, allotments, streams, formal leisure uses and roads have been used to delineate the boundary;
- 3 Non - residential land which is countryside, agricultural land, paddock, meadow, woodland and/or other green-field land has been specifically excluded;
- 4 Any development will only be encouraged where the site is wholly within the LTD boundary.

The community has expressed a clear desire to protect what is special about Arnesby for future generations. Its countryside setting, and the quiet pace of rural life are seen as being of particular importance.

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 treated as open countryside.

It is national and local planning policy that development in the countryside should be carefully managed. It should 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.

This approach to development in the open countryside is supported by this Neighbourhood Plan, in particular, because it will ensure that any development is focused in the built-up form of Arnesby which only has a limited range of services and facilities.

The following policy (S1) will also help to maintain the special and unique landscape character and setting of Arnesby and protect the open countryside for what it is, an attractive, accessible, distinct and non-renewable natural resource.

POLICY S1: LIMITS TO DEVELOPMENT - Development proposals within the Neighbourhood area will be supported on sites within the Limits to Development boundary as shown in Figure 2 (below) where the proposal complies with the policies in this Neighbourhood Plan including the need to achieve positive design and amenity standards.

[illegible]

It is the view of the Arnesby community that the Neighbourhood Plan will ensure that any future development either reflects the village's architectural character and fully integrates into the village environment or makes a positive high level architectural contribution to the specific location.

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any development should not adversely influence any of the Local Green Space or community-defined Green Space areas within the village that make a strong contribution to the overall character and physical form of the Parish.

In this section, the Neighbourhood Plan sets out design guidance which seeks to identify and protect the distinctive elements which together provide the special qualities of the landscape setting and built heritage of the Neighbourhood Area.

The biggest challenge facing the future of Arnesby is to balance the desire to protect the character of the village with the need for it to grow and evolve in a sensitive and proportionate manner in order to sustain the community and its facilities.

The NPPF notes that development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies.

A design guide and codes was commissioned as part of the process of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan and is available as appendix 2. Policy HBE 3 seeks to reflect the design principles which the community believes will help to achieve good design.

Existing settlement patterns have grown incrementally over time. The buildings date from many different periods, providing a richness and variety of styles and materials. This traditional rural character should be enhanced by new development; schemes should be designed to ensure that new buildings sit comfortably within the existing settlement pattern and are respectful of their surroundings.

It is not considered necessary to have uniform properties within any new development, rather to ensure that new developments respect the features of buildings which make Arnesby a desirable place to live.

New development proposals should be designed sensitively to ensure that the high-quality built environment of the Neighbourhood Area is maintained and enhanced. New designs should respond in a positive way to the local character through careful and appropriate use of high-quality materials and detail. Proposals should also demonstrate consideration of height, scale and massing, to ensure that new development delivers a positive contribution to the street scene and adds value to the distinctive character of the Neighbourhood Area.

POLICY S2: DESIGN - As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals should demonstrate a high quality of design, layout and use of materials which make a positive contribution to the special character of the neighbourhood area.

Development proposals should respond positively to the Design Guide and Codes (Appendix 2) and demonstrate how appropriate elements have been incorporated into their layout and designs. Development proposals should also respond positively to the prevailing character area in which the site is located and, where practicable, enhance its existing character and appearance.



9 Housing and the Built Environment

The core aim of this neighbourhood Plan is to retain the integrity of Arnesby as a small and vibrant rural village. Arnesby is a conservation village with 14 listed buildings and limited community facilities. The Centre of the settlement lies to the West of the A5199 and South of the Lutterworth Road. Its compact nature, narrow roads and predominantly cottage style housing make this an attractive place for residents and for the many visitors to the village who pass through on one of the many footpaths. The aim is to retain this compact, characterful village and to protect the integrity of the village of Arnesby for present and future generations.

The demography of Arnesby has undergone significant change over the last 50 years. After the Second World War, it was predominantly a farming community with as many as eight farms all with the principal housing and farm buildings within the village boundary. Alongside this principal form of employment there were several small textile factories, specialising in glove making, and this was supported by many home workers. Over the last 50 years the farms and the factories have ceased to operate and in many cases the land and buildings have been converted into small housing developments.

As the principal agricultural employment and factory work has declined and the buildings replaced with three and four bedroom houses the population has changed from a predominantly manual class of workers to one which is now mainly people from a professional background.

In 2021, the average entry point in Arnesby for a three-bedroomed house was £400,000. The community consultation also showed a demand for smaller and affordable housing to be provided in the Parish. Through the Neighbourhood Plan the opportunity has therefore been taken to plan positively for housing delivery that meets a local need by allocating a site to meet both local need and to help support local services.

The allocation of the site shown below under policy H1 will enable the Parish to secure the growth necessary up to 2031 to both help to sustain the local community and its limited services as well as contributing to the District's housing target through a location that is favoured by the community.

Residential Allocation

There is no housing target for the parish. The District Council does not require Arnesby to contribute any new housing to future housing need across the District. Through the made Neighbourhood Plan, the Parish is protected from inappropriate development inside and outside the Limits to Development.

The Parish Council recognises that there are continuing pressures in the District and in the parish for specific housing types to meet local housing needs. It also wants to help balance the housing stock and to support local services such as the School, churches, restaurant and village hall. In this context, the Plan allocates land off Lutterworth Road for housing development. The first criterion in the policy comments about the type of housing which will be supported. The Parish Council also wishes to promote sustainable development. As such, it also allocates an adjacent parcel of land for employment uses. Policy BE3 addresses the development of that site in greater detail.

POLICY HBE1: RESIDENTIAL ALLOCATION - The Plan allocates land off Lutterworth Road (as shown in red in Figure 2) for residential use. The development of the site should comply with the following criteria::

- a) Around four dwellings are to be provided of which 2 shall be 2/3 bed houses, and two shall be 2/3 bed bungalows;
- b) The gardens should be of a size appropriate to the houses concerned and avoid close-boarded fencing where the site borders the countryside;
- c) The design and layout of the development and the materials used should be in accordance with the design quality principles included in Policy S2 of this Plan;
- d) Landscaping is provided to soften the site boundaries;
- e) The site retains existing important natural boundaries such as trees and hedges, and
- f) Development should preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

[illegible]

The mix of housing proposed within the Neighbourhood Plan is based on the available statistical data and the views of residents obtained through various consultation exercises including open events and a community questionnaire.

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In terms of dwelling size, the proportion of 4+ bedroom dwellings increased over the time period 2011-2021, whilst the proportion of 2- and 3-bedroom dwellings decreased. The NA exhibits a significantly lower proportion of 1-bedroom dwellings than the district and England, with significantly higher proportion of 4+ bedroom dwellings.

The Housing Needs Assessment identified an overall trend of under-occupancy in Arnesby, with 90.1% of households living in a dwelling with at least one extra bedroom compared to their household size. This is most common in families aged 65+, families under 65 with no children and single persons aged under 65. This suggests that larger housing within Arnesby is being occupied by households with the most wealth rather than the largest households.

The high level of under-occupancy suggests a need for smaller, more affordable homes of two to three bedrooms which would be suitable for residents needing to downsize, small families and those entering the housing market. Providing suitable accommodation for elderly residents will enable them to remain in the local community and release under-occupied predominantly market sale and larger properties into the market which would be suitable for growing families.

This is reinforced by the evidence from the Housing Needs Assessment that future population growth can be expected to be driven by the oldest households, with a household reference person aged 65 and over expected to increase by 71% between 2011 and 2031.

Further evidence of housing need is provided in the housing needs assessment report (2023) which is attached as Appendix 1.

Policy HBE2: HOUSING MIX - New housing development shall provide a mixture of housing types which meets identified current local needs in Arnesby Parish, as demonstrated through the Housing Needs Assessment (March 2023) or subsequent report updating this assessment.

Development incorporating new dwellings of three or fewer bedrooms and/or single storey accommodation suitable for older people will be supported, whilst dwellings of four or more bedrooms will be supported only where they are subservient in number to any one, two or three-bedroom accommodation in any development.

Windfall development

A windfall site is defined in the NPPF as one which has not been specifically identified as available through the local or neighbourhood plan process. The sites normally comprise of previously developed land that has unexpectedly become available.

To help protect the nature of the Village character, development beyond the housing allocation described in H1 above will be restricted to windfall sites wholly within the LTD boundary and will be of no greater size than two new properties on any single site.

To meet the need for smaller dwellings, single unit developments will be of a suitable scale to the site but developments of two units will include at least one dwelling that is no more than three bedrooms in size.

POLICY HBE3: WINDFALL SITES - Development of infill and/or redevelopment sites comprising individual dwellings or small groups of dwellings within the LTD will be supported where it:

- a) retains existing important natural boundary features of gardens, trees, hedges and streams;
- b) provides for safe vehicular and pedestrian access;
- c) does not diminish existing parking provision, and;
- d) does not reduce existing garden space to such an extent it adversely impacts on the character of the area or provides inadequate levels of private residential amenity of neighbouring and proposed dwelling(s).

Affordable Housing Exception Site

Affordable housing is defined in the NPPF (Annex 2) as “social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market”. The PPG (2a-022) describes affordable housing need as being an estimate of “the number of households and projected households who lack their own housing or live in unsuitable housing and who cannot afford to meet their housing needs in the market.”

The Housing Needs Assessment (Appendix 1) from 2023 revealed that in 2021, 87.4% of households in Arnesby owned their own home. The proportion is significantly higher than both Harborough (75.8%) and England as a whole (61.3%). The neighbourhood area has a

notably small proportion of households living in affordable tenures, with households social renting accounting for 6.3% of the neighbourhood area's tenure mix and no households living in shared ownership dwellings.

The Housing Needs Assessment identified that between 2013 and 2021, the median house price grew by 137.5% to £535,000, although this value peaked in 2020 at £550,000. The lower quartile house price also grew by 82.5% in the same period to £400,000 in 2021, again peaking in 2020 at £470,000.

House prices in Arnesby are higher than the house prices across Harborough, with the median Harborough house price in 2021 being £312,500 compared to £535,000 in the neighbourhood area. This suggests that Arnesby is a particularly high-value area (as noted by the Steering Group) and reflects the high number of larger and detached homes locally. However, these figures should be treated with caution given the small sample-size.

This demonstrates a need for Affordable Housing and where it is to be provided as part of an exception site, the Housing Needs Assessment identifies an appropriate mix of 70% rent and 30% home ownership models. It also recommends that where First Homes are to be provided, they should be at a discount of 50%.

Policy HBE4: AFFORDABLE HOUSING EXCEPTION SITE – To meet identified needs within the community, the provision of high-quality affordable housing through an exception site will be supported where the following criteria are met:

- a) The site adjoins the Settlement Boundary;
- b) The type and scale of affordable housing is justified by evidence of need from a local housing needs survey;
- c) Planning obligations will be used to ensure that the market and affordable housing is available in perpetuity for people with a local connection to the Plan area; and
- d) The development consists entirely of affordable housing or is for a mixed-tenure scheme where an element of market housing is essential to the delivery of affordable housing. The market housing must be the minimum necessary to make the scheme viable and be of a type and size that will meet a specific locally identified housing need for low-cost market housing.

Proposals which incorporate First Homes and self-build scheme will be supported. Where First Homes are provided, they should be at a discount of 50% (as per the evidence provided in Appendix 1, Housing Needs Assessment (2023) subject to viability.

10 The Natural, Historical and Social Environment

Introduction

This chapter of the Neighbourhood Plan deals mainly with the *environmental* objectives of *sustainable development*, together with open spaces of community value in the *social* objective, as described in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (2021), page 5. The chapter aims to balance the requirement for appropriate development in the Plan Area against the value of environmental and other features that are both *special* – appreciated, in their own right and as community assets, by local people – and *significant* for their wildlife and history. It also deals with broader environmental issues of concern to the community, including protection and enhancement of biodiversity, avoidance of deleterious effects of new development on the best views, planning for resilience to flooding and climate change, and approaches to renewable energy generation.

Care was taken during preparation of the Plan to ensure that the policies (and the sites and areas of environmental significance covered by them) were not unduly restrictive on development during the Plan’s lifetime. Just over 10% by area of all the open and currently undeveloped land in the parish is protected through the Neighbourhood Plan’s policies, and the planning system generally, from potential environmentally damaging development:

1. Total area of Neighbourhood Plan Area	c.577 ha
2. Open countryside and other undeveloped land	c.560 ha
3. Area designated or recognised in this Plan for <i>environmental</i> protection	c.57 ha

Evidence base: environmental inventory

An environmental inventory (Appendix 3) of Arnesby parish was carried out to provide the evidence base for the 2018 Neighbourhood Plan between March 2017 and January 2018. The

work comprised two elements:

- Review of all existing designations and available information, and
- Fieldwork to identify sites and features of natural and historical 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, and local knowledge.

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

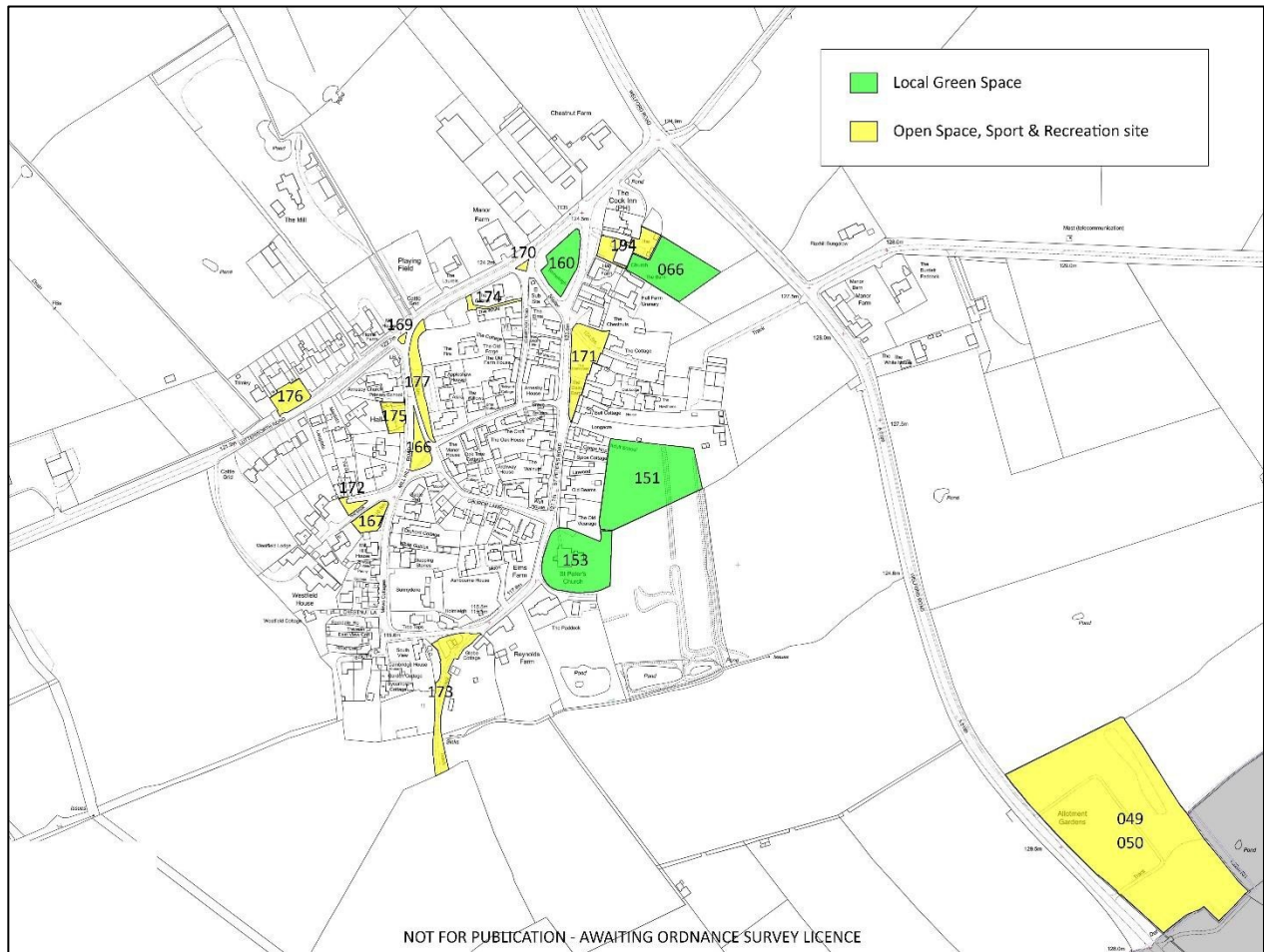
Current (January 2023) sets of the main data sources were obtained for this Neighbourhood Plan Review, and new designations and any updates of the previous records were incorporated. All sites were checked again, by fieldwork and using local knowledge, in 2023. The results were mapped and tabulated, and every environmentally significant site was scored and evaluated using the seven criteria for Local Green Space eligibility in the *National Planning Policy Framework* 2023. This primary evidence base for the Review Plan forms Appendix 3.

Local Green Spaces

Of the 177 surveyed and inventoried parcels of open and/or undeveloped land in the Plan Area, some 60 have been identified as having environmental significance at local level or higher. Of these, four sites (figure 4; details in Appendix 4) meet the requirements for designation as Local Green Space, as outlined in National Planning Policy Framework (2023) paragraphs 101-102.

The statutory protection afforded by Policy ENV 1 will ensure these sites are protected for future generations.

Figure 4: Local Green Spaces and Important Open Spaces



POLICY ENV 1: LOCAL GREEN SPACES – Development proposals that would result in the loss of, or have an adverse effect on, the following Local Green Spaces (details Appendix 4; locations figure 4) will not be supported other than in very special circumstances.

St Peter's churchyard (Inventory reference 153) LGS designation in Arnesby Neighbourhood
Plan (made March 2019)

Arnesby Baptist Church burial ground (Inventory reference 066) LGS designation in Arnesby Neighbourhood Plan (made March 2019)

Manor House Grounds (Inventory reference 151) LGS designation in Arnesby
Neighbourhood Plan (made March 2019)

Stoneleigh Paddock (Inventory Reference 160) LGS designation LGS/ARN/10 in HDC Local Plan and on Local Plan policies map; confirmed by this Plan

Important Open Spaces

A group of sites scored highly in the previous inventory for their recreational and community value. They were identified in community consultations and fieldwork, and in Parish records. Most of the Important Open Spaces in the final audit in the 2018 Arnesby Neighbourhood Plan became Open Space, Sport & Recreation (OSSR) sites in the Harborough District Council Open Spaces audit and are now shown on the HDC Local Plan (2019) Policies Map. The 2018 list has now been updated to match local circumstances in 2023, and the full audit appears below and on figure 4.

The value of all these sites as open spaces within and close to the built-up areas and/or their current, or potential, value, as community resources are recognised in Policy ENV 2. The policy adds local detail to, and is in conformity with, HDC Policy G12.

POLICY ENV 2: IMPORTANT OPEN SPACES - The following open spaces [figure 4] are of high local value for sport, recreation, function and/or amenity. Development proposals that result in their loss, or have a significant adverse effect on them, will not be supported unless the open space is replaced by at least equivalent provision in an equally suitable location, or unless it can be demonstrated that the open space is no longer required by the community.

Arnesby allotments, Loseby Wood and Meadow (Inventory reference 048/050) HDC OSSR on Local Plan policies map. *Allotments and community gardens; Natural and semi-natural greenspace.*

‘Village green east of St Peter’s Road at its junction with Factory Lane’ (now Oak Lane) (Inventory reference 171) (Registered Village Green VG15) HDC OSSR on Local Plan policies map. Owned by Arnesby Parish Council

‘Village green at the junction of Mill Hill Road, Church Lane and Factory Lane’ (now Oak Lane) (Inventory reference 166) (Registered Village Green VG16) HDC OSSR on Local Plan policies map *Amenity greenspace*. Owned by Arnesby Parish Council

‘Village Green south of The Bank at its junction with Mill Hill Road’ (Inventory reference 167) (Registered Village Green VG17) Not on HDC OSSR Local Plan policies map; *Amenity*

greenspace, this Plan. Owned by Arnesby Parish Council

Arnesby Baptist Chapel frontage and yard (Inventory reference 194). This includes ‘Village Green east of St Peter’s Road by the Baptist Church’ (Registered Village Green VG18). Part of HDC OSSR Arnesby Baptist Chapel on Local Plan policies map *Churchyards and cemeteries*. [NB the main burial ground east of the chapel is part of this site in the HDC open spaces audit, but is designated as Local Green Space in this Plan]

‘Village Green at the junction of Brook Lane [now Robert Hall Road] with Lutterworth Road’ (Inventory reference 170) (Registered Village Green VG19). Not on HDC OSSR Local Plan policies map; *Amenity greenspace*, this Plan. Owned by Arnesby Parish Council

‘Village Green at the junction of Mill Hill Rd with Lutterworth Road’ (Inventory reference 169) (Registered Village Green VG20) Not on HDC OSSR Local Plan policies map; *Amenity greenspace*, this Plan. Owned by Arnesby Parish Council

Small green north side of The Bank (Inventory reference 172) Not on HDC OSSR Local Plan policies map; *Amenity green space*, this Plan

Arnesby Village Hall frontage etc. (Inventory reference 175) HDC OSSR on Local Plan policies map; *Amenity greenspace*. Owned by Arnesby Parish Council

Footpath Y104a (jitty) from Robert Hall Rd to Lutterworth Road (Inventory reference 174) Not on HDC OSSR Local Plan policies map; *Greenway* and *Public Right of Way*, this Plan

Wide verge, Mill Hill Road (Inventory reference 177) Not on HDC OSSR Local Plan policies map; *Amenity greenspace*, this Plan

Green lanes south of St Peter’s Road (Inventory reference 173) Not on HDC OSSR Local Plan policies map; *Greenway/green corridor*, this Plan

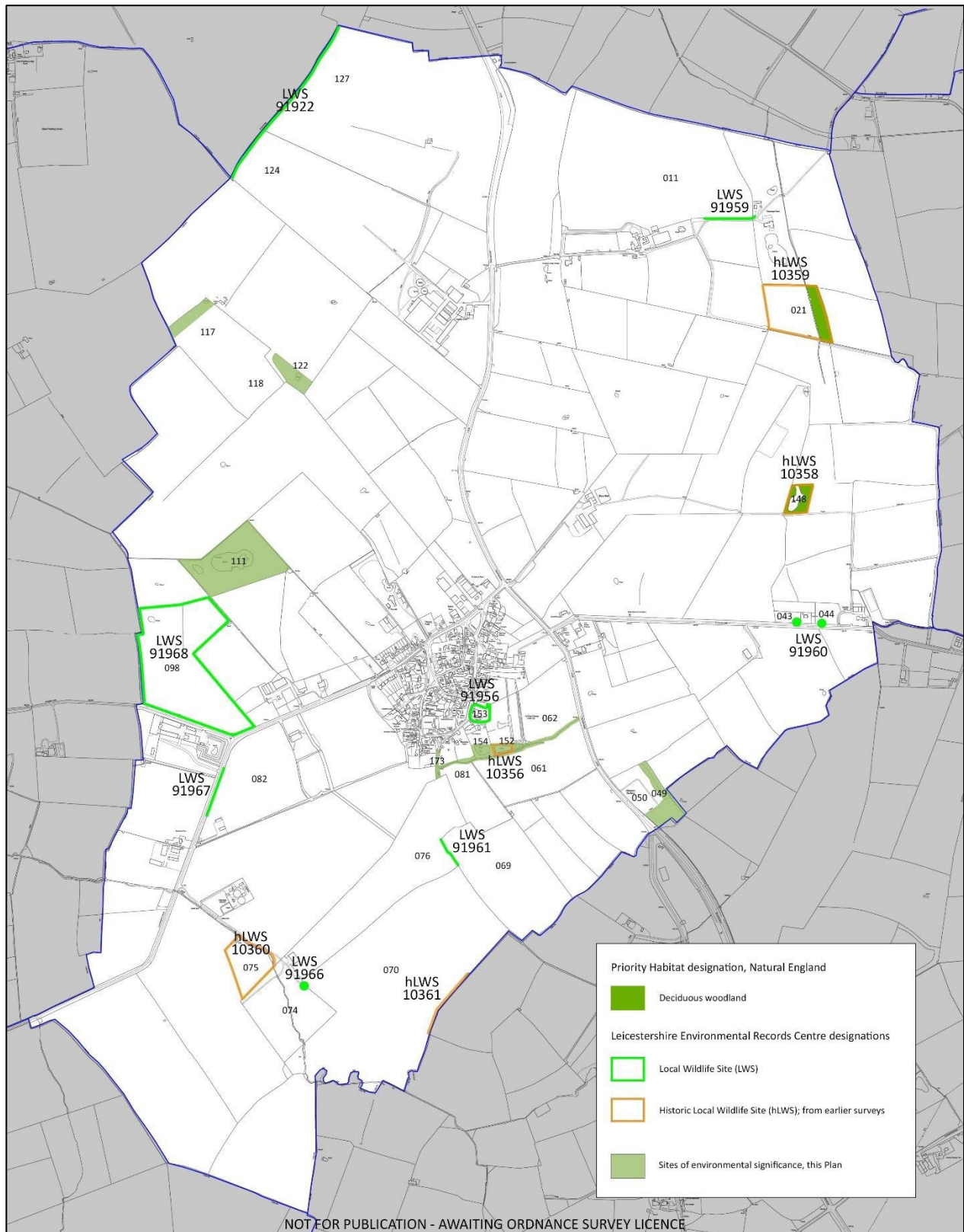
Open space, frontage of bungalows, Lutterworth Road (Inventory reference 176) Not on HDC OSSR Local Plan policies map; *Amenity greenspace, community garden*, this Plan

Sites and features of Natural Environment significance

The environmental inventory process described above included a review of existing and potential natural environment site designations. It identified, confirmed and described the habitats, species records and features of 19 sites of significance for wildlife (biodiversity) in the Arnesby Neighbourhood Plan Area. The features for which they have been designated or otherwise recognised are listed in the environmental inventory (Appendix 3). Figure 5 shows their locations. They comprise sites where priority habitats occur, Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) identified in Phase I Habitat Surveys by Leicestershire County Council; and four further sites identified during the inventory fieldwork as being of at least local biodiversity significance in the context of the Plan Area. Together, these sites are essential for biodiversity conservation in the Parish.

Policy ENV 3 delivers site-specific compliance in the Plan Area with the relevant Harborough District Council Local Plan policies, the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, the Habitats and Species Regulations 2017-2019, and the UK Environment Act 2021. It is in conformity with National Planning Policy Framework 2021 policies 174, 179 and 180. It also refers to the DEFRA *Guidance* of July 7, 2021 in respect of the use of the *biodiversity metric* approach for assessing the wildlife value of development sites.

Figure 5: Sites and features of natural environment significance



POLICY ENV 3: SITES AND FEATURES OF NATURAL ENVIRONMENT SIGNIFICANCE – The sites and features mapped in figure 5 have been identified as being of local or greater significance for the natural environment. They are ecologically important in their own right, make a contribution to carbon sequestration, and are locally valued. The significance of the species, habitats or features present should be balanced against the benefit of any development that would adversely affect them. Development proposals on the identified sites will not be supported unless they include evidence-based, measurable proposals for delivering *biodiversity net gain* at a minimum 10%.

If significant harm to biodiversity cannot be avoided (through relocating to an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated by net gain as above, or compensated for, planning permission should be refused, in conformity with paragraph 175 of the National Planning Policy Framework, 2021.

Biodiversity across the Plan Area

It might be argued that Arnesby parish is a ‘typical’ area of English Midlands countryside because it has no nationally-rare species or large-scale, nationally important wildlife hotspots, and thus that it has little or no biodiversity significance to be taken into account in the Planning system. This would be a misunderstanding of the concept of biodiversity. England’s biodiversity is entirely and only the sum of the wildlife in all of its individual parishes: Arnesby is as important in this regard as every other parish, and residents want it to play its essential part in protecting what remains of England’s threatened and diminishing biodiversity.

While policy ENV 3 delivers *site-specific* compliance in the Plan Area with all the relevant national and local authority policies, this policy (ENV 4) does the same for *strategic planning* and the scrutiny of all future development proposals across the Plan Area. It also refers to the DEFRA *Guidance* of July 7, 2021 in respect of the use of the *biodiversity metric* approach to assessing the value to wildlife survival of virtually every potential development site.

POLICY ENV 4: BIODIVERSITY ACROSS THE PLAN AREA– All new development proposals will be expected to safeguard habitats and species, including those of local significance, and to deliver biodiversity net gain. If significant harm to biodiversity cannot be avoided (through relocating to an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or dealt with through

onsite or offsite enhancement (via biodiversity net gain at 10%) or compensation, planning permission should be refused, in conformity with paragraph 180a of the National Planning Policy Framework.

When fulfilment of biodiversity net gain involves trees and hedges, compensatory plantings should be of native or suitable exotic/ornamental species and should take account of current best practice regarding plant disease control and aftercare.

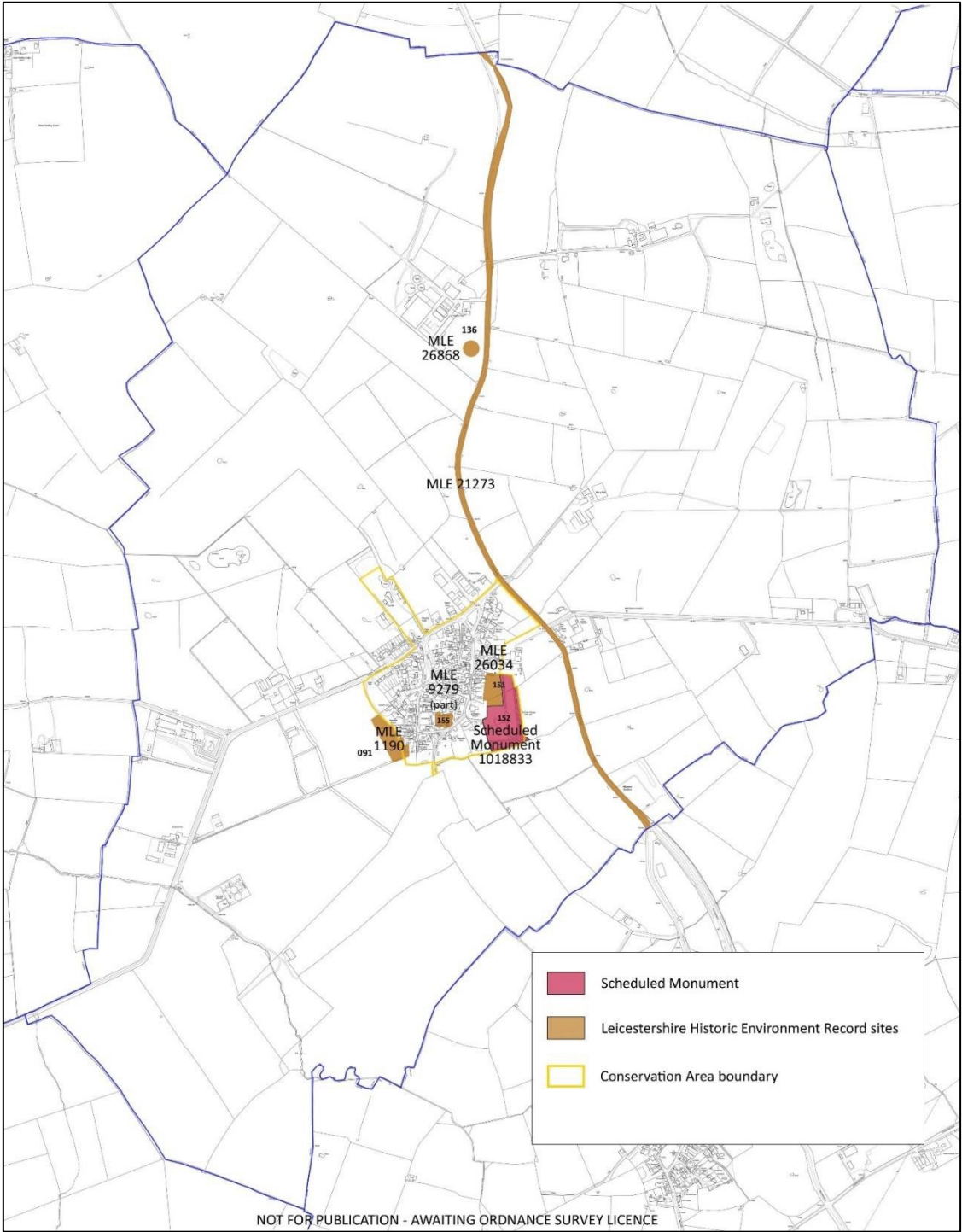
Sites and features of Historical Environment Significance

A group of inventory sites scores highly for 'history', scoring at least 3/5 under that criterion. The features for which the identified sites have been selected and notified are listed in Appendix 3.

They comprise all parcels of land of known local history significance (Historic England; Leicestershire Historic Environment Records; local knowledge) which have extant, visible expression in the landscape. These sites are important for the preservation of Arnesby's historical and cultural heritage.

POLICY ENV 5: SITES AND FEATURES OF HISTORICAL ENVIRONMENT SIGNIFICANCE - The sites mapped in figure 6 (details in Appendix 3) have been identified as being of at least local significance for history. The features are extant and have visible expression or there is proven buried archaeology on the site, and they are locally valued. The significance of the features present should be balanced against the local benefit of any development that would affect or damage them.

Figure 6: Sites and features of historical environment significance



Post-medieval well, The Paddocks

The remains of a well were discovered here in 2013 during and archaeological excavation in preparation for building work. Now restored as a garden feature.



Age Post-medieval (1540 – 1899)

Rarity Only surviving example in Arnesby

Aesthetic Value The well top has been rebuilt in 'traditional' style to match other building work on the property

Group Value n/a

Evidential Value Historical evidence is now sub-surface except for view down the shaft of the original (restored) brickwork.
Leics & Rutland Historic Environment Record MLE21367.
University of Leicester Archaeological Services report
<https://doi.org/ao/1029858>

Historic Association The area excavated proved to have been previously occupied by Victorian buildings and a wall. The well may have been part of this agricultural or outbuildings complex.

Archaeological Interest Moderate in Arnesby. Important enough to be a L&R HER site

Designed Landscapes n/a

Landmark Status n/a

Social & Communal Value The last known of what must have been many such wells in the village until mains water was installed

POLICY ENV 6: NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS – The buildings and structures listed here (locations figure 7) are non-designated heritage assets. They are important for their contribution to the layout and characteristic mix of architectural styles in the village, and their features and settings will be protected wherever possible. The local benefits of a development proposal, or of a change of use requiring planning approval, will need to be judged against their significance as heritage assets.

Assets in the Leicestershire Historic Environment Record (HER) as *Non-Listed historic buildings*:

1. Bell Cottage, St Peter's Road: HER reference MLE23163
2. Primary School and School House, Mill Hill Road: HER reference MLE25406

Non-designated Heritage Assets identified by this Plan:

3. Post-medieval well, The Paddocks (proven buried archaeology, with modern ornamental wellhead above)

Medieval ridge and Furrow

Ridge and furrow, the earthworks preserving the pattern of medieval ploughlands, is an important component of the landscape history of the parish of Arnesby. Created by some seven centuries of arable farming using a system in which cereals, beans and fallow were rotated in large, common, open fields, the ploughlands went out of use (in Arnesby's case) during the years between about 1600 and 1795, to be replaced by Enclosure: the creation of mainly pastoral farms in individual ownership. The ridges were 'fossilised' under the grass and enclosing hedges, thus protecting the patterns of lands and furlongs. This was the situation until the mid-20th century when pastures began to be converted back to arable using modern ploughs which obliterated the ridges and furrows. From an historical point of view, Arnesby was slower to do this than many parishes: figure 8.1 shows the extent of ridge and furrow in about 1947, while figure 8.2 shows how much survived in 1999 when surveyed by English Heritage (now Historic England). Most English midland parishes lost 90% in the 50 post-war years, but Arnesby retained over 50% then, and still (2023; figure 8.3) has about 20% of the 1947 acreage.

Figure 8.1 and 8.2 Ridge and furrow in c.1947 and c.1999

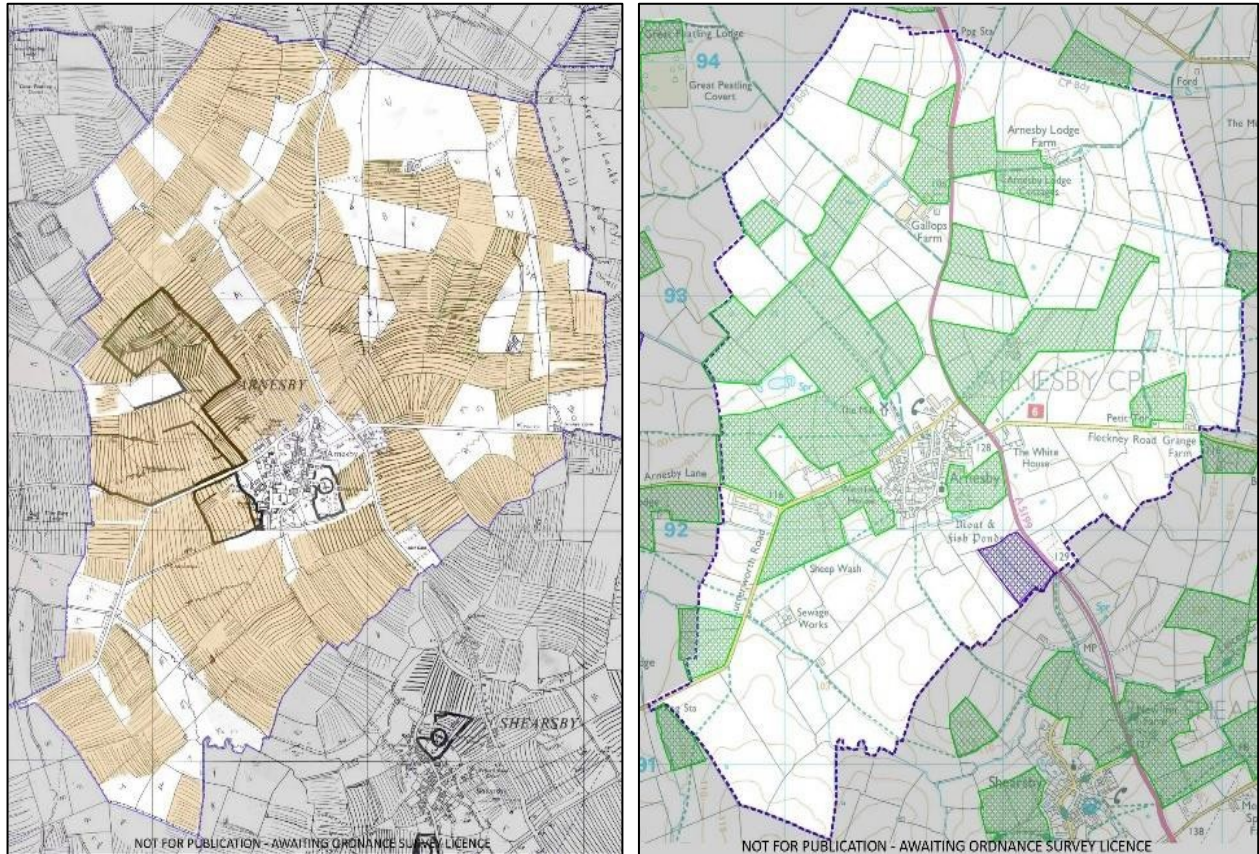
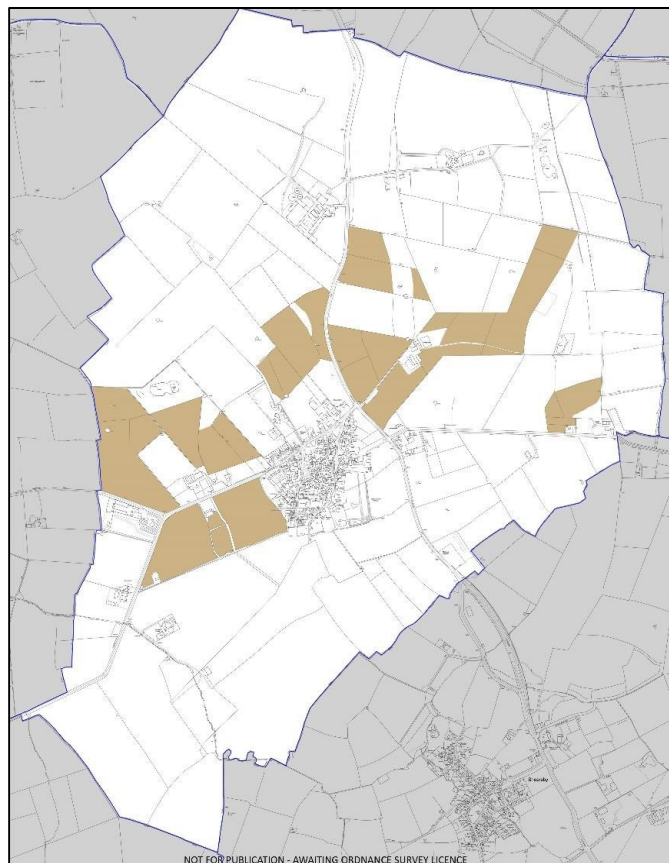


Figure 8.3: Ridge and furrow, 2023



POLICY ENV 7: MEDIEVAL RIDGE AND FURROW – The areas of ridge and furrow mapped in figure 8.3 are non-designated heritage assets.

A development proposal (or a change of land use requiring planning permission) resulting in loss or damage will not be supported; the local benefits of such development must be balanced against the significance of the ridge and furrow as heritage assets.

Important views

Consultation during the 2018 Neighbourhood Plan's preparation identified a widely held wish to protect Arnesby's rural setting, in particular its visual relationship with the surrounding landscape.

One of the main ways in which residents expressed this wish was by describing several highly valued views toward and from the village and of the most attractive parts of the surrounding countryside. These consultation findings were further defined by the environmental inventory, which although principally aimed at identifying sites of environmental significance also confirmed the sightlines of the suggested views and mapped them (figure 9). This policy is the same as for the made Neighbourhood Plan.

POLICY ENV 8: IMPORTANT VIEWS – The following views (figure 9, Appendix 5) are important to the setting and character of the village. Development proposals should respect and whenever possible protect them. Development which would have an adverse impact on the identified views will not be supported:

- A. Footpath Y89 at the end of South Close, west and northwest to Foston, Countesthorpe and distantly to Charnwood Forest (25 kms).
- B. Lutterworth Road beyond Westfield House southwest over rolling open country toward Bruntingthorpe
- C. Footpath Y1 and bridleway 0104 north over Peatling and across Leicester to Bradgate Park (25kms)
- D. Baptist Chapel ground and the field to its east, northeast over the Soar valley to Billesdon Coplow (15kms)
- E. Welford Road west across the medieval manor house site (Scheduled Monument) to the parish church and the village

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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. Arnesby has a relatively good network; they are well-used, and residents regard them as important for their recreational (as a contribution to physical and mental health and wellbeing) and for their socio-historical value. One of the effects of Enclosure (1795), with its new roads and the establishment of the Leicester to Welford Turnpike avoiding Arnesby is that several footpaths (Y14 and Z28, Y12 and Y5) preserve these late medieval routes between the village and Fleckney, Shearsby, Foston and Leicester.

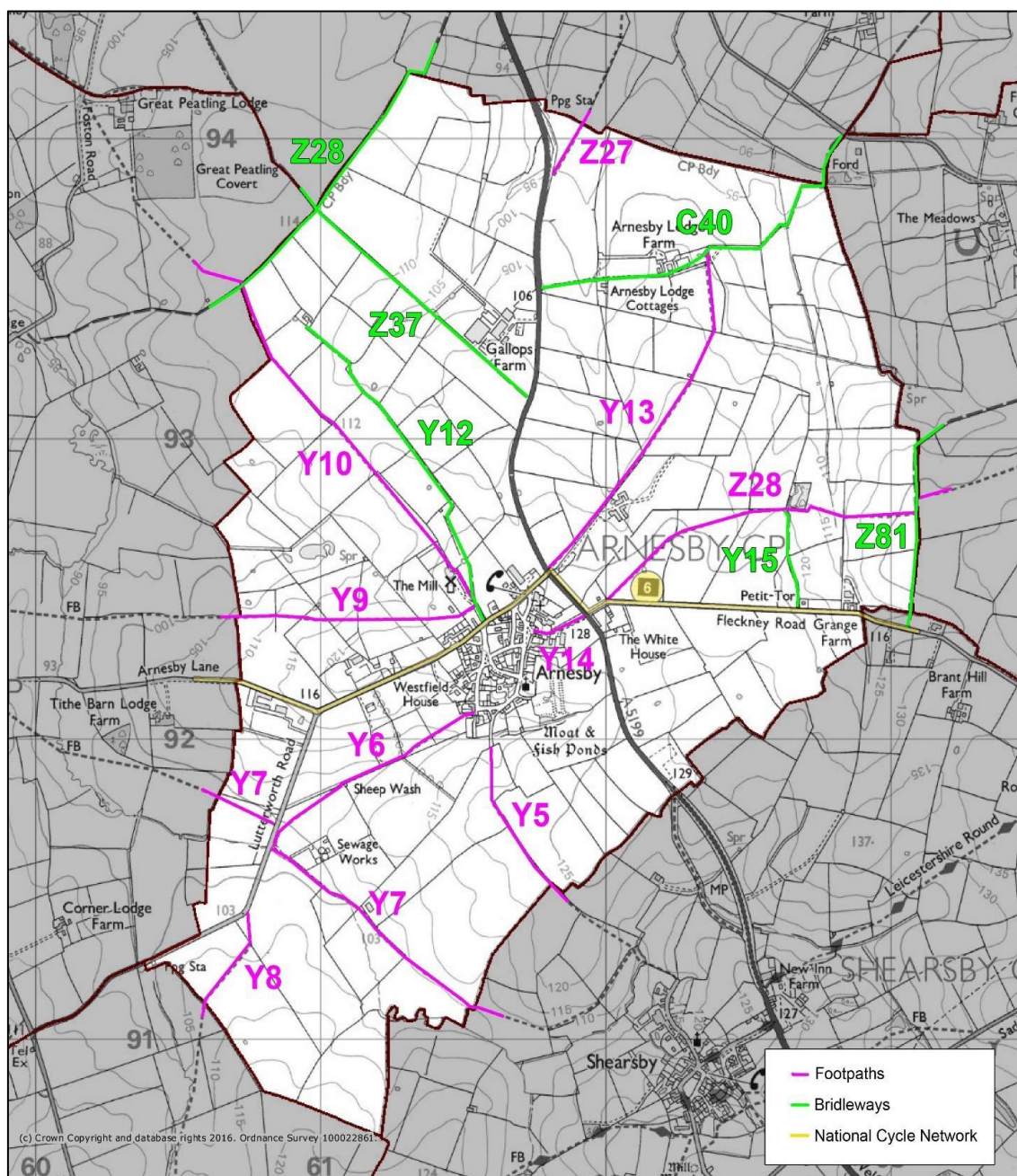
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the Neighbourhood Plan. With modern recognition of the value of walking routes for health and wellbeing any erosion of the network's extent and character will be resisted.

POLICY ENV 9: FOOTPATHS AND BRIDLEWAYS - Development will be supported provided it does not result in the loss of, or have a significant adverse effect on, the existing network of footpaths/bridleways and where it facilitates the maintenance/upgrade/extension of the pedestrian footpath network to:

- a) service new development connecting to the existing pedestrian footpath network;
- b) encourage walking over car use, and;
- c) support exercise and leisure activities.

Figure 10: Footpaths and bridleways

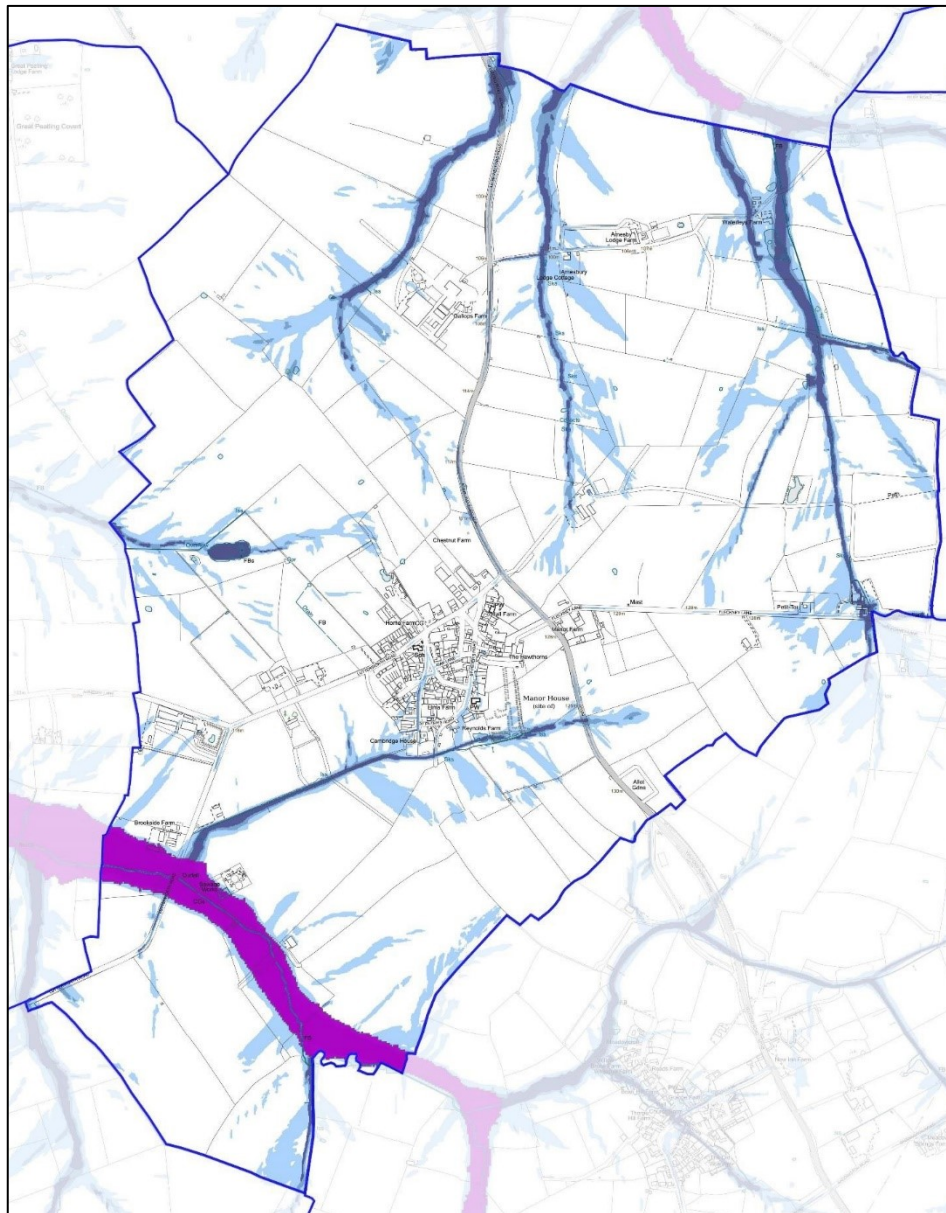


Flood risk resilience

Because of its elevated position, Arnesby village is at no risk of flooding by rivers. Occasional overbank events can be expected from the west-flowing brook 100m south of the settlement, and from the larger tributary streams (part of the Soar/Sence catchment) at the crossings of Lutterworth Road near the southwest boundary of the parish and of Welford Road close to the north boundary.

Figure11: Flood risk from Rivers (Zone 2) and surface water (high, medium, low)

Combined from Environment Agency online mapping, June 2023



However, as in other South Leicestershire villages, recent changes in agricultural practice, new development (increased use of impermeable surfaces, inappropriate siting) and the possible

effects of climate change, surface water flooding has become a fairly frequent occurrence in Arnesby. The intention of this policy is to ensure that current best practice is applied in order that the situation here is not exacerbated further by new development.

POLICY ENV 10: FLOOD RISK RESILIENCE – Development proposals within the areas of flood risk mapped in Figure 11 should demonstrate that the benefit of development outweighs the harm in relation to its adverse impact on climate change targets, and on the likelihood of it conflicting with locally applicable flood mitigation strategies and infrastructure.

Proposals to construct new (or modify existing) floodwater management infrastructure (ditches, roadside gullies, retention pools, etc.), including within or close to the built-up area, will be supported on condition that they reduce flood risk for residents and do not unnecessarily and adversely affect historical sites, biodiversity or important open spaces.

Development proposals of one or more dwellings and/or for employment/agricultural development should demonstrate that:

- a) if in a location susceptible to flooding from rivers or surface water, no alternative site to meet the local residential development need is available;
- b) its location and design respect the geology, flood risk and natural drainage characteristics of the immediate area and is accompanied by a hydrological study whose findings must be complied with in respect of design, groundworks and construction;
- c) it includes a Surface Water Drainage Strategy which demonstrates that the proposed drainage scheme, and site layout and design, will prevent properties from flooding from surface water, including allowing for climate change effects, and that flood risk elsewhere will not be exacerbated by increased levels of surface water runoff and will not threaten other natural habitats and water systems;
- d) its design includes, as appropriate, sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) with ongoing maintenance provision, other surface water management measures and permeable surfaces;
- e) it does not increase the risk of flooding to third parties;
- f) proposed SuDs infrastructure includes, where practicable, habitat creation comprising e.g. landscaping, access and egress for aquatic and terrestrial animals, and native species planting; and
- g) it takes the future effects of climate change on flood risk into account.

11 Community Facilities and Amenities

Introduction

The presence of community facilities and amenities make a significant contribution to the vitality and viability of Arnesby and has a positive impact on the sustainability of the Parish, enhancing the quality of life and regularly providing an important focal point for social interaction.

These facilities and amenities can provide local employment, reduce the need to travel and offer important services, particularly for those who do not have access to a car. The loss and threatened closure of facilities and services is, however, a common feature of village life and is likely to be tested further in the future as increases in car ownership and frequent commuting to work and to access leisure activities call into question the viability of many rural services. The range of facilities and amenities in many villages of a similar size to Arnesby is reducing as local residents increasingly use the larger retail outlets and leisure facilities in Fleckney, Leicester, Market Harborough and elsewhere. To promote the on-going prosperity of the Parish it is essential that Arnesby retains its remaining community facilities and amenities and continues to provide local services that will sustain the vitality of the community and encourage local spending.

The importance of the existing facilities and amenities were highlighted in the consultation events that have taken place across the Parish through the preparation of this Neighbourhood Plan.

The Open Event held on 1st October 2016 identified the value in retaining the existing Parish facilities as did the questionnaire produced in September/October 2016 in which respondents listed the village hall, the church and chapel, the restaurant and the school as the five most important amenities in the village. Both the NPPF and the Proposed Submission Harborough Local Plan indicate that valued community facilities should be retained. Policy CF1 supports the objective of maintaining an adequate level and range of facilities and amenities; whilst policy CF2 supports additional and enhanced facilities and amenities.

Support for Existing Community Facilities

In Arnesby village there is a limited range of facilities including:

Restaurant

The restaurant is currently privately owned and is listed as a community asset and as such the Parish Council has a period of time to submit a bid to purchase should it become available for sale.

The Baptist Chapel

The Chapel was built in 1798. Two marble plaques behind the pulpit celebrate the lives of illustrious former Arnesby residents; Benjamin Winckles who formed the Baptist church in the village in 1701 and Robert Hall, author and instigator of the Missionary movement.

The Chapel intends to seek planning permission at some stage for an extension to accommodate youth club facilities. As facilities for young people are limited within the Parish, the Neighbourhood Plan is supportive of such a planning application.

There are no issues at the Chapel regarding burial capacity.

St. Peters Church

St Peter's church is a Grade II* listed building and is one of the six churches in the Hexagon Benefice, the others being St Mary Magdalene at Shearsby, St Mary at Bruntingthorpe, All Saints at Thedddingworth, St Nicholas at Mowsley and Knaptoft and All Saints at Husbands Bosworth.

St Peter's is mostly Norman with the two central arches being early 12th century. The chancel, south and north aisles and the embattled west tower are early 14th century.

There have been approximately 12 burials/interments of ashes in the last 5 years. It is estimated that a further 30 spaces are available in the current burial area. This would typically be a 13/15year capacity year supply, after which it is intended to seek alternative facilities. This will be monitored through the life of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Village Hall

The village hall opened in 1963 and is very well utilised from both within and outside the community. In the recent community consultation, the village hall was the most valued community asset, 87% of those responding thought that it was important or very important.

It is registered with the Charity Commission and the committee forms the Trustees

A Management Committee runs the Hall with a Social Committee formed in 2017 to investigate possible uses. The hall is currently used by 8 groups each week.

However, perhaps its most significant current use at present is by the primary school, which uses it for assemblies, P.E. and many other curricular activities on a daily basis. This arrangement is referenced in the school section below.

Parent Care and Toddler Group

Currently running on a Friday morning in the village hall, the group offers shared activities for children 6 months and over, providing a strong link and natural progression route to the 3+ provision at the school.

School

Arnesby School is a church school but maintained by local authority. 100% of those responding to the questionnaire felt that Arnesby is well served by the school.

It can be seen that there is currently some capacity for additional pupils to attend the school. However, as the educational landscape evolves, a number of challenges and opportunities will face the school. Tighter budgetary constraint is inevitable; ongoing pupil demand is not inevitable but does seem likely to be maintained or even increased. The school is likely, in line with current trends, to seek academy status - offering greater autonomy but much reduced local authority support should issues arise such as reduced income or high maintenance bills.

The school uses the village hall daily for lunches, whole school assemblies and PE during bad weather.

Care Home

The Care Home is a privately-run establishment and has recently changed its client group.

Allotments and Community Woodland

Owned and managed by the Loseby Charity, there is a small number of allotments located in a field halfway between Arnesby and Shearsby. There is currently a short waiting list for plots.

On about 1 acre of the charity's land, some native woodland was planted in 2004 using donations from

villagers, a grant from the Leicestershire Grants Scheme, gifts from the Arnesby May Fayre and Arnesby Promises Auction.

An open afternoon is usually held in the woodland on August Bank Holiday.

Playing Field

This is currently leased by the Village Hall Management Committee. The field is maintained by the Parish Council and used by the school for outdoor sports activities.

Policy CF1: THE RETENTION OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND AMENITIES - Development leading to the loss of an existing community facility (as listed below) will only be supported where it can demonstrate:

- a) There is no longer any need or demand for the existing community facility;
- b) The existing community facility is no longer economically viable, or;
- c) The proposal makes alternative provision for the relocation of the existing community facility to an equally or more appropriate and accessible location.

The Community Facilities are as follows:

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| • Restaurant | • School |
| • The Baptist Chapel | • Care Home |
| • St. Peters Church | • Allotments and Community Woodland |
| • Village Hall | • Playing Field |

New or Improved Community Facilities

Community consultation with Arnesby residents confirmed the importance of enhancing the range of facilities and amenities in the Parish, recognising their value to the local community.

Facilities not currently available to the village were reviewed in terms of feasibility and previous experience.

- **Shop** – 78% of those responding to the community consultation would like to have a convenience shop in the village. However, this was considered unlikely due to both commercial and resourcing issues and, whilst opportunity exists for a private individual to open such a business, a community led shop would not be pursued.
- **Post Office** – Arnesby had a post office facility until a few years ago but Post Office Ltd decided that it was commercially unviable, and it was closed.

The theme group has identified and discussed several aspirational items to help sustain the character

and longer-term integrity of Arnesby village, along with a number of additional items considered desirable to enhance and strengthen the village amenities.

Park with play equipment for children

Over 55% of those responding to the community questionnaire stated that they would like to have a play area in the Parish. This is even though over 71% of respondents did not have any children living in their household. Consequently, it is clear that a cross section of the Parish population feel that this facility is needed for children in the Parish.

Pavement towards Peatling Magna

There is a general consensus that it would be very useful, particularly from a safety point of view for the provision of a pathway to the northern side of Lutterworth Road extending down to the gated road to Peatling Magna.

LED lighting

Whilst some LED lighting exists, the Parish Council have identified the need for a further 9 units. The Parish Council has established costs.

Disabled access

The Parish Council has identified the need to improve the extent of disabled access within the facilities in the Parish.

Each of these issues listed above is the subject of a Community Action to be pursued by the Parish Council.

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

- a) meet design criteria of Policy D1;
- b) not detract from residential amenity by merit of excessive traffic movement or other disturbance;
- c) not generate parking need that cannot be adequately catered for within the site;
- d) be of a scale proportionate to local need, and
- e) be readily accessible for cycle, pedestrian or physically impaired.

12. Transport

Traffic management

Arnesby is a rural Parish with the major A5199 running alongside it. Located as it is amongst other villages and urban areas (Fleckney, Market Harborough, Leicester etc.) the A5199 carries much traffic. Other roads in the Parish are covered by a 7.5ton weight limit (except for access).

The village largely predates motor transport which leads to parking issues, particularly at the centre of the village.

There is currently very limited public transport provision. During school terms, buses are used to convey schoolchildren to and from the local High Schools and 6th form colleges which are outside of the Parish. For most people living in the Parish, however, the car has become the principal mode of transport, even for some of the shortest journeys.

In the absence of regular public transport, the car necessarily provides the principal mode of transport for residents of the Parish. The National Planning Policy Framework encourages a reduction in congestion and greenhouse gas emissions through the introduction of measures which promote a reduction in the number of journeys made by car, and there are a number of actions that can be taken by individuals and by the public and private sectors to support this objective.

The Plan therefore focuses on those areas where it can have an influence on the need to travel by car, highway safety and parking provision. In particular, it includes measures to promote new areas for parking and ensure that, where necessary, traffic management measures are provided in connection with new developments.

Parking and traffic congestion

Several policies in the Neighbourhood Plan support the aim of improving the transport situation in the Parish. These include supporting the provision of new pedestrian and cycle links to the surrounding area (Policy Env 8) reducing the reliance on vehicles through the support for additional employment opportunities and home working (Policy BE3); supporting the promotion of high speed electronic communications, enabling businesses and individuals to communicate more effectively without travel

and providing the opportunity for residents to work at home and more locally (Policy BE6) and providing an appropriate level of off-street parking in any new developments (Policy D1).

However, traffic congestion remains an issue throughout the village. This is especially the case during rush hour and school run but more generally, some areas of the village, such as Robert Hall Road, are frequently inaccessible to delivery vehicles and even to emergency vehicles because of the volume of parking.

Parking on Robert Hall Road



At drop off and pick up times, parking outside the school creates congestion.

Parking issues at school drop off and pick up times



However, initiatives to encourage walking to school help to alleviate this problem.

The field facility on Lutterworth Road can accommodate up to 8 cars. However, this is a temporary and informal arrangement between the school and the landowner. If this arrangement ceases, these cars will necessarily be parked on streets within the village. The strengthening of this arrangement is therefore important (see School travel plan in supporting information).

One identified solution to traffic congestion in the village is a one-way system around the island on Mill Hill Road. This is supported by the Neighbourhood Plan and will be the subject of discussions with the Local Highways Authority.

A Double yellow line parking restriction on Lutterworth Road and corner of Mill Hill and a double yellow parking restriction at the southern end at the narrowest point of the one-way system on Robert Hall Road offer additional solutions and are supported by the Neighbourhood Plan.

Traffic calming

Speeding through the village is perceived by parishioners to be an issue. 71% of those responding to the questionnaire believe that change is needed in order to reduce speeds through Arnesby. Theme group discussion suggested that the problem is greatest along Lutterworth Road and Mill Hill Road. Problems are also associated with junctions of Mill Hill Road, Oak Lane and Church Lane, where traffic merges and visibility is poor.

Policy T1: TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT - With particular regard to the rural highway network of the Parish and the need to minimise any increase in vehicular traffic all development must:

- a) be designed to minimise additional traffic generation and movement through the village;
- b) incorporate sufficient off-road parking in line with policy D1;
- c) not remove or compromise the use of any existing off-road parking areas unless a suitable equivalent alternative is provided;
- d) provide any necessary improvements to site access, communal parking and the highway network either directly or by financial contributions, and where relevant;
- e) improve/create footpaths and cycleways to key village services

13. Business and Employment

Support for existing employment opportunities

The strength of the local economy and of the community goes hand in hand. Supporting the growth of a stronger local economy is recognised as an important theme of the Neighbourhood Plan. However, Arnesby is a rural parish relatively distant from the major employment centres. Employment opportunities within the Parish are therefore limited in scale.

That said, there is an increasing trend for residents to work from home (14% of people responding to the community questionnaire said that they either operate a business in the Parish or work from home. Types of business include: Pilates instruction, clinical reflexology, carpenter/builder, clothing manufacturer, accountancy services, postal delivery hub, school/preschool, gardening, heating engineer, home working and consultancy work) and with improving connectivity locally and changing employment patterns nationally, this trend is likely to continue.

For the majority of workers resident in the Parish the lack of significant employment opportunity means that their only option is to work away from the area, commuting to secure employment. This impacts particularly on young people for whom the high property values combined with the lack of local employment opportunities make Arnesby a difficult option for residence.

There are very few dedicated employment opportunities within the Parish outside of the local pub/restaurant, school and farm-related activities.

Where there are buildings dedicated to business use in the Parish it is recommended that they be protected against being lost to other uses.

Policy BE1: SUPPORT FOR EXISTING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES - Change of use of commercial premises or land in business use to an activity that does not provide employment opportunities will be supported only if it can be demonstrated that it has:

- a) not been in active use for at least six months, and;
- b) no potential for either reoccupation or redevelopment for employment generating uses, as demonstrated through a full valuation/viability report supported by a continuous marketing campaign of no less than six months.

Support for new employment opportunities

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

Theme group discussion suggested there would be support for small-scale development appropriate to the rural nature of the village and the Parish. However, there was opposition to any larger scale business development, citing reasons such as the inability of the roads to cope and it not being good for a small village.

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 on other matters agreed to be locally important such as increased traffic flows, parking, residential amenity, the preservation of historic/heritage assets and the local environment.

There is, however, a need to recognise and support the increasing numbers of people who conduct their businesses from home. The Neighbourhood Plan reflects this in its proposals to provide a wider range of housing and to support the provision of local business premises where appropriate.

The Harborough Core Strategy supports the rural economy by allowing for new employment land to be provided, helping create or safeguard jobs.

Policy BE2: SUPPORT FOR NEW EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES - New employment development will be supported, provided it:

- a) falls within the LTD or relates to small scale leisure or tourism activities, or other forms of commercial/employment related development appropriate to a countryside location;
- b) involves change of use of any existing building or an area of previously developed land;
- c) is of a size and scale not adversely affecting the character, infrastructure and built environment of the village and surrounding neighbourhood plan area;
- d) does not involve the loss of dwellings;
- e) would not increase noise levels, light or other pollution detrimental to residential amenities of nearby residential property;
- f) will not generate unacceptable levels of traffic movement;
- g) contributes positively to the character and vitality of the local area;

- h) will integrate into and complement existing businesses.

The following types of small-scale employment development will be supported:

- a) expansion of existing employment premises across the Neighbourhood Plan area, and;
- b) new build development within or adjacent to Arnesby village.

Commercial Allocation

The Plan allocates land off Lutterworth Road (as shown in yellow in Figure 12) for employment use. The development of the site should comply with the following criteria:

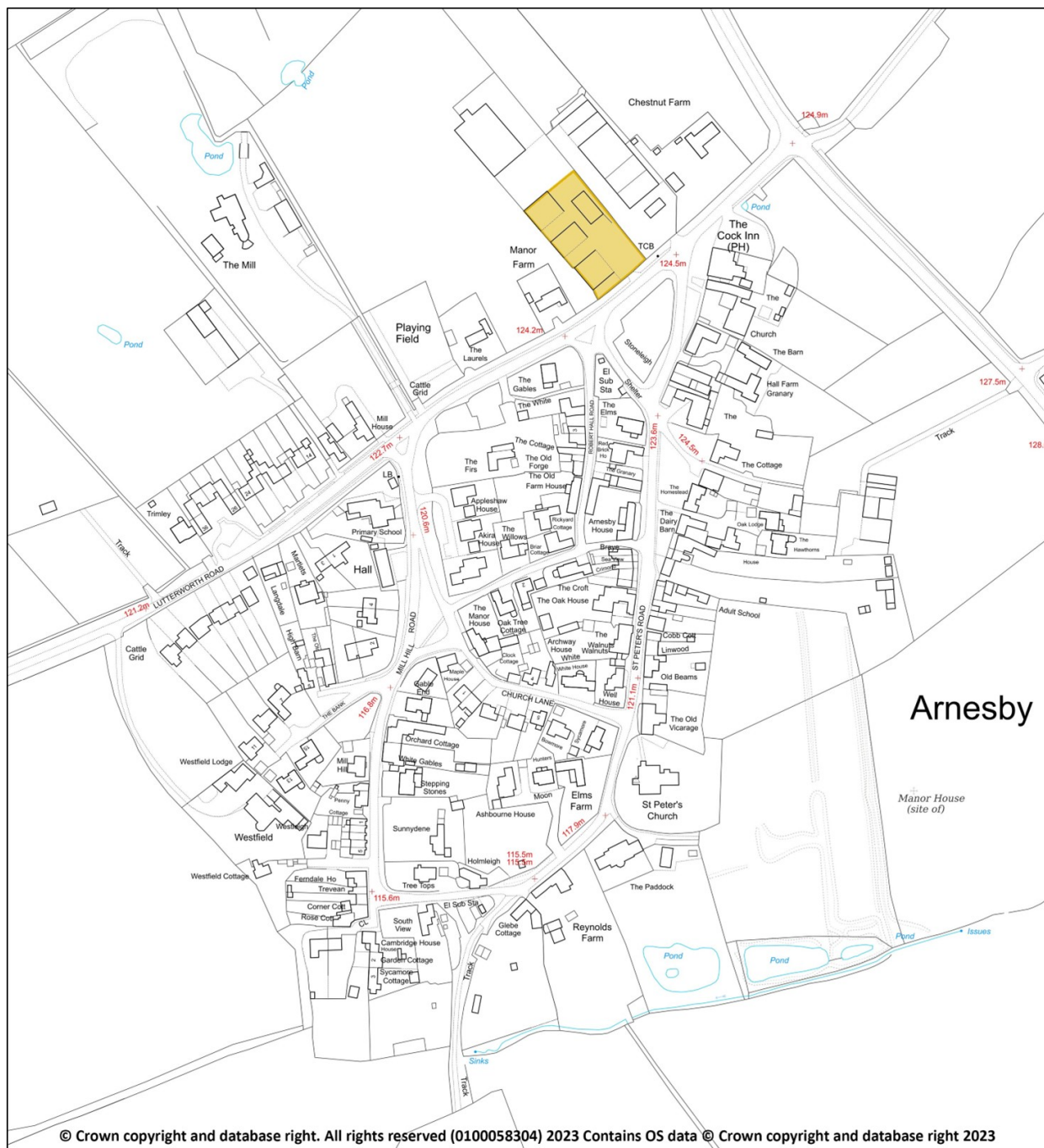
- a) The design and layout of the development and the materials used should be in accordance with the design quality principles included in Policy S2 of this Plan.
- b) Landscaping is provided to soften the site boundaries.
- c) The site retains existing important natural boundaries such as trees and hedges and provides a clear definition between the residential allocation to the north and to the existing residential property to the west.
- d) Renewable energy technology is to be incorporated into the Scheme to minimise carbon emissions and to address energy efficiency.
- e) Development will need to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.
- f) The development of the site incorporates an appropriate number of parking spaces and turning facilities in relation to the floorspace provided.
- i) Open space/outdoor seating areas are to be made available for the commercial units

POLICY BE3: COMMERCIAL SITE ALLOCATION - The Plan allocates land off Lutterworth Road (as shown in yellow in Figure 12) for employment use. The development of the site should comply with the following criteria:

- a) The design and layout of the development and the materials used should be in accordance with the design quality principles included in Policy S2 of this Plan.
- b) Landscaping is provided to soften the site boundaries.
- c) The site retains existing important natural boundaries such as trees and hedges and provides a clear definition between the residential allocation to the north and to the existing residential property to the west.

- d) Renewable energy technology is to be incorporated into the Scheme to minimise carbon emissions and to address energy efficiency.
- e) Development will need to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.
- f) The development of the site incorporates an appropriate number of parking spaces and turning facilities in relation to the floorspace provided.
- g) Open space/outdoor seating areas are to be made available for the commercial units

Figure 12: Commercial Development



Home working

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

Currently some 11% of the village inhabitants work from home (full-time or part-time), a little less than the national figure of 14% and rising trend indicated by both the TUC and the Office for National Statistics.

The intention of Policy BE4 is to recognise that people may not have a suitable space within their home from which to run a business, or they may wish to distinctly and deliberately separate their work and living space. Policy BE4 supports the construction of extensions, the conversion of outbuildings, and the development of new freestanding buildings in gardens from which businesses can operate. This is intended to maximise the opportunity for home run enterprises to be created and supported in the long term in Arnesby.

Policy BE4 would apply where a material change of use occurs, such that planning permission is required. This reflects positive support for entrepreneurial activity in line with the NPPF and Proposed Submission Harborough Local Plan.

Whilst it is acknowledged that it may not always be possible, there is a strong desire for new housing to contain a small office space to accommodate home working.

POLICY BE4: WORKING FROM HOME - Proposals for the use of part of a dwelling for office and/or light industrial uses, and for small-scale free-standing buildings within its curtilage, extensions to the dwelling or conversion of outbuildings for those uses, will be supported where:

- a) Such development will not result in unacceptable traffic movements and that appropriate parking provision is made within the site;
- b) No significant and adverse impact arises to nearby residents or other sensitive land uses from noise, fumes, light pollution, or other nuisance associated with the work activity; and
- c) Any extension or free-standing building shall be designed having regard to policies in this Plan and should not detract from the quality and character of the building to which they are subservient by reason of height, scale, massing, location or the facing materials used in their construction.

Farm diversification

There are 9 working farms in the Parish with 1 worked on a contract basis and there is general support for farming diversification. The conversion of former agricultural buildings has in the past, enabled diversification, led to the sustainable re-use of vacant buildings and provided opportunities for the establishment and development of small businesses, such as cheese making, which generate income and employment opportunities for local people. This is a trend which the Parish Council would like to continue in the Plan area to maintain a balanced and vibrant community, subject to the proper consideration of residential amenity for nearby houses, visual or other impact on the countryside and highway safety issues. New business development in the countryside is covered in Policy E2.

Specifically, this is intended to:

- Promote a viable and sustainable farming and rural economy in Arnesby Parish
- Promote the diversification of rural businesses
- Encourage new 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 land

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 BE5: RE-USE OF AGRICULTURAL AND COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS - Notwithstanding permitted development rights granted by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment and Consequential Provisions) (England) Order 2014 or any subsequent amendment, and, in order to support farm diversification and the sustainable growth and expansion of businesses, the conversion of existing agricultural and commercial buildings will be supported subject to:

- a) proposals satisfying the design criteria in Policy S2;
- b) the use being appropriate to a rural location;
- c) the conversion/adaptation works respecting the local built character;
- d) no adverse impact on any archaeological, architectural, historic or environmental features;

- e) the site access and local road system being assessed as capable of accommodating the traffic to be generated and adequate parking provision being made within the site.
- f) there being no significant adverse impact on neighbouring residential amenity through noise, light or other pollution, and;
- g) no increase in flood risk.

Tourism

Arnesby is a beautiful rural parish to which walkers and other visitors are attracted. The Parish is keen to extend a welcome to visitors whilst ensuring that their visit has a positive impact on parishioners - for example, in the context of traffic.

It is felt that the offer to visitors can be enhanced over the lifetime of the plan.

POLICY BE6: TOURISM - Support will be given to facilities that enhance tourism where they:

- a) are within or adjoining Arnesby, on a scale appropriate to the settlement;
- b) do not have a detrimental effect on the distinctive rural character of the Parish;
- c) do not adversely affect the surrounding infrastructure, particularly local road networks and water supply and sewerage;
- d) benefit the local community through, for instance, provision of local employment opportunities and improvements to local service provision appropriate in scale to their location;
- e) involve the re-use of existing buildings, or;
- f) form part of farm diversification.

Broadband infrastructure

The modern economy is changing and increasingly requires a good communications infrastructure as a basic requirement to maximise technological advances. High-speed Internet connectivity is driving business innovation and growth, helping people access services, and opening up new opportunities for learning. This is particularly important in small rural settings where better broadband enables improved access to an increasing number of on-line applications and services provided by the public and private sector, can help to reduce social exclusion and create business opportunities.

73% of those responding to the questionnaire felt that their broadband and their mobile phone reception required improvement. Additionally, just as few would have predicted the technological

transformation of the past few years, there will undoubtedly be further advances in the future. It is crucial that Arnesby is able to accommodate and deliver new technology as it arises. The need for further development of high-speed broadband infrastructure to serve Arnesby Parish as technology develops is very important.

POLICY BE7: BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE - Proposals to provide increased access to a super-fast broadband service and improve the mobile telecommunications network serving businesses and other properties will be supported.

This may require above ground network installations, which must be sympathetically located and designed to integrate into the landscape and not be located in or near open landscapes.

14. Monitoring and Review

The Neighbourhood Plan will last up to 2031. During this time, it is likely that circumstances will change.

The Neighbourhood Plan will be regularly monitored. This will be led by Arnesby Parish Council, on at least an annual basis. The policies and measures contained in the Neighbourhood Plan will form the core of the monitoring activity, but other data collected and reported at the Parish level relevant to the delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan will also be included.

The Parish Council proposes to formally review the Neighbourhood Plan on a five-year cycle commencing in 2029 or to coincide with the review of the Harborough Local Plan if this cycle is different.