



FLECKNEY

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN



REVIEW

2020 – 2041

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FOREWORD

1. Changes from the Made Neighbourhood Plan

The following changes (other than planning policy updates and formatting amendments) have been made to the Neighbourhood Plan which was Made by Harborough District Council on 7 May 2021.

The Neighbourhood Area incorporates an amended Neighbourhood Area boundary which was amended as of 13 December 2022 following a Boundary Review.

The following policies relate to those in the Made Neighbourhood Plan:

Policy F1: Countryside – this is covered in Policy H1 Settlement Boundary, which establishes a red line area within which development will be supported.

Policy F2: Public Rights of Way network – this is now Policy ENV 10 Footpaths and other recreational routes. No other change.

Policy F3: Ecology and Biodiversity and Policy F4: Trees and Hedgerows – these policies have been consolidated into new policies ENV 3 and ENV 4 (see below).

Policy F5: Features of Local Heritage Interest is now Policy ENV 7 Non-Designated Heritage Assets. The list of buildings identified in the 2021 Made Plan has been updated to reflect their current status in the Leicestershire Historic Environment Record.

Policy F6: Design – this policy (now Policy D1) has been updated to take into account the findings of a Design Guide and Codes document which was commissioned as part of the Neighbourhood Plan Review.

Policy F7: Local Green Spaces (LGS) – this is now Policy ENV 1. A new policy (ENV 2, see below) has been added to identify and provide appropriate protection for all Open Spaces in the Area. Two Local Green Spaces (and 32 Open Space, Sport & Recreation sites) replace and augment the 13 LGSs in the Made Plan.

Policy F8: Housing Provision – this statement of intent has been updated and is included as part of the narrative rather than as a specific policy.

Policy F9: Infill Housing – this is now policy H2 Windfall Housing which establishes criteria to be applied when supporting planning applications within the Settlement Boundary.

Policy F10: Housing Mix – this policy (now Policy H3) has been updated to take into account the findings of a Housing Needs Assessment which was commissioned as part of the Neighbourhood Plan Review.

Policy F11: Affordable Housing – this policy (now Policy H4) has been updated to take into account the findings of a Housing Needs Assessment which was commissioned as part of the Neighbourhood Plan Review.

Policy F12: Bus Services is now Policy T1 but otherwise unchanged.

Policy F13: Car Parking and New Housing Development. This is now Policy T3. It remains the same as in the Made Neighbourhood Plan, other than a stated requirement for new development to meet Leicestershire County Council Highways requirements.

Policy F14: Community Services and Facilities is now Policy CF1. The policy has been updated to include and describe current important community facilities and to promote their protection, and to support the introduction of new community facilities.

Policy F15: Infrastructure is now Policy In 1. It has been updated to reflect current priorities.

Policy F16: Local Centre. This is now Policy LC 1. It has been updated to address issues related to the quality of shop fronts in the Village Centre.

Policy F17: Local Centre Car Parking is now Policy LC 2, but is otherwise unchanged.

New policies:

Policy ENV 2 Open Space, Sport & Recreation sites (OSSRs). there was no policy in the Made Plan. The intention is to protect the functions and amenities of all the OSSRs in the Area, with support from community value. This policy makes a clear distinction between the protection afforded to Local Green Spaces by Policy ENV 1 and that for OSSRs.

Policy ENV 3 Sites of Natural Environment significance. This policy identifies all known sites (habitats) with known biodiversity significance (based on Leicestershire Environment Record Centre and other validated data) and affords them appropriate protection when new development is proposed. The measures for Biodiversity Net Gain in the current National Framework are referenced.

Policy ENV 4 Biodiversity and Connectivity. This policy provides protection for wildlife and habitats (including, but not restricted to, statutorily protected species) wherever new development is proposed in the Area, and identifies a wildlife corridor to provide connectivity between the known sites in ENV 3. The measures for Biodiversity Net Gain in the current National Framework are referenced.

Policy ENV 5 Sites of Historic Environment significance. This policy identifies all known sites with visible heritage features and proven buried archaeology (based on Leicestershire Historic Environment Record data) and affords them appropriate protection when new development is proposed.

Policy ENV 6 Ridge and furrow. This policy maps the extent of surviving ridge and furrow earthworks in the Area, compares it with the loss since 1947 and 1999, and protects the individual occurrences as Non-designated Heritage Assets.

Policy ENV 9 Flooding: Risk, Resilience and Climate Change. There was no policy in the Made Plan for flood risk; a section of narrative referred to 'water management'. The policy adds local detail to National and Local Plan policies based on 2025 Environment Agency mapping of risk, recent local flooding experience and deals with the urgent need to take account of these factors, and the effects of climate change on flood risk, when new development is proposed.

Policy E1: Employment. This is a new policy which seeks to support existing and promote new employment opportunities locally.

Policy T2 Transport Requirements for New Development seeks to address transport-related issues across the neighbourhood area.

Policy CF2 Healthcare seeks to support the expansion of existing facilities and the creation of new facilities subject to expressed criteria.

Policy CF3 seeks to support the expansion or relocation of the School in the Neighbourhood Area subject to expressed criteria.

2. Introduction

The 2011 Localism Act has given communities the right to draw up a Neighbourhood Plan. This right is aimed at giving local communities genuine opportunities to influence the future of the places where they live.

The Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan allows people who live, work and have a business in the parish to have a say where they think new houses, businesses and shops should be located and what they should look like. The Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan is a statutory plan which means that it is used to help determine planning applications in the parish, alongside the Local Plan (2011-2031).

The Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan was submitted to a referendum vote on 6th May 2021 and posed the question 'Do you want Harborough District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Fleckney to help decide planning applications in the Neighbourhood area'. 85% of those who voted were in favour of the Plan being used to decide planning applications in the Neighbourhood Area.

In November 2022 the Parish Council decided to undertake a review of the made Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan in the light of the recently published Harborough DC Strategic Housing and Economic Land Assessment 2021 and the very real likelihood that the new Local Plan would require further housing development in Fleckney over and above that already set out in the Adopted Local Plan and the Made Neighbourhood Plan.

The Fleckney Neighbourhood Area

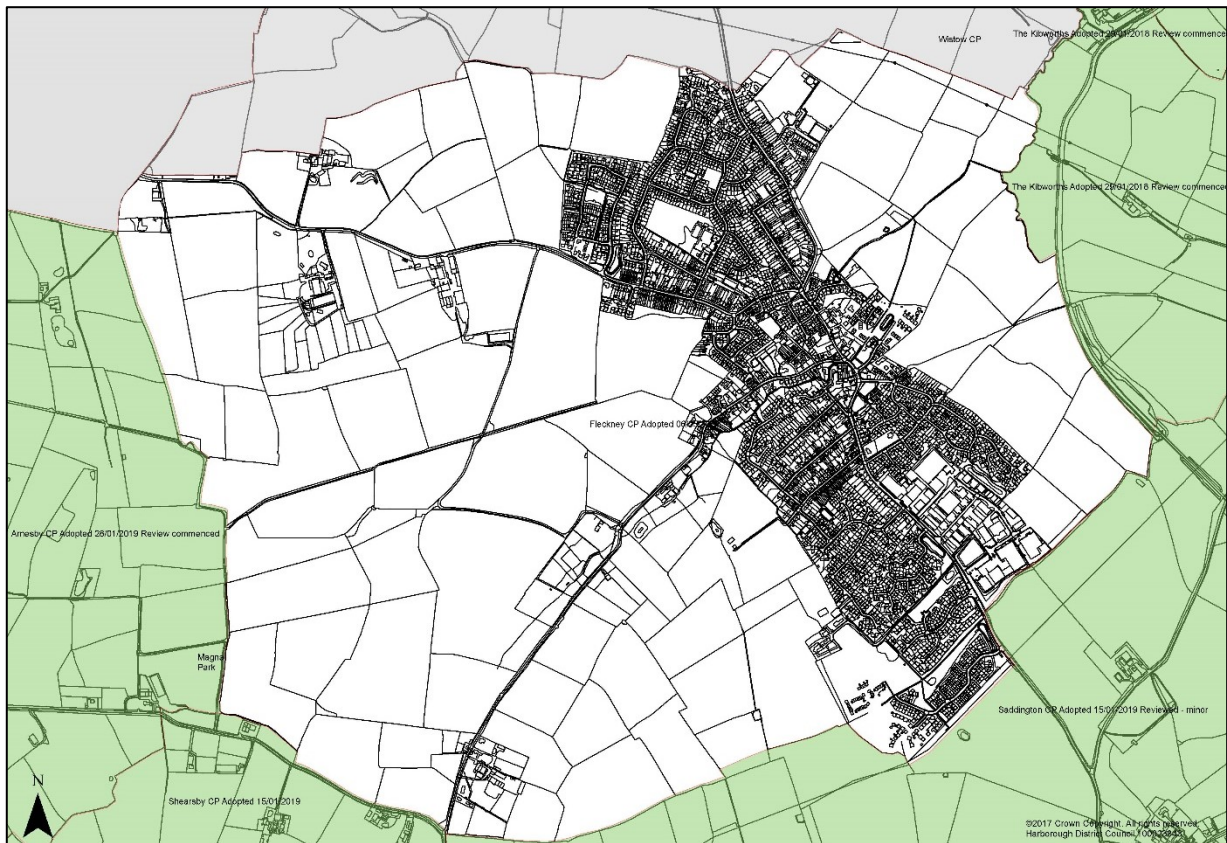
Fleckney lies 9 miles south of Leicester between the A6 and the A5199, in Harborough District, close to the District's border with Oadby and Wigston. Market Harborough is approximately 9 miles to the south-east.

Originally an agricultural settlement, Fleckney developed an industrial base related initially to brick making and then to the hosiery trade in the 19th Century. The village now has a small industrial estate and post-war housing development has seen the population grow to (4,924 2021 Census). The village has a good range of facilities including a primary school, several shops, two public houses and two doctors' surgeries. It is well placed for access to both Leicester and Market Harborough.

Fleckney was designated as a Neighbourhood Area on 24 March 2016. The Neighbourhood Plan covers the period 2020-2041.

In November 2022, Fleckney Parish Council applied to Harborough District Council to amend the Neighbourhood Area. This was to amend the original boundary to take into account the new Fleckney Parish Boundary, as amended by the boundary review of 2021. The new boundary was designated on 13 December 2022.

Figure 1- Fleckney Neighbourhood Area (amended 13 December 2022). HDC mapping



The Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan website www.fleckneynp.org.uk, provides information and updates about the Neighbourhood Plan and the review process and its progress.

Basic Conditions

Only a draft Neighbourhood Plan that meets each of a set of basic conditions can be put to a referendum and be adopted. This means that there is not an entirely free hand over how the plan is prepared. The Neighbourhood Plan Review must have regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) updated in December 2024 and be in general conformity with the development plan for the area.

Harborough Local Plan

The relevant development plan for the area is the Harborough Local Plan which was adopted by Harborough District Council in April 2019. This is currently under review, with the new Local plan being at Regulation 19 stage as this Neighbourhood Plan review was being prepared.

The Local Plan identifies Strategic Development Areas (SDAs) East of Lutterworth and at Scraftoft North, as the principal means of meeting Harborough District's housing and employment needs.

Fleckney is identified as a Rural Centre. In addition to the delivery of existing commitments and completions and an allowance for windfalls, land for about 130 dwellings is allocated off Fleckney Road, Fleckney. Land off Marlborough Drive is allocated for industrial and commercial development.

The proposed Settlement Hierarchy in the emerging Local Plan classifies Fleckney as a 'Large Village' alongside Broughton Astley, Great Glen and Kibworth (Beauchamp and Harcourt).

What has been done so far

During the preparation of the Made Neighbourhood Plan, a Neighbourhood Planning Launch Event took place in July 2016 at the Sports Centre, Leicester Road. Over one hundred people attended to hear how the process worked, the benefits of producing a plan and the timescale over which it would be produced. An exercise was conducted amongst those present to find out what was good about the village, what was bad, what should be retained and what needed changing. The results gave a first indication of those matters which are important to residents and need to be addressed by the Neighbourhood Plan.

In February 2017 a workshop was held with key stakeholders including local landowners, businesses, clubs and societies to look at the principle issues that the Neighbourhood Plan needed to address.

A questionnaire was developed by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee in conjunction with the Rural Community Council (Leicestershire & Rutland). The questionnaires were delivered to all households during March 2017- the closing date for returns was 24 April 2017. 537 completed questionnaires were returned which equates to a 27% response rate of the questionnaires distributed.

In June 2017, drop-in sessions were held at Fleckney Library so that local people could see the results of the residents' survey and to discuss the issues and options raised. The results of the survey are available on the Neighbourhood Plan website alongside all evidence relating to the Made Neighbourhood Plan.

Throughout the plan preparation process, local people were informed of progress through the website and newsletters.

The feedback from these events, the questionnaire results and information about the area helped us finalise the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan leading to Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, where a six-week pre-submission consultation period on the proposed Neighbourhood Plan for Fleckney ran from 4 June to 16 July 2018.

During the consultation period, 'drop in' sessions at Fleckney Library provided an opportunity to examine the contents of the Draft Neighbourhood Plan and to discuss it in more detail with members of the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee.

All representations and comments received were considered by Fleckney Parish Council and were used to amend the draft Neighbourhood Plan prior to submission to Harborough District Council. The Neighbourhood Plan passed Referendum on 6 May 2021 and was formally made by Harborough District Council on 27 May 2021.

In the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan Review, a further questionnaire was undertaken in 2024. A total of 144 responses were received.

An open event was held in xxxxx 2025 to share the draft policies in the Review with the community prior to formal Regulation 14 consultation.

Sustainable Development

Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportiveways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

- an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land ofthe right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
- a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed, beautiful, and safe, spaces, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and
- an environmental objective – to protect andenhanace our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, help improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

This Neighbourhood Plan Review shows what sustainable development inFleckney means in practice.

Key Issues

Feedback from community consultation identified the key issues that the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan has addressed, and which remain relevant in the Review:

- How to meet the strategic development requirements for housing and employment set out in the Harborough LocalPlan
- The impact of new development and the need for improvedinfrastructure (especially transport), services and amenities
- Not all new development has been well integrated into theheart of the village
- New housing has not met local needs- especially the needs of older households and young families
- The erosion of local identity through the loss of heritage assetsand the poor design of new buildings
- The protection of the local countryside and the naturalenvironment
- The need to maintain separation between Fleckney and theneighbouring villages of Wistow and Saddington
- The retention of important open spaces within the village

- Traffic congestion, speeding vehicles, road safety and parking problems
- Need for bus service improvements
- Better sports and recreation facilities
- Concerns about the vitality of the village centre

Implementation

There is no point in preparing a Neighbourhood Plan which cannot be delivered. To help implement the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan, stakeholders were involved at an early stage and identified what infrastructure was needed to support the plan.

Almost all development has some impact on the existing, and the need for new, infrastructure, services and amenities. Sometimes these impacts are detrimental and so it is only fair that new development pays a share of the cost of providing additional infrastructure.

The Neighbourhood Plan Review builds on the work that has been undertaken since the Neighbourhood Plan was made by Harborough District Council

Vision

In setting out the aims for the Made Neighbourhood Plan it was considered vital to consider how the Parish should be at the end of the plan period. The plan needed to be aspirational, but realistic. The vision statement set out below has helped guide the preparation of the Made Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan. It remains relevant, with an extended time frame, for the Neighbourhood Plan Review.



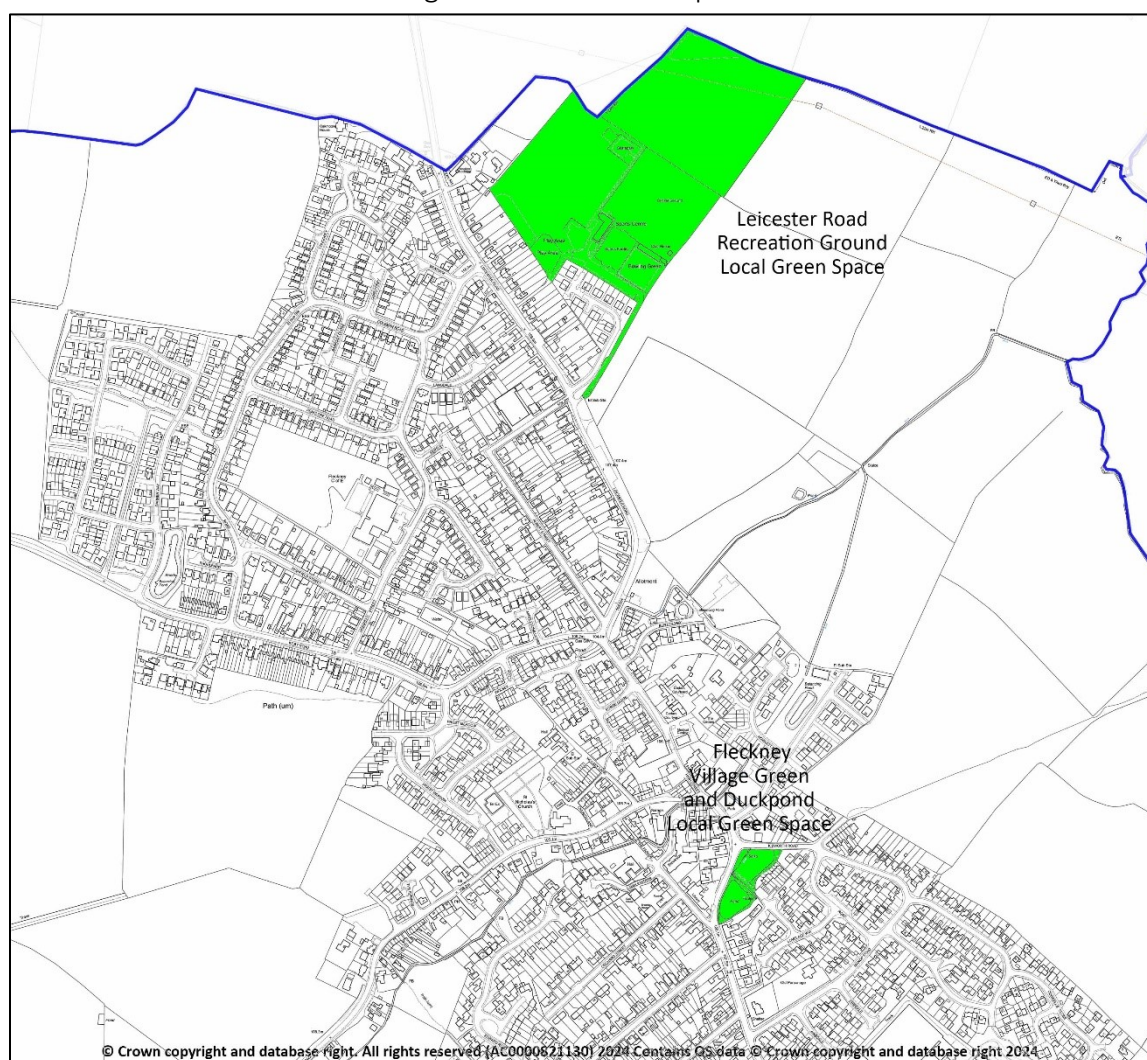
3. The Natural, Historic and Social Environment

Local Green Spaces

The Made 2021 Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan designated 13 sites as Local Green Spaces (LGS), but they are not shown as such on the Harborough Council Local Plan (2019) Policies Map. The current Local Plan designates one Local Green Space in Fleckney ('Priest Meadow Estate amenity area'), but this is not among the LGSs in the Neighbourhood Plan. Meanwhile, the Made Neighbourhood Plan did not designate, or have a policy for, Open Space, Sport & Recreation sites – of which there are many, including 23 shown on the 2019 HDC policies map.

In order to ensure completeness and an evidence-based balance between the different protections given to LGSs and OSSRs by the National Planning Policy Framework (2012 to 2024), a review of all potential Local Green Spaces (LGS) and Open Space, Sport & Recreation sites (OSSRs) was therefore undertaken for this Review Plan to re-assess the 13 Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan LGSs along with all other open spaces in the Area. As a result of this comprehensive re-assessment, **two** sites are now designated as Local Green Spaces (evidence base, Appendix 3), while **32** open spaces are designated as OSSR (policy ENV 2

Figure 2: Local Green Spaces



Statutory protection ensures that these most important places in Fleckney's natural and human environment are protected for future generations.

POLICY ENV 1: LOCAL GREEN SPACE – Development proposals that would result in the loss of, or have an adverse effect on, the following sites (details Appendix 3; locations figure 2) will not be permitted other than in very special circumstances.

Leicester Road Recreation Ground and extension, play area, bowling green, with parking and community facilities: Suggest merge OS1-4 as one LGS. Is there any reason not to do so – e.g. future long-term use or development value?

Village Green and the duck pond Suggest merge OSs 17 and 18 as one LGS. Can the score be legitimately enhanced (more history; better access and use)?

Open Space, Sport & Recreation Sites

The Made 2021 Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan had no policy for Open Space, Sport & Recreation sites (OSSRs). The Planning status of OSSRs generally (nationally and in Harborough District) and their relevance to Neighbourhood Plans has been clarified by the Making of numerous Neighbourhood Plans with an OSSR policy in recent years. This Review Plan has therefore assessed all *de facto* and potential OSSRs in the Neighbourhood Area, including all the sites now included in the Harborough Council audit (HDC *Open Spaces Strategy*, 2019) and shown on the HDC *Policies Map* (2019, for the 2018 *Local Plan*), and others identified by the community, as meeting the criteria for designation (including twelve OSSRs in recent residential developments), and using the open space typologies recognised by HDC.

In total, 32 OSSRs in the Fleckney Neighbourhood Area are recognised by this Plan and covered by Policy ENV 2.

POLICY ENV 2: IMPORTANT OPEN SPACES- The following open spaces (figure 3, details Appendix 2) 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.

Open Spaces provided as a condition of planning consent (i.e. to meet national and local standards) in future new developments will fall under this policy following their completion and formalisation as open space, however owned and managed.

In HDC 2021 Audit and on 2019 Policies Map

Amenity Green Space

OS09 Amenity Area, Priest Meadow Estate (on Policies Map as LGS/FLECK/2) *Amenity Open Space*

OS05 Longgrey open space (as OS96 Longgrey *Amenity Open Space* in 2015 audit)

OS16 Edward Road open space (as OS105 Edward Road *Amenity Open Space*)

OS20 Crossleys open space (as OS107 Crossleys *Amenity Open Space* in 2015 audit)

OS24 Forge Close north open space (as OS100 Forge Close *Amenity Open Space* in 2015 audit)

OS09 School field extension (Tarmac area, off Coleman Road)

OS21 Lodge Road Sports Field (as OS96 Lodge Road *Amenity Open Space* in 2015 audit)

OS06 Batchelor Road open space (as OS97 Batchelor Road *Amenity Open Space*, Fleckney in 2015 audit)

OS23 Badcock Way open space and balancing pond (as ‘Saddington Road’): *Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace; Amenity Open Space*

Cemeteries and churchyards

OS11 St Nicholas Churchyard

Provision for children and young people

OS03 Children’s play area, Leicester Road recreation Ground

In HDC 2015 audit (but omitted from 2021 audit)

OS13 Fleckney allotments (no ref)

OS15 Edward Road Play Area as OS 106 *Play Area*

OS07 Kertley open space, Fleckney as OS 98 *Amenity Open Space*

OS12 Kilby Road Corner, Fleckney as OS 102 *Amenity Open Space*

OS14 Forge Close (north) open space as OS 101 *Amenity Open Space*

OS22 The Meer, including (separately mapped on 2019 Policies Map) OS 109 *Flood Relief Area*

OS19 Cobwells Close open space [as (no reference) Open Area [in] industrial estate – Fleckney] as *Natural Greenspace*

OS10 Fleckney Band Hall grounds (parish property) *Amenity Open Space* (no ref.)

OS08 School Field, Fleckney (Leics CC): *Outdoor Sports provision; Provision for children and young people* (no ref.)

On HDC 2019 Policies Map (only)

OS08.1 School Field extension

OS18 Kibworth Road open space: *Amenity Open Space*

Designated by this Plan (previously undesignated, or in new developments)

OS25 Blackbird Road north (two parts): *Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace; Amenity Open Space*

OS26 Blackbird Road west and south (two parts): *Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace; Amenity Open Space*

OS27 Blackbird Road east: *Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace; Amenity Open Space*

OS28 Blackbird Road central open space: *Amenity Open Space*

OS29 Tigers Road north, including balancing pond: *Amenity Open Space*

OS30 Tigers Road south: *Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace; Amenity Open*

OS31 Fleckney Industrial Estate open space and balancing pond and banks, Fleckney Industrial Estate: *Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace; Amenity Open Space*

OS32 Garner Way estate central greenway (three parts): *Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace; Amenity Open Space*

OS33 Garner Way estate green buffers (north, west and south): *Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace; Amenity Open Space*

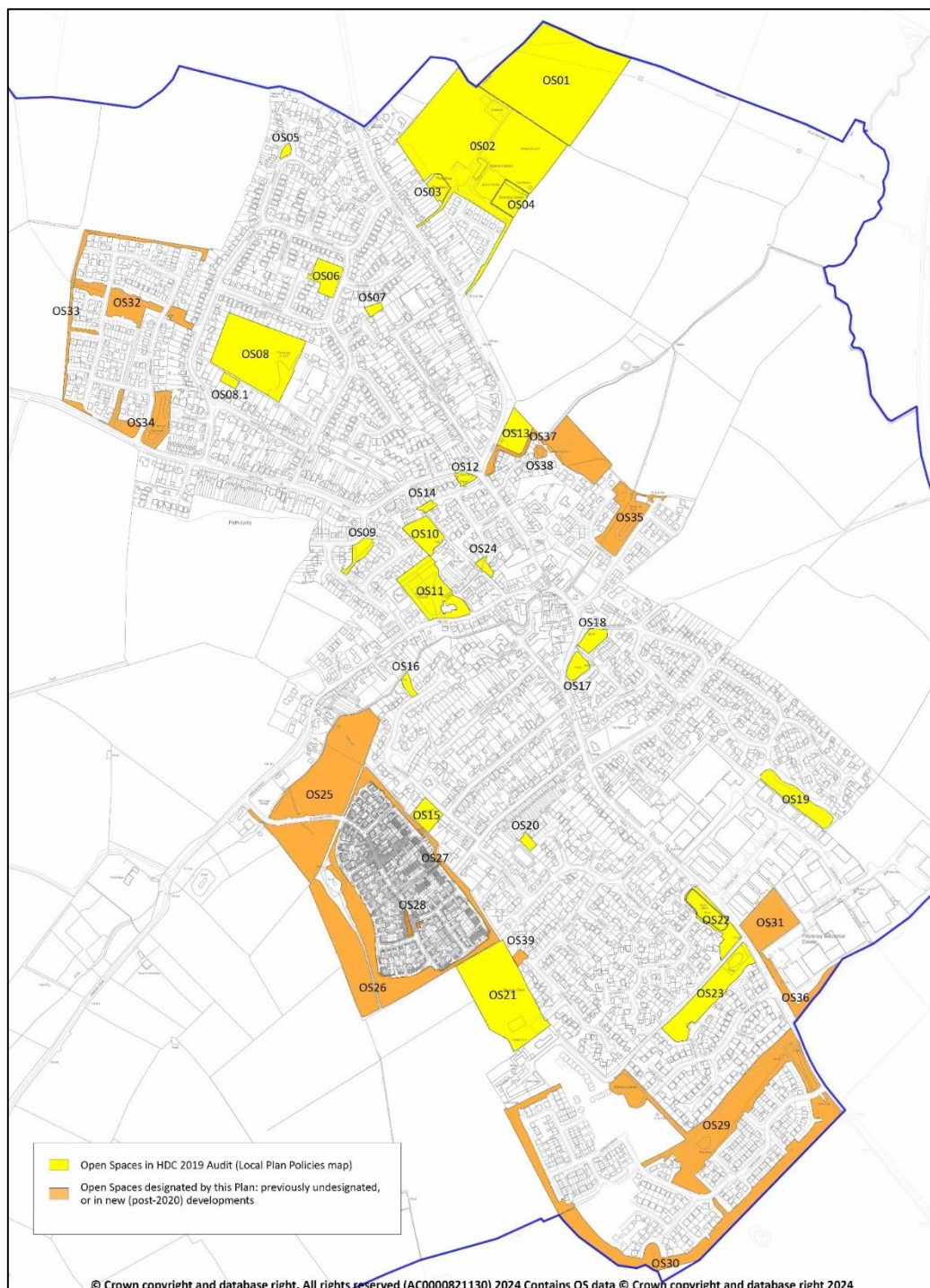
OS34 Garner Way estate flood relief area and southern open space (two parts): *Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace; Amenity Open Space*

OS35 Howlett Road open space, attenuation and stream: *Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace; Amenity Open Space*

- OS36 Fleckney Industrial Estate woodland buffer; *Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace*
- OS37 Burton Way waterside, balancing pond and meadow: *Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace; Amenity Open Space*
- OS38 Burton Way attenuation pond: *Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace; Amenity Open Space*
- OS39 Lodge Road open space: *Amenity Open Space*

Note: Sites OS01 – OS04 (Leicester Road Recreation Ground and components) and OS17 and OS18 (Fleckney Village Green and Duckpond) are designated Local Green Space by this Plan. Although also functionally OSSRs they are not listed here, or covered by Policy ENV 2, to avoid conflict or duplication with Policy ENV 1.

Figure 3: Open Space, Sport & Recreation sites (NB the candidate LGSs will be omitted after confirmation)

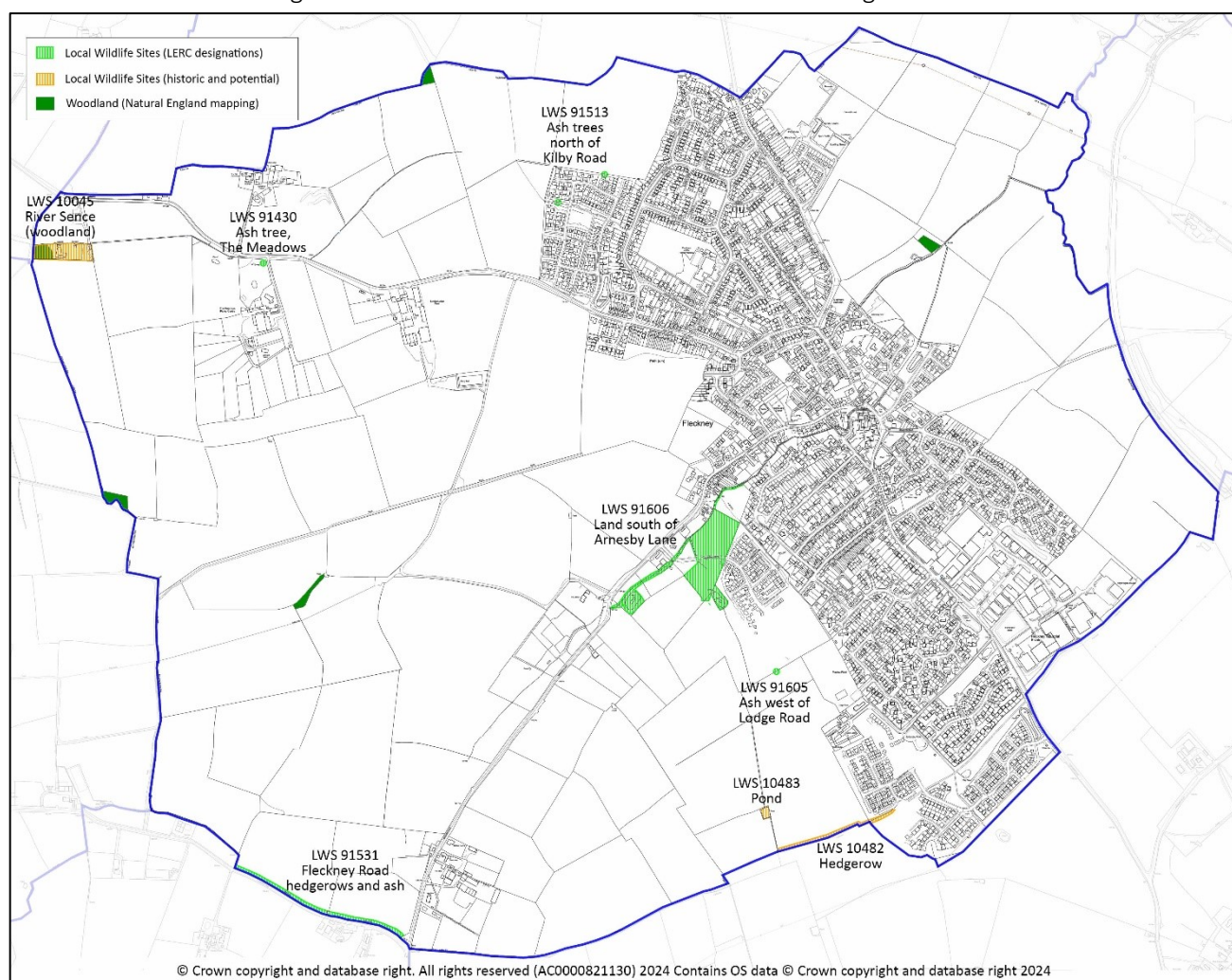


Natural Environment: significant sites and features

A number of sites in the Neighbourhood Area are of at least local significance for wildlife (biodiversity). The features and designations for which they have been identified comprise a) woodland (Natural England mapping); b) sites identified as ecologically significant in the Leicestershire Environmental Records, including Local Wildlife Sites, and c) sites identified during the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan as being of high biodiversity significance in the context of the Area. The map (figure x) shows their locations.

Policy ENV 3 delivers locally detailed, site-specific compliance in the Neighbourhood Area with the 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 has regard for National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) policies 185 and 186. It also refers to the *Planning Practice Guidance* of 2024, in respect of the use of the *biodiversity metric* approach for assessing the wildlife value of development sites and for delivering *biodiversity net gain*.

Figure 4: Sites and features of Natural Environment significance



POLICY ENV 3: SITES AND FEATURES OF NATURAL ENVIRONMENT SIGNIFICANCE – The sites and features mapped here (figure 4; details in appendix 2) have been identified as being of at least local significance for the natural environment. They are ecologically important in their own right, and are locally valued. Development proposals affecting them will only be supported if the value of the development can be shown to outweigh the biodiversity significance of the site, and they will be required to include evidence-based, measurable proposals for delivering *biodiversity net gain* at a minimum of 10%. using the appropriate *metric* for the scale of the development.

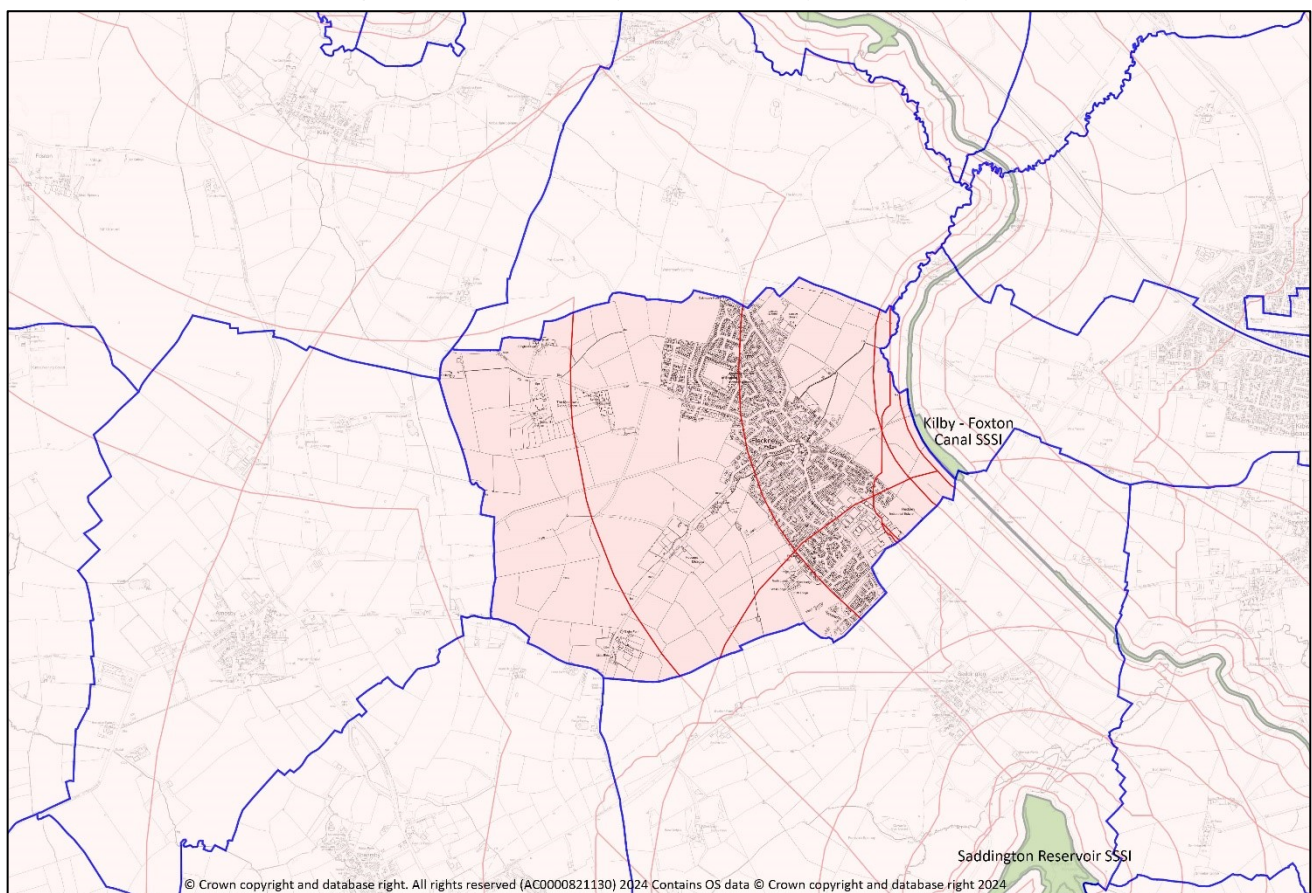
If significant harm to biodiversity cannot be avoided (through relocating to an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated by net gain as above, or compensated for, planning permission should be refused, having regard for paragraph 193a of the National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024.

Natural Environment: Biodiversity and Connectivity

Strategic natural environment protection

Two Sites of Special Scientific Importance (SSSIs) are located within 10 kms of the Neighbourhood Area; one of them is on the Area boundary (figure 5.1). This Plan does not need a policy, but notes that any future development proposals likely to have a significant environmental impact on them, or on other designated natural environment features, may be required to provide a Strategic Environmental Assessment and ultimately the required mitigations.

Figure 5.1: SSSIs and Impact Risk Zones (for reference)



Biodiversity across the Neighbourhood Plan Area

Notable species that have been recorded locally include barn owl, black redstart, brambling, bullfinch, dunnock, fieldfare, grey partridge, hobby, kingfisher, lesser redpoll, marsh harrier, red kite, redstart, redwing, reed bunting, sparrow, skylark, song thrush, starling, yellowhammer, badger, bats (several species), brown hare, hedgehog, wall butterfly, frog, grass snake and great crested newt. Although much of the parish is farmed intensively, there are some areas of permanent pasture and new woodland, and some with Environmental Land Management Scheme agreements.

The community places considerable value on biodiversity protection and enhancement in the Parish, including the creation of wildlife habitats, the conservation of hedgerows, the planting of native trees and wildflowers, and the protection of wildlife corridors. All potential development sites (including agricultural land and brownfield sites) across the Neighbourhood Area have *some* intrinsic and measurable biodiversity, and the ecological harm of destroying this existing biodiversity is now fully recognised in the National Planning Policy Framework's provisions for habitats and species protection and for biodiversity net gain.

Woodland, trees and hedgerows

Leicestershire is one of the least wooded counties in England, so the conservation of existing trees and woodland and planting of new is an important factor for protecting and enhancing the natural environment. Fleckney is a poorly wooded parish even by comparison with the rest of the County, with few important individual or groups of mature trees and no extensive mature woodland. The 'next best' include streamside woodland strips, a small number of coverts and spinneys, and ornamental plantings in the gardens of larger 19th and 20th century houses. A group of new woodland plantings in the south part of the parish has recently been established.

Among the hedgerow trees (mostly ash and oak, probably dating from soon after the Enclosure of 1769) are a few designated as Local Wildlife Sites in the Leicestershire Environmental Records Centre (LERC) database); they are intrinsic components of the village's rural setting and important for local biodiversity.

Bats

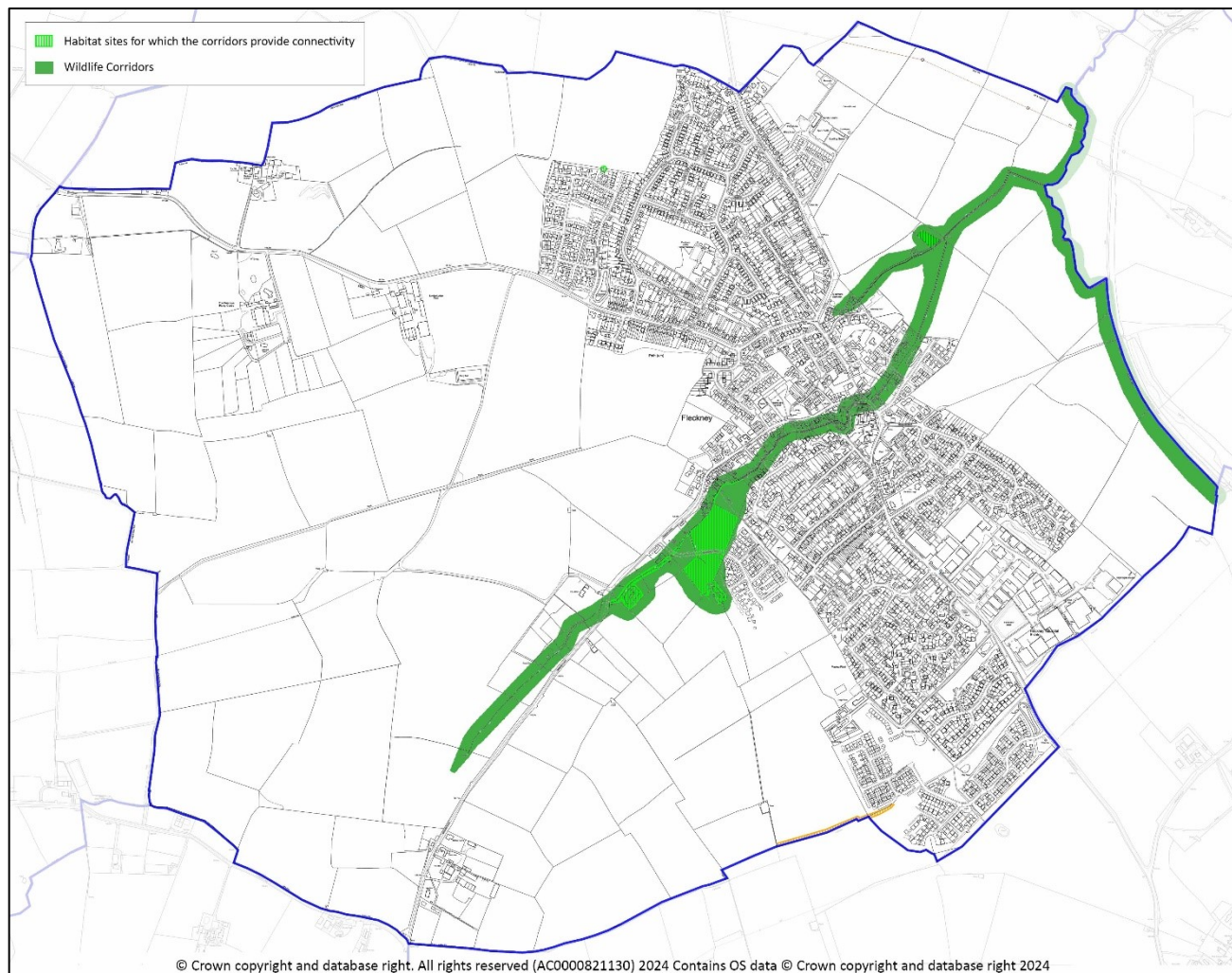
At least five species of bat have been recorded in the Neighbourhood Area. Known roosting sites include Saddington canal tunnel and several others within the village itself. The actual distribution of bats (roosts, breeding and foraging) is likely to be wider than the records suggest, because of 'observer bias': most surveys (using bat detectors) have been concentrated in easily accessed locations. This Plan does not map the (confidential) LERC records for bat species protection reasons, but anyway Policy ENV 4 applies across the whole Neighbourhood Area.

Wildlife corridor

It is important that species should be able to move safely and spread naturally from one area to another, making wildlife corridors extremely important. The canal, part of which is on the parish boundary, is a linear SSSI and is intrinsically biodiverse, but it also provides wider connectivity for

many species. It connects with Fleckney Brook, which runs from the west of the parish and through the village, where it also provides opportunities for positive interaction between local people and nature. The importance of Wildlife Corridors for providing this kind of essential *connectivity* for habitats and species is recognised in the National Framework.

Figure 5.2: Wildlife Corridor



Conformity

While 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, this policy (ENV 4) does the same for strategic planning and future development proposals across the Neighbourhood Area. The policy is explicitly supported by National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) paragraphs 187 (a) and (d), 188 and 192, and on 193(a), on which this policy's wording is partly based. The community also expects all planning strategies, proposals and decisions affecting the Plan Area to comply with the requirements of the *Climate Change Act 2008*, to follow the spirit of the *Paris Agreement* (UK ratification 2017) and the UK's *25 year environment plan (2018)*, and to plan for *biodiversity net gain* through the mechanisms described in the *Environment Act 2021* and the relevant *Planning Practice Guidance* of 2024-25.

POLICY ENV 4: BIODIVERSITY AND CONNECTIVITY – All new development proposals in the Neighbourhood Area 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 minimum 10%), planning permission should be refused, having regard for paragraph 193(a) of the National Planning Policy Framework December 2024.

Development proposals that adversely affect trees, woodland and hedges of environmental (biodiversity, historical, arboricultural) significance, or of landscape or amenity value, will be resisted. New development should be designed to retain such trees and hedges wherever possible. Where destruction cannot be avoided, developers will be required to deliver 10% biodiversity net gain by planting replacement trees and/or hedges on site or by providing compensatory planting elsewhere in the Neighbourhood Area. 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.

To comply with current legislation and guidance, all development proposals in the Neighbourhood Area should take account of the possibility of bats, their roosts and commuting and foraging habitats, in and adjacent to the development site. They should:

- in known bat habitat areas, not incorporate exterior artificial lighting (on buildings or open areas) unless demonstrably essential
- in known or potential bat habitat areas, not remove trees unless demonstrably essential
- in all locations, apply mitigation methods in the design and location of artificial lighting using current best practice in respect of dark buffers, illuminance levels, zonation, luminaire specifications, curfew times, site configuration and screening
- in all locations, incorporate integral or external bat boxes in an agreed ratio of boxes to number of buildings or site size.

Development in the Neighbourhood Area will be expected to protect and enhance the identified wildlife corridors (figure 5.2) and other potential habitat links. It should not create barriers to the permeability of the landscape for wildlife in general, or result in the fragmentation of populations of species of conservation concern.

Proposals for 'rewilding' of suitable agricultural land and brownfield sites, and for allocation of land for Biodiversity Net Gain off-site offsetting, will be supported.

Historic Environment: significant sites and features

Four sites in the Leicestershire Historic Environment Record (HER) have proven or suspected buried archaeological features. Some seven other sites with visible features or buried archaeology are recorded and mapped in the Leics HER, but have been destroyed or built over in the 21st-century growth of Fleckney.

The surviving sites are an important component of Fleckney's heritage, as well as having at least

County level significance for historical research and understanding.

POLICY ENV 5: SITES OF HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SIGNIFICANCE – The sites mapped in figure 6 (details in Appendix 2) are of at least local significance for their historical features. 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.

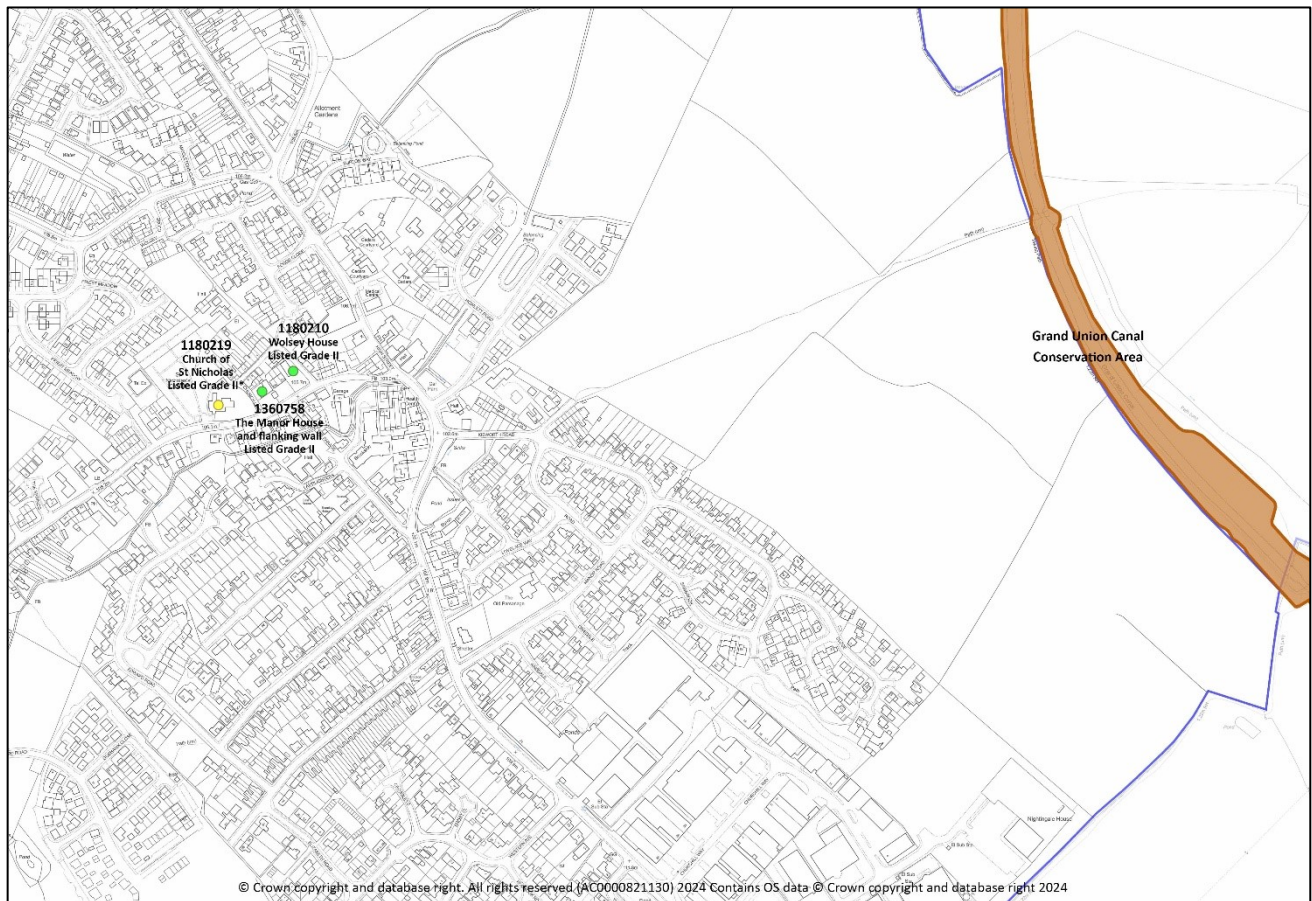
Figure 6: Sites of Historic Environment significance



Historic Environment: existing designations

There are three Listed Buildings (Historic England designations) in Fleckney, while the whole Leicestershire section of the Grand Union Canal, which runs beside the eastern edge of the Neighbourhood Area, is a linear Conservation Area (Harborough District Council designation). Because they are already protected at higher levels in the planning system, this Neighbourhood Plan does not need to have its own policy; they are mapped here (figure 7) for completeness and to note that their *settings* must (Listed Buildings) or should (Conservation Areas) be taken into account when proposals affecting them are being decided.

Figure 7: Listed Buildings and Conservation Area



Historic Environment: ridge and furrow

The historical manor of Fleckney, with the village at its centre, was farmed using the ‘open field’ system for nearly a thousand years, from its establishment in the Early Medieval Period until 1769, the date of its *Enclosure Award*. Like most townships (parishes) Fleckney had three open fields: Holbrook, Quisick and Marr. Cultivation – arable crops and pasturage – was rotated on a 3-year basis and the land was managed communally. Ploughing was mainly by a team of oxen and a ploughman; the medieval plough was not reversible, meaning that as the team progressed up and down the furlongs the soil was always thrown to the same side, forming ridges and furrows with a height difference of up to 2 metres. After the 1769 Enclosure, the fields were subdivided and almost all were converted to permanent grazing land, thus ‘fossilising’ all the features of the medieval farmed landscape, including the furlongs, headlands, sikes and baulks.

A return to arable farming, using modern ploughs, during the late 20th century caused the destruction of most ridge and furrow across the Midlands. The national trend has been a loss of between 85% and 100% per parish, most since c.1947. Fleckney’s loss is relatively high; as shown by figures 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3: the extent immediately after the Second World War was mapped from RAF aerial photographs by Leicestershire County Archaeology in the 1980s, while English Heritage, working with Northants County Archaeology, surveyed ridge and furrow across the Midlands twice in the 1980s and c.1999. Fleckney has now been re-surveyed for this Plan in 2024. Some 85 of the c.175 agricultural fields in the Neighbourhood Area had ridge and furrow in 1947 (about 420 of the 840

hectares of the parish), but just seven fields or partial fields (24 hectares, 5.7% of the 1947 baseline by area) still retained traces of ridge and furrow in 2024.

Figure 8.1 Ridge and furrow c.1947
(LCC Archaeology)

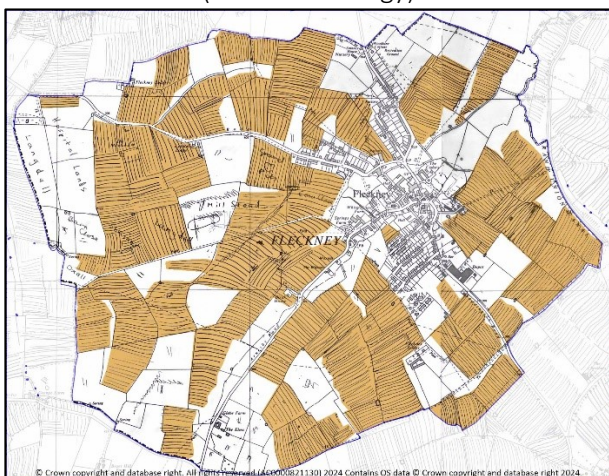


Figure 8.2: Ridge and furrow c.1999
(Turning the Plough, English Heritage)

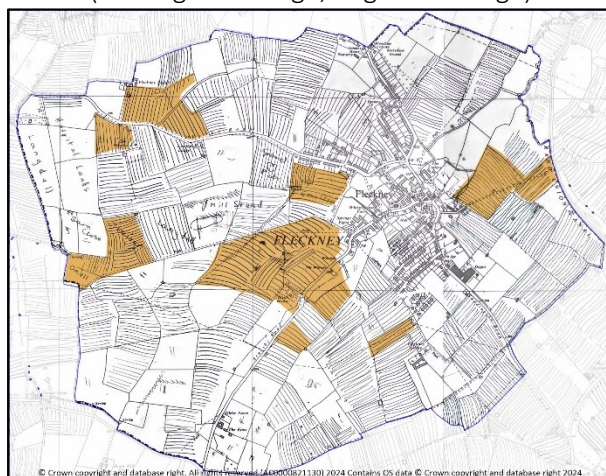
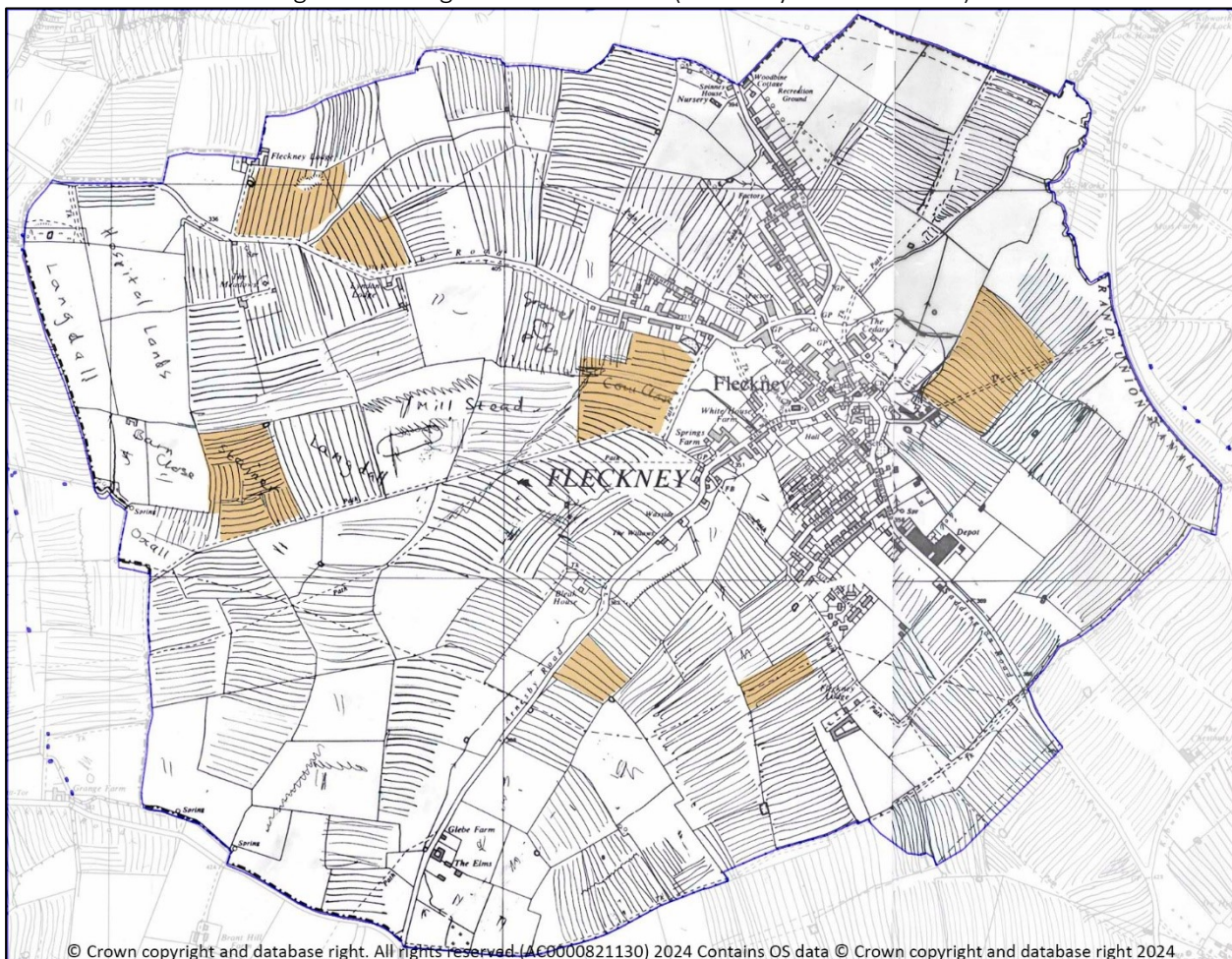


Figure 8.3: Ridge and furrow 2024 (re-surveyed for this Plan)



In English legislation ridge and furrow fields (except for the few that are also Scheduled Monuments) are not statutorily protected, despite a recognition that “as the open field system was once commonplace in NW Europe, these [surviving] sites take on an international importance” (English Heritage, 2012). Individual fields in Fleckney are not claimed to be of international importance, but

the scale of loss of well-preserved ridge and furrow fields here is of concern to the local community, and any further loss would be significantly detrimental to both local and national heritage. While this policy is primarily aimed at non-agricultural developers, the involvement of farmers and agricultural landowners on a case-by-case basis will be necessary to achieve a sustainable balance between this important heritage asset and the viability of local agriculture.

POLICY ENV 6: RIDGE AND FURROW- The surviving areas of ridge and furrow shown in Figure 8.3 are non-designated heritage assets. Any development proposal that would result in loss or damage to the assets will only be supported if the local benefits of and need for the development can be shown to outweigh the historic significance of the ridge and furrow features.

Historic Environment: buildings and local heritage

Non-Designated Heritage Assets

To add local detail to the statutory historic environment designations (Listed Buildings, Conservation Area), the Neighbourhood Plan identifies and confirms 19 further buildings and structures in the Neighbourhood Area that are considered to be of local significance for architectural, historical or social reasons. Sixteen of these were identified in the 2021 Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan, and subsequently added to the Leicestershire Historic Environment record (HER), while three others are in the already Leics HER as Non-Designated Heritage Assets, having been identified by historians and added to the list following validation.

POLICY ENV 7: NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS – The following buildings and structures (and mapped in figure 9) are non-designated heritage assets. They are important for their contribution to the layout and characteristic mix of architectural styles in the village and to its social history, and their features and settings will be protected wherever possible. Any harm arising from a development proposal or a change of use requiring planning approval affecting it will need to be balanced against its significance as a heritage asset.

Assets identified in previous Fleckney Neighbourhood Plans and now in the Leicestershire HER:

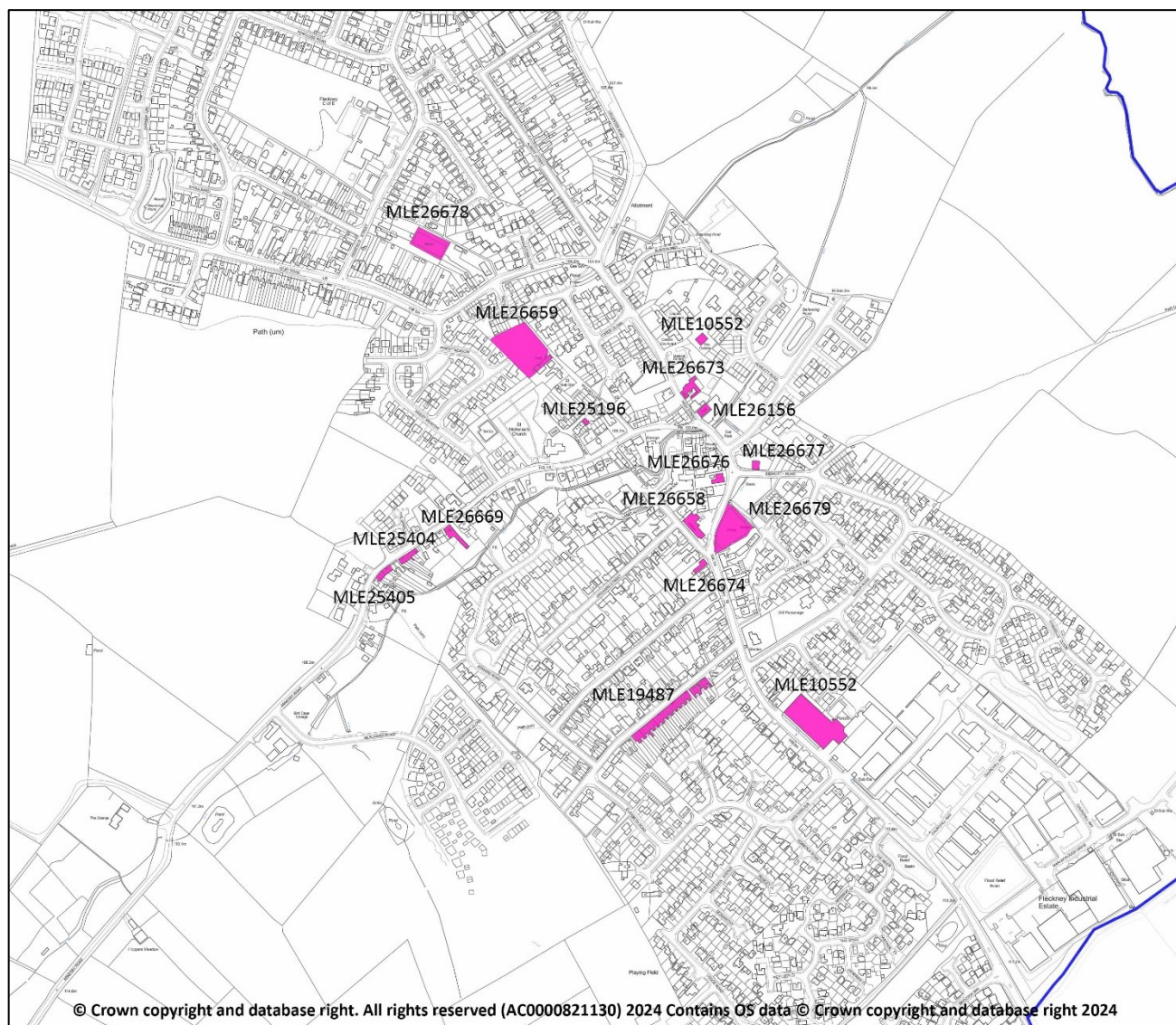
- MLE10552 Post-medieval farmstead, Cedars Farm, Fleckney K
- MLE19487 Rowley's hosiery factory, 24, Saddington Road, Fleckney
- MLE22172 Nos. 2-60, Gladstone Street, Fleckney
- MLE22175 Particular Baptist Chapel, Wolsey Lane, Fleckney J
- MLE26156 General Baptist Chapel, High Street, Fleckney C
- MLE26658 Fleckney library (former school), High Street, Fleckney D
- MLE26659 The Band Hall and Field, Wolsey Lane, Fleckney E
- MLE26660 No. 1, Wolsey Lane, Fleckney F
- MLE26669 The Golden Shield Public House, Main Street, Fleckney G
- MLE26673 The Old Crown (PH), Main Street, Fleckney H
- MLE26674 Carmel House, No. 1, School Street, Fleckney
- MLE26675 Woodbine Cottage, No. 123, Leicester Road, Fleckney L
- MLE26676 Stapleton House, 6, High Street, Fleckney M

MLE26677 No. 2, Kibworth Road, Fleckney N
MLE26678 Old reservoir rear of No. 23, Kilby Road, Fleckney O
MLE26679 Old clay pit (the village pond), High Street, Fleckney

Assets already in the Leicestershire HER:

MLE25196 Building adjacent to 2, Stores Lane, Fleckney
MLE25404 Nos. 62-74, Main Street, Fleckney
MLE25405 Nos. 80-90, Main Street, Fleckney

Figure 9: Non-Designated Heritage Assets



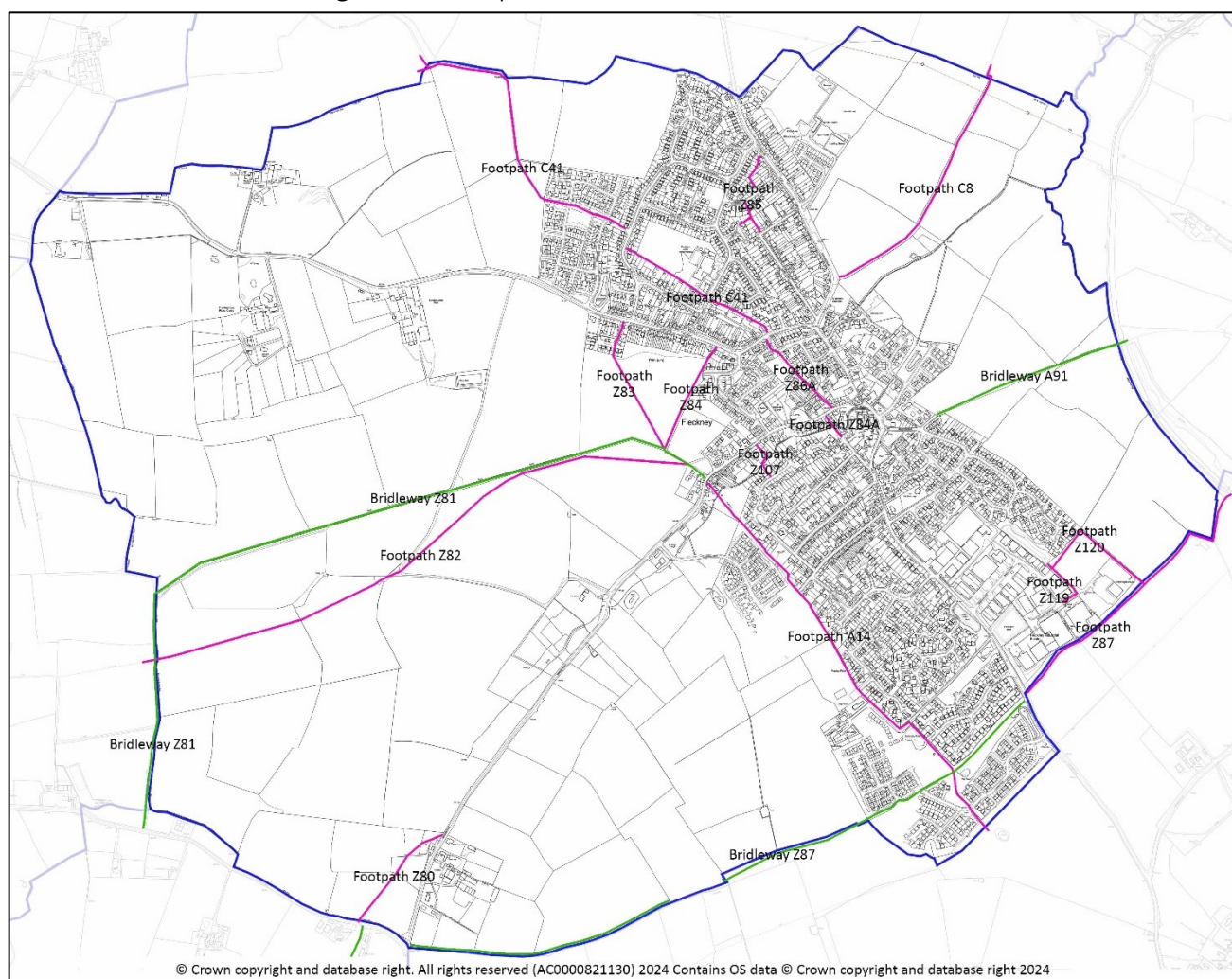
Footpaths and other recreational routes

89% of respondents to the 2017 Questionnaire identified 'easy access to the countryside' as one of the things they most enjoy about living in Fleckney. 90% wanted to see footpaths and opportunities for walking in and around the Parish protected. 44% walk along public footpaths and bridleways around the village on a daily basis.

Fleckney has a fairly extensive network of footpaths and bridleways both within the village and

outside it into the surrounding countryside. This includes a link to the Grand Union Canal (SSSI) – part of the Sub-region’s Strategic Green Infrastructure network. The village footpaths are well used by dog walkers and by people moving around the village to shop, go to school and to visit friends and families. Recreational walkers, runners and dog walkers all use the paths leading from the village to Saddington, Kibworth, Kilby, and Arnesby. These paths were originally part of an ancient network of tracks used by villagers to walk to the open fields, to market or between neighbouring villages, but they are now used almost exclusively for leisure activities. As such they are an appreciated and well-used community asset that contributes to health and wellbeing. The Leicestershire Round long-distance path passes close to the parish and residents use local paths to access it.

Figure 10: Footpaths and other recreational routes



Country walking brings benefits as a leisure activity that contributes to health and wellbeing. We are keen to see the existing network extended and enhanced, with more radial paths generally and the development of circular and interconnecting routes. We are keen to see the creation of a ‘Fleckney Round’, which in large part already exists and could include links to the Fleckney Recreation Ground. Footpath links to Wistow Rural Centre and Saddington are also encouraged.

POLICY ENV 8: FOOTPATHS AND OTHER RECREATIONAL ROUTES- Development proposals that result in the loss of, or have a significant adverse effect on, the existing network of footpaths and other recreational routes (figure 10) will not be supported without appropriate mitigation.

Flooding: Risk, Resilience and Climate Change

Even if international cooperation and national strategies and policies eventually succeed in halting the human and industrial contributions to climate change, the effects on weather events of recent and current warming will likely persist for decades. It is therefore desirable to plan for at least a medium-term future in which weather events will continue to become more extreme by putting in place measures that manage the effects of climate change on flooding for the lifetime of this Plan and beyond. This objective is explicitly supported by the Environment Agency (EA) draft *National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England* (2019), in which the strategic emphasis shifts from mitigation to resilience; in other words from requiring new development to reduce its adverse effects on flood risk to requiring it to avoid creating or adding to flood risk at all.

The high ground of the Neighbourhood Area is almost entirely situated on a bedrock of impermeable Jurassic mudstone and Quaternary glacial till (stony clay), while lower ground is mostly composed of superficial deposits including alluvium, silt, sand and gravel. The village is located in the shallow valley of Fleckney Brook and its tributaries (themselves tributaries of the River Soar); these watercourses act as channels for surface water run-off into areas mapped as at high flood risk by the Environment Agency (March 2025). The result is standing water and rapid run-off at times of high rainfall, and a propensity to local flooding [This is where you can add detail about local experience and flooding history \(with more photos, if you have them\) to support the policy.](#)

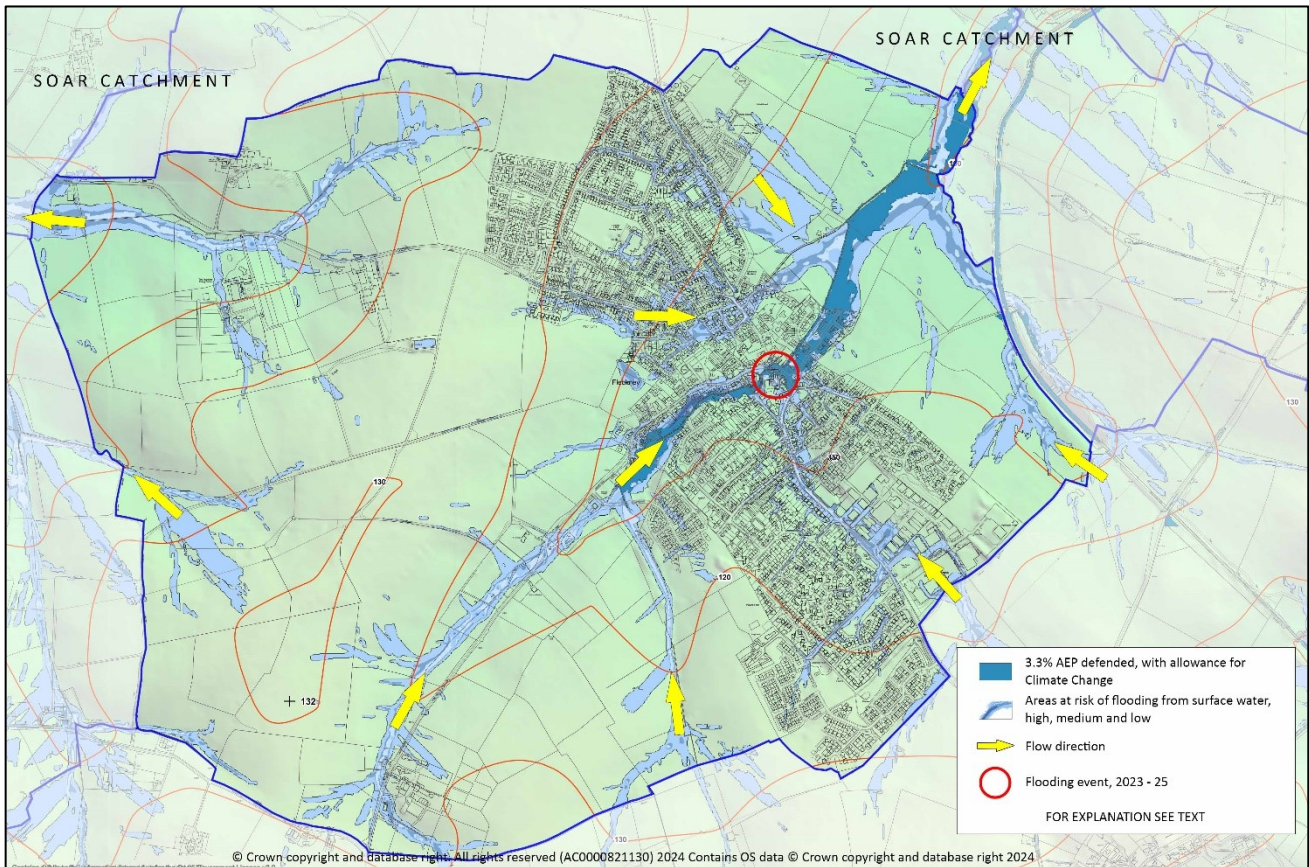
Flooded businesses, houses and vehicles in central Fleckney, June 2023



In light of all this, it is particularly important that the location and technical standards of all new development proposals in the Neighbourhood Area should in future be judged on their likely contribution to flooding in a climate change world. To complement this part of the policy, the community will support proposals to improve the infrastructure in built-up areas for managing flooding from watercourses and from surface water run-off events, providing this is not unduly detrimental to the historic built environment, biodiversity sites, or open and green spaces.

This policy has regard for National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024, updated February 2025) paragraphs 161, 162, 164(a) (and generally with 170- 182), and with Harborough District Council Local Plan Policy CC3. It will also be in line with the (currently Regulation 19 Draft) Harborough Local Plan 2020- 2041 paragraphs 2.20 and Policies DS03(d), DM07 and DM08.

Figure 11: Flood risk from rivers and surface water
Based on combined Environment Agency mapping, March 2025
TO MARK UP WITH LOCATIONS OF OTHER RECENT FLOODS



Environment Agency risk definitions in figure xx (from March 2025):

Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) is the preferred method for describing the likelihood of a flood occurring. This is because it better explains that the chance of a flood of a given magnitude occurring remains constant through time, i.e. 3.3% AEP means that *for any given year* there is a 3.3% chance (1 in 33) of a 1-in-100-year flood occurring. The 3.3% zone has the highest probability but covers the smallest area (nearest to the river causing the flood).

Defended 3.3% AEP Rivers (Climate change). The mapping of this zone takes into account the presence of flood defences and assumes that they will operate in the way they were intended (or designed) to function. The climate change allowance is based on the latest UK Climate Projections (UKCP18) from the Met Office. The specific climate change scenario used in the map is the projection for the 2080s epoch (2070-2125) for risk of flooding from rivers. [In Fleckney, the 3.3% (Climate Change) risk area is effectively the same as those for (defended and undefended), 3.3%, 1% and 0.1% for 'present day' and 'climate change']

POLICY ENV 9: FLOODING: RISK, RESILIENCE AND CLIMATE CHANGE– Development proposals within the areas mapped in Figure 11 as being at risk of, or the source of, flooding from rivers and/or surface water will be required, where appropriate, to demonstrate that the benefit of development outweighs the harm in relation to its adverse impacts on-site or elsewhere (and having regard for local and national climate change targets).

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

- if in a location susceptible to flooding from rivers or surface water, no alternative site to meet

the local need is available;

- its location and design have regard for the geology, flood risk and natural drainage characteristics of the immediate area, and the proposal is accompanied by a hydrological study whose findings must be complied with in respect of design, groundworks and construction;
- 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, that flood risk elsewhere will not be exacerbated by increased levels of surface water runoff, and that the development will not threaten natural habitats and water systems;
- its design includes, as appropriate, sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) with ongoing maintenance provision, other surface water management measures and permeable surfaces;
- proposed SuDs infrastructure includes, where practicable, habitat creation comprising e.g. landscaping, access and egress for aquatic and terrestrial animals, and native species planting;
- it does not increase the risk of flooding to third parties; and
- it takes the effects of climate change into account.

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, provided they do not adversely affect designated open spaces or sites and features of natural or historical environment significance.

4. Design

The Parish of Fleckney has a long and interesting history, resulting in a wide array of heritage assets, attractive landscapes and a distinctive local character. This is reflected in the fact that Fleckney sits within a Conservation Area.

The biggest challenge facing the future of Fleckney 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.

Fleckney has been subjected to standard, 'identikit' homes that typify new developments built by some house builders. Some of our housing looks the same as developments elsewhere and could be anywhere in the country. Too often new developments are dominated by the same, identikit designs that bear no resemblance to local character.

The Design policy seeks to reflect the design principles which the community believes will help to achieve this aim. They reflect the outcome of consultations with the community and a comprehensive design guide and codes (Appendix 2). The overall aim is to protect Fleckney so that it retains its character within a unique and distinctive Parish. This can be achieved by the use of the planning system to respond sensitively to the wide range of historic buildings, structures, landscapes and archaeology situated within the Parish. These assets form many of the key characteristics of the Parish, and future development should seek to enhance, reinforce and preserve this distinctive historic environment.

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

To ensure this new development will be assessed against the criteria in Policy H5 and the accompanying Design Guide. This is in line with national planning policy which promotes good quality design.

In this section therefore, the Neighbourhood Plan sets out a planning policy which seeks to identify and protect the distinctive elements which together provide the special qualities of the landscape setting and built heritage of Fleckney Parish.

New development proposals should be designed sensitively to sit within the distinctive settlement patterns of the village. 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 and schemes should be designed to ensure that new buildings sit comfortably within the existing settlement pattern, and are respectful of their surroundings.

The community consider it to be important that new residential development is of the highest

standard to ensure that it is in keeping with the majority of residential properties in the village. It is not considered necessary to have a uniform series of properties that all look the same, rather to ensure that new developments respect the features of buildings which make the Parish a desirable place in which to live.

New development proposals should be designed sensitively to ensure that the high-quality built environment of the Parish is maintained and enhanced, particularly where schemes are located within or in close proximity to the Conservation Area. 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 area.

As you wander through the older parts of the village, particularly Main Street and Stores Lane, there are many houses built in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. These houses would mainly have been built using the local brick from the Fleckney Road brickworks.

We now expect all development to contribute positively to the creation of well-designed buildings and spaces. Through good design we want to maintain and enhance the individual character of our parish and create places that work well for both occupants and users and are built to last.

POLICY D1: DESIGN – 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.

As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals should respond positively to the Design Guide and Codes (Appendix 2) and demonstrate how its contents has been incorporated in their design and layout. Development proposals should contribute positively to the existing character of the part of the neighbourhood area in which it is located.

5. Housing

Harborough Local Plan 2011-2031

The Harborough Local Plan was adopted in April 2019.

The Local Plan identifies Strategic Development Areas (SDAs) East of Lutterworth and at Scraptoft North, as the principal means of meeting Harborough District's housing and employment needs.

Fleckney is identified as a Rural Centre in the Local Plan, with a proposed reclassification as a Large Village in the emerging Local Plan. In addition to the delivery of existing commitments and completions and an allowance for windfalls, land for about 130 dwellings is allocated in the Made Local Plan (2011-2031) off Fleckney Road, Fleckney. Land off Marlborough Drive is allocated for industrial and commercial development.

348 new homes were built in Fleckney between 2011/12 and 2022/23. As of March 2023, outstanding commitments (dwellings on sites with planning permission) total 325 homes.

The Adopted Local Plan (2011-2031) allocated a site for 130 dwellings on land at Fleckney Road. This allocation fulfilled the housing requirement for Fleckney, therefore the Made Neighbourhood Plan limited further development to windfall housing within the Limits to Development.

The 2024 Questionnaire identified concerns about overdevelopment and additional housing without matched infrastructure, and there were calls to limit new housing developments and to improve existing infrastructure to support current and future populations.

Regulation 19 Harborough Local Plan 2020- 2041.

In February 2025, Harborough District Council issued its Regulation 19 version of the new Local Plan. Fleckney is classified as a 'Large Village' in the emerging Local Plan, along with Broughton Astley, Great Glen and Kibworth.

The emerging Local Plan identifies the housing requirement for Harborough District as 13,182 between 2020 and 2041. The annual housing requirement is 657 homes per year between 2020 and 2036, and 534 homes per year between 2036 and 2041.

Policy DS01 in the emerging Local Plan identifies a net housing requirement for Fleckney of 150 homes. Policy SA01 allocates a site for residential development for 150 dwellings on land north of Kilby Road and land west of Longgrey within the Neighbourhood Area.

On the basis of this housing requirement and residential allocation, the Qualifying Body has determined that it will not allocate further sites for residential development in the Neighbourhood Plan Review.

Settlement Boundary

In historical terms rural communities like Fleckney have often been protected by the designation of a 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 specified circumstances (for example to provide affordable housing or accommodation for farm workers).

The purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan Review Settlement Boundary 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.

Settlement Boundaries, known as 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 settlement, 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. Settlement Boundaries were removed from the Harborough Local Plan which was adopted in April 2019.

The Neighbourhood Plan has therefore designated a Settlement Boundary policy for the built form of Fleckney – as shown below in figure 2. Figure 2 updates and supersedes the existing Settlement Boundary within the Made Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan as it takes into account development since the Neighbourhood Plan was Made.

Within the defined Settlement Boundary an appropriate amount of suitably designed types of development in the right location is acceptable in principle, although some sites within the Settlement 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 Settlement Boundary, the Fleckney Neighbourhood Plan has applied the following methodology:

- 1 Defined physical features such as walls, fences, hedgerows, gardens, allotments, streams, formal leisure uses and roads have been used to delineate the boundary;
- 2 Non- residential land which is countryside, agricultural land, paddock, meadow, woodland and/or other green-field land has been specifically excluded;
- 3 The Local Plan allocation has been included within the Settlement Boundary.

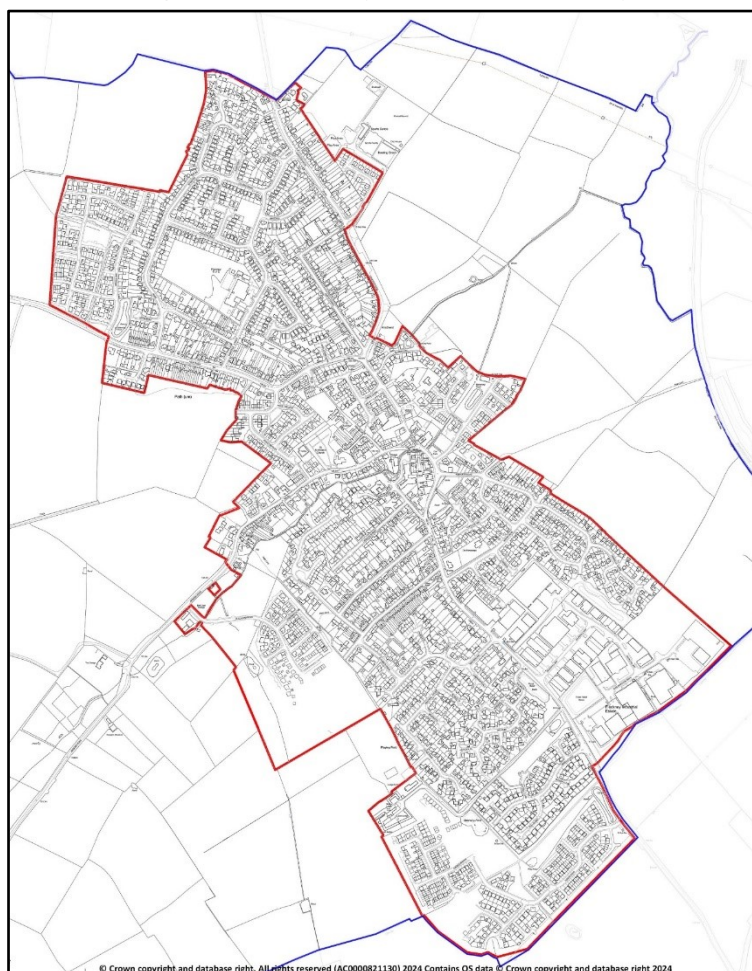
The community has expressed a clear desire to protect what is special about Fleckney for future generations. Its countryside setting, and the quiet pace of rural life are seen as being of particular importance.

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 Fleckney which only has a limited range of services and facilities.

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

Figure xx – Fleckney Settlement Boundary



POLICY H1: SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY- Development proposals within the Settlement Boundary (see figure 2) will be supported where they comply with other policies in this Plan.

Land outside the Settlement Boundary will be treated as open countryside, where development will be carefully managed in line with local and national strategic planning policies.

Windfall Housing

The Harborough Local Plan identifies Fleckney as a settlement suitable for infill development. This refers to the development of vacant and under-developed land within the main built-up area of the village.

Limits to Development for Fleckney have been used to guide development for many years. To clarify where development would be acceptable, our Neighbourhood Plan defines updated Limits to Development which take account of the character of the village, recent and proposed developments. Outside the Fleckney Settlement Boundary, new build residential development will not normally be supported unless it accords with the circumstances specified in planning policy.

Policy H2: Windfall Housing- Small scale development proposals for infill and redevelopment sites will be supported where:

- a. It is within the Settlement Boundary;
- b. It helps to meet the identified housing requirement for the Plan area in terms of housing mix;
- c. It maintains and where possible enhances the character of the built environment;
- d. It is of an appropriate scale which reflects the size, character and level of service provision within the Plan area;
- e. It retains natural boundaries such as trees, hedges and streams;
- f. It provides for a safe vehicular and pedestrian access to the site and any traffic generation and parking impact created does not result in an unacceptable direct or cumulative impact on congestion or road and pedestrian safety;
- g. It does not result in an unacceptable loss of amenity for neighbouring occupiers by reason of loss of privacy, loss of daylight, visual intrusion or noise; and;
- h. It does not reduce garden space to an extent where it adversely impacts on the character of the area, or the amenity of neighbours and the occupiers of the dwelling.

Meeting local housing needs

In planning for new homes, there should be a mix of housing to meet the needs of people living locally. This is reinforced by the NPPF which requires local planning authorities to plan for a mix of housing needs, including for older people and people with disabilities, whilst the Harborough Local Plan (2011-2031) says 'Major housing development should provide a mix of house types that is informed by up to date evidence of housing need'.

Using data from the 2021 Census, we have looked at the population profile of the parish compared with Harborough District. More properties are owned (81.0%) in Fleckney compared to Harborough (75.8%), whilst 50.7% of dwellings are detached. The majority of dwellings have 3-bedrooms (40.8%) followed by 4+ bedrooms at 28.9%.

80.3% of dwellings are underoccupied, particularly in households aged 65+. There are fewer bungalows in the Neighbourhood Area (11.5%) compared to Harborough (12.2%)

Fleckney Housing Needs

A Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) was undertaken as part of the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan Review.

The HNA concluded that population growth can be expected to be driven by the oldest households, with a 104.0% increase expected in the 65 and over age group.

This projected growth in the older age group will place pressure on the housing stock and the inclusion of accessible and adaptable standards (M4(2) Category 2) in a significant percentage of new housing would be supported.

The HNA concluded by recommending that a range of different dwelling sizes are needed in the Neighbourhood Area over the Plan period. The growth in the older population and the relatively low level of homes suitable for older people, coupled with high levels of underoccupancy lead to a policy which supports the provision of bungalows and standards of accessible and adaptable standards.

Policy H3: Housing Mix- New housing development shall provide for a mix of housing types that will be informed by the most up to date evidence of housing need. Applicants for development of 10 or more dwellings will need to demonstrate how their proposals will meet the housing needs of older households (e.g. bungalows) and the need for smaller, low-cost homes.

The inclusion of homes built to M4((2) Category 2 standards is supported.

Affordable Housing

Affordable housing is defined within Annex 2 of the NPPF (2024), and includes housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers). Affordable housing can include affordable housing for rent, starter homes, discounted market sales housing and other affordable routes to home ownership.

The HNA prepared as part of the Neighbourhood Plan Review showed that house prices locally have increased by over 37% between 2014 and 2022, concluding that local households on average incomes are unable to access even entry level homes without a very large deposit.

An assessment was undertaken as part of the HNA on the most appropriate level of subsidy for First Homes. It concluded that a discount of 30% would be affordable to households on average incomes with two owners.

As with the Made Neighbourhood Plan, it is important that new affordable housing should be allocated initially to people with a local connection, including those living, working or with close family ties in Fleckney Parish.

Harborough Local Plan (2011-2031) Policy H2 requires that on large private sector developments, 40% of dwellings should be affordable.

Policy H4: Affordable Housing- On sites of 10 or more dwellings, or on sites of more than 0.5 hectares, developers will be required to supply a percentage of affordable homes in line with Local Plan requirements.

The affordable housing stock should be made available as an integral part of the development, should be visually indistinguishable from the equivalent market housing on the site, should be dispersed throughout the development and shall be allocated to eligible households with a connection to Fleckney, including those living, working or with close family ties in the Parish.

First Homes shall be made available at a discount of 30% in line with the recommendations of the Housing Needs Assessment (Appendix x).

6. Employment

Churchill Way Industrial Estate is a large, well established general industrial estate off Saddington Road. It is the only major employment site in the village. The nine-hectare site contains around 38 units- a mix of older single storey sheds with more recent two-storey larger units. Located on the south-eastern edge of Fleckney, the site has adequate links to the highway, facilities and good access by public transport. Churchill Way Industrial Estate is identified as a Key Employment Area in the Harborough Local Plan (Policy BE3) and is to be retained for business.

Victoria Works adjoins the Churchill Way Industrial Estate to the north-west. The 0.6-hectare site contains five, two-storey units. The residential areas of Manor Road and Ainsdale adjoin the site. This area is identified as a General Employment Area in the Harborough Local Plan (Policy BE3) and is to be retained mainly for business uses.

Land off Marlborough Drive, as shown on the Policies Map, was allocated for Use Classes B1c, B2 and non-strategic B8 (industrial and commercial development) in the Harborough Local Plan (2011-2031) Policy F2. It comprises a flat open arable field approximately three-hectares in size to the east of the existing Churchill Way Industrial Estate.

On 7 November 2017, Harborough District Council's Planning Committee approved an outline planning application for up to 8,550sq m of B1 (Business)/B2 (General Industrial) and B8 (Storage or Distribution) employment land off Marlborough Drive, subject to the completion of a Planning Obligation regarding transport improvements (Ref: 16/02030/OUT). This site remains partially developed.

In the Questionnaire undertaken in 2024, the most popular types of employment respondents thought should be encouraged locally were Shops-retail, Agriculture related, Community services, Light industrial & manufacturing and Pubs, restaurants and cafes, with transport, storage and distribution being the least popular. 40% of respondents thought that more land should be allocated to encourage employment, 34% were against such a proposal. In terms of the types of sites that should be allocated for employment, most respondents identified the conversion of existing buildings to be allocated for employment use followed by Brownfield land (developed), with 80% opposed to greenfield land (undeveloped).

POLICY E1 SUPPORT FOR EXISTING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES- Development proposals that result in the loss of, or have an unacceptable effect on, an existing employment use will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that the site or building is no longer suitable for employment use or economically viable.

Proposals for employment-related development (for new and/or expansion of employment uses, including homeworking) will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the development will not generate unacceptable disturbance, noise, fumes, smell or traffic; that it will respect and be compatible with the local character and surrounding uses; and that it will, where appropriate, protect residential amenity.

7. Transport and Traffic

Road traffic management, road safety, road infrastructure, parking and pavements are high-priority local concerns. It is recognised that not all aspects of traffic management is under the control of the planning system.

Public Transport

There is no rail service to Fleckney. The nearest railway stations are in South Wigston (7 miles), Leicester (8.5 miles), Narborough (9 miles) and Market Harborough (10 miles).

The village has three bus services:

- Arriva Midlands Service 49: Runs between Leicester and Fleckney via Wigston Magna every 30mins from Monday to Friday (frequencies vary between 20 minutes and hourly on Saturday). The last bus from Leicester leaves at 6.15pm and there are no services on a Sunday.
- Centrebus Midlands Service 44: Runs between Fleckney and Foxton via Kibworth, Great Bowden and Market Harborough approximately hourly from Monday to Saturday.
- Beaver: Beaver bus offers a local bus run to the ASDA supermarket in Oadby on a Wednesday.

48% of respondents to our 2017 Questionnaire used the local bus services, but this reduced to 39% in 2024. Opinion on the quality of service is mixed. 28% of respondents felt that the bus routes were good or excellent, but 28% also said that they were poor or bad.

The lack of bus services affects older, disabled and young people. For example, young people from rural areas cannot access leisure and entertainment services in urban centres and this contributes to anti-social behaviour in rural areas where facilities are more limited.

Policy T1: Bus Services- Where necessary, new developments will be required to contribute to network capacity improvements to bus services to ensure these standards are met as well as the provision of bus shelters.

Cycling

Cyclists are typically prepared to cycle up to 5km for non-leisure journeys, such as those to school or work. The cycle catchment area for Fleckney includes Kibworth, Great Glen and several smaller villages.

There are no dedicated cycle paths, although National Cycle Route 6 passes to the south of the Parish. National Route 6 passes through Watford, Luton, Milton Keynes, Northampton, Market Harborough, Leicester, Derby, Nottingham, Worksop, Sheffield, Manchester, Blackburn, Preston, Lancaster, Kendal and Windermere, and will connect London and Threlkeld (nr. Keswick) in Cumbria when complete. Locally, the South Midlands section links Saddington and Fleckney.

Traffic Impact

Cumulative Development Traffic Impact Study

In 2016, Harborough District Council and Leicestershire County Council commissioned a study to assess cumulative traffic impacts at links within the of Kibworth Beauchamp, Kibworth Harcourt, Fleckney and Great Glen areas. The Study was published in January 2017. The list of junctions that Study looked at included the High Street/Kilby Road/Leicester Road and Main Street/High Street junctions in Fleckney. The Study assessed the cumulative impact of ten proposed developments in Fleckney, Kibworth and Great Glen. Two of these were in Fleckney:

- West of Fleckney Road, Saddington: A full planning application (Ref: 16/01355/FUL) for 290 dwellings;
- Kilby Road: An outline planning application to build up to 150 dwellings (Ref: 16/00592/OUT).

The Study considered these proposed developments and traffic growth forecasts to 2021.

The Study demonstrates that the A6 corridor within the area would be operating significantly above its theoretical capacity level. Improvements are necessary to accommodate traffic flows at the A6 Leicester Road/Wistow Road roundabout and the New Road/Harborough Road junction. However, none of the links or junctions in Fleckney would be at or above 85% of available capacity.

Local Traffic Flows

A road usage survey undertaken in October 2016 looked at traffic flows on the main roads in the village. The busiest road is High Street with a morning 8-9am two-way flow of around 600 vehicles (cars, taxis, vans, HGVs, buses) and a 5-6pm flow of around 700 vehicles.

Speeding Traffic

Evidence from speed sensors indicate that there are speeding issues through Fleckney. The 2024 Questionnaire demonstrated good support for vehicle activated radar speed signs with speed display and a 20mph speed limit throughout the Village. There is little support for chicanes or priority gates.

POLICY T2 – TRANSPORT REQUIREMENTS FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT- Development proposals, where appropriate, will be required to demonstrate that:

- a. The cumulative residual impact on traffic flows on the strategic and local highway network (taking account of proposed mitigation measures) will not be severe.
- b. Provision is to be made for accessible and efficient public transport routes within or otherwise serving the development.
- c. Pedestrian and cycle routes are incorporated or improved to serve the development, where necessary and appropriate, to provide safe, convenient and attractive routes to shops, employment, schools and community facilities; and which are integrated into wider networks.
- d. Existing rights of way are retained or acceptable modifications are provided.
- e. Adequate parking and manoeuvring space within the development is provided in accordance with

the Highway Authority's standards.

- f. The development will not be occupied unless necessary measures (such as 'travel packs') are in place to encourage new residents to use bus services as an alternative to the private car.
- g. Traffic flow through the centre of the village should not be increased by any developments as the centre of the village is already at capacity. (See South Leicestershire Maternity Services)
- h. Any proposed development should increase the parking provision in the centre of the village as this is past its capacity or provide local services.

Parking

In some parts of the village e.g. Kilby Road and Albert Street, there are many Victorian terraced properties with no off-street parking, so on-street parking can be a necessity. In relation to further housing development, Many respondents to our 2024 Questionnaire cited concerns about parking as a significant issue.

This included inconsiderate parking, especially around schools, needing enforcement of existing regulations and wider and more accessible footpaths for safer pedestrian movement, suggesting cycling routes and disabled-friendly paths.

Policy T3: Car Parking and New Housing Development- New development will need to demonstrate that satisfactory off-street parking provision is made and that on-street parking will be discouraged. Factors including the type of development, its location and accessibility and the number of bedrooms will be taken into account in determining the number of spaces to be provided.

New development must meet Leicestershire County Council Highways standards

8. Services and Facilities

Fleckney has a good range of facilities including a primary school, several shops, a post office, two public houses, library, sports centre, two doctors' surgeries, dentist, pre-schools, band hall, a chemist, hairdressers, garages, restaurant and takeaways.

The loss of key services and facilities that residents currently enjoy can have a significant impact on people's quality of life and the overall viability of the community. With an increasing proportion of older people in the population, access to locally based services will become increasingly important due to lower mobility levels.

The Scout Hut, Baptist Church, Batchelor Road Play Area, Village Hall, Band Hall, Library, Pond and Green, and Edward Road Play Area have been registered as Assets of Community Value with Harborough District Council. We can then use the Community Right to Bid if any of these assets ever come up for sale. This means that the community can have up to six months to raise the funds to bid for it and at the end of the period, the owner may sell it to whoever and at whatever price they choose.

Fleckney Village Hall

Fleckney Village Hall, in the village centre, is managed by Fleckney Village Hall Management Committee. The Village Hall can be hired for private parties and functions, sports & fitness events, playgroups, clubs and social gatherings. The Main Hall can accommodate up to 250 people or 150 people seated. A separate Meeting Room is ideal for a smaller gatherings or meeting for up to 40 people. The Village Hall is regularly used by Fleckney Guides, New Life Christian Fellowship, Play School, Keep Fit classes, Fleckney WI, Ensemble Theatre Company, The Duckpond Players and Fleckney History Group.

Fleckney Sports Centre and Recreation Ground

Fleckney Sports Centre on Leicester Road provides a range of facilities including a sports hall, changing rooms, meeting room, kitchen and office accommodation for the Manager and Parish Council staff.

The Sports Hall at Fleckney Sports Centre is just over the size of one badminton-court and is available for badminton, table tennis, indoor bowls, martial arts and for any type of exercise class.

The All-Weather Pitch at Fleckney Sports Centre is predominantly used for football. It can be split into two five-a-side pitches or used as a seven-a-side pitch for football. The All-Weather Pitch is floodlit and open for bookings from 9am up to 10pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 5pm at weekends.

The adjoining Recreation Ground is home to the Fleckney Football Club and caters for 16 teams. There are two 11 v 11 pitches, one 9 v 9 pitch, one 7 v 7 pitch, three 5 v 5 pitches and a junior rugby pitch. It is also home to Fleckney Village Cricket Club. There are over 22 acres for sport and play.

There is also a half-court basketball court that can be used for football or basketball, a floodlit

Skatepark, children's play areas, outdoor gym equipment and spinney.

Lodge Road Recreation Ground

The Lodge Road Recreation Ground consists of an area of land of 3.75 acres and was acquired by Fleckney Parish Council in the mid-nineties for the provision of a recreation ground. A single full-size football pitch is provided on the site for the playing of football during the football season and is available all year round for informal recreational use. It also has a full-size basketball court, youth shelter and basic changing, shower and toilet facilities.

Band Hall and Field, Wolsey Lane

The Band Hall and Field on Wolsey Lane is regularly used by Fleckney Silver Band and the annual Churches Together Fun Day.

Fleckney Community Library

Fleckney Community Library is managed and run by the Friends of Fleckney Library and 30 volunteers, and is funded by donations, grants, membership fees and fundraising activities. Although there is some financial support from Leicestershire County Council, this tapers off and the Trustees are working towards being financially independent and sustainable.

Leicester Road Allotments

The allotment site measures some 0.7 hectares and contains 10 full plots, 21 half plots and two starter plots. The allotments are managed by Fleckney Allotment Association on behalf of Fleckney Parish Council and are well used and has a waiting list for vacant plots

Bowls Club

'The Hart of Fleckney Bowls Club'

The bowling green and clubhouse are situated at the Fleckney Recreation Ground off Leicester Rd. LE8 8BG. During the summer bowling season the club is open most afternoons & evenings for bowling. Friendly matches & league matches take place mainly in the evening from 6:15 pm. The land is rented from Fleckney Parish Council.



Scouts

The 1st Fleckney Scout Group, established in 1909, has been a cornerstone of the Fleckney community for over a century. Their longstanding commitment to youth development has been supported by dedicated facilities, their current headquarters located High Street, Fleckney LE8 8LJ.

Recognizing the need for modern amenities, the group embarked on a significant project to construct a Scout hut. In June 2022. This hand near completion to the new hut on Rd, Fleckney.



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St Nicholas Church

St Nicholas Church is located on Main Street, Fleckney, Leicester, LE8 8AP, stands as a testament to the village's rich historical tapestry.



Originally constructed in the 12th century, the church has undergone significant transformations, notably in the 14th century and during the Victorian era, evolving from its initial Norman design.

The church is part of the Wistow Benefice, which includes St. Mary Magdalene in Kilby, St. Wiston in Wistow, and St. Luke in Newton Harcourt.

The current incumbent is The Revd Canon Philip Jonathon O'Reilly. The Church requires significant upkeep including the cemetery and bell tower.

Baptist Church

Fleckney Baptist Church, located on High Street, Fleckney, LE8 8AJ, has been a cornerstone of the community for over two centuries.

The church's origins trace back to 1811, with the first baptisms conducted in the village brook. By 1813, a dedicated chapel was established, the original structure was rebuilt in 1897 to accommodate the growing community. A playgroup initiated evolved into the Fleckney The church's growth necessitated expansion, leading to the opening of a three-story extension September 1990. Unfortunately, the new Baptist church was close to the main centre of the village and impacts traffic and pedestrian flow. This should be considered in any new development.



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Baptist Pre-School



Ofsted-approved facility for children aged 2-5, operating weekdays during term time from 9 am to 3 pm.

The Fleckney Baptist Pre-School operates as a charitable entity, registered under charity number 1154011. The facility was purpose-built, comprising three playrooms and an enclosed outdoor area, and employs seven staff members. It offers funded early education for children aged 2, 3, and 4, supporting those who speak English as a second language and children with special educational needs. The Baptist playgroup adds to the congestion in the centre of

the village with the Baptist church and any future development should support the increase in parking within the centre of the village and improve the village centre highway.

Our 2024 Questionnaire shows that local people particularly value the local facilities, including the health centre, library, primary school, community buildings, sports and leisure facilities and public houses.

It called for enhanced community facilities and social spaces for all ages, including seating for the elderly and youth clubs, and more local shops and dining options as previous venues have been reduced.

POLICY CF1: COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND AMENITIES- Development leading to the loss of an existing community facility (including Fleckney Community Library, Leicester Road allotments, Fleckney C of E Primary School, Fleckney Village Hall, Fleckney Sports Centre, Leicester Road Recreation Ground, Lodge Road Recreation Ground, Band Hall and Field, Wolsey Lane, St Nicholas Church, Fleckney Baptist Church, Hart of Fleckney Bowls Club and Fleckney Scout Hut) will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that any of the following apply:

- a. There is no longer any proven need or demand for the existing community facility;
- b. The existing community facility is no longer economically viable and there are no alternative uses for the building that meet a community need;
- c. The proposal makes alternative provision for the relocation of the existing community facility to an equally or more appropriate and accessible location within the Parish which complies with the other general policies of the Neighbourhood Plan Review.
- d. Proposals that provide new community facilities or improve the quality and range of existing community facilities, will be supported provided that the development:
 - e. Meets the design criteria stated in Policy x;
 - f. Will not result in unacceptable traffic movements that generate increased levels of noise, fumes, smell or other harmful disturbance to residential properties including the need for additional parking which cannot be catered for within the curtilage of the property;
 - g. Provides appropriate levels of car parking;
 - h. Is of a scale appropriate to the needs of the locality and conveniently accessible for residents of the village wishing to walk or cycle; and
 - i. Takes into full account the needs of the wider community.

Healthcare

Healthcare in Fleckney is provided by South Leicestershire Medical Group, Also known as Dr M A Williams & Partners

The practice has 5 branch surgeries, 2 are in Fleckney at:

- Fleckney Duck Pond Surgery, 6a High Street, Fleckney, Leicester. LE8 8AJ

This South Leicestershire Medical Group had a population of 25,000 patients to support when reviewed in 2021 by the care quality commission. The CQC awarded a “requires Improvement” notification during their audit, which had not been satisfactorily improved by 2023. There are around 6 full time doctors to cover this the 25000, This is not sufficient to effectively service the village. Any future development should liaise with South Leicestershire Medical and the Parish council to support the improvement of these services for new residents.

- Fleckney Medical Centre, High Street, Fleckney, Leicester. LE8 8AJ (Maternity Hub for South Leicestershire)

Fleckney Medical Centre is the Maternity Hub for South Leicestershire, Market Harborough, Narborough, Blaby, Oadby, Lutterworth and Billesdon and is open 7 days per week.

According to a freedom of information request, it has on average 280 appointments per week. This equates to around 14,000 extra cars per year, The maternity hub only has 4 parking spaces. Any future developments need to include extra parking for the centre of the village to mitigate this increased requirement. The Parking in the centre of the village was also reduced by the Fleckney Fields development and is not adequate for visits to the Coop, Chemist, chip shop, Pub, Newsagent or medical centre. The recent NP Questionnaire rated the health centre the 3rd most concerning

area in facilities and services, after the village centre highway and parking, which are both impacted by South Leicestershire Medical Group.

The 2024 Questionnaire highlighted what is considered to be the inadequacy of health services, which may worsen with population growth and provided suggestions for building new schools, shops, and facilities along with housing.

POLICY CF2: HEALTHCARE- Proposals for the expansion or replacement of GP premises that increase the accessibility of health and wellbeing services for residents living in Fleckney will be supported providing that the development:

- a. Would not lead to an unacceptable impact on highway safety or the free flow of traffic, taking account of any mitigation measures and would not cause unacceptable disturbance to residential amenity in terms of noise, fumes or other disturbance; and
- b. Will include adequate parking provision.

Fleckney C of E Primary School

The primary school is on Batchelor Road on the north side of the village and provides primary education to around 480 local 4-11 year olds. There are no other schools in the village. The school has a capacity of 420 and is unable to accommodate additional development without improvement. Therefore, new development should contribute to resolving capacity issues by improving, remodelling or enhancing existing facilities at the Primary School.

POLICY CF3: FLECKNEY C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL- Proposals for the expansion of the school in the Parish will be supported where it can be demonstrated that:

- a) expansion would not exacerbate existing access-related or traffic circulation problems, or that suitable mitigation measures are brought forward as part of a proposal;
- b) there is no loss of land already used for recreation by the community unless outweighed by benefits to the community;
- c) the development will not result in the significant loss of amenity to residents or other adjacent users.

Proposals for the creation of a new school would be supported where it can be demonstrated that the development:

- a) Would be safely accessible for pedestrians and cyclists, and is well related to bus routes and/or there is adequate provision for waiting school buses to park;
- b) Has appropriate vehicular access, and does not taking, account of appropriate mitigation measures, have a severe impact upon traffic circulation; and
- c) Would not result in an unacceptable loss of open space, amenity to residents or other adjacent users.

The use of a Community Use Agreement will be required to prevent facilities being underused and to help ensure a viable and sustainable business model over the longer term.

9. Infrastructure

New development will have some impact on the existing, and the need for new, infrastructure, services and amenities. Sometimes these impacts can be detrimental and so developers must expect to contribute towards the cost of providing additional infrastructure. The priority being village centre improvements for highways and parking. With health provision being second.

There is a feeling that some services and facilities need improvement to meet growing demands. In relation to further housing development, our 2024 Questionnaire showed that local people have concerns about pressure on the health services, village centre roads and village centre parking, drainage and flooding.

It identified

- Inadequate roads for future developments and dangerous junctions (e.g., Main St. Junction).
- Traffic congestion, especially around schools at start and finish times.
- Traffic calming measures needed due to speeding and narrow roads.
- Improved road maintenance and addressing loose chippings and unsurfaced areas.

To enable new housing development to take place, there will need to be improvements to most village services and facilities. However, our Neighbourhood Plan must be deliverable. Therefore, the developments identified in the Plan should not be subject to such a scale of obligations and burdens that their viable implementation is threatened. Contributions are governed by the provisions of the Community Infrastructure Regulations 2010.

There are also circumstances where contributions for affordable housing and tariff style planning obligations (section 106 planning obligations) should not be sought from small-scale and self-build development.

Policy In 1: Infrastructure- New development will be supported by the provision of new or improved infrastructure, together with financial contributions for the following off-site infrastructure requirements where appropriate:

- a) Village centre highways and pedestrian access;
- b) Parking provision in the Village centre;
- c) Improvement of footpaths and public rights of way within the village, Particularly the A14 footpath;
- d) Community infrastructure improvements including the provision of parish notice boards, defibrillator equipment, seats, bus shelters, community garden, litter bins; and
- e) Biodiversity improvements, habitat creation, tree and hedge planting.

Contributions will be phased or pooled to ensure the timely delivery of infrastructure, services and facilities where necessary. The village is now of such a size that all developments will need to contribute to these infrastructure improvements to reduce risks village centre highway risks.

10. Local Centre

Nearly all of us depend on the local centre for meeting friends and colleagues, for shopping, entertainment, leisure, culture, public services and worship. The local centre provides jobs and the businesses there depend on its vitality for survival, profits and growth. The Local Centre is shown on the Policies Map: Local Centre.

Fleckney's centre, focused on High Street, helps meet the day-to-day needs of village residents and the immediate area. The local centre contains a Co-op supermarket, non-retail services such as take-aways, a library, dental surgery and health centres. There is also a newsagent, Post Office, coffee shop and a pharmacy.

There are very few vacancies, but the opportunities for expanding the centre are limited. Local people generally feel that the local centre meets their day-to-day needs, but there are concerns about the range of shops and the quality of the shopping environment.

The Shopping Environment

The road running through the centre has a restricted width, with no scope for widening either the pavements or the carriageway. The road is the main through-route and carries buses and HGVs to the local amenities and shops, causing restrictions to traffic flow and danger to pedestrians. In places, the pavement is less than 1m in width and two pushchairs cannot pass, forcing pedestrians onto the road.

Leicestershire County Council Personal Injury Accident data identifies that there have been three slight accidents on High Street for the most recently available five-year period (01/06/2012 – 31/05/2017). Two involved pedestrians. There have been no serious or fatal accidents in the Local Centre over this period.

Our 2024 Questionnaire showed that 67% of respondents were concerned about the condition of pavements in the Local Centre. 76% of respondents would welcome more footpaths or cycleways.

Future Challenges

Our Neighbourhood Plan needs to consider the consumer trends that are likely to impact on our local centre:

- An ageing population will lead to specific demands for services and facilities, as well as an attractive and safe environment in which to shop and socialise.
- The ever-increasing demand for choice will place local centre operators under pressure to break from traditional business models to satisfy the demand for convenience.
- The continuing rise of e-commerce may take trade from traditional retailers, yet mobile technology will be so embedded in people's lives that local centre businesses could embrace and exploit it for their own benefit.
- The demand for value is here to stay. There will be an increasing demand for good value but high-

quality goods and services.

- Leisure time will continue to be important. People's expectations are ever higher, in a world where innumerable options compete for their attention. If our centre is to compete it will need to offer people a viable alternative, where they can shop, eat, work, and play in a unique cultural, social, and exciting environment.

Local Centre

The Harborough Local Plan identifies Fleckney as a 'Local Centre' and defines a Local Centre boundary to guide our Neighbourhood Plan. The Local Plan also recognises that the centre has an important role to play in supporting and servicing the local community to the benefit of the sustainability of Fleckney.

When assessing applications for retail, leisure and office development outside of centres, Harborough District Council require an impact assessment if the development is over a proportionate, locally set floor space threshold. Local Plan Policy RT2 sets the local floor space thresholds for the requirement for an impact assessment at 500m². The evidence produced as part of the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan identifies that the largest retail unit in Fleckney is 540m² (the Co-Op). The Local Plan requirement of a 500m² threshold for an impact assessment would therefore apply to retail provision almost the same size as the largest existing retail unit in the Local Centre. Therefore, a threshold of 100m² would be a more appropriate threshold for Fleckney given the size of the existing retail units.

In June 2018, full planning permission (Ref: 18/00335/FUL) was granted for the construction of two retail units on land between the Post Office and Fleckney Fish Bar. Historically the site has been utilised for ad hoc car parking.

In February 2019, a full planning application (Ref: 17/02146/FUL) was granted planning permission for 43 dwellings, a three-storey building (containing 8 flats and approximately 285 square metres of retail floor space), a new public plaza, replacement car parking and a location for a new scout hut at land off the High Street.

Policy LC 1: Local Centre- Development proposals to alter or replace existing shopfronts, create new shopfronts or to alter the frontages within the defined Town Centre will be supported where they:

- a) Conserve or enhance the special qualities and significance of the building and area; and
- b) Relate well to their context in terms of design, scale and material.

Poorly designed development proposals to remove, replace or substantially alter shop fronts or the frontages of buildings will not be supported.

A sequential test will be applied to planning applications for main Local Centre Uses* that are not within the Local Centre. Proposals for main Local Centre Uses* should be located in the Local Centre, then in edge of Local Centre locations and only if suitable sites are not available should out of Local Centre sites be considered.

When assessing applications for retail development outside of the Local Centre, an impact assessment will be required if the development is to provide more than 100m² retail floor space. This should include an assessment of the impact of the proposal on Local Centre vitality and viability.

Where an application fails to satisfy the sequential test or is likely to have an adverse impact on Local Centre vitality and viability, it will not be supported.

Except where changes of use are allowed through permitted development, Class E uses should remain the dominant use in the Village Centre and development leading to an over- concentration of any other one use will not be permitted and planning applications for uses other than Local Centre Uses* will not be supported.

*The main Local Centre Uses are within class E uses, which include E(a) Shops, E(b) Sale of food and drink for consumption (mostly) on the premises, E(c)(i)provision of Financial Services, E (c)(ii) Professional Services, other than health or medical services), or E (c) (iii) other appropriate services in a commercial, business or service locality(other than health or medical services), and Sui Generis Uses including Drinking Establishments, Hot Food Takeaways, and F1 Learning and non- residential Institutions of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended).

Local Centre Parking

The main areas of Local Centre car parking are:

High Street Car Park

There is a free, private car park adjacent to the Baptist church capacity for 22 spaces plus two blue badge holders. This is often full during surgery times, school runs, Cub Scout meetings and church events. The car park is to be redeveloped as part of a mixed-use development for new housing and shops (see paragraph 8.11). The lost car parking spaces will be replaced by around 40 new spaces.

Cooperative Food Store

The Cooperative Store's customer car park has 25 spaces (two of which are for parent and child) plus two for blue badge holders.

The Old Crown Public House

The Old Crown Public House has a patron's car park and an overflow car park, both of which are used as village parking for the local shops and the pub itself.

Current car parking standards for new developments are set out in the Leicestershire Highway Design Guide.

The car parking standards are often expressed as a maximum requirement which, in the case of Fleckney Local Centre, could exacerbate existing and future parking problems. Therefore, for our Local Centre, we have used these parking standards to set minimum requirements.

Of course, our local centre is also accessible to those without access to a car. A lot of young people can get to local centre services and facilities by bicycle or by walking.

Policy LC 2: Local Centre Car Parking- Additional off-street car parking is essential to maintain the vitality and viability of the Local Centre. The extension and improvement of existing off-street car parks to provide additional spaces and cycle parking to serve the Local Centre will be supported. The loss of Local Centre car parking will not be supported unless it is replaced by equivalent or better car parking provision in terms of quantity, quality and location.

New developments within or on the edge of the Local Centre should incorporate additional car parking spaces in accordance with the parking requirements set out in Appendix 3 unless it can be demonstrated that it would not be practical and the development would not add significantly to the demand for parking space.

11. Monitoring and Review

The Neighbourhood Plan will be monitored on an annual basis. This will be led by Fleckney Parish Council in conjunction with Harborough District Council as the local planning authority at least on an annual basis. The policies and measures contained in the 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 or to coincide with the review of the Harborough Local Plan if this cycle is different.