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# Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan

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2021 to 2036

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Referendum version

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Dated 29/11/22

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2. Built-Up Area Boundary Rationale
3. Rationale for Local Green Spaces and Other Valued Green Spaces
4. Consultation Statement
5. Housing Needs Survey
6. List of Societies and Clubs
7. Basic Conditions Statement

Photos courtesy of Anne Constantine, Phillip George, Andrew Pearce.

The Parish Council would like to thank the people involved with the steering group or who provided advice: Elaine Boyd, Stephanie Beaumont, Jonathan Bonnett, James Catmur, Anne Constantine, Ann Cosgrave, Fiona Coulson, Martin Davies, Nigel Day, Rachel Greaves, Phil Hemmans, Peter King, Tim Martindale, Debi Pearce, Andrew Pett, David Prest, Dean Sibley, The late Angela Steele, Rachel Hogger on behalf of Cambridgeshire ACRE, Natalie Elworthy & Jeremy Miller at HDC.

# **1 Introduction**

## **The Neighbourhood Plan**

- 1.1 This document is the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan (GGNP) for the designated Great Gransden Plan Area (Figure 1, page 11) for the period 2021 to 2036. The purpose of a Neighbourhood Plan is to set a framework for future development in the Plan Area, for which the Local Planning Authority is Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC). Once approved by a referendum, the GGNP will carry the same legal weight as the Local Plan drawn up by HDC. The GGNP will sit alongside the adopted HDC Local Plan (last revised 2019) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, last revised 2021) and together they will provide the statutory development plan for the parish of Great Gransden. The Local Planning Authority must follow what is in the GGNP when making decisions about planning applications in the area, subject to other material considerations.
- 1.2 The work on the GGNP has been led by a Steering Group which was set up by the Great Gransden Parish Council (GGPC), comprising a mixture of local residents and Parish Councillors. Work on the plan started in March 2018. In September 2021 management of the plan was taken over by a working group of Great Gransden Parish Councillors, henceforth referred to as “The Working Group”. The Steering Group remains active to assist the Working Group and GGPC on request.
- 1.3 Public engagement has used a range of approaches to identify major themes of the Plan, including:
- Display materials and presence at village events, e.g. church and school fetes, Lighthouse Cafe
  - Leafleting every house in the village
  - Engagement with village societies
  - Dedicated Web site (for the initial public engagement phase)
  - Dedicated Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/GreatGransdenNDP/>)
  - Letters to local businesses, seeking their input
  - Updates at the monthly PC meeting by a member of the Great Gransden Steering Group
  - Updates in the monthly village newsletter, “Roundabout”
  - Steering Group meetings open to the public, including an open forum session
  - Specific projects to engage young people including the school and Brownies
  - Dedicated village events, including a walking treasure hunt, a quiz, a networking event for homeworkers and a Societies Fair
  - An independent Housing Needs Survey by Cambridgeshire ACRE



Consultation Event



Reading Room Quiz



Societies Fair

## Consultation

- 1.4 The GGNP Steering Group have consulted parishioners and other stakeholders and have drafted the GGNP, which covers the entirety of the parish.
- 1.5 Following a six-week period of formal consultation (“Reg. 14 Consultation”) on this plan with residents, community stakeholders and statutory consultees, the GGNP Working Group will amend this plan in light of comments received and submit it to HDC, who will then undertake a further period of consultation (“the publication stage”) before appointing an independent examiner. Subject to a successful examination, this plan will then proceed to a parish-wide referendum.
- 1.6 The original intention was to complete the GGNP and take to referendum in 2020. Restrictions due to Covid 19 caused significant delay, with the GGNP being complete in 2022.

## Basic Conditions for Neighbourhood Plans

- 1.7 There are certain requirements, referred to as basic conditions which all Neighbourhood Plans are tested against at examination. The planning policies in the plan will need to:
  - be in broad conformity with the strategic policies of the HDC 2019 Local Plan
  - contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development
  - be appropriate having regard to national policy and guidance (e.g. the National Planning Policy Framework 2021)
  - be in accordance with environmental and human rights legislation.
- 1.8 This GGNP is believed to be in compliance with these requirements.

## A Small Settlement

- 1.9 The Local Plan currently in force in Huntingdonshire is the Local Plan to 2036, adopted by HDC in May 2019. In this plan, Great Gransden has been designated a Small Settlement. This means the settlement is relatively low in the district-wide settlement strategy and, compared to other settlements in the district, will receive relatively low housing growth.
- 1.10 HDC’s policy for Small Settlements requires any housing proposal to demonstrate sustainability in relation to both the level of service and infrastructure provision within the settlement, and opportunities for users of the proposed development to access everyday services and facilities by sustainable modes of travel including walking, cycling and public transport.

1.11 As a Small Settlement, the village of Great Gransden has no formal allocation for new housing in the Local Plan. The village will however be expected to contribute sustainable housing to the Local Plan requirements for unallocated sites. HDC advised the GGNP Steering Group in October 2021 that the housing requirement figure for the designated Great Gransden Plan area – the whole parish of Great Gransden – is 64 new dwellings during the period 2011 to 2036.



## 2 Summary of Policies, Glossary and List of Figures

- 2.1 The Policies are in Section 7 (Planning policies), with the linked GGPC commitments replicated to Section 9 (Community Action Plans) for ease of reference.
- 2.2 To provide context when reading the Plan documents, the subjects of the Policies are:

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### Glossary of Abbreviations

CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy
GGNP	Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan
GGPC	Great Gransden Parish Council
HDC	Huntingdonshire District Council
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework 2021
PROW	Public Right of Way
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest



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**Larger versions of these maps are available on the GGNP corner of the parish council's web site: <https://greatgransdenpc.org.uk/neighbourhood-plan/>**

## 3 The Plan Area

### Location

- 3.1 The parish of Great Gransden is located at the southern edge of Huntingdonshire, one of the districts making up Cambridgeshire, and has a total area of 1374 hectares. The only major settlement is Great Gransden village, at the south of the parish. Adjacent and to the south of Great Gransden village is the village of Little Gransden. The parish of Little Gransden is located in a different district, South Cambridgeshire District.
- 3.2 The village is located approximately 9 miles south east of St Neots, 15 miles south of Huntingdon and 15 miles west of Cambridge. Great Gransden is surrounded by a cluster of villages including Little Gransden, Waresley, Abbotsley, Eltisley, Caxton, Bourn and Longstowe. The growing town of Cambourne is about five miles to the North-east.
- 3.3 Most villagers regard themselves as inhabitants of “The Gransdens” (a name given to the two settlements of Great and Little Gransden), but Little Gransden does not fall within the NP area boundary. The Great Gransden NP area consists of the whole parish of Great Gransden as shown in Figure 1 below, and Figure 2 shows the Great Gransden community within the wider regional context.
- 3.4 The name 'Great Gransden' refers both to the village settlement and to the whole parish, with the NP area covering the latter. For clarity, in the rest of this document settlement and village are used interchangeably to refer to the main built-up area of the parish and its immediate environment within the parish. This is to align with the HDC Local Plan, which characterises Great Gransden (village) as a Small Settlement.

# Great Gransden Conservation Area

Scale: 1:26,000

Date: 04/12/2021

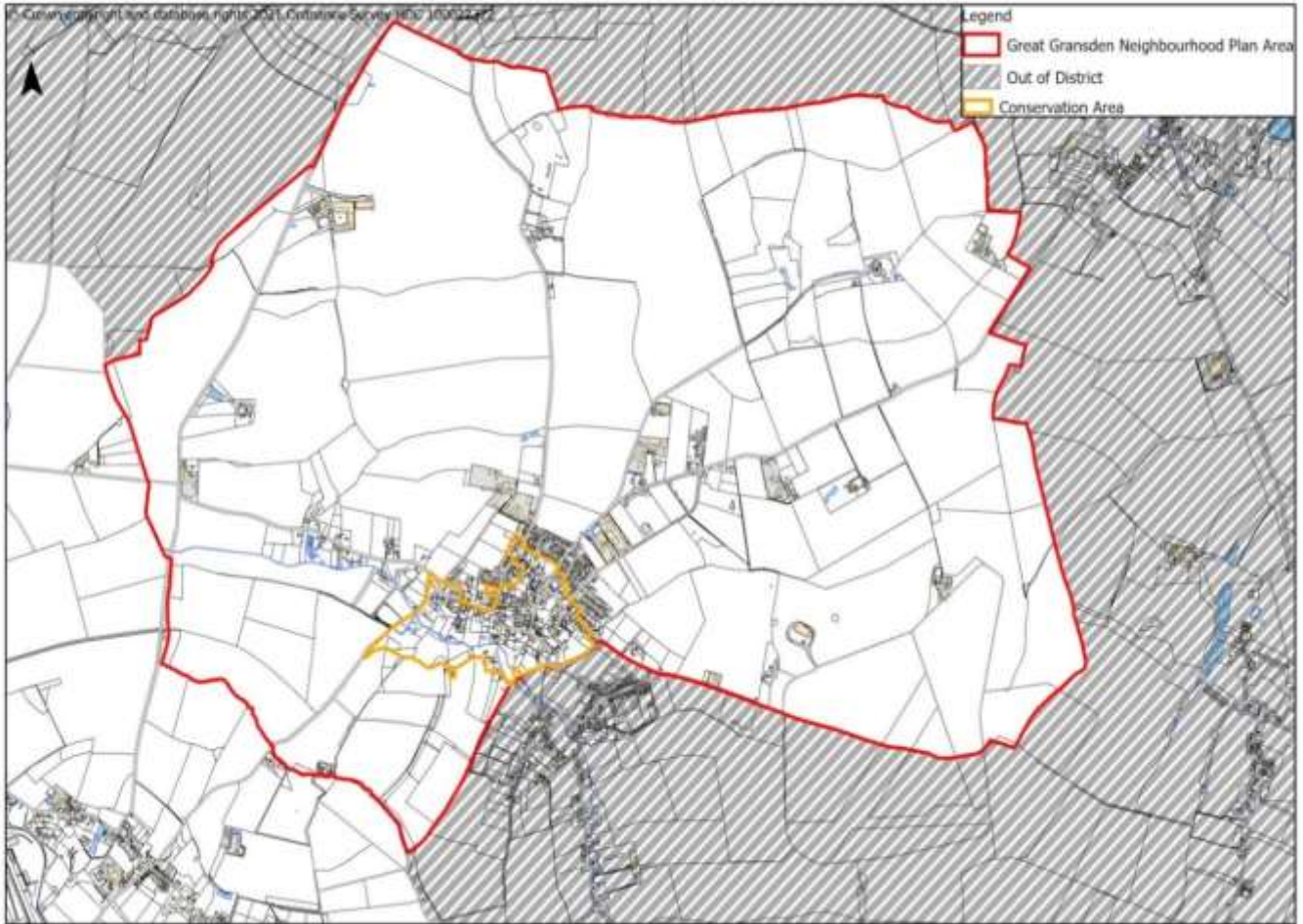


Figure 1 Great Gransden Plan Area, consisting of the parish of Great Gransden

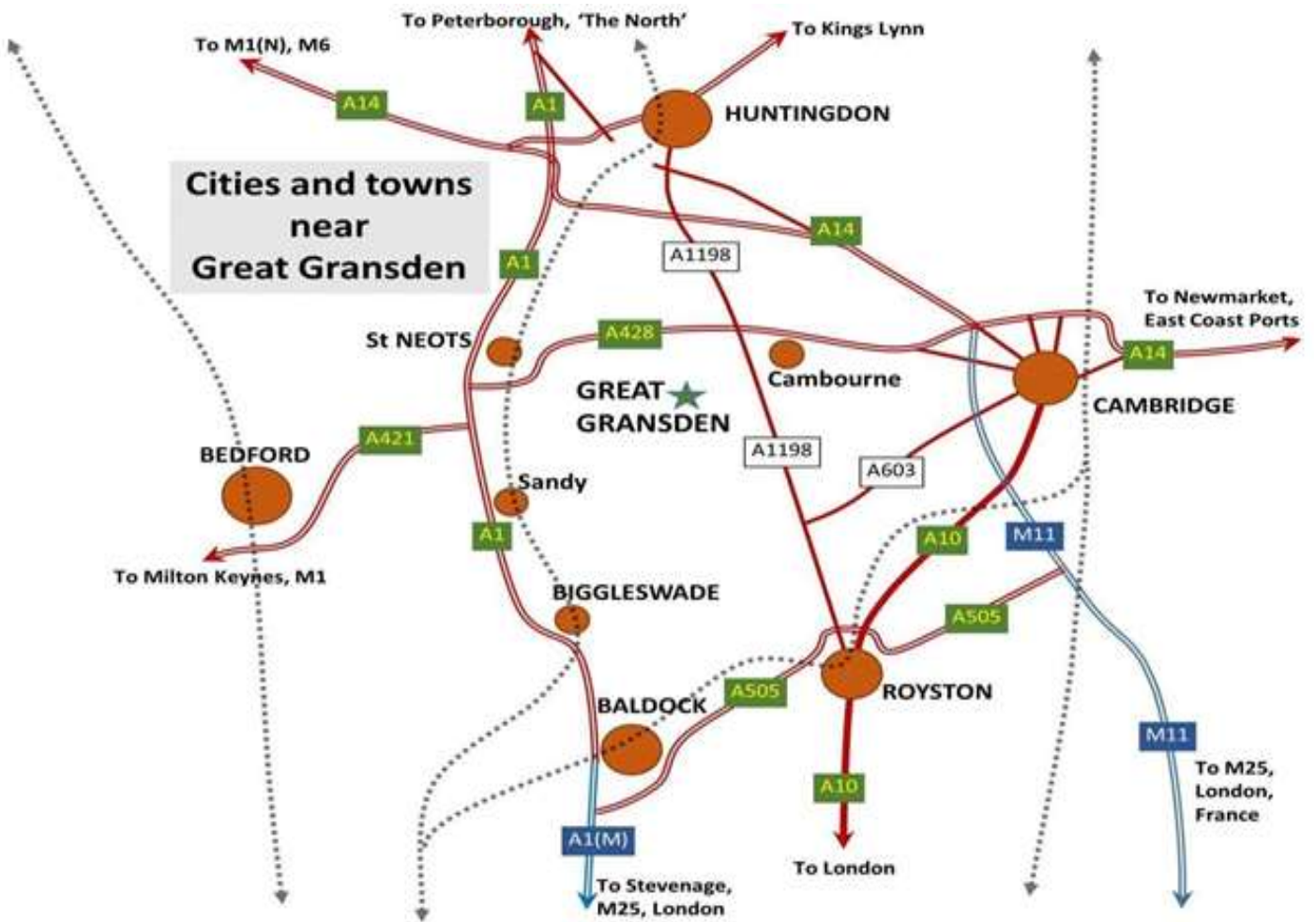
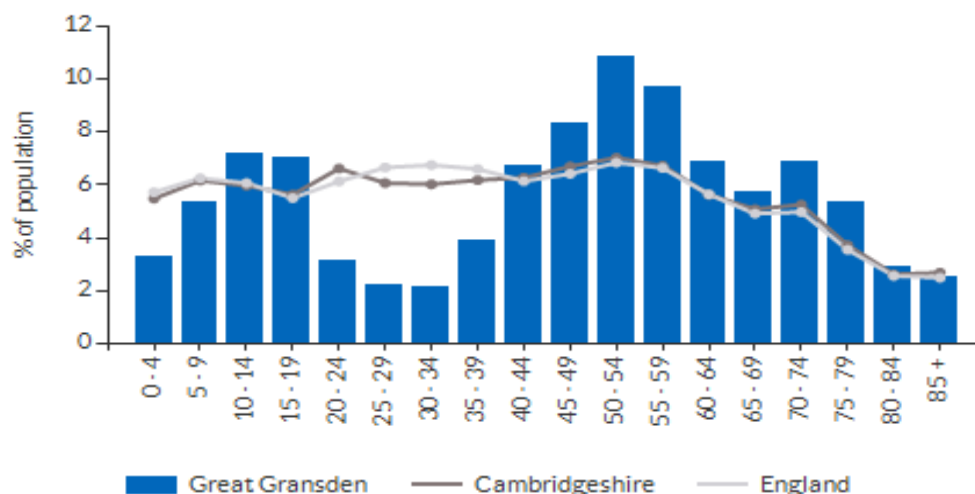


Figure 2: Great Gransden NP area within the wider regional context

## Population

- 3.5 The latest Great Gransden population estimate from ONS in mid-year 2020 was 957 as at 2020 with the age profile shown in Figure 3:



Date: 2020 Source: ONS

Figure 3: Great Gransden residents age profile

## Household Characteristics

- 3.6 There are currently about 400 dwellings in the parish. Owner occupation is the dominant tenure in Great Gransden accounting for 84 per cent of all households (at the time of the 2011 Census of Population). Social and private rented accommodation each account for about seven per cent of all households.
- 3.7 There are twenty rented dwellings managed by housing associations, and two shared ownership properties in the parish. On completion of the development of Dutton Gardens, off Sand Road, there will be an additional 16 affordable dwellings, of which 11 will be affordable rented properties and 5 shared ownership properties.
- 3.8 Fifty six per cent of all dwellings in Great Gransden have four or more bedrooms. Smaller properties are relatively scarce; dwellings with two or fewer bedrooms account for only 15 per cent of stock (at the time of the 2011 Census of Population).
- 3.9 The village is not provided with mains gas. Most dwellings are heated by oil, though increasing numbers have air or ground source heat pumps installed.

## Built Environment Character

- 3.10 Great Gransden is an ancient rural parish, mentioned in 973 when its land was endowed to Thorney Abbey by Aethelwold, Bishop of Winchester. The main settlement in the parish ('the village') lies on the southern edge of the parish.
- 3.11 The village has a spacious feel with many dwellings set in plots with gardens both front and rear. The village layout incorporates open green spaces at road junctions, often with large trees. There are many mature trees, hedges and grassy verges around the village, reflecting its rural nature and providing the link to the countryside.



3.12 At its heart is a picturesque conservation area (see Figure 4, below) with many well-preserved historic buildings and several large distinctive houses, including Gransden Hall, Rippington Manor, Audley House, Old Vicarage, Rectory Farm, The Old Barn, Manor House, and Brinkley House. There are 60 listed buildings in the parish, almost all within the conservation area.



## Great Gransden Heritage Assets

Scale: 1:7,500

Date: 04/12/2021

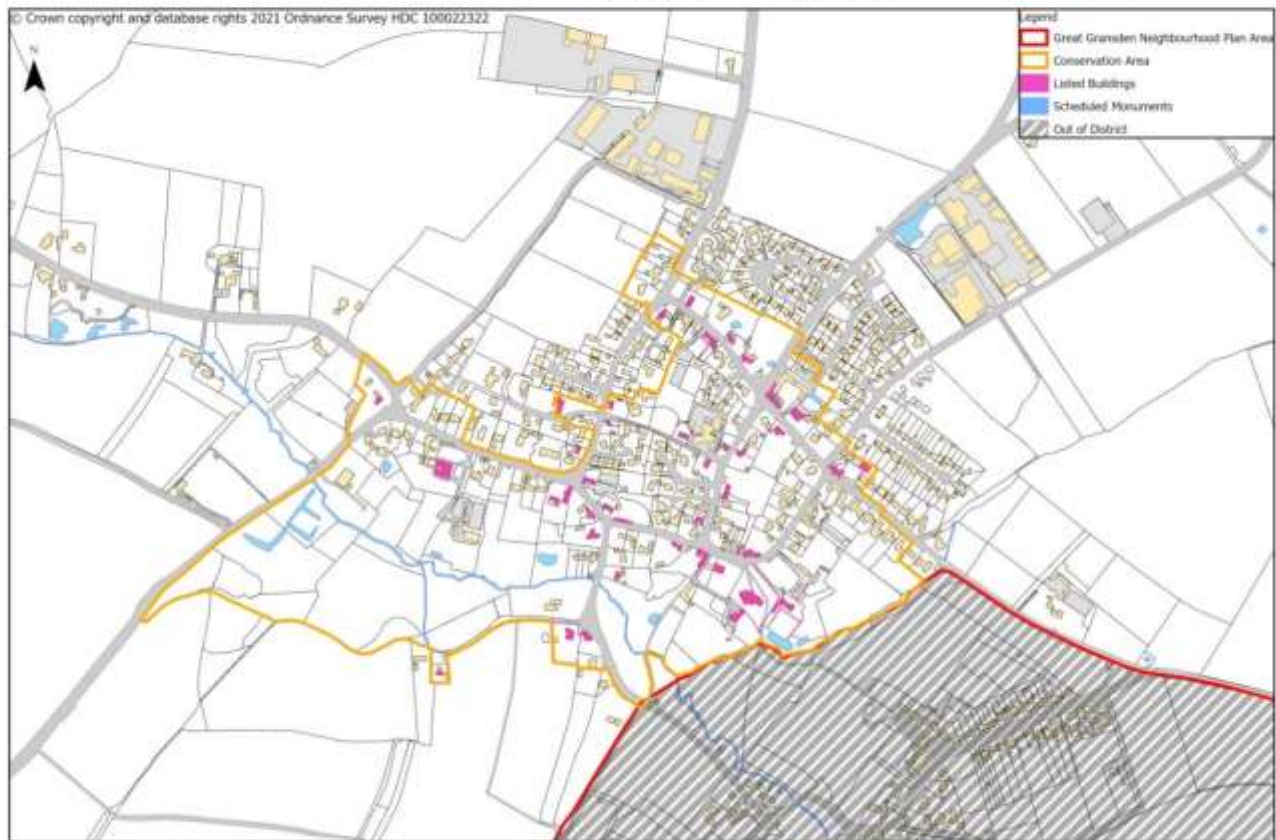


Figure 4: conservation area boundary, with listed buildings marked in purple

- 3.13 There is limited street lighting, so the village enjoys dark skies. Refer to CPRE's light pollution and dark skies map from 2015: <https://nightblight.cpre.org.uk/maps/>
- 3.14 The village is surrounded by agricultural land with extensive views to the open countryside, and with traditional buildings such as barns. However, there is limited access for recreation.

### Landscape Character

- 3.15 The parish of Great Gransden lies within the South Eastern Claylands Landscape character area, one of nine landscape character areas in the district as described in the Landscape and Townscape Supplementary Planning Document (L&T SPD) 2022 which was adopted on 17 March 2022. This character area is situated in the south eastern corner of Huntingdonshire. It stretches from the district boundary in the east and south (where Great Gransden is located), to the Ouse valley in the north and west. The following description of the Claylands landscape contained in the L&T SPD 2022 reflects well the landscape character in Great Gransden:



*“The South East Claylands include large areas of high quality landscape with a varied and typically gently undulating landform, established hedgerows and woodland and the historic settlement patterns which are reflected through the route of the Roman Ermine Street”*

*“The relative lack of settlement in the area combined with the mature vegetation creates an intimate and tranquil feel to the landscape.*

”



Towards Great Gransden from  
Little Gransden Lane

3.16 The landscape character around the village of Great Gransden comprises gently undulating arable farmland with mostly large fields and hedgerows. Great Gransden Postmill, St Bartholomew’s Church and Gransden Woods are key landmarks within this gently rolling landscape. The village of Great Gransden itself has an undulating topography which contributes greatly to the setting of the village as a whole, the conservation area and the individual listed buildings.

### **Natural Environment**

3.17 The natural environment in Great Gransden is much treasured by the people who live here. Key features are the attractive countryside, a strong sense of tranquillity, dark skies and the rich diversity of wildlife. Areas rich in wildlife assets that are enjoyed by



Towards the village on  
Sand Rd

local people include the Waresley and Gransden Woods Nature Reserve, the community orchard and a wildflower meadow both located on the Allotments site, rural gardens and the wider agricultural landscape including hedgerows, ponds, meadows

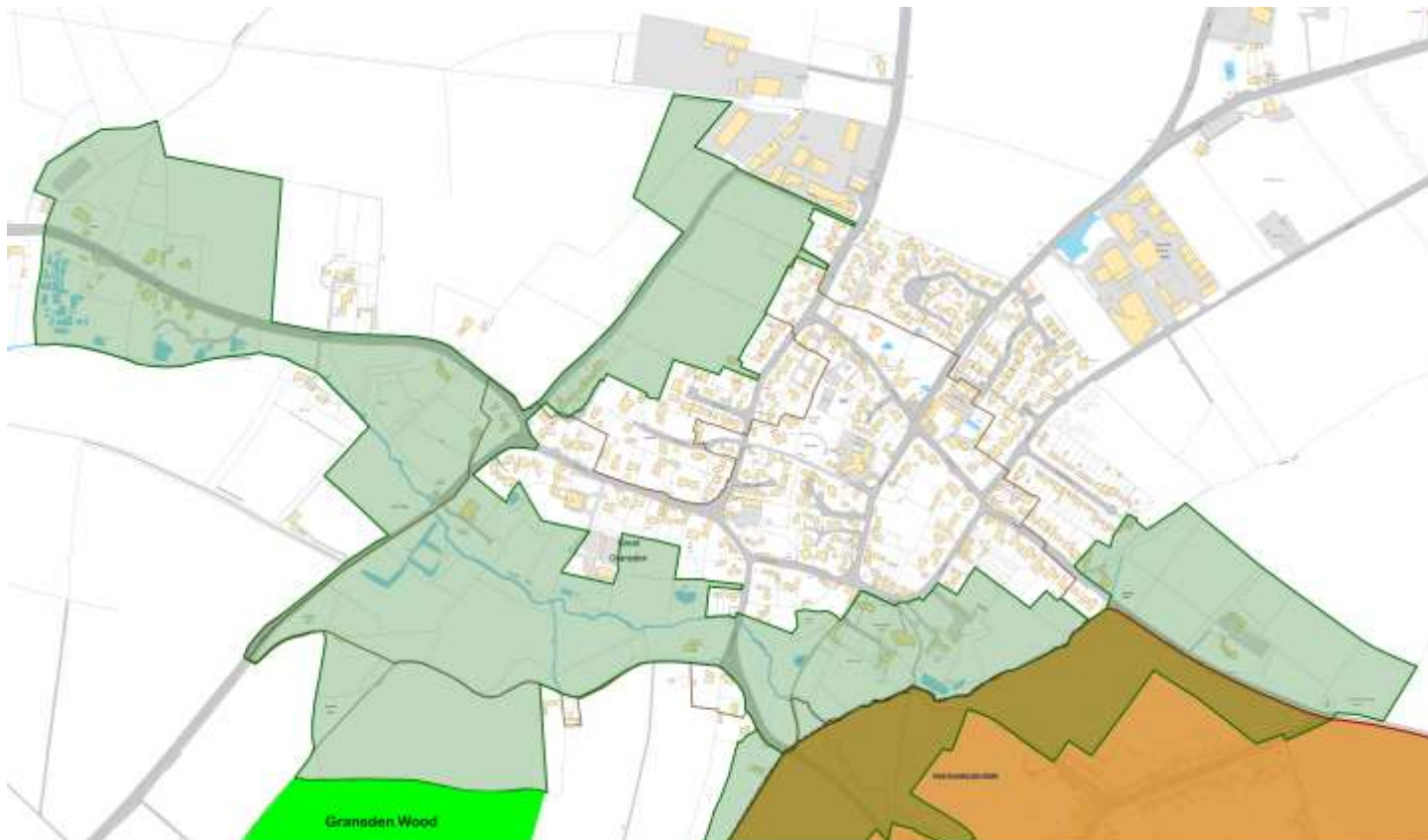
and copses. Some of the areas of importance for wildlife are accessible or viewable from the established public footpaths and roads but others are not.

- 3.18 Much of the area of the parish is given over to arable farmland which is managed fairly intensively to grow crops mainly of winter-sown cereals (mostly wheat), oil-seed rape and beans. The wildlife of most of the parish is typical of many such areas of lowland farmland in Southern and Eastern England but within Great Gransden these areas still support populations of yellowhammers and smaller numbers of corn bunting and skylarks, species which have declined greatly elsewhere.
- 3.19 Gransden Wood is an ancient woodland and is by far the most important site for wildlife within the parish. It supports a number of ancient woodland indicator plant species, including an important population of Oxlips, and a spectacular show of Bluebells carpets the woodland floor in Spring. Together with Waresley Wood (with which it forms a single woodland block) it is notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as a Site of Special Scientific Interest. Two-thirds of the area of Gransden Wood lies within the Waresley and Gransden Woods Nature Reserve which is owned and managed by the Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire Wildlife Trust. The northern third is in private ownership. There are various other small copses of deciduous broadleaved woodland (some of which are also ancient woodland remnants) elsewhere in and around the parish.



- 3.20 The relatively small areas of permanent grassland remaining within the parish are mostly horse-grazed or cut for hay. Apart from the fields between West Street and Park Riddy and the Gransden Showground field, most of the other small parcels of land within the parish that have survived as areas of grassland are well away from the village itself, at Crimpledean, Leycourt and Hardwicke. These meadows are mainly on the poorly draining calcareous boulder clay and often with ridge and furrow topography. Cowslips are common and a few of these neutral meadows remain unimproved and still support scarcer plants such as Adder's Tongue Fern and Sulphur Clover.
- 3.21 Connectivity of wildlife habitats greatly enhances their value. On the southern flank of the village, a contiguous series of surviving grassland fields and adjacent rural gardens provide a high degree of wildlife habitat connectivity, supporting biodiversity. Wherever

possible, this should be maintained and opportunities sought to further improve the network of connected habitats across the parish. These areas currently provide connectivity between the village itself and existing important wildlife areas such as Gransden Wood SSSI. Collectively they form a valuable green corridor along the valley of the Home Dole Brook and Gransden Brook, stretching from Gransden Windmill down Mill Road, across to Little Gransden Lane and to Waresley Road and parts of Meadow Road including Gransden Park. This connected green arc also includes parts of the Mandeian Brook, Crimpledean Brook and Park Riddy, which are tributaries of the Gransden Brook. This green arc-shaped corridor (Figure 5, below) is identified as a priority area to maintain such connectivity and encourage wildlife protection and habitat enhancements through Community Actions.



*Figure 5: The Gransden Brook Corridor*

The orange-shaded area in the right-hand corner of the map is part of the neighbouring parish of Little Gransden, which lies outside the Plan area of the GGNDP. However, it should be noted that the green arc identified within Great Gransden Parish is complemented by contiguous areas of grassland (shown in olive green) along the Home Dole Brook and Gransden Brook in Little Gransden, reinforcing the wildlife connectivity of these areas in the landscape.

### **Great Gransden Community**

- 3.22 Great Gransden benefits from a strong sense of community. In GGNDP consultations, community spirit was identified as the most important aspect of village life.
- 3.23 The village has many clubs, societies and organisations covering sport, music, the arts, education and general social activities. These serve all age groups, from playgroup and nursery for pre-school children to the Evergreens for older residents. The drama group



“The Revellers” stages several performances each year. A list of clubs and societies is provided in Supporting Document 6.

3.24 There are five main social hubs within the village: the Crown and Cushion public house, the Reading Room (which acts as the village hall), the Lighthouse café, the school hall and St Bartholomew's Church. The village shop and Post Office is also a highly valued village facility. The village shop and Post Office and the Crown and Cushion village pub are designated as Assets of Community Value. The PC made a statement about this <https://greatgransdenpc.org.uk/2021/statement-regarding-the-crown-and-cushion-public-house/>. It will be important to continue support for these assets and to strive to ensure that they retain ACV status.



The residents of Great Gransden have access to a range of sports and leisure facilities, supporting health and wellbeing. Centrally situated within the village is the Playing Field, with the Bowls Club, a recently opened Multi-Use Games Area and a children's playground. There is a second playground situated in Mandene Gardens but it is currently unsafe and cannot be used. It is due to be revamped when the two developments in that area are complete. The Sportsfield, on the outskirts of the village is managed through the Gransden Sports and Recreation Association, a trust established by the GGPC. It is used by Gransden Football and Gransdens Tennis Clubs.



The pavilion is used by the local nursery. There is also a car park which has space for circa 25 cars. The car park is also used during the day by the pre-school playgroup.

- 3.25 The Great Gransden allotments are situated about one mile from the village centre. There are 29 full size plots and a children’s area of smaller plots plus a community orchard, pond and wildflower meadow.
- 3.26 There are regular charitable events, contributing to both local and national charities, including: Blues and Soul music festival; “Later with” music event; charity tennis tournaments; the Summer Ball; Gransden Muddy Run; Traidcraft Big Brew and the Gransden Agricultural Show.



## Transport

### Road Links

- 3.27 The village of Great Gransden is not on any A road, the nearest being the A428 (2.5 miles to the North). Nearby is the A1 (6 miles West) and the A1198 (3 miles East), and within easy reach via these roads are the M11, the A14 and the A505, all about 12 miles away (see Figure 2, page 12 above). The B1040 runs along the western boundary of the parish, and the B1046 runs roughly E-W through the village,
- 3.28 Overall, the connectivity by car is quite good, with access to the local employment and shopping centres and local rail stations (see Figure 6 below). However, this does result in a high level of traffic through the village at peak hours, especially if there are problems on the A14 and/or the A428.
- 3.29 There is a proposal to put a new, limited-access dual carriageway between the Caxton Gibbet roundabout (the A428/A1198 junction) and the Black Cat roundabout (the A421/A1 junction), with the existing A428 section between the Caxton Gibbet and the A1 being downgraded. (See <https://highwaysengland.co.uk/a428-black-cat-to-caxton-gibbet-home/>.) Work is due to start on this in 2022, with the route running close to St Neots and then north of the existing A428, as sketched on Figure 6 .

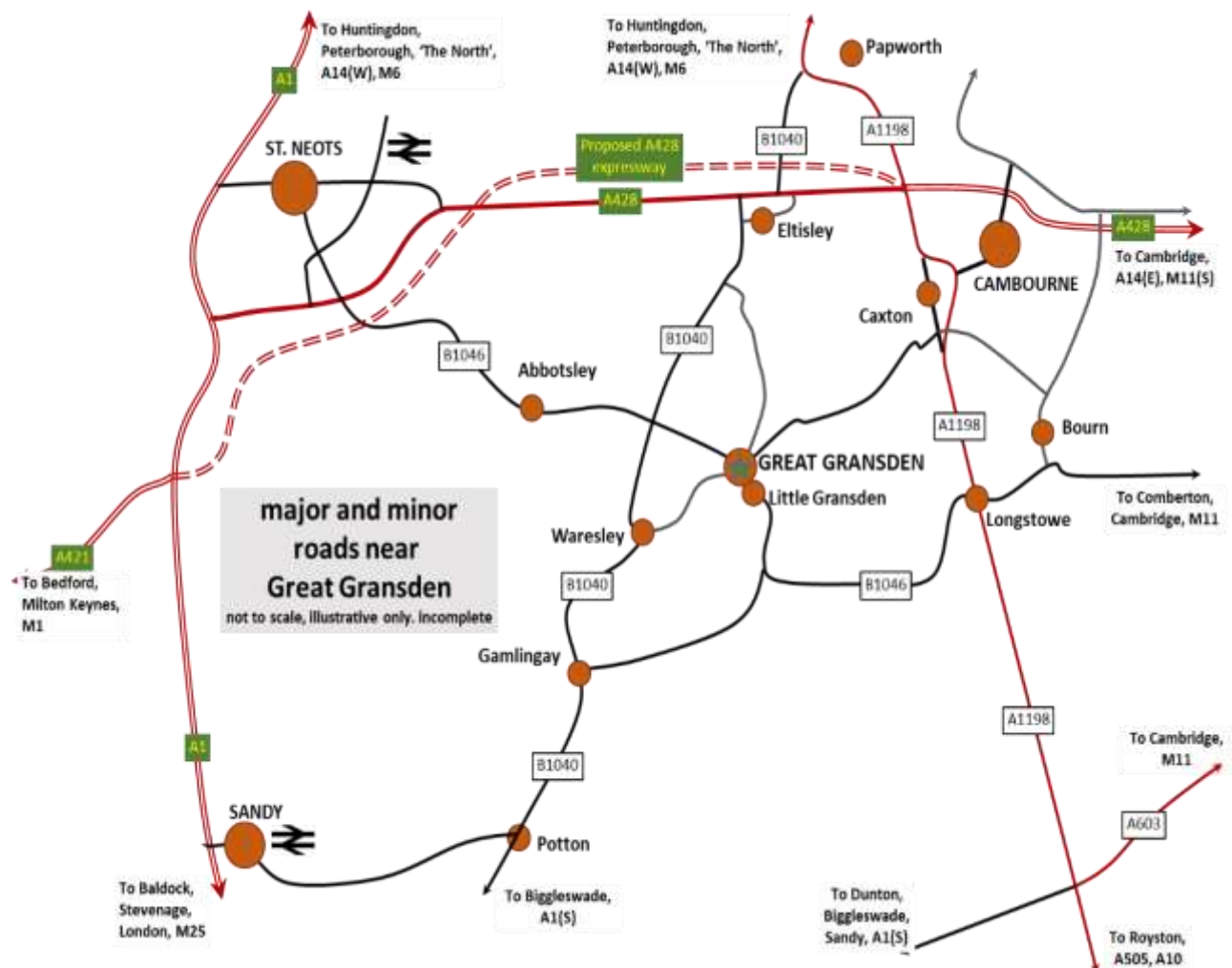


Figure 6: Roads and communities around Great Gransden

## **Public Transport**

- 3.30 The nearest railway stations are at Sandy and St Neots, both on the East Coast Main Line; St Neots has fast services to Huntingdon and Peterborough in one direction, and London, Gatwick airport and Horsham in the other. Other nearby stations include Royston (on the Cambridge Line), Huntingdon itself (East Coast Main Line) and Cambridge.
- 3.31 Public consultation is underway to identify the preferred route of the planned east – west rail link. Some route options would run through the parish, while others would be to the north or south. ([eastwestrail.co.uk](http://eastwestrail.co.uk)). The current preferred routes are the northerly ones and would include a new station between Caxton and Cambourne, around four miles from the village of Great Gransden. The implications for the Parish of the route and the new station are unclear at this stage. The new station could provide a useful rail option, but there are concerns on the potential impact on the surrounding countryside of some route options.
- 3.32 There is a very limited bus service, with one service each weekday morning to Cambridge from Great Gransden, and two return services.
- 3.33 There is a dial-a-bus and dial-a-car service called HACT serving Huntingdonshire, for people who cannot access local bus routes. The dial-a-bus service has a different destination each day of the week.

## **Road Safety**

- 3.34 Except for the village environment, all roads have national speed limit. The approaches to the village have 40mph limits, and the village itself 30mph. Middle Street by the primary school has a speed limit of 20mph. There is a Mobile Speed Indicator managed by GGPC but no other traffic calming measures. Village volunteers operate a Speedwatch scheme.
- 3.35 There is limited provision of pavements, no designated cycle paths, nor any dual-use foot/cycle paths in or around the village. This poses a significant hazard for pedestrians, especially with the speed of traffic, the narrowness of roads, and limited street lighting. The roads around the centre of the village are generally narrow. There is extensive on-road parking that further narrows the roads and causes congestion, especially at peak times.
- 3.36 A number of the road junctions have limited visibility for vehicles and pedestrians. Some properties have driveways that emerge on or close to blind corners or blind humps.

## **Employment**

- 3.37 Great Gransden is well placed for access to employment opportunities across the region being located close to major roads (A1/A14/A428) and having St Neots train station within a 15 minute drive. The initial commute from the village is almost entirely by private transport.
- 3.38 Home based working has become more common, particularly with recent restrictions due to COVID-19. Many residents work from home full-time, and many more split their time between home and office, reducing the number of cars on the roads and increasing the sustainability of local village services.

In the HDC Local Plan Great Gransden has two Established Employment Areas: the Sand Road Industrial Estate and the Hardwick Road Industrial Estate. Together



these house around 25 Small Medium Enterprises (SME)s. Kingspan is a significant local employer, however they are planning to relocate and develop their site for housing. There are agricultural employers such as Collings Brothers and farms surrounding the village. Within the village the school is a significant employer; the village shop, nursery and playgroup each employ a small number of people



Sand Road Industrial Estate



Hardwick Road Industrial Estate

These employers provide an estimated 400 jobs, however only a minority of the workforce live in Great Gransden, the majority commute to work into the village, mainly by car. In addition, there are a significant number of people who work from home.

### **Communication infrastructure**

- 3.39 Great Gransden is provided with a number of mobile and fixed line broadband services. All broadband services are provided via British Telecommunications plc (BT) and its subsidiaries, whilst mobile services are provided via the big four mobile companies, Vodafone, O2, EE and Three. Ultrafast services are available within some developments in Great Gransden area, but are currently of very limited availability. County Broadband have now hit their required order target and the build phase has commenced in the village. Mobile service providers all provide only partial – and differing – coverage of the parish.
- 3.40 As well as standard services, facilities exist within the local area, to utilise mobile internet services (data) via mobile operators, or to use satellite-based data networks.

### **Education**

- 3.41 Easy access to a good school is essential for families with children under 16. Great Gransden is fortunate to have its own primary school; so many children can travel on foot. There is much family-sized housing in the village already and this generates a good number of school-aged children in each age group 5-18.

### **Primary Education and Early Years**

- 3.42 Barnabas Oley Primary School, located in the very centre of Great Gransden, is one of the prized facilities of the village. It is a C. of E. Foundation School, rated as Outstanding by Ofsted and Excellent by SIAMS (the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools). It enrolled 141 pupils in 2019/20 and has a pupil admission

number (PAN) of 147. It serves the catchment area of Great and Little Gransden, Waresley and Abbotsley and admits some children from outside the catchment area when there are available places.

- 3.43 Of additional importance to families with younger children is access to pre-school and after-school provision. There is currently excellent provision in the village of a playgroup, a nursery, both rated Outstanding by OFSTED, and an after-school/school holiday club. All these are managed as businesses or not-for-profit enterprises.

### **Secondary Education**

- 3.44 The village is in the catchment area of two secondary schools – Longsands Academy in St Neots and Comberton Village College. Most secondary-age children attend Comberton Village College but some attend church or private schools in Cambridge, Bedford and Kimbolton. Post-16 education is provided in school sixth forms, two sixth form colleges in Cambridge and Cambridge Regional College (FE) in Cambridge.

### **Adult Learning**

- 3.45 Of value to all residents are the opportunities for adult learning in the village. This is provided through specialist clubs and societies and through Carry on Learning. The Reading Room is a valuable venue for these activities.

### **Health Services**

- 3.46 There are GP services in Bourn and Gamlingay. Bourn Surgery had provided a weekly clinic service in the village for many years, but this was withdrawn from September 2019. There are NHS hospitals in Cambridge (Addenbrooke's General Hospital, Royal Papworth Hospital - a Specialist Heart and Lung Hospital - and the Rosie Maternity Hospital), Huntingdon (Hinchingbrooke General Hospital) and specialist NHS clinics in Cambridge and Buckden. There are also private hospitals in Cambridge.

## 4 The Key Issues

- 4.1 This section sets out the issues that have been identified through community engagement. The initial questions posed were:
- What do you like about Great Gransden?
  - What don't you like, or what concerns do you have about Great Gransden?
  - What changes would you like to see in Great Gransden?
- 4.2 Analysis of the responses identified recurring themes, which were then investigated further in future engagements, and these have been used to develop the Vision, Objectives and Policies in the Plan.
- 4.3 Some of these issues are planning related and can be addressed through a Neighbourhood Plan planning policy. The GGNP planning policies are set out in Section 7 (Planning policies) of this plan. Some of the issues fall wholly or partly outside of the scope of planning policy. Where possible, GGPC will seek to support community-led action to address such issues through **Community Action Plans (CAP)**. These are set out in Section 9 (Community Action Plans) of this plan.

### Key Issue 1 – Sustainable development and growth of the housing stock in Great Gransden.

- 4.4 The need for further growth and development in the parish is understood, however this must not undermine the essential character of what is a small, rural community.
- 4.5 Sustainable growth must help support and maintain village infrastructure, not threaten it. The phasing and scale of new development is an important factor.
- 4.6 New development should improve the affordability and diversity of housing stock to meet parish needs, as identified in the Housing Needs Survey (supporting document 5, and subsequent revisions).
- 4.7 New development should be of minor scale (this means for residential development, up to 9 houses and a site no larger than 0.5 hectares; for non-residential less than 1,000 square metres floorspace on a site less than 1 hectare), with a focus on brownfield sites and infill.

### Key Issue 2 – Protection and enhancement of the rural character

- 4.8 New developments must have a rural rather than urban character, consistent with this small rural parish.
- 4.9 New developments must enhance and not compromise the street views, adding to the interest and attractiveness of the street scene. The design and density of housing in new developments should be similar to that already existing in the village. The layout should have a spacious feel, with use of hedges and tree planting to mirror the rural environment.
- 4.10 Particular care should be taken with proposed developments that impact the conservation area. Views to and from the conservation area must be protected.

### **Key Issue 3 - Access to open space and enjoyment of the countryside**

- 4.11 The countryside character and setting of the parish is valued highly, but public access is relatively limited. An estimated 95% of the open countryside in the parish is in private ownership, the majority of which is used for arable farming and equestrian and/or hay.
- 4.12 Existing public open green space today is very limited, confined to a few small areas that are owned by GGPC, including the Sportsfield, the Playing Field, Mill Weir and the Allotments, The Sportsfield lies outside the built-up area and lends itself mostly for organised recreational and sporting uses and the small parking area at Mill Weir gives access only for limited local coarse fishing. None of these areas is suitable for walking or attractive for other informal countryside uses.
- 4.13 Under local byelaw, none of these existing public open green spaces allow dog walking - a major daily activity for many village residents around the streets and public footpath network. Consequently, dog walking is a significant and important activity amongst visitors to the Wildlife Trust Waresley and Gransden Wood Reserve (including Browne's Piece), putting pressure on the conservation goals of this Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).
- 4.14 Large parts of the parish are not accessible through or even viewable from the limited public right of way (PROW) network. Virtually the only accessible area of semi-natural wildlife habitat is the Wildlife Trust Nature Reserve at Gransden Wood, with access to the wood by the permissive path network established by the Trust. One third of Gransden Wood is in private ownership and this area is not open to the public at all. None of the other woodland copses in the parish have any established public access.
- 4.15 Circular walking routes from the village are very limited; those few that do exist depend on use of public roads (without pavements) for at least part of the walking route or on use of permissive paths though Waresley and Gransden Woods, which the Wildlife Trust have sometimes closed off in recent winters.
- 4.16 A number of other walking routes depend on individual private agreement with the landowners. Misunderstandings on access rights can sometimes cause local tensions.
- 4.17 The rich wildlife assets around the parish must be sustained and enhanced, consistent with the requirement for net biodiversity increase in the Local Plan (Policy LP30) and NPPF (Para 179), and supportive of the West Cambridgeshire Hundreds strategic project. <https://www.wildlifebcn.org/westcambshundreds>

### **Key Issue 4 – Road safety and traffic**

- 4.18 At peak times there is a high level of through traffic, both passenger cars and commercial vehicles, causing congestion and road safety problems, especially during the morning rush hour which coincides with the time younger children in the village need to get to the village primary school.
- 4.19 The absence of pavements on some of the key roads in the village, the narrowness of some of the pavements, and parking on pavements results in pedestrians having to share the road with vehicles, including HGVs and agricultural vehicles. Even where they exist, there are gaps in the pavement network, and in many locations, poor visibility.

- 4.20 A number of the road junctions have limited visibility for vehicles emerging from side roads or for pedestrians trying to cross the junction. A number of properties have driveways that emerge on or close to blind corners or blind humps.
- 4.21 Vehicles exceed the speed limits in the village, including the 20mph stretch adjacent the school
- 4.22 There are no designated cycle paths in or around the village. Many of the roads connecting the village to other villages and the local towns have blind spots requiring cyclists or horse riders to be particularly wary of other road users, and in some places the hedges and ditches block escape routes. The importance of walking and cycling routes is outlined in Working Together to Promote Active Travel by Public Health England

### **Key Issue 5 - Education and Health Services**

- 4.23 Housing development in the village may have an impact on the resourcing and character of Barnabas Oley Primary School. The school can accommodate around 150 pupils in its current buildings and configuration of classrooms. Revenue funding for schools is pupil-related, so growth in pupil numbers is financially beneficial and a fall in numbers would have a negative financial impact. Demographic projections suggest modest growth in primary-age pupil numbers over the next eight years (less than 10%)<sup>1</sup> but the completed and committed housing developments in the plan period, of some 87 additional dwellings could take this growth over the 150 mark. If pupil numbers were to expand beyond 180 a full capital appraisal would be necessary in order to determine the best solution for the school.<sup>2</sup>
- 4.24 Great Gransden falls within the catchment areas of both Longsands Academy and Comberton Village College, so children of secondary age may attend either school by choice. However, free transport is only provided by the County Council to Longsands School. As most secondary-age children in Great Gransden attend Comberton Village College, parents have to organise and pay for bus transport themselves.
- 4.25 The Reading Room will need ongoing investment to ensure that it is fit for purpose for learning and other related activities.
- 4.26 The withdrawal of the weekly Bourn Surgery Clinic in the village is a significant loss of a valued service, particularly as there is no bus service to either of the local surgeries. This has increased the number of car journeys between The Gransdens and Bourn.

### **Key Issue 6 – Community Facilities, Leisure and Infrastructure**

- 4.27 On the Playing Field there is a small playground which, though safe to use, is in a poor state and in need of refurbishment and improvements to offer a more challenging, safe play environment. The playground at Mandene Gardens is unsafe and cannot be used at present; it is due to be resited and refurbished as part of the conditions on the planning permission for 2 new dwellings nearby.

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<sup>1</sup> According to the ONS National population projections: 2020-based interim.

<sup>2</sup> Joint meeting of Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group (NDP) and Barnabas Oley Primary School (BOPS) with Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC)

4.28 The Sportsfield is home to the Gransden Youth Football Club (GYFC). For the 2021/22 season GYFC comprises:

- 120 playing members
- 7 formal year group teams and Fox Cubs (aged 4 to 6 year olds)
- 4 matches are played each weekend from mid August to mid May
- 7 training sessions during BST (Apr-Oct)

The pavilion on the Sportsfield has shared use by the Nursery and GYFC, but for GYFC it is limited to WC facilities on Saturday morning. All the club kit is stored in a container. The large car-park, which is shared by the Nursery and the Preschool Playgroup, requires resurfacing.

4.29 The Tennis Club, which is situated to one side of the Sportsfield, has three floodlit courts for use by members. It has a small clubhouse which requires updating with toilet/washing facilities to improve hygiene and safeguarding, especially as children use the club.

### **Key Issue 7 – Uncertainties of major infrastructure decisions**

4.30 The planned east-west road link (new A428) will pass to the north of the parish. The implications for commuter and traffic levels are not yet clear.

4.31 The implications for the Parish of the route and the new station of the planned east – west rail link are unclear. The new station could provide a useful rail option, but there are concerns on the potential impact on the surrounding countryside of some route options.

4.32 GGPC will continue to monitor the proposals for these infrastructure projects and assess the implications for Great Gransden. It is important that local infrastructure projects are monitored, and that opportunities are taken to ensure the views and needs of the parish are represented

### **Additional Key Issue - Post Consultation another issue became apparent; this is addressed below.**

### **Key Issue 8 - Flood risk and development**

4.33 Flood risk in the parish arises from fluvial (rivers and tidal) flooding and surface water flooding. The areas of the parish at risk of fluvial flooding follow the Gransden Brook Corridor and is limited to the areas outside the Built-up Area Boundary, to the south and west of the village. The areas at risk of surface water flooding are more extensive, covering the corridors of the Mandeem Brook, the Gransden Brook, the Riddy Public Right of Way and Crumple Dean Brook. The Huntingdonshire District Council's 2017 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment includes maps of all sources of flood risk in the district. An extract focusing on surface water flood risk only and for Great Gransden village is shown below.

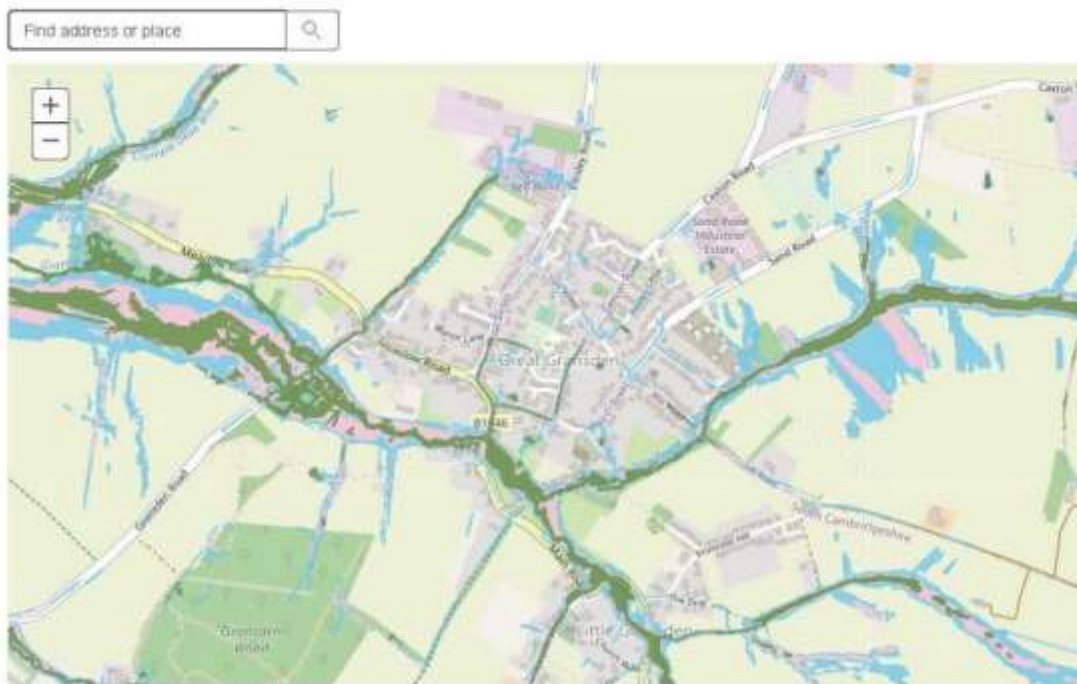


## SFRA 2017 map

Please refer to the [SFRA report 2017 \[PDF, size unavailable\]](#) for explanations of the information shown on this map.

### Map Legend

<input type="checkbox"/>	Flood Zones	 Flood Zone 2	 Flood Zone 3a	 Flood Zone 3b		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Climate Change Flood Risk	 Central	 Higher Central	 Upper End		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Updated Flood Map for Surface Water	 30 year extent	 100 year extent	 1,000 year extent		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Areas Susceptible to Ground Water Flooding	 ≥ 75%	 ≥ 50% < 75%	 ≥ 25% < 50%	 < 25%	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Flood Warning Coverage	 Flood warning area				



- 4.34 For all areas of land, regardless of whether they are identified in an area of flood risk, it is essential that where development takes place it is designed so that surface water run-off is accommodated within the site. Sustainable drainage systems (SuDs) is the best method for managing surface water run-off, whilst also benefitting biodiversity.
- 4.35 Policy LP 5 in the Local Plan states that proposals will only be supported where all forms of flood risk have been addressed, as detailed in national planning practice guidance and with reference to the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Document 2017. This policy also set out the requirements for site-specific flood risk assessments.



- 4.36 Local Plan Policy LP 15 states that proposals will only be supported where surface water has been considered from the outset as an integral part of the design process and includes criteria a) to g) which must be met. Criteria a) requires that proposals incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SuDs) in accordance with the Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Document or successor documents and advice from Cambridgeshire County Council as Lead Local Flood Authority.
- 4.37 Existing policy and guidance on managing flood risk and surface water will apply to planning applications in Great Gransden parish. This includes:
- The NPPF 2021
  - National planning practice guidance  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-and-coastal-change>
  - HDC Local Plan up to 2036 (see Policies LP 5 and LP 15)
  - Cambridgeshire Flood and Water Supplementary Planning Document.  
<https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/2609/cambridgeshire-flood-and-water-spd.pdf>

There are no additional planning policies relating to surface water or flood risk in the neighbourhood plan.

## 5 A Vision for Great Gransden Plan area

The vision for Great Gransden in 2036 expressed in this Neighbourhood Plan is derived from the Key Issues, which in turn were derived from the comments, consultation and engagement of the residents and other stakeholders. It is consistent with the statutory requirements of the HDC Local Plan and the NPPF.

### The Vision

Great Gransden will continue to thrive as a vibrant rural village, with a diverse population and a highly engaged community. The village will develop in a sustainable, evolutionary manner, such that the parish's rural nature and character are maintained and enhanced.

This will be achieved through the following objectives and policies:

Objective	Policy reference and description
<b>Spatial Strategy</b>	
<p><b>Objective 1</b> - The Great Gransden NP will include policies which facilitate the delivery of the housing requirement figure provided to it by the district</p> <p><b>Objective 2</b> - New growth will be focussed on providing deliverable and sustainable developments in the parish, supported by necessary infrastructure</p>	<p><b>Policy G1 – A Built-Up Area Boundary Strategy for Great Gransden.</b> This policy defines a Built-Up Area boundary within which the principle of development is accepted (subject to other constraints) and outside of which development is resisted.</p> <p>The policy requires all schemes to maintain residential amenity and for essential infrastructure to be in place.</p> <p><b>Policy G2 – Affordable Housing on Rural Exception Sites.</b> One of the exceptions allowed for under Policy G1 is the delivery of rural exception sites (affordable housing for people with a connection to Great Gransden) on the edge of the Built-Up Area Boundary. Policy G2 sets out criteria for such proposals.</p>
<b>A Rural and Historic Village</b>	
<p><b>Objective 3</b> - New development must be of a high quality and sensitive to the key characteristics of Great Gransden taking cues from existing designs.</p>	<p><b>Policy G3 – Local Character and Design.</b> This policy seeks to ensure that all new development contributes in a positive way to the existing built environment and is sensitive to the rural setting of the village. The policy is informed by the Great Gransden Design Guide which is set out in Section 6 of the full draft plan.</p>

<p><b>Objective 4</b> - New developments will protect and enhance the landscape character and important views</p> <p><b>Objective 5</b> - The Conservation Area and its essential character will be conserved or enhanced.</p>	<p><b>Policy G4 – Development, Landscape Character and Valued Views.</b> This policy requires all proposals to protect or enhance existing landscape character. The policy also requires valued views of significant buildings and valued landscapes to be protected.</p> <p><b>Policy G5 – Conserving and enhancing Great Gransden’s Conservation Area.</b> A policy which applies specifically to development proposals which would impact the historic core of the village.</p>
<b>Natural Environment</b>	
<p><b>Objective 6</b> - Existing areas of important semi-natural habitats within the parish and the biodiversity that they support will be effectively protected.</p> <p><b>Objective 7</b> - The biodiversity value of existing areas of semi-natural habitats should be enhanced and lost habitats restored where possible.</p> <p><b>Objective 8</b> - Protection and habitat enhancement will be targeted to areas which increase their connectivity across the landscape and thus their viability and long-term sustainability.</p>	<p><b>Policy G6 – Protecting and enhancing biodiversity in the parish including at Gransden Woods.</b></p> <p>This policy requires proposals to protect and enhance the biodiversity assets in the parish including Gransden Woods. It also signposts the reader as to how development proposals can deliver biodiversity net gain in our parish.</p> <p>See also Community Action Plan</p>
<b>Open Space</b>	
<p><b>Objective 9</b> - Maintain and protect key areas of green space within the village and elsewhere in the parish where these are valued by the community for their amenity and recreational value and/or rural landscape value.</p> <p><b>Objective 10</b> - Increase the quality and quantity of accessible open space within the parish, to enable local people to experience a wider enjoyment of the Gransden countryside and the associated recreational and health benefits.</p> <p><b>Objective 11</b> - Improve access to the countryside whilst fully respecting the rights of private landowners and legitimate uses of the land.</p>	<p><b>Policy G7 Local Green Spaces and Other Valued Green Spaces.</b> This policy gives strong protection to four open spaces in the plan area.</p> <p><b>Policy G8 – Development and Open Space Requirements.</b> This policy sets out the priorities for open space improvements and provision in the parish.</p> <p>See also Community Action Plan</p> <p><b>Policy G9 – Public Rights of Way Network.</b> The policy draws attention to the existing network of public rights of way, protects the network, and requires future proposals to either link with the network or look at creating new links.</p> <p>See also Community Action Plan</p>
<b>Transport and Road Safety Improvements</b>	
<p><b>Objective 12</b> - A prioritised programme of improvements will be implemented, to enhance</p>	<p>Community Action Plan</p> <p>See also:</p>

<p>road safety for all road users, particularly pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians</p> <p><b>Objective 13</b> - Cycleways, footpaths, and pavements on key routes around the village, and to and from the village will be established and upgraded.</p> <p><b>Objective 14</b> - New development will allow for safe movement of vehicles and non-motorised users in and around the village.</p>	<p><b>Policy G10 – A walkable village and reducing village car use.</b> This policy requires all development proposals to be provided with adequate infrastructure to enable occupants to walk and cycle along safe and direct routes into the village centre.</p> <p><b>Policy G11 – Roads and new development.</b> A policy setting standards when new roads are proposed in the parish.</p>
<p><b>Community Facilities, Leisure and Infrastructure</b></p>	
<p><b>Objective 15</b> - New development will be supported by improvements in village infrastructure</p> <p><b>Objective 16</b> - CIL spending by GGPC will reflect local priorities as expressed through the GGNP and through ongoing liaison with the community following adoption of the plan.</p> <p><b>Objective 17</b> - Community-led projects will be identified to move towards net zero carbon.</p>	<p><b>Policy G12 – Great Gransden Infrastructure Priorities.</b> This policy highlights the priorities for financial contributions to direct new and improved infrastructure, where it can be locally determined</p> <p>See also Community Action Plans</p> <p><b>Community led project</b></p> <p><b>Community Action Plan</b></p>
<p><b>Primary Schooling, Education and Health</b></p>	
<p><b>Objective 18</b> - The village primary school will maintain it's very high standards of education and its strong community ethos through any period of housing growth. It will be well-resourced and financially secure.</p> <p><b>Objective 19</b> - Residents in the village will have easy access to good educational opportunities for all age groups – pre-school through to adult learning.</p> <p><b>Objective 20</b> - Health provision in the village will be restored and expanded</p>	<p><b>Policy G13 – Barnabas Oley Primary School and parish pre-school provision.</b> This policy supports development proposals which will help to sustain or enhance pre-school or primary school infrastructure in the parish. The policy supports in principle development needed to expand school facilities provided there are no adverse impacts on road safety, congestion or the appearance of the conservation area.</p> <p>See also the Community Action Plan</p>

## 6 Design Guide for Great Gransden

6.1 This Design Guide is derived from the Character Assessment of Great Gransden (supporting document 1). Most of the housing growth in Great Gransden dates from the 1950s onwards, but much of its earlier architectural heritage has been preserved, either in its original form and use or as careful conversions from former use, such as public houses or shops, into private residences. As a consequence, an extensive part of the village was designated a Conservation Area in 1972. There have been a few decades when the village has seen a high level of house building, for example the 1970s and 1980s. However, these developments have largely been sensitive to the aesthetics of existing buildings. Ribbon development, which has marred the character of many villages and created suburban anomalies in the countryside, has been well-contained, and a visitor or passer-by is quickly captivated by the very visible green character of Great Gransden (mature trees, shrubbery, meadows and paddocks), the historic architecture, and the evidence of its agricultural economy in the barns and other former farm buildings. Most residents are now commuters or home-workers, but this has not broken the village's evident link to the times when it was a purely agricultural and largely self-contained community. This is why Great Gransden is referred to in this plan as having a 'rural character'. This should be preserved, and any development of the village must respect the existing character and be designed in harmony or complementarity with it. This Design Guide covers overarching principles for future development and detailed guidelines for new buildings.

6.2 Overarching principles:

- Proposed schemes should be in harmony with the character of those in the local proximity.
- The landscaping of any new developments on the edge of the village should be congruent with the adjacent countryside.
- Boundary treatments should be harmonious with the immediate surroundings including retention of existing trees and hedgerows where these are native or of local historic interest. New boundaries should incorporate native hedgerow species.
- New developments should not intrude above existing skylines and should protect existing views.
- Developments should be within the Built-Up Area Boundary of the village, prioritising brownfield sites or infill, and designed to integrate with the existing settlement with units arranged to maximise pedestrian permeability, promote activity and surveillance of existing and proposed streets. Ribbon or greenfield development will not be supported.
- Building materials for walls and roofs should echo those found already in the village.
- There should be variation of house design within any development of more than two houses.
- House design and construction should aim for the lowest carbon footprint and highest standard of sustainability in materials (source, lifetime and recyclability) and energy (insulation, heat source).

- The HDC Local Plan up to 2036 includes Policy LP 5 Flood Risk and Policy LP 15 Surface Water. These policies, along with the NPPF 2021 and national guidance will apply to proposals coming forward in Great Gransden Parish.

## **Specific guidelines:**

### **Height**

- 6.3 The vast majority of existing dwellings are single-storey or two-storey. A small number of houses have a third storey but most of these are loft-style with rooflights; a few have dormer windows set into the roof.
- 6.4 Exterior walls are, therefore, no more than two storeys high with the occasional exception of the apex of a gable end. Other height options will not be acceptable.

### **Layout and overall design**

- 6.5 There is much consistency of design in the village, but this is very different from uniformity. On small and medium-sized developments within the village, houses have been positioned asymmetrically (Winchfield) and some have alternated gable end and main façade for the street frontage (Poplar Close). Some house styles are replicated but there is sufficient variation in house design throughout each development to avoid visual uniformity.
- 6.6 Street layout should be used to create pleasing lines within the development and also enable valued views to be preserved. House designs should complement rather than be exact copies of others in the development.

### **Roofs and rooflines**

- 6.7 Roofs in the village are mainly variations of gable or hip. Many roofs are steep and long, reducing the impact of first-floor windows through the incorporation of dormer/chalet windows or rooflights. Traditional roof coverings in the conservation area are clay plain tiles or pantiles. A common traditional tile is the Norfolk pantile which has a distinctive form and is also available today as a Fenland pantile. This has been used on some newer buildings in clay or concrete – Lavender Barns, West Street and on barn conversions. Other pantile forms have been used on modern houses in clay or concrete – e.g. the Anglia or Lincoln tile and the Double Roman or Wessex tile. The plain clay tile has been copied to newer builds – Eltisley Road, Bowling Green House and others - albeit in plain colour rather than the attractive mix of colours on the old roofs of The Old Barn, Manor House, Audley House, Home Farm and others. There are some slate roofs in the village.
- 6.8 There are many thatched roofs in the village, but no new ones have appeared for well over 100 years. However, one house currently under construction will be partly thatched.
- 6.9 Chimneys are predominantly brick, some with styling detail to the form of the chimney as on older houses.
- 6.10 Roof coverings on future developments should be predominantly plain tiles or pantiles in clay or concrete. Tile form and colour should complement the adjacent buildings. Timber shingles, slate, thatch and zinc would be acceptable alternatives. Green roofs and solar panels are encouraged, although under current planning requirements solar panels cannot be installed in the Conservation Area on roofs that face the road.

- 6.11 Rooflines should be designed to lessen the impact of any obtrusive windows, for example through the use of recessed dormers or rooflights.

### **Build materials**

- 6.12 Traditional building was often timber frame with plaster infill and many newer homes incorporate smaller examples of this on their facades. Traditional Potton Homes are modern versions of timber frame and plaster houses. Feather-edged boarding, a traditional barn material, has been retained in barn conversions but also incorporated as a decorative feature to the second storey in many modern houses – Bakers Court, Eltisley Road, Audley Close, Meadow Road, Baldwins Manor and others.
- 6.13 Glass began to appear as an architectural feature from the 1980s with double-height glass windows – West Street, Meadow Road - or glass box/link extensions - Fox Street and Middle Street.
- 6.14 The predominant build material is brick even for centuries-old houses like Rippington Manor, Gransden Hall, Old Barn Farm. The most common brick is soft red or orange-red reflecting the original Gransden bricks used to build the older houses in the village (the brick pits were on Meadow Road). Pale yellow or buff brick (traditionally Cambridge gault) is the second most common brick used. Many red-brick houses use a buff brick decoration around windows or as cornerstones; this is seen in the Victorian terrace on Eltisley Road, the Reading Room and Vincent Cottage, and has been carried though to modern houses in Audley Close and Bowling Green House. The colours are reversed in the Victorian terrace and adjacent semi-detached houses on the corner of Middle Street and the Georgian terrace on Church Street, and modern houses built of buff brick with red brick detailing are found on Meadow Road and Williams Close.
- 6.15 Pale yellow or buff brick without red detail has been used as the main material in some developments e.g. Winchfield and some bungalows, but this has lower visibility in the village because few of these houses front the main roads. Some bungalows and the houses in Webbs Meadow are built of mixed-colour bricks.
- 6.16 In some parts of the village, plain rendered frontages can be found – Mandene Gardens, Crow Tree Street, Middle Street and some bungalows. In the case of Crow Tree Street, the newer houses reflect the old, thatched houses at either end. The white painted brick of Old Porch House and Chapel House has been carried through to some of the houses in Poplar Close, but this is not necessarily a permanent design feature.
- 6.17 Stone or reconstituted stone is not a house building material in Great Gransden.
- 6.18 In summary, a soft-red brick is the predominant building material but with buff bricks being used as a decorative element; these colours are sometimes reversed. Subject to the first of the overarching principles set out above, these are the recommended build materials together with timber frame and plaster infill, feather-edged boarding or glass as further decorative options. Plain rendered fronts could be supported in certain sympathetic locations.

### **Gardens**

- 6.19 Great Gransden has managed to more than double the number of its dwellings since the war *and* retain its rural character whilst impinging little on surrounding countryside. This has been achieved through densification within the village boundary – the building of dwellings on land between existing houses, mainly farmers' fields. These have been developed as Closes/No Through Roads. They have been planned and built with



gardens often extending along all four sides of the plot. Mature trees have been retained and front planting has added to the very green aspect of the whole village.

- 6.20 Anti-pollutant, carbon dioxide-reducing and with a health and aesthetic benefit, substantial green space and planting needs to be incorporated into plans for all new house building of whatever size. Native species of hedgerow plants should be used. Existing ponds should be retained, and new ponds encouraged.

### **Parking**

- 6.21 All developments need to incorporate adequate off-street dedicated parking for the anticipated number and size of households and their visitors. Safe access for emergency vehicles and delivery vans must be ensured. External parking spaces should include permeable surfaces to reduce run-off and the risk of flooding/drain overload.

### **Lighting**

- 6.22 Views of the night sky are highly appreciated by Great Gransden residents. This is possible because of sparse street lighting.
- 6.23 Any new development should only incorporate low impact external lighting that is essential for the reasonable safety of residents.

## 7 Planning policies

### Spatial Strategy

#### Core Objectives:

- **Objective 1** The Great Gransden NP will include policies which facilitate the delivery of the housing requirement figure provided to it by the district
- **Objective 2** New growth will be focussed on providing deliverable and sustainable developments in the parish, supported by necessary infrastructure

#### Policies G1and G2 – A spatial strategy for Great Gransden

#### Policy context and rationale:

7.1.1 HDC advised the GGNP Steering Group in October 2021 that the housing requirement figure for the designated Great Gransden Plan area – the whole parish of Great Gransden – is 64 new dwellings during the period 2011 to 2036. The GGNP must include a strategy and policies that allows for sustainable development<sup>3</sup> to come forward and that allows for the housing requirement figure to be delivered. The GGNP is not allowed to place a cap on numbers.

7.1.2 Since April 2011 (the start date for the current Local Plan) to March 2021 there have been net twenty nine new dwellings completed in the parish. In addition, there are other sites for which planning permission has been granted for sixty four new dwellings, not yet completed at the time of this report:

Location and HDC Planning Reference	Number of dwellings remaining to be built	Type of development
Rippington Manor Barn 18/01909/FUL	1	Infill.
Adjacent to 37 Meadow Road 18/02645/FUL	1	Edge of village.
Leycourt Farm barn 18/02269/FUL	1	Rural site.
End of Mandene Gardens 17/00979/FUL	2	Infill.
Rear of 6 West Street 0900906FUL	4	Brownfield infill site
Dutton Gardens 17/01375/OUT	17 (was 40 , but 23 now completed)	Edge of village, Sand Road.
Eltisley Road – Potton Timber site 18/00958/FUL	38	Not started. Outline permission for self-build dwellings.

7.1.3 The Potton Timber site also has permission for five show houses, but the planning permission does not allow occupancy of these. The current total for new build and commitments in the Local Plan period is therefore ninety three. The housing

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<sup>3</sup> Paragraph 8 of the NPPF stipulates what sustainable development means for the planning system.

requirement figure provided at district level will therefore be exceeded in the designated Great Gransden Plan area.

### **Great Gransden Built-up area**

- 7.1.4 A spatial strategy for growth in Great Gransden is provided by Policy LP 9 ‘Small Settlements’ of the HDC Local Plan 2019. This policy, which applies to all settlements defined as Small Settlements in the district, allows, in principle, for new development within the built-up area of Great Gransden. The policy also states that development outside the built-up area but well related to the built-up area may also be supported *“where it accords with the specific opportunities allowed for through other policies in the plan”*. Supporting paragraph 4.107 of the Local Plan clarifies that the exceptional development allowed must be linked to Local Plan policies LP10 ‘The Countryside’, LP19 ‘Rural Economy’, LP22 ‘Local Services and Community Facilities’, LP23 ‘Tourism and Recreation’, LP28 ‘Rural Exceptions Housing’, LP33 ‘Rural Buildings’ and Policy LP38 ‘Water Related Development’.
- 7.1.5 The approach in the Local Plan is therefore to focus new development in the parish within the existing built up environment of Great Gransden village, where existing facilities such as the primary school, the village shop, the church, the bus stop, the pub and community meeting spaces are located. The GGNP supports this approach but considers it important to clarify further through the designation of a Built-Up Area Boundary around the built-up area.
- 7.1.6 Paragraphs 4.80 to 4.85 of the HDC Local Plan includes a definition of built-up areas and ten principles, with implementation guidance, which can assist in understanding whether specific locations fall within a built-up area or not. The Local Plan explains that a built-up area is a distinct group of buildings that includes thirty or more dwellings. Land which relates more to the group of buildings rather than to the surrounding countryside is also considered to form part of the built-up area. In the parish of Great Gransden, the only distinct group of buildings including 30 or more dwellings is the village itself. The rest of the Parish consists of more isolated agricultural buildings, and some dwellings built adjacent to the principal roads serving the village.
- 7.1.7 The GGNP proposes to designate a Built-Up Area Boundary around the built-up area of the village of Great Gransden. The methodology used to define the boundary is consistent with the ten principles and guidance provided in paragraphs 4.80 to 4.85 of the Local Plan to identify the built-up area. The Built-Up Area Boundary is shown in Figure 7, below, and the methodology for defining it is available to view alongside this plan.

## Great Gransden Built-up Area

Scale: 1:7,500

Date: 29/04/2022

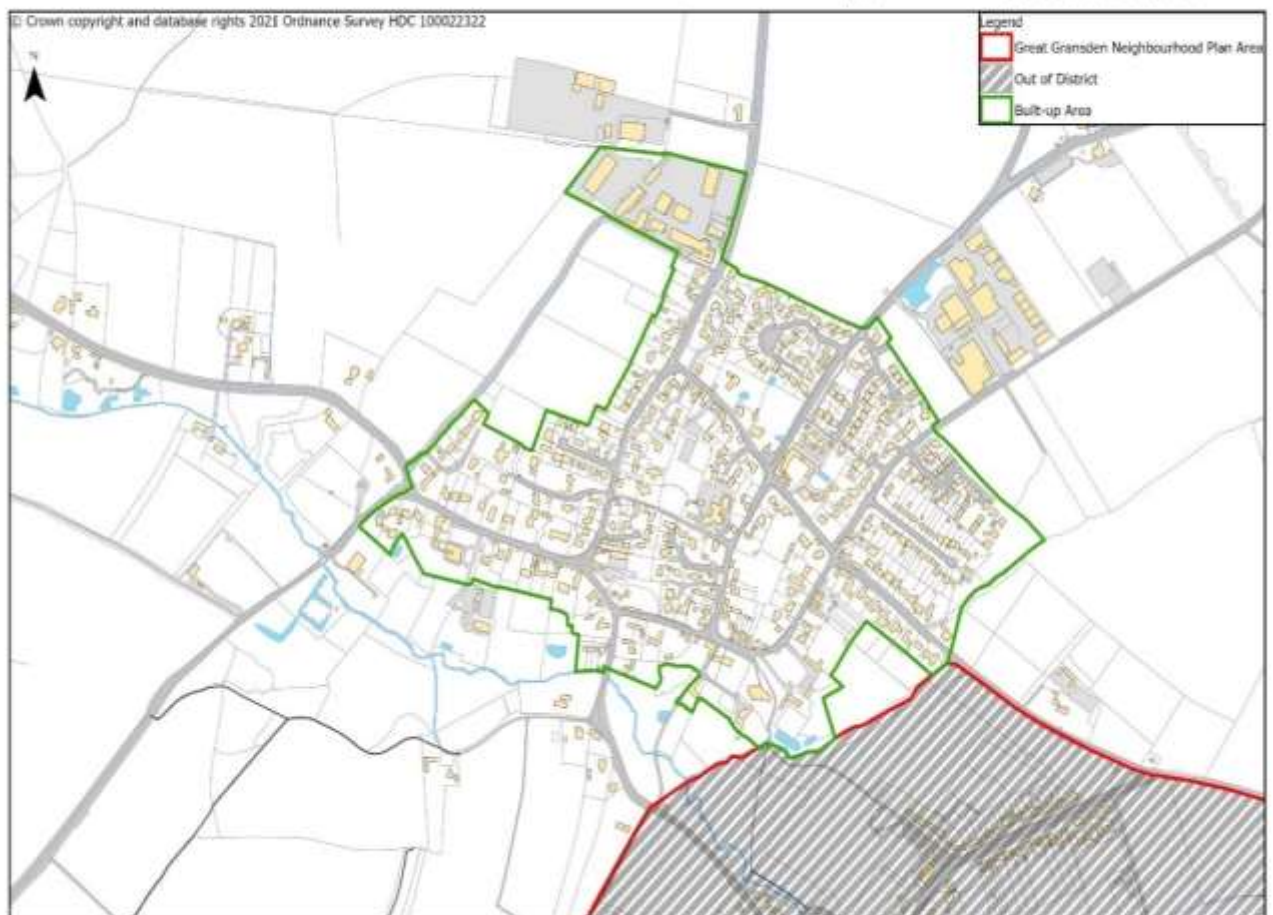


Figure 7: Great Gransden Built-Up Area

7.1.8 Together with other proposed policies in this GGNP, the Built-Up Area Boundary provides clarity on the geographic extent of permissible development in the Parish. In particular it enables the Parish to achieve its contribution to the development needs of the HDC Local Plan, while providing additional protection to greenfield sites and agricultural land surrounding the village, which are excluded from development unless in exceptional circumstances, consistent with HDC Local Plan Policies detailed below.

### **Preference for brownfield sites over greenfield sites**

7.1.9 Consultation has identified a clear preference for development to come forward on brownfield land over development on greenfield land.

7.1.10 The HDC Local Plan allows for specific types of development in countryside locations i.e. development outside existing built up areas. This includes:

- Policy LP 19 Rural Economy allows for business proposals in specific circumstances

- Policy LP 20 Homes for Rural Workers allows for rural dwellings in the countryside in specific circumstances and in keeping with NPPF policy on rural housing
- Policy LP22 Local Services and Community Facilities
- Policy LP23 Tourism and Recreation
- Policy LP28 Rural Exceptions Housing allows for proposals outside built up areas where the scheme is well related to a built up area as an exception to the requirements of other policies on the proviso that the affordable housing will be allocated to people with a local connection.
- Policy LP38 Water Related Development

### **Affordability and Range of Housing Stock in Great Gransden**

7.1.11 The Housing Needs Survey (undertaken in 2018) (supporting document 5) commissioned by the GGNP Steering Group asked if residents would be in favour of a small development of affordable dwellings for local people within the parish. Fifty four per cent of respondents supported the principle of such a development and 42 per cent were opposed (page 15 of the Housing Needs Survey). Support for affordable housing tended to focus particularly on the needs of young people. Some respondents were concerned about ensuring any affordable housing was secured for local people in perpetuity.

7.1.12 A common concern of people opposed to a small affordable housing development in principle was the potential impact on the character and scale of Great Gransden,

7.1.13 The Housing Register maintained by HDC was searched for households in need of affordable housing who either live in Great Gransden or stated they have a local connection to the Parish. There were two households on the Register that met these criteria. Neither currently live in the parish so presumably qualify through family, work or previous residence.

7.1.14 The Housing Needs Survey, together with the local Housing Register, identified five households identified in need of affordable housing who either live in or have a local connection to Great Gransden. Three of these five households would be eligible for a bungalow which is indicative of the age cohorts of those households identified.

1 bed		2 bed		3 bed		4 bed		5+ bed		Total
F/H	B	F/H	B	F/H	B	F/H	B	F/H	B	
	1	1	2	1						5

7.1.15 The development on Sand Road (Dutton Gardens) will provide sixteen affordable dwellings (although not tied to local people) and some smaller sized properties. These will contribute to the stock of affordable housing for the district but would not necessarily meet the needs of those with a link to Great Gransden. For this reason, a Policy is proposed that the GGPC will monitor the local housing needs and when appropriate explore the option for a Rural Exception Site.

7.1.16 There is also a small need for market housing, largely among households aged 50+ seeking to downsize.

7.1.17 As the housing survey showed, the village is well provided with large 3, 4 and 5 bedroom houses but these tend to be expensive as Great Gransden is a highly desirable place to live and lies within commuting distance of Cambridge and London.

The village is not well provided with smaller dwellings and affordable housing. The mix of housing is not ideal for all generations including young families with small children. The community would be more likely to support housing developments that provide a mix of housing size that enables provision for older people accommodation and a mix of dwelling types such as bungalows and flats to cater for changing needs and younger individuals and families, thus sustaining and growing a multi-generation community.

### **Impact of development on village infrastructure**

7.1.18 Policy LP 9 'Small Settlements' states that a proposal in a built-up area of a Small Settlement will be supported where the amount and location of development proposed is sustainable in relation to the level of service and infrastructure provision within the settlement. The question of adequate infrastructure being in place in Great Gransden has been a key concern expressed during public consultation on the GGNP. There is a shared concern that existing infrastructure constraints are not fully recognised by developers and decision makers. This concern is addressed in more detail below in this section, under 'Community Facilities, Leisure and Infrastructure'.



## **G1 – A Built-Up Area Boundary Strategy for Great Gransden**

### **Policy Intent**

7.1.19 The purpose of this policy is to ensure any new residential development proposals are guided to locations within the Built-Up Area Boundary of the village and to allow development in locations outside of this boundary only where this is justified through:

- Sensitively designed affordable housing schemes for people with a Great Gransden connection in locations on the edge of Built-Up Area Boundary in locations which will not harm or undermine village character, consistent with HDC Local Plan Policies above.
- Development which is appropriate in countryside locations, consistent with HDC Local Plan Policies above.

### **Policy G1 – A Built-Up Area Boundary Strategy for Great Gransden**

Development proposals within the Great Gransden Built-Up Area Boundary defined in Figure 7 (page 40) will be supported subject to the location, size and design of the development respecting the character in the immediate area and the settlement as a whole.

- a. Development proposals outside the defined Built-Up Area Boundary will be resisted other than the following cases:
  - the development comprises a rural exceptions housing scheme referred to in Policy G2, located on a site contiguous with the Built-Up Area Boundary and within easy and safe walking distance to village amenities.
  - residential development that complies with one or more of the circumstances set out in paragraph 80 of the NPPF 2021; or
  - the development comprises development specifically allowed for by the following policies in the Local Plan – LP10 the countryside, LP19 Rural Economy, LP20 Homes for Rural Workers, LP22 Local services and community facilities, LP23 Tourism and Recreation, LP33 Rural Buildings and LP38 water related development.
- b. To be supported, all development proposals must
  - maintain or enhance residential amenity of neighbouring properties and deliver good levels of amenity for future occupiers of the proposed scheme.
  - demonstrate that necessary infrastructure is in place or will be provided to serve the development;
  - demonstrate safe and suitable access for vehicles without undermining pedestrian safety or accessibility
  - Where the scale permits residential development proposals will be expected to provide a housing mix suitable for meeting local needs (see Paragraph 7.1.17).

7.1.20 There are no community action plans associated with policy G1.

## **G2 – Affordable Housing on Rural Exception Sites.**

### **Policy intent**

7.2 The purpose of this policy is to adopt a supportive approach to the delivery of rural exception sites within the parish where the proposed scheme is demonstrated to meet the specific needs of Great Gransden.

7.2.1 **Linked Parish Council action/commitment: CAP 1** - the Parish Council will monitor the local housing needs and when appropriate explore the option for a local Exception Site.

### **Policy G2– Affordable Housing on Rural Exception Sites.**

Proposals for small scale affordable housing (10 or fewer dwellings) on rural exception sites contiguous with the Built-Up Area Boundary will be supported in principle for occupation by people with a genuine local connection with Great Gransden parish provided that the criteria in Policy LP 28 of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan, and the related reasoning, are met.

In addition, the following local criteria will apply:

- the homes are located within safe and easy pedestrian and cycle access to Great Gransden village centre and amenities; and
- no significant harm shall be caused to the character of the village, its setting or the countryside.

## A Rural and Historic Parish

### Core Objectives:

- **Objective 3 New development must be of a high quality and sensitive to the key characteristics of Great Gransden taking cues from existing designs.**
- **Objective 4 New developments will protect and enhance the landscape character and important views**
- **Objective 5 The Conservation Area and its essential character will be conserved or enhanced.**

### Policy G3 – Local Character and Design

#### Policy context and rationale:

- 7.3 The NPPF states (paragraph 127) that Neighbourhood Plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development. The Great Gransden Character Assessment has been developed alongside the GGNP and is available as Supporting Document 1. This document describes the key distinguishing features of the built environment in the parish.
- 7.3.1 Great Gransden is an ancient rural village. The village has a spacious feel; with many houses set in plots with gardens both front and rear. The village layout incorporates open green spaces at road junctions, often with large trees. There are many mature trees, hedges and grassy verges around the village, reflecting its rural nature and providing the link to the countryside.
- 7.3.2 At its heart is a picturesque conservation area, with many well-preserved historic buildings, including several large distinctive houses, including Gransden Hall, Rippington Manor, Audley House, Old Vicarage, Rectory Farm, The Old Barn, Manor House and Brinkley House. There are sixty listed buildings in the parish.
- 7.3.3 Many buildings are wattle and daub construction, often with thatched or clay tile roofs, and with rendered walls washed in white, terracotta or pastel shades. Other heritage buildings are built with traditional local brick, often with feature chimneys and windows, detailed with contrasting brick colours.
- 7.3.4 Buildings are almost all two storey or less, with some incorporating dormer windows in the roof.
- 7.3.5 The village has expanded and evolved over the last few decades with the addition of housing developments (typically 10-30 dwellings) and individual builds, each with the style of the time. Grey or black clapboard has been incorporated into some house designs to reflect the rural environment. Most of these developments have a spacious layout, including good sized gardens and public green spaces, with tree planting to provide a rural rather than urban feel. The developments tend to be in the form of a close, which limits through traffic.
- 7.3.6 These more recent developments often have limited visibility from the streets, an important factor in retaining the rural village ambience that is greatly valued by residents and visitors.
- 7.3.7 There is limited street lighting, so the village enjoys dark skies.
- 7.3.8 The village is surrounded by agricultural land with extensive views to the open countryside, but there is limited access for recreation.

- 7.3.9 In some locations in the village on-street parking creates problems for pedestrians, and unwanted congestion in the village.
- 7.3.10 It is therefore considered important that any new development proposals incorporate adequate parking provision to provide for the residents and their visitors. To avoid adverse impacts on the street and pedestrians, designated parking should be located off-street. Care must be taken that the designation of off-street parking does not dominate the appearance of the road frontage and detract from the quality of the built environment in Great Gransden. In addition, any on-road parking must not make it difficult for service vehicles and emergency vehicles to negotiate the streets.

**Policy Intent:**

- 7.3.11 The intent of this policy is to ensure all new development contributes in a positive way to the built environment in a way which is in keeping with the built environment and sensitive to the rural setting of the village.

<b>Policy G3 – Local Character and Design</b>
<p>All development proposals should contribute in a positive way to the quality of the built environment in the parish.</p> <p>Development proposals must be the result of a design-led process with regards to a scheme’s location, layout, design, choice of building materials and density.</p> <p>To be supported, development proposals must also be sympathetic to the existing rural character of Great Gransden, detailed in the Great Gransden Character Assessment (available as supporting Document 1 alongside this Neighbourhood Plan), and demonstrate how they accord with the Design Guide principles set out below and follow guidance in the Design Guide (Section 6 (Design Guide for Great Gransden) of this Plan).</p> <p>Design Guide Principles</p> <p>a. For all development proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Proposed schemes must be in harmony with the character of those in the local proximity.</li> <li>ii. The landscaping of any new developments on the edge of the village should be congruent with the adjacent countryside</li> <li>iii. Boundary treatments should be harmonious with the immediate surroundings including retention of existing trees and hedgerows where these are native or of local historic interest. New boundaries should incorporate native hedgerow species.</li> <li>iv. Developments should be within the Built-Up Area Boundary of the village, prioritising brownfield sites or infill, and designed to integrate with the existing settlement with units arranged to maximise pedestrian permeability, promote activity and surveillance of existing and proposed streets. Ribbon or greenfield development will not be supported unless it accords with the specific opportunities afforded by local and national policy.</li> <li>v. Building materials for walls and roofs should echo those found already in the village.</li> </ul>

b. For residential development proposals:

- i. Schemes of more than two dwellings should have a variety of design styles with individual features
- ii. All dwellings should have private gardens proportionate to dwelling size and in-keeping with properties in immediate vicinity
- iii. House design and construction should aim for the lowest carbon footprint and highest standard of sustainability in materials (source, lifetime and recyclability) and energy (insulation, heat source).

In addition, development proposals must include adequate provision for the parking of cars, cycles, electric scooters and mobility scooters to meet the needs of the residents and their visitors. Every house must have sufficient designated parking spaces appropriate to its size. On-street designated parking will only be acceptable where the street environment will not be compromised with respect to pedestrian safety or emergency vehicle access and does not risk causing on street congestion. Proposed schemes will conform with the HDC Design Guide SPD section 3.5 Parking and Servicing <https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/2573/huntingdonshire-design-guide-2017.pdf>

7.3.12 There are no community action plans associated with policy G3.

## **Policy G4 – Development, Landscape Character and Valued Views**

### **Policy context and rationale**

- 7.4 A key component of Great Gransden Village's character is the landscape character of the built environment itself and its setting within the wider landscape. The village feels very green with many mature trees, hedgerows and grass verges. The topography is undulating, adding interest to the built environment. Existing features of landscape value within the built up area of the village include:
- Roadside paddocks and meadows, e.g. alongside Little Gransden Lane where a paddock to the east provides a strong and characterful rural opening along the southern edge of the village
  - Roadside greens and large trees at the following junctions: Eltisley Road/Fox Street; Fox Street/West Street; West Street/Crow Tree Street; Caxton Road/Fox Street and Mandene Gardens/Sand Road.
  - Green spaces, often with feature trees, within newer developments such as Winchfield and Audley Close
  - Roadside verges, often tree lined, which often provide a transition from countryside to village environment, such as Caxton Road, Mill Road, Eltisley Road
  - The Mill Weir pond, used nowadays for fishing
  - The landscape surrounding the village provides many long distance vistas across rolling landscape and views of key landmarks along the approaches into the village both from the roadside and from the network of public rights of way.
  - There are also striking views within the village, particularly the setting of the listed and heritage buildings.
  - The valued views both within and surrounding the village are shown on Figure 8 and described as follows:
    - A. An open view across Gransden Brook Valley to the north when travelling along Waresley Road towards the village. Key features in this view to be respected are the many trees and hedgerows, and an ancient green lane along Meadow Lane. Several of the hedgerows would appear to be of ancient origin and thus of significant historic interest.





- B. The green arc-shaped corridor along the valley of Gransden Brook. This provides important visual amenity linking to the SSSI of Gransden Wood, in addition to being an important contributor to biodiversity. Key features in this view to be respected are the open ancient parkland landscape with scattered large trees, an ancient moated feature surrounded by trees, a range of hayfields, horse grazing meadows and various copses and scrub. These together provide a continuous green corridor, visually linking the village to the surrounding woods but also providing a green backdrop to the village itself. As such, this corridor makes a major contribution to the rural character of the village that is so valued by residents and visitors alike.



- C. The view from the Hayfield looking over Gransden Brook towards Gransden Hall. Key features to be respected are the Grade II listed building, an abundance of trees along the skyline, other hedgerows and trees along the field margins, and the brook itself, all of which combine to perform an important function in providing setting to the heritage asset”



- D. The view from Little Gransden Lane, looking cross to St Bartholomew's Church, Rectory Farm, Rippington Manor and the Dole Field. Key features to be protected are the listed buildings, including Grade I St Bartholomew's Church, Grade II\* Rippington Manor, Grade II Rectory Farm, set in mature trees, meadow and hedgerows, looking across the confluence of the Home Dole Brook and Gransden Brook situated along the parish boundaries. These views link back to the south-west to the attractive, much used and much valued footpath and bridleway of Dick and Dolls Lane (which leads to Gransden Wood and itself follows the line of the parish boundary and the old Huntingdonshire/Cambridgeshire county boundary).



- E. The views of St Bartholomew's Church on all sides. Key feature to be protected are views of the Grade I listed building, and its grounds, including set in the original village graveyard which features two striking lime trees each around 50 metres tall. The churchyard is also of significant botanical interest, being the Type Locality for the Gransden Goldilocks Buttercup *Ranunculus obovatilobatus*, a local species virtually endemic to West Cambridgeshire



- F. The view from the roundabout has many historic buildings and features in all directions. Church Street to the northeast, Middle Street to the north and Crow Tree Street to the west. Key features to be respected are the individual heritage assets, their setting and the significance of the conservation area itself.

### Great Gransden Valued Landscape Views

Scale: 1:7,000

Date: 29/11/2022

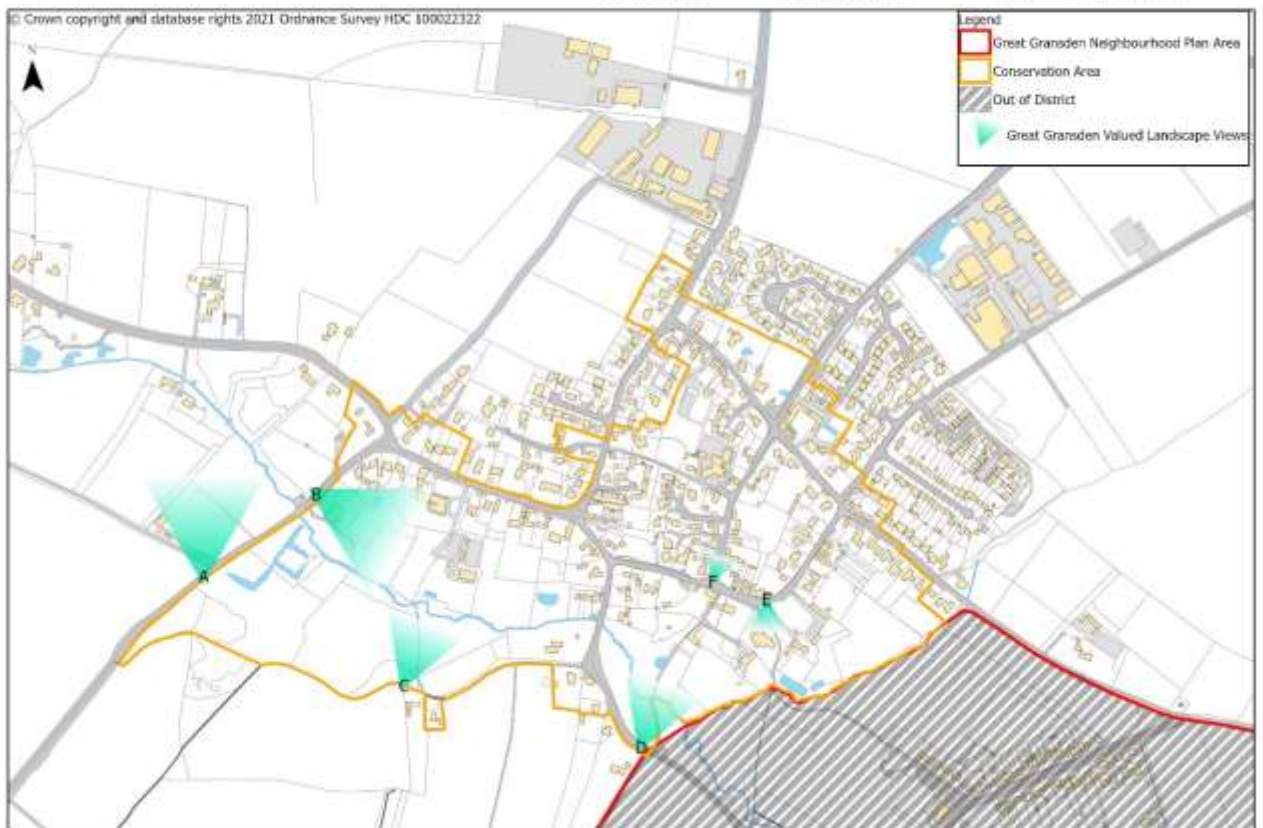


Figure 8: Map of Great Gransden Valued Landscape Views

## Policy intent

7.4.1 All development coming forward should maintain or enhance the existing landscape character in the parish

### **Policy G4 – Development, Landscape Character and Valued Views.**

All development proposals must contribute positively to existing landscape character in the plan area. To be supported proposals must:

- i. Be designed to be sensitive to the existing landscape character of the village and keep intact and where possible enhance existing features of landscape value (including the features described in the supporting text to this policy) in the immediate vicinity to the proposed development; and
- ii. Incorporate its own on-site landscaping scheme (proportionate to the scale of proposed development), where this is informed and sensitive to the existing setting of the site in relation to surroundings, and in a way which contributes to the overall rural character of the village.

Proposals will not be supported where there would be a significant adverse impact upon the valued views shown on Figure 8 and described in the supporting text to this policy.

7.4.2 There are no community action plans associated with policy G4.



## **Policy G5 – Conserving and enhancing Great Gransden’s Conservation Area**

### **Policy context and rationale:**

- 7.5 The parish is rich in built-heritage assets. There are sixty statutorily listed buildings (mostly focused in Great Gransden village) including three Grade II\* buildings and the Grade I listed Church of St. Bartholomew. The restored Great Gransden Windmill is also a scheduled monument. A full list is provided in the Character Assessment (Supporting Document 1).
- 7.5.1 A large part of Great Gransden village is a designated conservation area, extending beyond the built up area boundary into the adjoining countryside. (See Figure 4, page 15, above.)
- 7.5.2 In keeping with paragraph 189 of the NPPF, the parish heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource which should be conserved so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.
- 7.5.3 The NPPF requires that local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage asset affected by a development proposal, including any contribution made by their setting. The NPPF requires Local Planning Authorities to take account of three elements when assessing development proposals:
- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
  - b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
  - c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 7.5.4 In Great Gransden, the built heritage, particularly within the village centre and the conservation area, makes a very important contribution to local character and distinctiveness. The heritage assets, summarised above, make the place what it is today. Any proposal which undermines the significance of the Great Gransden Conservation Area will have an adverse impact on character and local distinctiveness of the place as a whole. No changes to the Conservation Area boundary are proposed in this Plan.
- 7.5.5 Policy LP34 in the HDC Local Plan attaches great weight and importance to the conservation of heritage assets and their setting. The policy states that the statutory presumption of the avoidance of harm can only be outweighed if there are public benefits that are powerful enough to do so.
- 7.5.6 Policy LP34 states that proposals within, affecting the setting of, or affecting views into or out of, a conservation area should preserve and where possible enhance features that contribute to the area’s character, appearance and setting as set out in character statements or other applicable documents. HDC have not, as at time of writing, prepared a conservation area character appraisal or statement for Great Gransden Conservation Area. The Great Gransden Character Assessment prepared alongside this GGNP includes a description of the conservation area.

### **Policy intent:**

- 7.5.7 To ensure that all development proposals preserve or enhance the quality of the historic built environment in the parish.

- 7.5.8 To ensure adherence to Policy LP34 in the HDC Local Plan, which provides a development management approach to all proposals which may impact on heritage assets including conservation areas.
- 7.5.9 To complement the approach set out in Policy LP34 of the Local Plan by providing detail specific to Great Gransden.

#### **Policy G5 – Conserving and enhancing Great Gransden’s Conservation Area**

Development proposals are required to conserve and where possible enhance heritage assets (and their setting) in line with local and national policy.

To be supported, development proposals in the Conservation Area (including infill development) or within the setting of the conservation area must be sensitive to the significance and distinctive character of the Conservation Area as well as the individual heritage assets within it. To achieve this, proposals will be expected to be informed by the context and guidance (where it is relevant to the conservation area) set out in the Great Gransden Character Assessment.

Development proposals will not be supported where there would be a significant adverse impact upon views into, out of and within the Great Gransden Conservation Area (as shown on Figure 8), where these views include features of heritage value. However, where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

- 7.5.10 There are no community action plans associated with policy G5.



## The Natural Environment

### Core Objectives:

- **Objective 6 Existing areas of important semi-natural habitats within the parish and the biodiversity that they support will be effectively protected.**
- **Objective 7 The biodiversity value of existing areas of semi-natural habitats should be enhanced and lost habitats restored where possible.**
- **Objective 8 Protection and habitat enhancement will be targeted to areas which increase their connectivity across the landscape and thus their viability and long-term sustainability.**

### Biodiversity in Great Gransden

7.5.11 The natural environment in Great Gransden is treasured by the people who live here. Key features are the attractive countryside, a strong sense of tranquillity, dark skies and the wildlife diversity. This rich wildlife asset enjoyed by local people is very broadly provided by the Waresley and Gransden Woods Nature Reserve, the community orchard and a wildflower meadow both located on the Allotments site, the agricultural landscape and habitats, meadows, copses and rural gardens.

7.5.12 In addition to Gransden Woods (see below) there are various small copses of deciduous broadleaved woodland in and around the parish.

7.5.13 A green arc-shaped corridor along the valley of Gransden Brook, as shown on the map in Figure 5 (page 18, above) has been identified as an area to target an improved network for protection and habitat enhancements. This arc could then connect to other important habitats such as the Gransden Wood, directly supportive of the West Cambridgeshire Hundreds plan (See 7.6.6 below). The implementation of such a project largely lies outside the planning scope of the NP, it would require community engagement and delivery by a Community Action Plan. The GGPC may use contributions generated via the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) towards the implementation of habitat protection and enhancement projects.

7.5.14 Development proposals will be required to deliver net gains in biodiversity in line with Policy LP30 in the Local Plan. This may for example mean protecting or designing in existing features of biodiversity value such as hedgerows, trees and ponds and/or creating new features of biodiversity value.

7.5.15 Development proposals must ensure compliance with Local Plan Policy LP30 Biodiversity and Geodiversity, which provides a framework for development management officers to use when assessing planning applications that may impact biodiversity and geodiversity.

## **Policy G6 – Protecting and enhancing biodiversity in the parish including at Gransden Woods.**

### **Policy context and rationale**

- 7.6 Waresley and Gransden Woods are a very popular destination for visitors. There are no public rights of way in the woodland, but the Wildlife Trust provides access via permissive routes. The Wildlife Trust need to balance the needs of wildlife conservation with public access. In recent years the Woods have been closed to public access for extended periods to prevent excessive damage to footpaths during bad weather. Dogs are required to be kept on the lead.
- 7.6.1 Gransden Wood can be accessed by footpath from the village, providing beautiful views of the countryside and the village heritage. It can also be accessed from the Waresley Wood car park located just off Waresley Road, over 1 km away from Great Gransden village centre. Public footpath 104/3 and 104/2 run from the southern edge of the village on Little Gransden Lane south and follows the western boundary of the woods towards and into the neighbouring parish Waresley-cum-Tetworth.
- 7.6.2 Gransden Wood is an ancient semi-natural broadleaved woodland site, which has been continuously wooded for the last 400 years but potentially for over 1,000 years. As such an ancient survivor, Gransden Wood is clearly a site of high importance from a nature conservation perspective. In the spring there is a spectacular showing of Bluebells *Hyacinthus non-scriptus* and other characteristic ancient woodland flowers which make it a very popular site with visitors.
- 7.6.3 The Waresley and Gransden Woods Nature Reserve is owned and managed by the Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire Wildlife Trust and forms part of an SSSI (listed as “Waresley Wood SSSI”) located in and to the south west of the parish. The northern part of this reserve comprises part of Gransden Wood which lies entirely within Great Gransden parish. Waresley Wood forms the southern part of this block of woodland and lies within the neighbouring parish of Waresley-cum-Tetworth. A northern section of Gransden Wood is not owned by the Reserve but is in private ownership and there is no public access to this section.
- 7.6.4 Figure 9, below, shows the extent of the SSSI (totalling 54.22 ha) and the ownership.

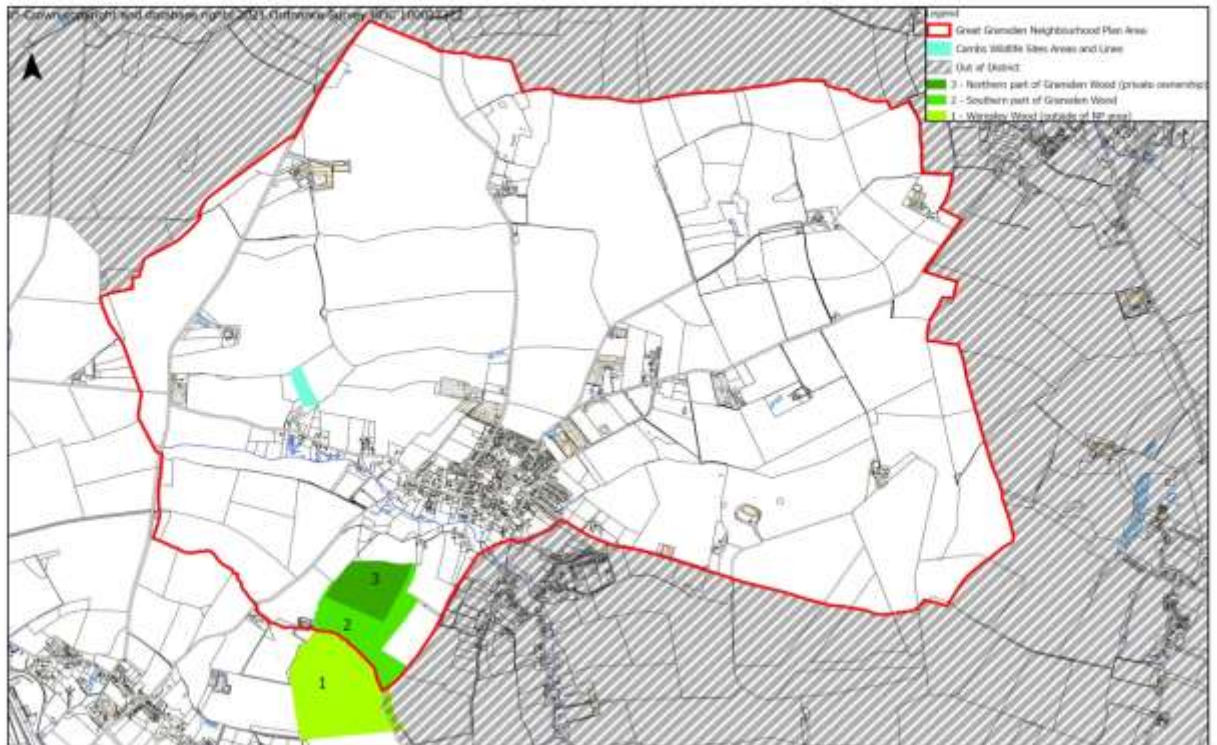


Figure 9: Waresley and Gransden Woods SSSI

- 7.6.5 Discussions between the GGNP Steering Group and The Wildlife Trust have highlighted the need to improve management of the permissive path routes through the woodland and the adjacent public footpaths and bridleways during all seasons, and for Great Gransden to be provided with alternative natural green space to give alternative options for recreational enjoyment of the countryside thus relieving pressure on the Nature Reserve site. In a public Waresley & Gransden Woods Statement (February 2019) The Wildlife Trust commented ‘Increased numbers of visitors and dogs within the woods also causes increased disturbance to the detriment of wildlife’.
- 7.6.6 The West Cambridgeshire Hundreds is a strategic project focused on a collection of wildlife rich ancient woodlands to the SW of Cambridge, including the ancient woodland at Waresley and Gransden Woods. These lie within an area defined for over 1000 years by the old Anglo-Saxon regional divisions known as the Cambridgeshire Hundreds. The scheme aims to enhance the unique biodiversity found in these woodlands through better management, maintaining or reinstating traditional coppicing, widening rides and providing better conditions for butterflies and other insects. The vision for the project is for the wide area to be a landscape of connected woodlands between which wildlife can move freely. Maintaining and enhancing connectivity between the small copses, woodland areas, adjacent grassland areas and hedgerow networks will be crucial to the success of this initiative. <https://www.wildlifebcn.org/westcambshundreds>
- 7.6.7 The HDC Local Plan recognises the strategic importance of the West Cambridgeshire Hundreds Project, Paragraph 4.36.

### Policy intent:

- 7.6.8 Waresley and Great Gransden Woods are already recognised as part of the national network of SSSIs. The intention is to identify that part of the SSSI that falls within Great Gransden parish as a parish site of value to biodiversity and resist any development proposals which would risk impacting directly or indirectly on the biodiversity integrity of the site.
- 7.6.9 Policy G6 also requires the delivery of biodiversity net gain (aligned with the Environment Act) on all sites and signposts what measures might be appropriate in the parish.
- 7.6.10 **Linked Parish Council commitment CAP 2** - Outside the scope of the GGNP, GGPC will aim to work with both landowners of the Waresley and Gransden Woods site to find ways to effectively protect their woodland whilst facilitating ongoing public enjoyment of these woodlands, and also continue to seek alternative outdoor recreation provision to serve the parishioners.
- 7.6.11 **Linked Parish Council commitment: CAP 3** - will support a community-led initiative to recognise an arc shaped corridor shown on the map in Figure 5, page 18 above, along the valley of Gransden Brook and its tributaries to maintain its connectivity value for wildlife and encourage landowners to target this for habitat protection and enhancement.

#### Policy G6 – Protecting and enhancing biodiversity in the parish including at Gransden Woods.

(It should be noted that only part of the SSSI lies within the Plan area, the remainder being in the adjacent parish of Waresley).

The area of woodland shown on Figure 9, page 57 above, is an SSSI and highly valued as a parish wide biodiversity asset. Any development proposals which would impact adversely on the biodiversity value of the site will be resisted.

Contributions may be sought, where this would be compliant with tests set out in paragraph 57 of the NPPF, LP 4 of the Local Plan (Contributing to Infrastructure Delivery) and the Developer Contributions SPD (2011) (or any successor documents), towards measures which seek to protect or enhance the biodiversity value of Gransden Woods.

Proposals which would protect wildlife assets at Gransden Woods such as provision of alternative open space for Great Gransden parishioners to enjoy will be sought.

Delivering biodiversity net gain in the parish:

All development should provide net gains in biodiversity by creating, restoring and enhancing habitats for the benefit of species. Measures to deliver net gains will be proportionate to the size of the development being proposed and could include:

- Trees, hedgerows, water and other habitats integrated into a development site;
- Bat roosts and bird boxes
- installation of green or brown roofs
- taking available opportunities to restore or enhance the existing ecological network across the Gransden Brook Corridor (see Figure 5)
- taking available opportunities to protect and enhance Gransden Woods including the delivery of an alternative open space designed to relieve pressure.

## Open Space

### Core Objectives:

- **Objective 9 Maintain and protect key areas of green space within the village and elsewhere in the parish where these are valued by the community for their amenity and recreational value and/or rural landscape value.**
- **Objective 10 Increase the quality and quantity of accessible open space within the parish, to enable local people to experience a wider enjoyment of the Gransden countryside and the associated recreational and health benefits.**
- **Objective 11 Improve access to the countryside whilst fully respecting the rights of private landowners and legitimate uses of the land.**

### Policy G7 – Local Green Spaces and Other Valued Green Spaces

#### Policy context and rationale

7.7 The NPPF 2021 allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them by designating them as a Local Green Space (LGS) through a Neighbourhood Plan or a Local Plan. To qualify for LGS designation a space must meet certain criteria:

- be in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves.
- be demonstrably special to a local community and hold a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife.
- be local in character and not an extensive tract of land.

7.7.1 Community engagement work has identified a number of valued open spaces. The Four spaces are designated as Local Green Spaces. In recognition of the public value attached to them, a further seven spaces are designated as Other Valued Green Spaces. Supporting Document 3 provides an assessment of the LGS spaces against the criteria above, together with an assessment of the Other Valued Green Spaces.

#### Local Green Spaces

7.7.2 The Local Green Spaces are:

**The Sportsfield:** Owned by the Parish Council and located 0.5 miles from the village centre.

This space is demonstrably special to the community it serves, due being the principal sports facility for the village. In addition, it is used for community events. See Supporting Document 3 for more detail.

**The Playing Field:** Owned by the Parish Council and located in the heart of the village.

This space is demonstrably special to the community it serves due its function as an outdoor recreation area serving all ages. See Supporting Document 3 for more detail.

**The Allotments:** Owned by the Parish Council and run by Gransden Allotment and Leisure Gardens Society and located 0.5 mile from the village centre on Caxton Road.

This space is demonstrably special to the community it serves, principally due to its amenity value but also includes areas of biodiversity value. See Supporting Document 3 for more detail.

**The Mill Weir:** Common land maintained by the Parish Council and located 0.4 miles from the village centre.

This space is demonstrably special to the community it serves due its amenity value as a publicly accessible open space with a pond and a course fishing spot for local residents. See Supporting Document 3 for more detail.

### **Other Valued Green Spaces**

7.7.3 Due to the public value attached to these spaces, Local Plan Policy LP 32 (Protection of Open Space) will apply to proposals impacting upon these spaces. The purpose of Policy LP 32 is to protect against the loss of open space. It does so by only supporting proposals which result in the whole or partial loss of an area of open space of public value if there would be no significant adverse impacts on the character of the surrounding areas and, as clarified in paragraph 8.28 of the Local Plan, *“where the space is to be replaced with an alternative for which there is a proven need or where compensatory measures that will deliver net gains for the community can be delivered.”*

7.7.4 Paragraph 8.27 in the Local Plan states that:

*“Open space takes many forms including parks, village greens, play areas, sports pitches, allotments, semi-natural areas and substantial private gardens. Many provide important recreational and sporting facilities or are important for biodiversity. Others are part of heritage assets or form part of the setting of heritage assets. Whatever their size, function and accessibility they all contribute to the character of place and quality of life for the local community. It is important to prevent the loss of open space where this would harm the character of a settlement, the visual quality of the locality or the quality of life of residents and visitors”*

7.7.5 The specific nature of the Other Valued Green Spaces and how they contribute to the character of the Great Gransden settlement is described below:

### **Other Valued Green Spaces and how they contribute to the character of Great Gransden**

#### **Green spaces adjacent to road junctions in the village:**

These three spaces are described below. They formerly marked the ancient village boundaries, with large specimen trees



**Fox Street/ Middle Street/ East Street/ Caxton Road Crossroads (Figure 11 marked A)**

A roughly triangular piece of land in the heart of the village, slightly elevated above the road, displays the Great Gransden village sign and is the site of a specimen chestnut tree and a hornbeam. On the opposite corner is a substantial wildflower verge extending down West Street and Middle Street and very large and handsome sycamore tree.

The space contributes to settlement character by providing a connection with the past, a local landmark and an attractive and verdant space, with biodiversity value, in the heart of the village.

**Crow Tree Street/ Meadow Road/ West Street (Figure 11 marked C)**

A triangular piece of grass and wildflower land in the fork of the junction has the stump of one of the old boundary trees, a young oak tree and a public bench.

The space contributes to settlement character by providing a connection with the past, a local landmark and an attractive and verdant spaces, with biodiversity value, in the heart of the village.

**Eltisley Road/ Fox Street/ West Street (Figure 11 marked B)**

A large grassed space with edge planting and a small tree sweeps down from the new development on the corner of Fox Street and Eltisley Road. This piece of land is privately owned. On the opposite corner is a mature lime tree and a public bench, on a green triangle owned by Highways Department

The space is cherished as an open greenscape feature in a busy part of the village near the shop and the Reading Room. It provides a view of the Grade II listed Fox Cottage, which is set at 90° to the road.

**Policy intent**

- To protect existing open spaces of value to Great Gransden parishioners.

**Policy G7 – Local Green Spaces and Other Valued Green Spaces**

Local Green Spaces:

The following open spaces as shown on Figure 10, below, are designated as Local Green Spaces:

- The Sportsfield (2)
- The Playing Field (4)
- The Allotments (1)
- The Mill Weir (3)

Development on these sites shall be consistent with national Green Belt Policy and where it would support the identified use of the space

Other Valued Green Spaces:

The Other Valued Green Spaces, shown on Figure 11 are Other Valued Green Spaces to which Local Plan Policy LP 32 (Protection of Open Space) will apply.

- Green spaces adjacent to road junctions in the village:
  - Fox Street, Middle Street, East Street, Caxton Road Crossroads (A)
  - Eltisle Road/ Fox Street, West Street (B)
  - Crow Tree Street/Meadow Road/ West Street (C)

## Great Gransden Local Green Spaces

Scale: 1:9,000

Date: 29/07/2022

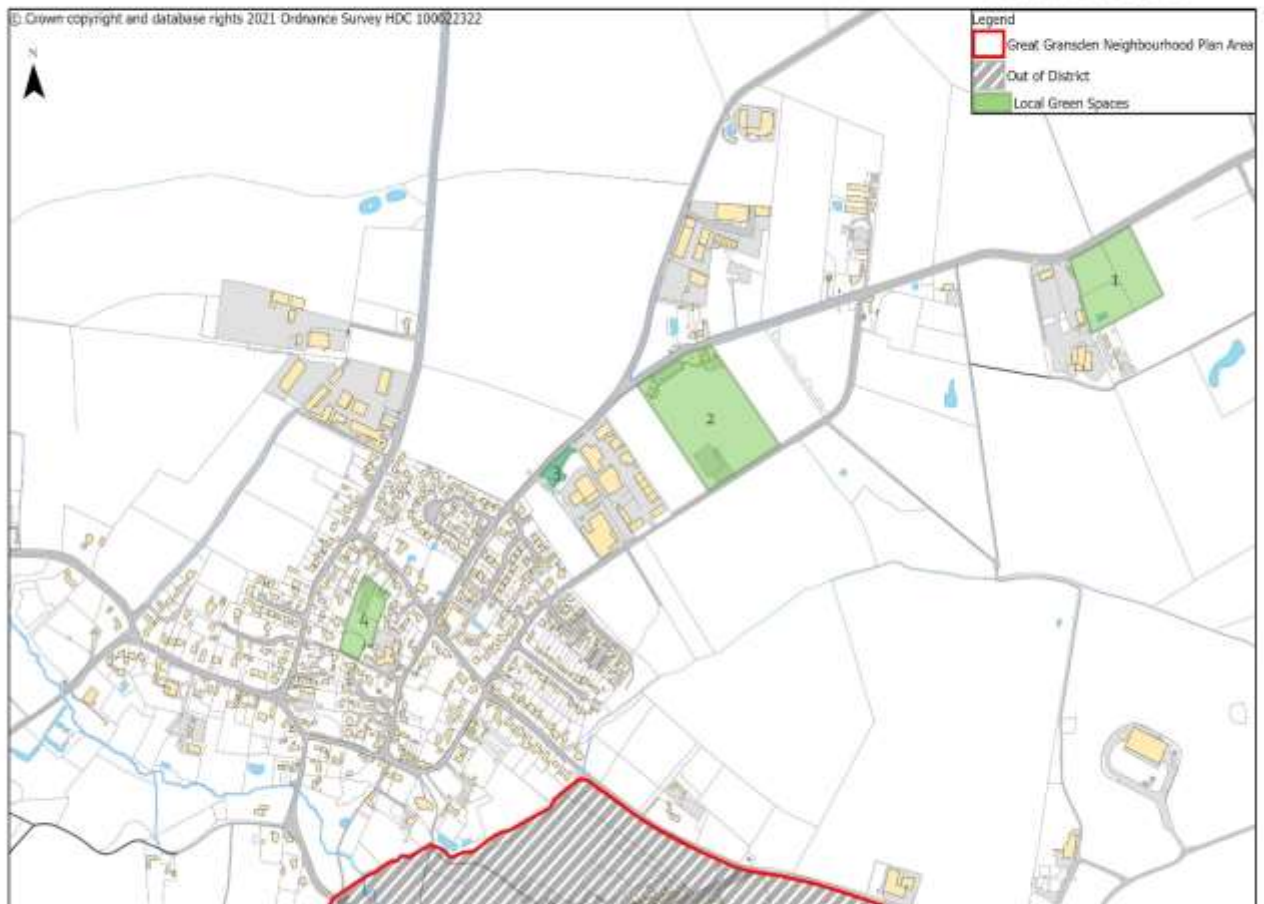


Figure 10: Local green spaces

## Great Gransden Other Valued Green Spaces

Scale: 1:7,000

Date: 29/11/2022

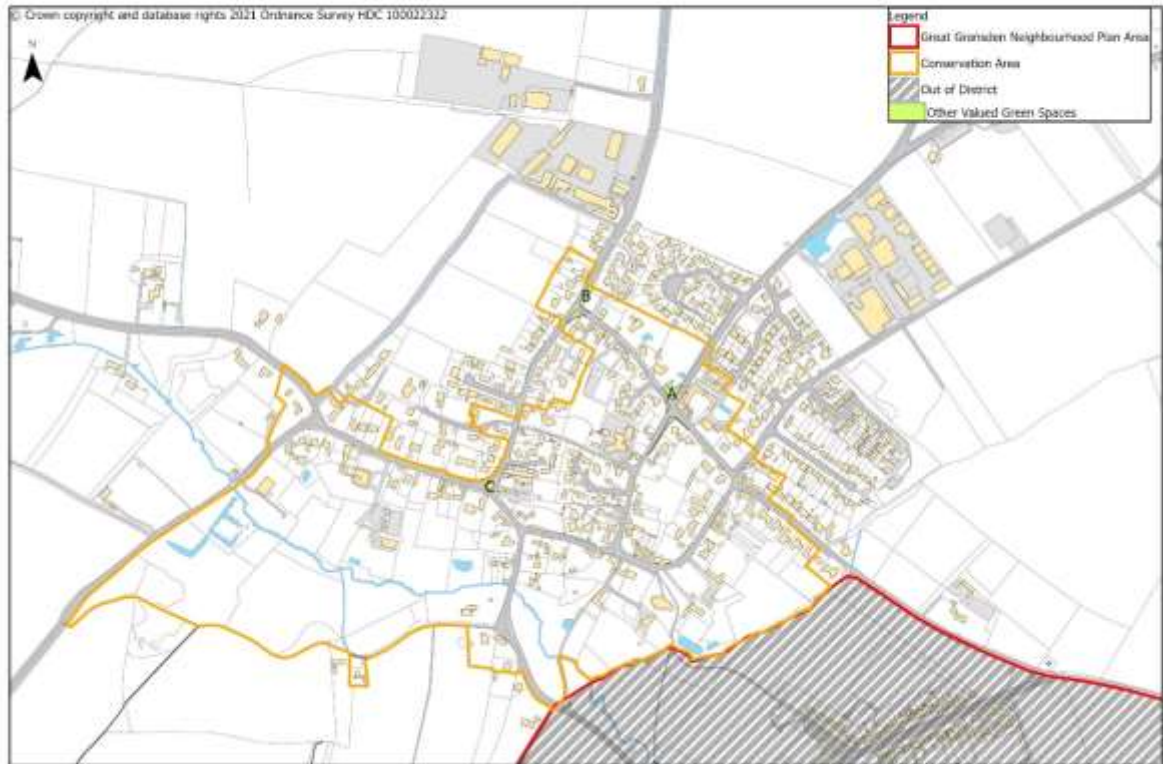


Figure 11: Other Valued Green Spaces

7.7.6 There are no community action plans associated with policy G7.

## Policy G8 – Development and Open Space Requirements

### Policy context and rationale

7.8 The NPPF 2021 allows local planning authorities to plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of open space, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation and to retain and enhance landscapes

7.8.1 In terms of publicly accessible open space, the following shortfalls have been identified during the initial public engagement phase detailed in 1.3

- Publicly accessible informal open space. There is an identified lack of public open space
- Dog walking opportunities. There is a lack of open space and publicly accessible rural paths providing dog walking opportunities
- Poor access to the countryside which surrounds the village.

- Circular walks from the village are particularly important, to help relieve the pressure on the woods.

7.8.2 This conclusion is supported by other earlier studies. As part of the Local Plan evidence base, a Sports and Leisure Facilities Strategy 2016-21 was produced. This finds that whilst Great Gransden residents have good access to playing fields, they have no access to amenity space or other informal provision. This remains the case today. With respect to dog walking opportunities, under local byelaw, the existing public open green spaces (the sportsfield, the playing field, Mill Weir and the Allotments) do not allow dog walking. As a result, many residents resort to walking dogs at the Waresley and Gransden Woods Reserve. However, as discussed in paragraph 7.6.5 in this plan, the Wildlife Trust have expressed concern with respect to dog walking activity undermining the conservation goals at this SSSI. See paragraph 7.6.5.

7.8.3 Local Plan Policy LP3 Green Infrastructure requires development proposals to incorporate open/green space in accordance with the Council's Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document 2011. This document requires provision of land for additional informal open space on schemes of 10 or more dwellings.

#### Policy intent

7.8.4 The purpose of Policy G8 is to establish the priorities with regard to open space provision as part of new schemes. It is not the intention of the policy to undermine delivery of necessary on-site play or open space infrastructure that is designed-in or triggered by particular schemes but to complement these.

7.8.5 **Linked Parish Council action/commitment: CAP 4** - To complement Policy G8, GGPC will aim to work with landowners and the community to identify a suitable location for a new open space close to the village centre.

#### Policy G8 – Development and Open Space Requirements

All development schemes will be expected to contribute (subject to Paragraph 57 of the NPPF, LP 4 of the Local Plan (Contributing to Infrastructure Delivery) and the Developer Contributions SPD (2011) (or any successor documents) to the provision of open space in the parish in terms of both quality and quantity having regard to the following locally identified priorities:

- New informal open space close to (within half a mile from the Village Hall) the village centre providing an alternative destination to Gransden Woods
- Improved access into the countryside for informal recreation, walking, wildlife enjoyment, countryside relaxation
- The creation of new routes and spaces where residents can walk, ride or cycle safely, including dog walking and also including horse riding

## **Policy G9 – Public Rights of Way**

### **Policy context and rationale:**

- 7.9 A related common concern shared by many residents is the lack of access or difficulty of access to public rights of way (PROW)<sup>4</sup> and permissive paths from the built-up environment of Great Gransden into the open countryside. There are a number of public rights of way in and around the parish, as shown on Figure 12, below - there are few networks, few opportunities for circular walks and not many of the public rights of way have access points from the edge of the village. (Figure 13 shows the PROWs in a larger area centred on The Gransdens; in both figures, the public highways are not highlighted, just the public footpaths and the bridleways.) As an example, there is a public right of way from Little Gransden Lane in the south of the village which leads towards Gransden Wood but there is no official access point into the wood at the northern end. However, the wood is a popular outdoor recreation resource for villagers, so many villagers drive to the woods instead, as the public access points are quite remote from the village.
- 7.9.1 Villagers feel there are only limited opportunities for dog owners/carers to walk their dogs near the village, so many walks will begin and end with a car journey.
- 7.9.2 Other than the PROWs there are limited publicly accessible footpaths. Expanding accessibility by establishment of permissive footpaths could greatly increase access to the countryside and relieve the pressure on the established footpaths. This would require agreement with private landowners.
- 7.9.3 Due to their importance to well-being, it is important that the existing public rights of way and their amenity value are protected. Existing PROWs should be maintained to an appropriate standard, allowing easy use. Where a development proposal is near to an existing public right of way or permissive path which provides access to the open countryside, opportunities to link the development in with that network should be taken. Where there are no or limited nearby public rights of way providing access to the countryside, consideration should be given to how the development itself could deliver or contribute towards enhanced access to outdoor recreation space.

**Linked Parish Council action/commitment: CAP 5** - To complement Policy G9, GGPC will support a community-led action to start initial dialogue with and then to work with landowners to identify improved access into the countryside via permissive footpaths and permissive bridleways.

### **Policy intent:**

- 7.9.4 The purpose of this policy is to highlight to developers the existing network of public rights of way, to protect this network (and its amenity value) and require future proposals to either link in with this network and/or explore opportunities for creating new links.

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<sup>4</sup> For a definition of various types of public right of way, see the following article on the Land Registry's website: <https://www.landregistry-titledeeds.co.uk/frequently-asked-questions/information/public-rights-of-way.asp>



## Policy G9 – Public Rights of Way Network

The existing PROW should be protected or enhanced.

Any new development on or adjacent to an existing Public Right of Way must:

1. consider the appearance of the proposal from the Right of Way or Permissive Path, and incorporate green landscaping to reduce any visual impacts, and
2. provide links to the network in and around the village.

Enhancements or extensions to the PROW network - for example through improving accessibility or connectivity - will be encouraged where this does not result in harm to ecology or landscape character, and may be required where a development is likely to lead to a significant increase in the usage of the network.

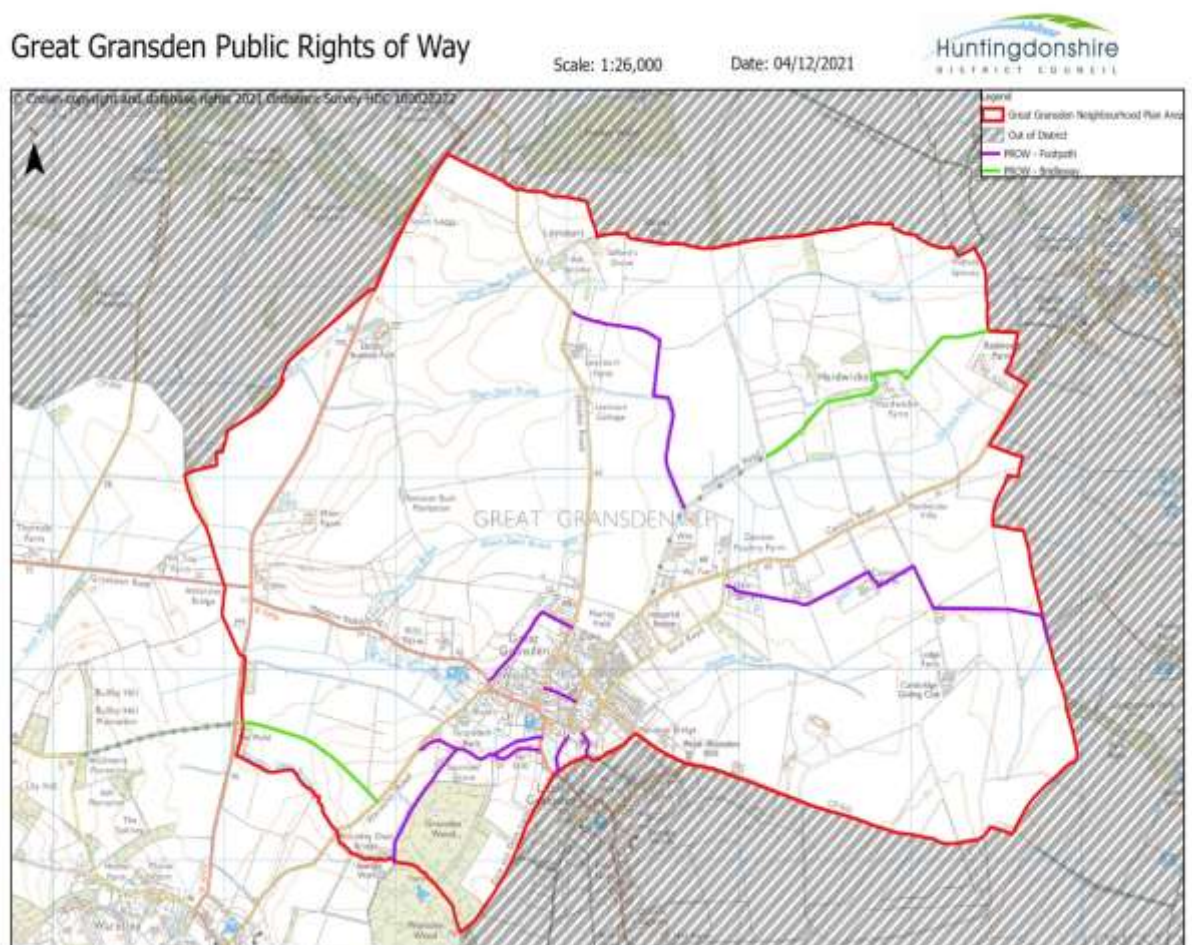


Figure 12: Public rights of way in The Gransdens



# Public Rights of Way

Scale: 1:35,000

Date: 04/12/2021

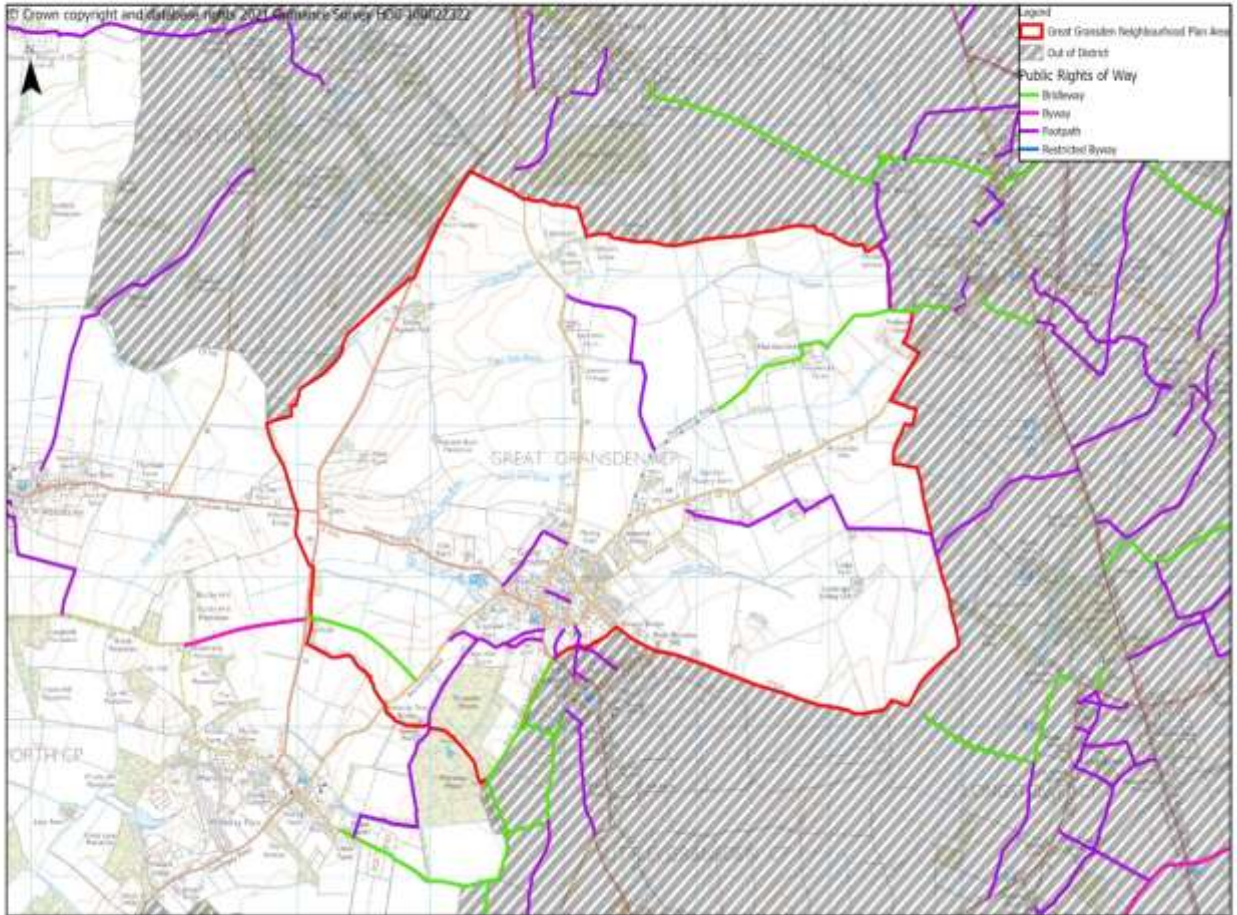


Figure 13: Public rights of way in The Gransdens and neighbouring villages

## Transport and Road Safety Improvements

### Core Objectives:

- **Objective 12 A prioritised programme of improvements will be implemented, to enhance road safety for all road users, particularly pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians.**
- **Objective 13 Cycleways, footpaths, and pavements on key routes around the village, and to and from the village will be established and upgraded.**
- **Objective 14 New development will allow for safe movement of vehicles and non-motorised users in and around the village.**

### Policies G10 and G11 – Policy context and rationale.

7.10 Car movements to and through the village are relatively light during the day, but high at peak periods. The morning peak consists of users going to work or school, people dropping off children at the school, people coming to work in the village and people using the village as a through route on their way to work in Cambridge – which is often to avoid traffic problems on the A roads. The evening peak consists of people leaving the industrial estates from 4pm onwards, users returning home from work, and others cutting through the village on their way home from work. Middle Street is the subject of a 20mph speed limit.

- Bus movements to and through the village are very light and consist mostly of school buses.
- Heavy goods vehicle movements consist mainly of deliveries to and from the industrial sites, vehicles delivering to building sites around the village, vehicles visiting the weighbridge on the airfield via Mill Road, and vehicles using the village as a through route. Many of the village roads are too narrow for two HGVs to pass each other without going onto the verges or pavements. Junctions that cause particular difficulties are the Sand Road/Mill Road/East Street crossroads and the East Street/Caxton Road crossroads. HGVs have difficulty manoeuvring around the roundabout at the Crow Tree St/Church St/ Middle St junction which lies on an HGV route to the Caxton Road Industrial area. Vehicles are seen going the wrong way around the roundabout.
- A common concern expressed by residents is the difficulties that pedestrians and cyclists face in moving around the village and into the countryside. Whilst the village is relatively compact, the pedestrian route is not safe in places. Many of the roads either lack a pavement altogether or lack an adequately wide path. Road crossing points are often on blind corners and junctions.
- Irrespective of new developments, it is important to establish a prioritised improvement plan for road safety in Great Gransden.

## **Policy G10 – A walkable village and reducing village car use.**

### **Policy intent**

7.10.1 The pedestrian environment is poor. Investments will be sought to improve cycle way network.

7.10.2 The quality of the pedestrian environment should be a key consideration for all planning proposals. All future residents of the village should be able to walk and cycle safely to village facilities including the shop, the school, the bus stop, employment areas and recreation facilities.

### **7.10.3 Linked Parish Council action/commitment: CAP 6**

GGPC will:

- support the development of a prioritised improvement plan for road safety in Great Gransden for all road users, including traffic calming, pedestrian safety, pavement widening, reduced parking on pavements, new pavements, parking and support fundraising for implementation.
- support a community-led action plan to encourage reduced car usage within the village, especially for short trips; and,
- work with neighbouring parishes, the District and the County to explore the potential for a new cycle route to Cambourne, St Neots and Cambridge to link in with similar networks in neighbouring parishes.

### **Policy G10 – A walkable village and reducing village car use**

New multiple-dwelling development proposals, and new build proposals providing places of employment must enable residents to walk and cycle along safe and direct routes into the village centre to access services. Where pavements or routes are not in place, provision shall be made as required by the District Council in consultation with the local highway authority as part of the proposed development. Attempts should be made in development proposals to improve existing pavements serving the development to make them more accessible for all users including children and those using mobility aids.

## **Policy G11 – Roads and new development**

### **Policy intent**

- 7.11 It is important for safety reasons that all dwellings are accessible by emergency vehicles – ambulances, fire appliances and police cars. The GGNP seeks to ensure that any roads are wide enough to ensure emergency vehicles and service vehicles (e.g. refuse collection vehicles) have safe access even if all designated on-street parking slots are occupied.

### **Policy G11 – Roads and new development**

Where development proposals involve the creation of new roads, these must be wide enough to allow for two-way traffic (unless one-way movement of traffic has been deliberately designed-in as part of the scheme-wide movement strategy addressing all users across the scheme).

The design and layout of roads should enable ease of access for service vehicles which should have ready access to all properties and open areas when all on-street parking areas are occupied. This will not prejudice the introduction of low order shared surface private drives and mews streets if required,

All roads in new developments should be to adoptable standard to ensure the maintenance of access and safety standards.

## Community Facilities, Leisure and Infrastructure

### Core Objectives:

- **Objective New development will be supported by improvements in village infrastructure**
- **Objective 16 CIL spending by GGPC will reflect local priorities as expressed through the GGNP and through ongoing liaison with the community following adoption of the plan.**
- **Objective 17 Community-led projects will be identified to move towards net zero carbon.**

### Infrastructure: Existing, Shortfalls and Aspirations for the Future.

7.11.1 Great Gransden has a wealth of clubs and societies. There is a strong sense of community and volunteering capacity is high. The parish has a shop/post office, a primary school, a pub, the Reading Room (village hall) and a church. It also has two playgrounds (one of which is currently unusable), and a large sportsfield providing grassed football pitches, and hosting the tennis club which has three floodlit courts. Allotments are situated approximately one mile from the village.

7.11.2 Engagement work on the GGNP has identified that the residents are concerned with existing shortfalls in community infrastructure and how any new development may impact upon this.

7.11.3 The following shortfalls in Great Gransden have been identified during the initial public engagement phase detailed in paragraph 1.3

- Very poor public bus service meaning the population is heavily dependent on the private car. Even secondary school children are predominantly dependent on being driven to school.<sup>5</sup>
- A need for improved indoor recreational facilities.
- A need for improvements to the children's playgrounds particularly some repair to existing equipment, the replacement of an aging roundabout with a wheelchair accessible roundabout and also some other special needs equipment.
- A lack of informal open space in and around the village. This is supported by ongoing work with the Wildlife Trust in relation to Gransden Woods. See paragraph 7.6.5.
- A need to upgrade the clubhouse facilities on the Sportsfield to provide an improved standard of hygiene and safeguarding.

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<sup>5</sup> Great Gransden secondary school aged children are in the catchment of Comberton or Longsands St Neots.

## **Policy G12 – Great Gransden Infrastructure Priorities**

### **Policy context and rationale:**

- 7.12 The NPPF 2021 seeks to allow planning authorities to plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments.
- 7.12.1 Residents consider that any increase in the number of dwellings in Great Gransden should be accompanied by improvements in community facilities, leisure and infrastructure and these should be decided on the basis of local priorities.
- 7.12.2 The GGNP seeks to set out the infrastructure that the parish requires when new development comes forward. How infrastructure improvements are delivered will vary from case to case. For some proposals, there will be the need for a Section 106 agreement to be tied to a planning consent to ensure necessary improvements e.g. improving a road junction which can make a development proposal acceptable in planning terms. A number of the planning policies in this section refer to such requirements.
- 7.12.3 Low and unreliable broadband speed is a problem in parts of Great Gransden. Significant improvements could be achieved with the implementation of full fibre broadband.
- 7.12.4 The Reading Room and garden is a popular venue for small events and club meetings. It is small, with no room for a stage and can only accommodate up to 60 people. As a listed building remodelling is not straightforward but the Reading Room Management Committee is examining the potential to extend in order to accommodate a greater variety of activity and larger groups and maintain its viability. Such a project would require substantial funding.
- 7.12.5 Great Gransden has no natural gas, so households are dependent on oil, LPG or electric heating systems. Some dwellings have installed ground or air source heating systems. Great Gransden has an outdoor playground that is beginning to show its age. Most of the facilities are dated and require constant attention to ensure their safe use by children. The updating of these facilities is seen as a priority by GGPC.

### **Policy intent**

- 7.12.6 This policy highlights the priorities for financial contributions to direct new and improved infrastructure, where it can be locally determined. Policy G7 – ‘Gransden Woods’, Policy G9 ‘Development and Open Space Requirements’ and Policy G10 – ‘A walkable village and reducing village car use’ all include references to a possibility of infrastructure improvements being sought as part of specific development proposals. The intention of this policy is to articulate a general principle that for all development proposals there may be requirements for financial contributions or direct provision of new infrastructure where this is necessary to make the development acceptable and where this is directly, fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. Many development proposals coming forward in the plan will be subject to CIL contributions (as required by HDC). The CIL contribution will be fully taken into account before determining whether additional contributions are required to make a scheme acceptable.



The current levy (revision date 2019) of 15% capped at £100/dwelling (indexed for inflation), paid to parish each year will rise to 25% uncapped when the Neighbourhood Plan is finally 'made'. These funds can be spent on community infrastructure projects.

#### **Policy G12 – Great Gransden Infrastructure Priorities.**

Financial contributions or direct provision of new infrastructure will be sought to secure infrastructure improvements made necessary by development proposals. Use of developer contributions that are locally determined will be directed to any of the following priorities:

- Improvements to the children's playground
- Improvements to the Reading Room
- Improvements to the Playing Field carpark in the centre of the village
- Improvements to indoor facilities provided at Great Gransden Sportsfield\*
- Improvements to the Sportsfield carpark
- Installation of new pavements and improvements to the existing pavements and pedestrian environment within the village of Great Gransden subject to a prioritised road safety improvement plan
- Implementation of traffic calming measures
- Creation of new informal open space in and around Great Gransden\*
- Extending or improving the public rights of way network and permissive footpaths so as to increase access to the countryside\*
- Creation of a cycle route to access neighbouring parishes and linking up with wider cycle network and to provide access to public transport
- Habitat protection and enhancement measures along the valley of the Gransden Brook as shown on Figure 5 (page 18)\*
- Improvements to the communications and broadband capabilities\*
- Evaluation of ground and air source heat projects\*
- Enhanced opportunities for education for all ages\*

Priorities marked with an asterisk \* will require community leadership, with support from GGPC

## Health and Education

### **Core Objectives:**

- **Objective 18** The village primary school will maintain its very high standards of education and its strong community ethos through any period of housing growth. It will be well-resourced and financially secure.
- **Objective 19** Residents in the village will have easy access to good educational opportunities for all age groups – pre-school through to adult learning.
- **Objective 20** Health provision in the village will be restored and expanded

## Policy G13 - Barnabas Oley Primary School and parish pre-school provision

### **Policy context and rationale:**

7.13 As Great Gransden has a lot of family housing, access to good pre-school and after-school provision is essential, both for the social and intellectual development of infants and for the convenience of working parents. There is currently excellent provision in the village of a playgroup, a nursery and an after-school/school holiday club but they all have limited space. All these are managed as businesses or not-for-profit enterprises and are fee-paying.

7.13.1 Barnabas Oley Primary School, located in the very centre of Great Gransden, is one of the prized facilities of the village, rated Outstanding by Ofsted (2019) and Excellent by SIAMS (the Schools Inspectorate for Anglican and Methodist Schools) (2019). The community wishes for the primary school to thrive through the plan period, and it is important that every primary aged child in the Gransdens and wider catchment area should have the opportunity to attend the school.

7.13.2 Housing development in the village may have an impact on the resourcing and character of Barnabas Oley Primary School. The school can accommodate around 150 pupils in its current buildings and configuration of classrooms. Revenue funding for schools is pupil-related, so growth in pupil numbers is financially beneficial and a fall in numbers would have a negative financial impact. Demographic projections suggest modest growth in primary-age pupil numbers over the next eight years (less than 10%)<sup>6</sup> but the completed and committed housing developments in the plan period, of some 87 additional dwellings (see 7.1.2) could take this growth over the 150 mark. If pupil numbers were to expand beyond 180 a full capital appraisal would be necessary in order to determine the best solution for the school.

### **Policy Intent**

7.13.3 Barnabas Oley Primary School is situated on Middle Street in the centre of the village. It is conveniently situated adjacent to the playing field with playground, the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA), and close to the village shop and St Bartholomew's church. Pupils and staff from the Gransdens are able to walk to school; those from outside the village generally arrive by car. This can add to traffic congestion at the start and end of the school day. As highlighted in paragraph 7.11.3 a very poor public bus service means that the population is heavily dependent on the private car. Middle Street is

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<sup>6</sup> According to the ONS National population projections: 2020-based interim.

narrow, with 20mph speed limit, and is the main thoroughfare for traffic including HGVs for the Industrial Estates. Pavements on both sides are present for only part of its length. There is a layby which is used as a bus stop and for parking. Additional traffic calming is being considered to improve road safety for pedestrians. Road safety would be a consideration if the school were to grow significantly.

#### **Policy G13 – Barnabas Oley Primary School and parish pre-school provision**

All development proposals which create additional primary school or pre-school demand on the parish will be assessed for this impact and required, as per the NPPF, Local Plan, Policy LP 4 (Contributing to Infrastructure Delivery) and the Developer Contributions SPD (2011) (or any successor documents), to contribute to pre-school and primary school provision accordingly.

Proposals which will help sustain and enhance pre-school or primary school infrastructure in the parish (for example through housing which is targeted at younger families) will be considered favourably subject to meeting other policy criteria in this plan.

Proposals that seek to extend or alter Barnabas Oley Primary School to meet changing demands or provide additional educational facilities required to accommodate growing pupil numbers will be supported in principle, provided there are no adverse impacts on road safety, congestion, the appearance of the conservation area and still maintaining a high standard of residential amenity for existing and future residents.

### **Secondary Schooling**

7.13.4 The majority of secondary school-aged children in the parish attend Comberton Village College. The County Council designates two schools as catchment schools for the parish - Longsands Academy in St Neots and Comberton Village College - but the Local Authority only provides free public transport to Longsands Academy from Great Gransden. As a consequence, many secondary-aged children living in the parish either travel by private transport to Comberton Village College or pay for a place on a non-funded school bus. It is not within the scope of the GGNP to secure a funded public transport service from the parish to Comberton Village College as this is a matter for the County Council as the Local Authority. However, the GGNP has identified two **Parish Council commitments/actions**:

- GGPC to explore with the Local Authority the possibility of instating free travel as the cost of such journeys has a financial implication for families and could be disadvantaging people from lower incomes; and,
- GGPC to explore with stakeholders including the school, neighbouring parishes and parents the possibility of operating a locally run and part resident-funded/part subsidised secondary school bus.\*
- GGPC to collaborate with the school to monitor the impact of growth and student numbers.

### **Adult Learning Opportunities**

7.13.5 The parish is well-provided with village societies, which are a highly valued aspect of Great Gransden village life. The aspiration is that village societies are able to offer more learning opportunities to parishioners, and that village societies themselves have better access to improved meeting facilities. Current meeting venues in the parish include the Reading Room, the Primary School and the Lighthouse Café/Baptist Chapel. Meetings are also often held in the village pub. The owners or

committees responsible for these facilities will be encouraged to provide greater access to community groups as far as is practical for them to do so.

7.13.6 It is not within the scope of the GGNP to deliver these aspirations as they are not land use matters. The GGNP therefore identifies the following **Parish Council commitments**:

- GGPC to work alongside village societies to see how learning opportunities for all parishioners can be expanded\*
- GGPC to work alongside owners of buildings and committees responsible for managing community spaces to see how greater access to existing meeting rooms and community buildings can be best provided.

### **Health Provision**

7.13.7 There is currently no GP surgery in the parish. Residents must therefore travel to Bourn or Gamlingay to receive GP care. The Bourn Surgery used to run a weekly Gransden Clinic to enable less mobile residents to access GP services more easily but this was suspended in September 2019. It is recognised that more suitable premises would be required by the general practitioners in order for a consultation clinic to be restored to Great Gransden. The GGNP therefore identifies the following **Parish Council commitment**:

- GGPC to discuss with GP surgeries at Bourn and Gamlingay to try to identify and agree suitable premises for appropriate consultation clinics to be held in Great Gransden.

### **Health and Education Infrastructure.**

Development can place additional demands upon infrastructure, the environment and the social sustainability of a community, and it is therefore essential to mitigate these impacts by providing adequate infrastructure and other services to meet economic, social and environmental needs. To this end GGPC will lean heavily on the HDC Local Plan Development Strategy Section LP4 – Contributing to Infrastructure Delivery and on HDC Developer Contributions SPD, which sets out their policy for securing developer contributions from new developments that require planning permission.

## **8 Monitoring the Planning Policies**

The monitoring will be summarised in a report produced by the GGPC annually and published on the GGPC website.

GGPC will be responsible for maintaining and periodically revisiting the Plan to ensure relevance and to monitor delivery. Monitoring will include:

- how the policies are being applied to shape decisions on planning applications (development management)
- Whether projects and/or actions identified are being achieved
- level of monies raised through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and how such monies are being used
- whether plan aims are being achieved
- changes to national and local policy
- changes in the local area

## 9 Community Action Plans

- 9.1 Several of the action areas in the GGNP will be delivered by a combination of Planning Policies supported by Community Action Plans. These Community Action Plans are listed below, with the rationale having been detailed in Section 7 (Planning policies), where they are flagged as Parish Council commitments.
- 9.2 Community Action Plans (CAPs) will be community-led projects, sponsored and supported by GGPC.

Policy Theme	Policies	Related Community Action Plans
Spatial Strategy	Policy G1 – A Built-Up Area Boundary Strategy for Great Gransden	<i>There are no community action plans associated with policy G1.</i>
	Policy G2 – Affordable Housing on rural Exception Sites	<b>CAP 1</b> The Parish Council will monitor the local housing needs and when appropriate explore the option for a local Exception Site.
A rural and historic parish	Policy G3 – Local Character and Design	<i>There are no community action plans associated with policy G3.</i>
	Policy G4 – Development, Landscape Character and Valued Views	<i>There are no community action plans associated with policy G4.</i>
	Policy G5 – Conserving and enhancing Great Gransden’s Conservation Area	<i>There are no community action plans associated with policy G5.</i>
The Natural Environment	Policy G6 – Protecting and enhancing biodiversity in the parish including at Gransden Woods	<b>CAP 2</b> Outside the scope of the GGNP, GGPC will aim to work with both landowners of the Waresley and Gransden Woods site to find ways to effectively protect their woodland and continue to seek alternative outdoor recreation provision to serve the parishioners. <b>CAP 3</b> GGPC will support a community-led initiative to recognise an arc shaped corridor shown on the map in Figure 5, page 18 above, along the valley of Gransden Brook and encourage landowners to target this for habitat protection and enhancement.
Open spaces	Policy G7 – Local Green Spaces and Other Valued Green Spaces	<i>There are no community action plans associated with policy G7.</i>



	Policy G8 – Development and Open Space Requirements	<b><u>CAP 4</u></b> To complement Policy G8, GGPC will aim to work with landowners and the community to identify a suitable location for a new open space close to the village centre.
	Policy G9 - Public Rights of Way	<b><u>CAP 5</u></b> To complement Policy G9, GGPC will support a community-led action to start initial dialogue with and then to work with landowners to identify improved access into the countryside via permissive footpaths and permissive bridleways.
Transport	Policy G10 – A walkable village and reducing village car use	<b><u>CAP 6</u></b> GGPC will: Support the development of a prioritised improvement plan for road safety in Great Gransden for all road users, including traffic calming, pedestrian safety, pavement widening, reduced parking on pavements, new pavements, parking and support fundraising for implementation.  Support a community-led action plan to encourage reduced car usage within the village, especially for short trips; and,  Work with neighbouring parishes, the District and the County to explore the potential for a new cycle route to Cambourne, St Neots and Cambridge to link in with similar networks in neighbouring parishes. Similarly, new route provision should be sought for horse riders and all non-motorised users.
	Policy G11 – Roads and new development	
Community Facilities, Leisure and Infrastructure	Policy G12 – Financial Contributions for Great Gransden Infrastructure Priorities.	Financial contributions or direct provision of new infrastructure will be sought to secure infrastructure improvements made necessary by development proposals. Use of developer contributions that are can be locally determined will be directed to any of the following priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvements to the children’s playground</li> <li>• Improvements to the Reading Room</li> <li>• Improvements to the Playing Field carpark in the centre of the village</li> <li>• Improvements to indoor facilities provided at Great Gransden Sportsfield*</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvements to the Sportsfield carpark</li> <li>• Installation of new pavements and improvements to the existing pavements and pedestrian environment within the village of Great Gransden subject to a prioritised road safety improvement plan</li> <li>• Implementation of traffic calming measures</li> <li>• Creation of new informal open space in and around Great Gransden*</li> <li>• Extending or improving the public rights of way network and permissive footpaths so as to increase access to the countryside*</li> <li>• Creation of a cycle route to access neighbouring parishes and linking up with wider cycle network and to provide access to public transport</li> <li>• Habitat protection and enhancement measures along the valley of the Gransden Brook as shown on Figure 5 (page 18, above)*</li> <li>• Improvements to the communications and broadband capabilities*</li> <li>• Evaluation of ground and air source heat projects*</li> <li>• Enhanced opportunities for education for all ages*</li> </ul> <p><b>Priorities marked with an asterisk * will require community leadership, with support from GGPC</b></p>
Health and Education	Policy G13 – Barnabas Oley Primary School and parish pre-school provision	GGPC to explore with the Local Authority the possibility of instating free travel as the cost of such journeys has a financial implication for families and could be disadvantaging people from lower incomes; and, GGPC to explore with stakeholders including the school, neighbouring parishes and parents the possibility of

		<p>operating a locally run and part resident-funded/part subsidised secondary school bus*.</p> <p>GGPC to collaborate with the school to monitor the impact of growth and student numbers.</p> <p>GGPC to work alongside village societies to see how learning opportunities for all parishioners can be expanded;*</p> <p>GGPC to work alongside owners of buildings and committees responsible for managing community spaces to see how greater access to existing meeting rooms and community buildings can be best provided.</p> <p>GGPC to discuss with GP surgeries at Bourn and Gamlingay to try to identify and agree suitable premises for appropriate consultation clinics to be held in Great Gransden.</p> <p><b>Priorities marked with an asterisk * will require community involvement, with support from GGPC</b></p>
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