

# 1. Welcome

## The story so far

In 2017 the Parish Councils agreed to jointly prepare a Neighbourhood Plan for the villages. Since that time a Steering Group has, with the aid of professional support, undertaken background research and consultation on what the Plan should cover.

We've now reached an important stage in its preparation and are consulting widely on the Draft Plan.

## What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

It is a new kind of planning document designed to allow local people to play an active part in planning their area. It can guide the development and conservation of the village. It can, for example, also identify proposals for:

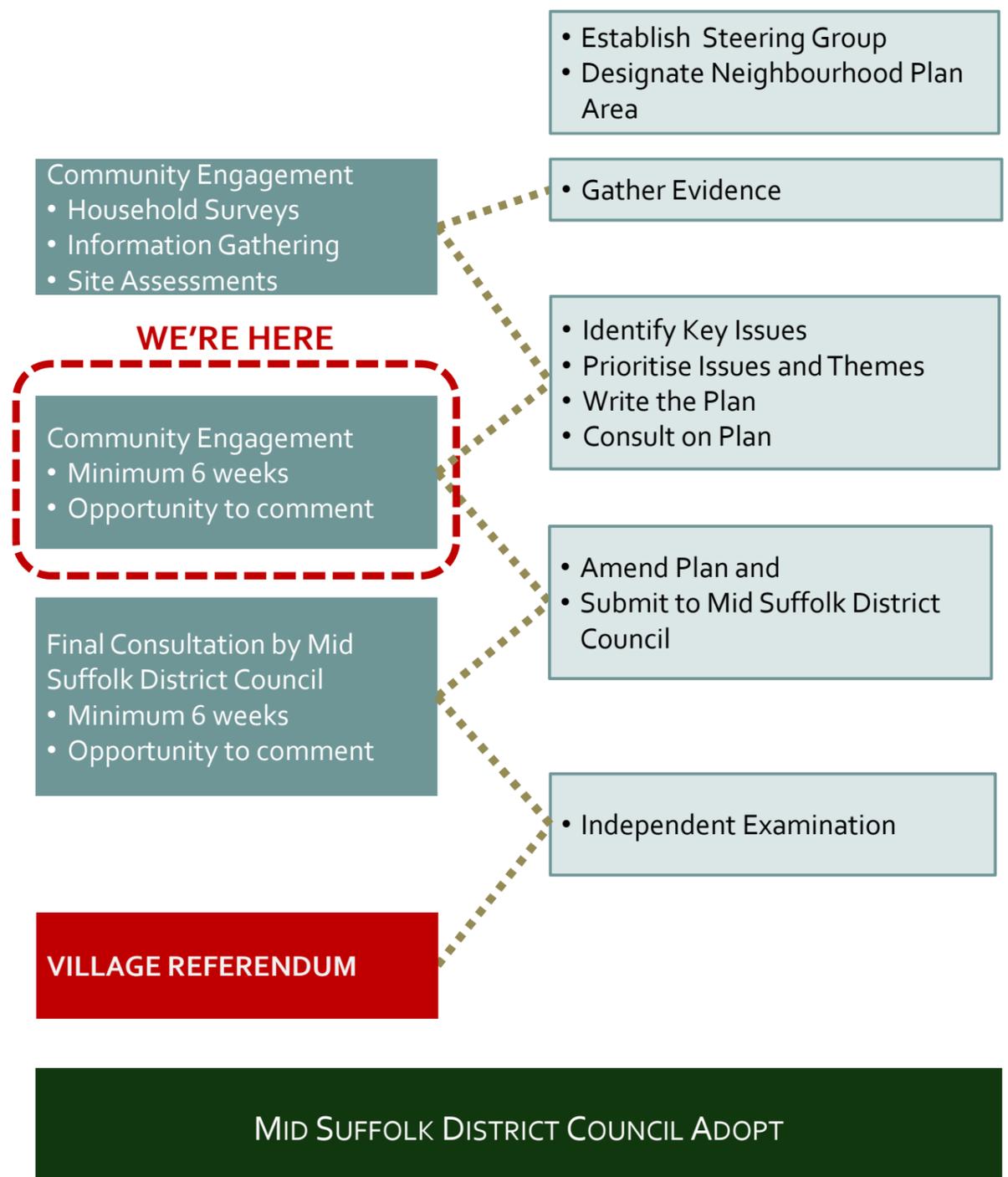
- Improving areas;
- Providing new facilities;
- Sites for new development;
- Protecting sites of environmental or historic quality

When complete, it will form part of the statutory development plan for the area, meaning Mid Suffolk District Council and Planning Inspectors will have to take note of what it says when considering development proposals.

Community Involvement is a major part of the process of developing a Neighbourhood Plan and it must be approved in a local referendum before it can be used.

## How it is prepared

There are a number of stages that have to be completed, as illustrated. Some of these stages are governed by the regulations for preparing neighbourhood plans and so there is no short cut



Over the next 6 weeks you have an opportunity to read the Plan and submit your comments to us.

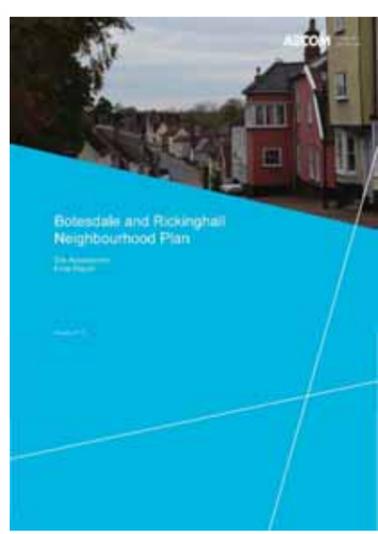
**WE NEED YOUR VIEWS**



# 2. The Draft Plan

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- Introduction
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- Current Issues
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## Supporting Documents

- Housing Site Assessments
- Local Green Spaces
- Landscape Character Assessment
- Historic Character Assessment
- Household/Housing Need Survey Summary
- Business Survey Summary
- Youth Survey Summary
- People and Population Report



## The Plan contains:

**Planning Policies**  
These will be used to supplement the Local Plan when decisions on planning applications are made

**Community Actions**  
Local proposals that are not necessarily town planning related but could improve life or facilities in the village

**WE ESPECIALLY WANT YOUR COMMENTS ON THE PLANNING POLICIES AND COMMUNITY ACTIONS**



# 3. Our Vision & Objectives

Arising from the outcomes of the research and surveys, the Plan's over-arching vision is:

In 2036 Botesdale and Rickinghall will have maintained its significant historic built and natural environment while accommodating sustainable growth that meets the needs of the Parishes and their hinterland and ensures that appropriate levels of infrastructure and services are retained and improved.

The Vision is supported by three topic areas, each with objectives that will contribute to the delivery of the Vision.

## Historic and Natural Environment Objectives

1. Conserve and enhance the heritage assets of Botesdale and Rickinghall.
2. Protect and improve the features which contribute to historic character.
3. Maintain the villages' rural setting.
4. Protect the important green spaces, woodland and countryside and public rights of way.
5. Protect important views and links to the wider countryside.
6. Promote the inclusion of native planting in and around existing and new developments.

## Housing and Development Objectives

7. Ensure that the amount of new housing growth in Botesdale and Rickinghall, collectively a Core Village, is appropriate and of a scale that the local infrastructure can support.
8. Deliver housing that is tailored to the needs of local residents, and specifically includes affordable housing provision.
9. Ensure all development is of a high-quality design, eco-friendly and of a scale and nature that reinforces local character.
10. Deliver development that is permeable by pedestrians and cyclists and has improved access to rights of way in and around the villages.

## Jobs, Services and Facilities Objectives

11. Protect and improve the range of existing community facilities and services.
12. Ensure that the broadband and mobile connectivity throughout the Plan Area meets the domestic, social and business needs of the community.
13. Support small-scale business creation and retention.

## Transport and Travel Objectives

14. Support and encourage safe and sustainable transport, including walking, cycling and public transport.
15. Improve bus services to enable access to services, secondary and tertiary education and employment.

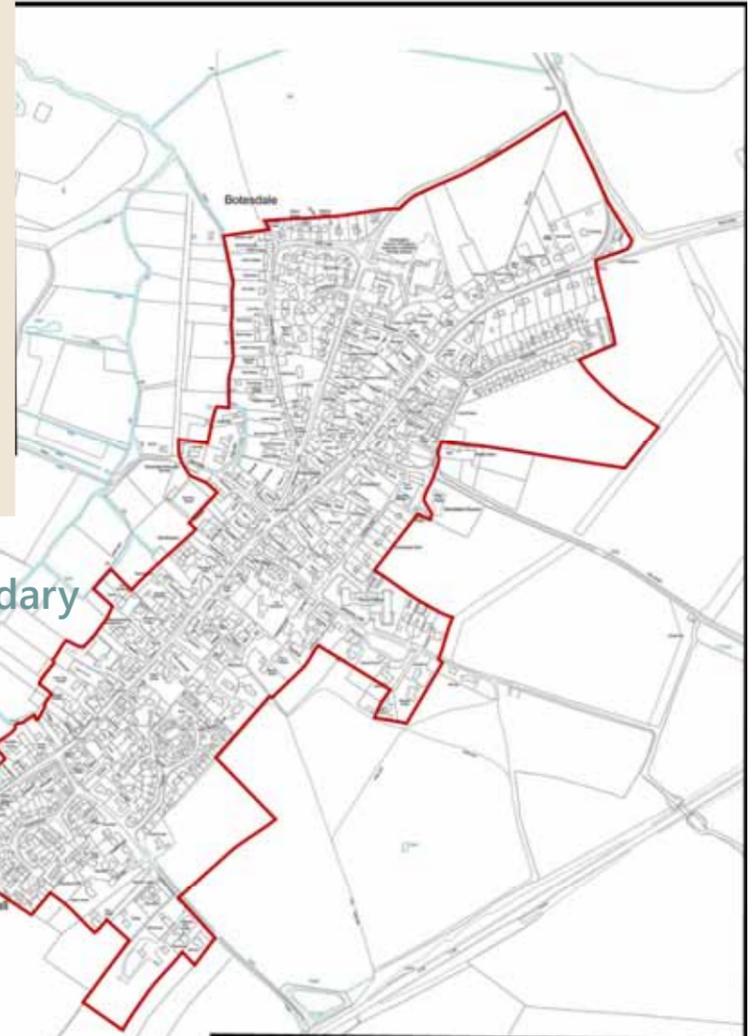


# 4. Planning Strategy

## THE PLAN

- ✓ *Identifies the amount of housing growth in the villages for up to 2036*
- ✓ *Focuses the growth on the existing built-up areas of the villages*
- ✓ *Enables low cost affordable housing to meet local needs to be built next to the Settlement Boundary*
- ✓ *Protects Playing Fields from being built on*
- ✓ *Protects other important spaces as Local Green Space*
- ✓ *Protects and maintains features of Landscape and Biodiversity Value*
- ✓ *Identifies important views that should be protected from the impact of development*
- ✓ *Protects the landscape outside the built-up areas*
- ✓ *Seeks to maintain important village characteristics*
- ✓ *Identifies a large number of important buildings that contribute to the character of the village despite not being "listed"*
- ✓ *Seeks to retain existing employment sites as well as shops, services and community facilities*

- The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared taking into account the content of both the National Planning Policy Framework and the adopted local plan documents for Mid Suffolk.
- The 1998 local plan defines a single Settlement Boundary for the villages.
- The Neighbourhood Plan has revised the Boundary to take account of recent changes and planned locations for development identified in the Neighbourhood Plan.
- Development within the Settlement Boundary is acceptable, in principle, subject to the potential impact of the proposal being acceptable.
- Proposals for development outside the boundary will be treated as being in the countryside and will have to demonstrate exceptional circumstances in order to be allowed.



## Policy B&R 1 – Spatial Strategy

In the period 2017 to 2036 the Neighbourhood Plan area will accommodate development commensurate with the villages' designation as a Key Service Centre in the local plan settlement hierarchy. New development will be focused within the defined Settlement Boundary, through sites allocated in this Plan, as identified on the Policies Map, or in the form of small-scale windfall developments.

Unless specifically identified elsewhere in the Plan, land outside the Settlement Boundary is defined as countryside where development will only be allowed for that which is essential for the operation of agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor recreation and other exceptional uses for which it can satisfactorily be demonstrated that it needs to be located in the countryside.

DO YOU SUPPORT THIS POLICY?



# 5. New Housing

## Amount of new housing

The government requires that "the 'policies and allocations' in a Neighbourhood Plan should meet the identified housing requirement for the settlement in full.

- There is a need for nearly 10,000 new homes in Mid Suffolk by 2036.
- Around one third of this requirement is already in the pipeline.
- Most of this new housing will be built in the larger towns of the district.
- There is an expectation that villages with a good level of services such as schools, shops and jobs will accommodate some growth.

The Neighbourhood Plan makes provision for the construction of 200 new homes between 2017 and 2036, including the homes that we already know have planning permission but have yet to be built.

## The location of new housing in Botesdale & Rickingham

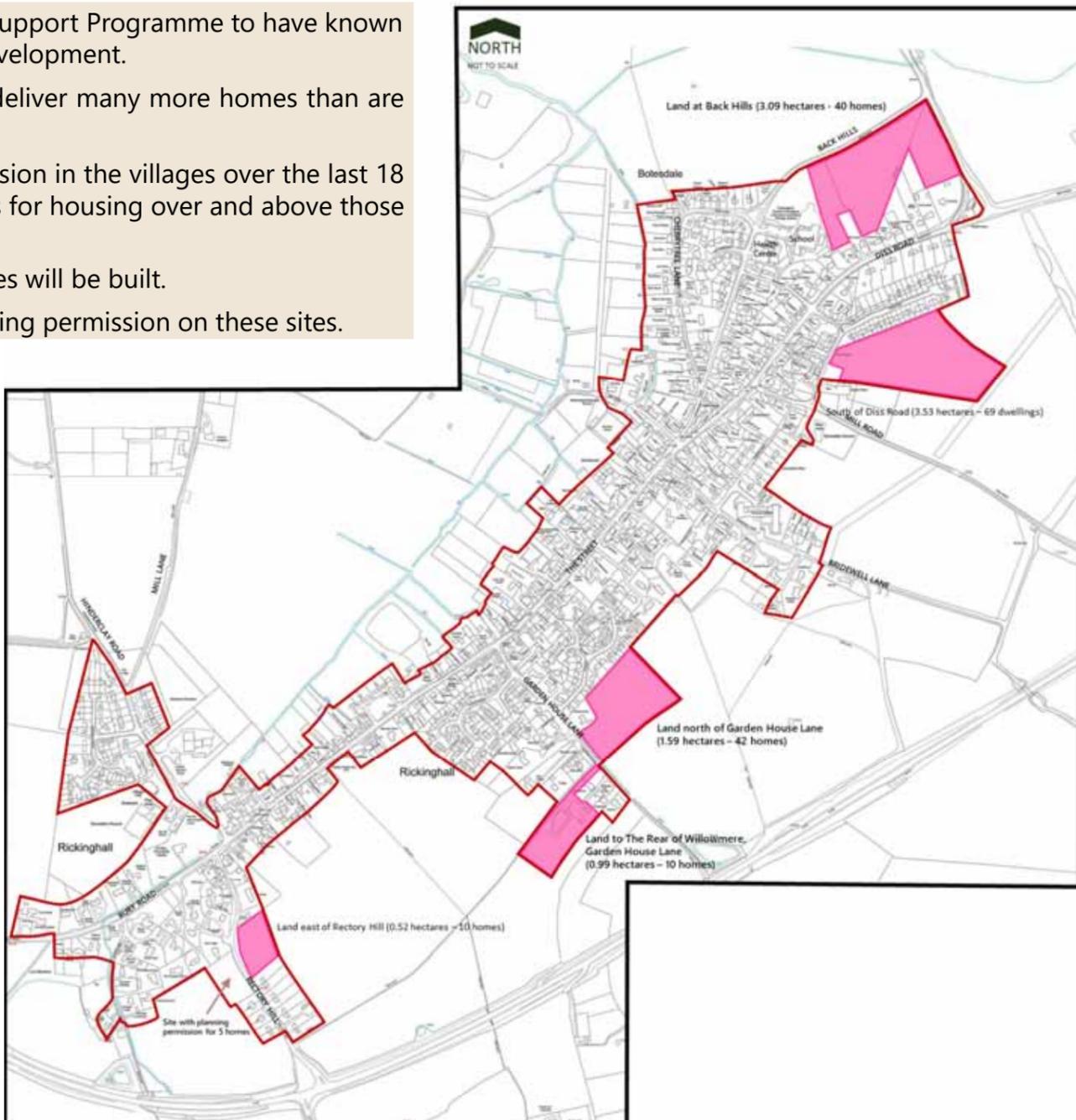
- We used the Government Neighbourhood Plan Support Programme to have known potential sites assessed for their suitability for development.
- The Assessment concluded that the sites could deliver many more homes than are needed by 2036.
- Because of the number of homes granted permission in the villages over the last 18 months, we do not need to identify any new sites for housing over and above those we already know about.
- So we already know where most of the new homes will be built.
- We cannot reverse the decision to approve planning permission on these sites.

### Policy B&R 2 – Housing Development

This Plan provides for 200 dwellings to be developed in the Neighbourhood Plan area between 2017 and 2036.

This growth will be met through:

- the allocation of the following sites for 10 or more new homes:
  - Land at Back Hills (3.09 hectares - 40 homes) (Policy B&R2);
  - Land north of Garden House Lane (1.59 hectares – 42 homes) (Policy B&R 3);
  - Land east of Rectory Hill (0.52 hectares – 10 homes) (Policy B&R 4);
  - Land to The Rear of Willowmere, Garden House Lane (0.99 hectares – 10 homes) (Policy B&R 5); and
  - South of Diss Road (3.53 hectares – 69 dwellings) (Policy B&R6) as indicated on the Policies Map; and
- small "windfall" sites of under 10 dwellings that come forward within the Settlement Boundary during the plan period and not identified elsewhere in the Plan.



DO YOU SUPPORT THIS AMOUNT OF HOUSING GROWTH?



# 6. Housing Sites

## Land at Back Hills

- The site is located next to Botesdale Primary School
- Area = 3.09 hectares
- Outline planning permission granted in August 2018 for 40 dwellings with:
  - associated improvements to public footpaths
  - creation of public open space
  - transfer of an area of woodland to the Parish Council. Use of this land is to be split between the Pre-School / Primary School and for a wildlife wood to be managed by "BARWOODS" (Botesdale and Rickinghall Community Woodlands Project)
  - vehicle access from the B1113 Hall Lane
  - improved pedestrian links to The Street to ensure that the development is integrated into the village.

The Site Concept below illustrates how it could be developed



### Policy B&R 3 – Land at Back Hills

- A site of 3.09 hectares south of Back Hills is allocated for:
- 40 dwellings comprising a mix of single and two storey dwellings and including 35% affordable housing;
  - public open space including an area of community woodland;
  - use by the pre-school and primary school to provide a woodland classroom; and;
  - the retention and improvement of the existing public footpath to provide an improved link to The Street.

## Land north of Gardenhouse Lane

- Mid Suffolk District Council agreed to grant planning permission for up to 42 homes in May 2017
- Illustrative layout identified links to the public footpath and a new hedgerow boundary on the south-east and north-east sides of the site.
- Approval subject to the applicant entering into a Section 106 Planning Obligation for the provision of 35% affordable housing and making a contribution of £6,000 towards bus stop improvements.
- The permission has yet to issued by the District Council.
- Essential that substantive screen planting is provided along the new boundaries that comprises native trees and hedgerows.
- The detailed proposal should make provision for play facilities

The Site Concept below illustrates how it could be developed



### Policy B&R 4 – Land north of Garden House Lane

- A site of 1.59 hectares north of Garden House Lane is allocated for 42 dwellings including 35% affordable housing.
- The development of the site must make provision for:
- direct links to adjoining public rights of way network;
  - a new and substantive tree and hedgerow screen using native species on the south-east and north-east boundaries of the site; and
  - play provision in accordance with the Fields in Trust recommended benchmark guidelines.

## Land east of Rectory Hill

- Outline planning permission for 10 homes approved in February 2018.
- Only the minimum amount of hedgerow required to create a safe vehicle access to the site to be removed.
- New and substantive planting of native species of trees and hedgerows is provided along the boundaries of the site.

The Site Concept to the right illustrates how it could be developed

### Policy B&R 5 – Land east of Rectory Hill

- A site of 0.59 hectares East of Rectory Hill is allocated for 10 dwellings.
- The development of the site must:
- make provision for a new and substantive tree and hedgerow screen using native species on the boundaries of the site; and
  - only remove the absolute minimum hedgerow on the Rectory Hill frontage to provide a safe vehicle access to the site; and
  - provide a new footpath along Rectory Hill highway verge from the site frontage to a point just north of the entrance to The Laurels.



DO YOU SUPPORT THESE POLICIES?



# 7. Housing Sites

## Land to the rear of Willowmere, Garden House Lane

Mid Suffolk approved planning permission for 10 homes in January 2018

- Existing hedgerows and trees must remain and be reinforced in order to reduce the impact of the development on the countryside to the south and west of the site.
- A connection to the adjoining public footpath at the south-west corner of the site must be provided.

The Site Concept below illustrates how it could be developed



### Policy B&R 6 – Land to the rear of Willowmere, Garden House Lane

A site of 0.99 hectares rear of Willowmere, Garden House Lane is allocated for 10 dwellings including 35% affordable housing.

The development of the site must retain the existing trees and hedgerows that form the boundary of the site and make provision to reinforce this with new planting using native species in order to reduce the impact of the development on the surrounding open countryside.

The development must also provide a connection to the adjoining public footpath at the south-west corner of the site.

## Land south of Diss Road

Mid Suffolk approved planning permission for 69 homes in April 2018.

- The permission requires 35% of the homes to be “affordable”
- The development must also provide public open space and children’s play facilities
- Access will be from Diss Road but there must be a footpath link to Chapel Lane.
- A sustainable drainage pond will be needed adjacent to Diss Road to prevent flooding from surface water
- New screen planting will be provided on the southern boundary

The Site Concept below illustrates how it could be developed



### Policy B&R 7 – Land south of Diss Road

A site of 3.53 hectares south of Diss Road is allocated for:

- Up to 69 dwellings including 35% affordable housing; and
- Public open space including children’s play provision in accordance with the Fields in Trust recommended benchmark guidelines.

The development of the site must provide a footpath and cyclepath link to Chapel Lane and screen planting using native species to the boundary between the site and both Park View and Mill Road.



DO YOU SUPPORT THESE POLICIES?



# 8. Housing Policies

## Affordable Housing

Although the allocations in the Plan will provide over 50 homes classified as “affordable”, we want to have the ability to provide additional affordable housing to meet the needs of local residents during the lifetime of the Plan.

As an exception, affordable housing will be allowed outside the Settlement Boundary to meet an identified local need.

Any housing built under this approach would, in the first instance, be offered to those with a demonstrated local connection.

### Policy B&R 8 – Affordable Housing on Rural Exception Sites

Proposals for the development of small-scale affordable housing schemes on rural exception sites outside the Settlement Boundary, where housing would not normally be permitted by other policies, will be supported where there is a proven local need and provided that:

- secure arrangements are made to ensure that initial and subsequent occupation of the dwellings can be restricted to those having an identified local need for affordable housing through the use of appropriate safeguards, including conditions or legal obligations;
- the housing is for people that are in housing need because they are unable to buy or rent properties in the villages at open-market prices;
- the housing is offered, in the first instance, to people with a demonstrated local connection. Where there is no need, a property should then be offered to those with a demonstrated need for affordable housing in neighbouring villages.

These restrictions should be delivered through a legal agreement attached to the planning consent for the housing. Applications for such development will be considered in relation to the appearance and character of the surrounding area, the potential impact on residential amenity and highway safety.

To be acceptable, proposals should demonstrate that a local need exists which cannot be met by applying normal planning policy for the provision of affordable homes in association with market housing. Any application for affordable housing in respect of this policy should be accompanied by a detailed need and the accommodation proposed should contribute to meeting this proven need.

In exceptional circumstances, a small number of market homes will be permitted where it can be demonstrated:

- that no other means of funding the construction of the affordable homes is available; and
- the market housing is subsidiary to the affordable housing element of the proposal and the amount of market housing required is, as demonstrated through a viability assessment, the minimum required to deliver the affordable housing.

Where sites for affordable housing in the countryside are brought forward with an element of market housing, both housing tenures should be built to the same design standards and contribute towards the character of the area.

## House Sizes

- There is a comparative shortfall of three-bedroomed homes in the villages when compared with Mid Suffolk as a whole.
- Providing more three-bedroomed homes will help families grow and remain in the villages.

### Policy B&R 9 – Housing Mix

In all housing developments of ten or more homes, there shall be an emphasis on providing a higher proportion of three-bedroomed homes within the scheme, unless it can be demonstrated that the particular circumstances relating to the tenure of the housing dictate otherwise.

## Housing Space Standards

Some new homes can be too small for modern needs, especially for those downsizing from larger properties.

We want new homes to meet the government recommended minimum space standards.

Currently housebuilders do not have to meet these government standards unless they’re in a planning policy.

Number of bedrooms (B)	Number of bed spaces (persons)	1 storey dwellings m <sup>2</sup>	2 storey dwellings m <sup>2</sup>	3 storey dwellings m <sup>2</sup>	Built-in storage m <sup>2</sup>
1B	1p	39 (37)			1.0
	2p	50	58		1.5
	3p	61	70		2.0
	4p	70	79		2.0
2B	4p	74	84	90	2.5
	5p	86	93	99	2.5
	6p	95	102	108	2.5
3B	5p	90	97	103	3.0
	6p	99	106	112	3.0
	7p	108	116	121	3.0
	8p	117	124	130	3.0
4B	6p	103	110	116	3.5
	7p	112	119	125	3.5
	8p	121	128	134	3.5
5B	7p	116	123	129	4.0
	8p	125	132	138	4.0

Minimum Space Standards (square metres)

### Policy B&R 11 – Housing Space Standards

All new dwellings shall achieve appropriate internal space through adherence to the latest Nationally Described Space Standards. Dwellings should also make adequate provision for the covered storage of all wheelie bins and cycles, in accordance with the adopted cycle parking standards.

## Lifetime Homes

New homes need to address the needs of an ageing population in the design of new homes.

The Lifetime Homes (LTH) standard is a set of 16 design criteria that provide a model for building accessible and adaptable homes and ‘seeks to enable ‘general needs’ housing to provide, either from the outset or through simple and cost-effective adaptation, design solutions that meet the existing and changing needs of diverse households.’

New homes also need to be ready to accept new technology such as superfast broadband and electric vehicles/

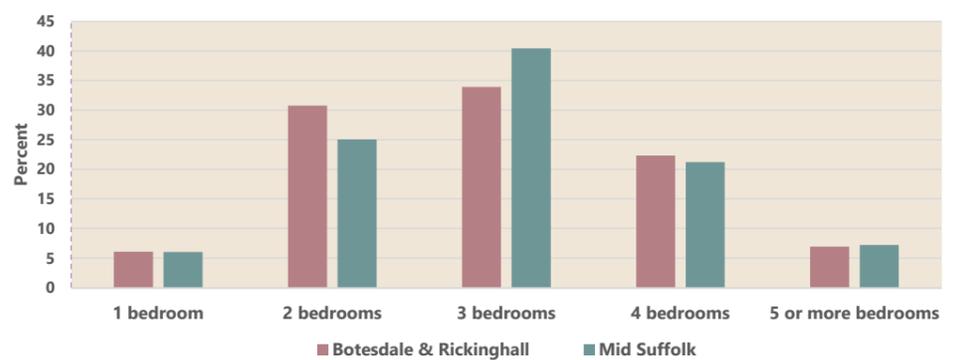
### Policy B&R 10 Delivering homes to meet the needs of all potential occupants

All proposals for new dwellings within the Neighbourhood Plan area shall be designed and built to the Lifetime Homes Standard.

In addition, all new homes shall provide:

- suitable ducting capable of accepting fibre to enable superfast broadband; and
- one electric vehicle charging point per off-street parking space.

House Sizes (2011 Census)



DO YOU SUPPORT THESE POLICIES?



# 9. Natural Environment

## Landscape Setting

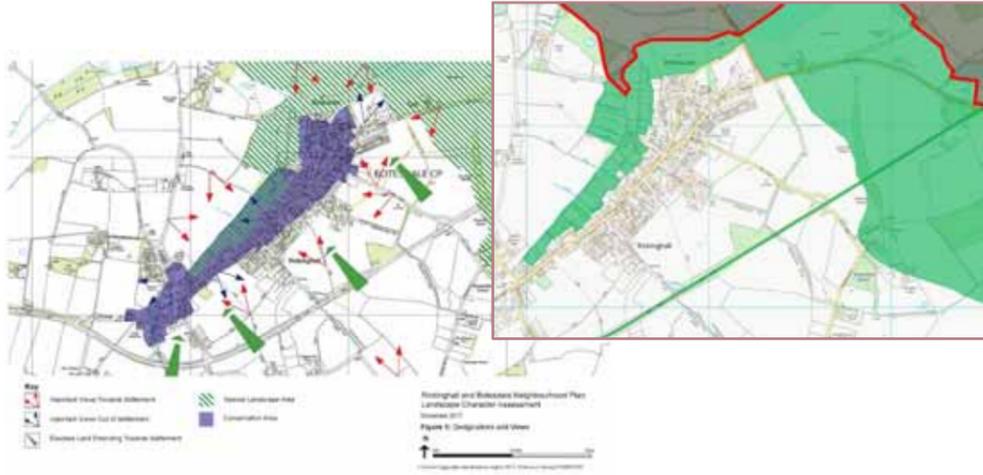
We commissioned a Landscape Appraisal of the Neighbourhood Plan Area to identify important features such as woodland and view.

Land to the north and east of the villages is currently designated in the local plan as a Special Landscape Area (SLA). There is the prospect of the SLA not being retained in the new Joint Local Plan.

A new local designation, the Area of Local Landscape Sensitivity, is made in the Neighbourhood Plan covering the SLA area.

The designation does not, in itself, stop development taking place.

It ensures that any development within the area should be designed to be in harmony with the special characteristics of the area.



## Local Green Spaces

Open spaces make important contributions to the character and setting of the villages and play important roles in providing space for recreation.

Government policy enables neighbourhood plans to designate "Local Green Spaces". The designation should only be used:

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

A number of sites qualify as Local Green Spaces and are proposed for designation in the Neighbourhood Plan. A separate report has been prepared.

Development on these spaces is restricted to that which is essential to these sites, such as that required for utility service providers for telecommunications equipment.

It is not appropriate to designate the sports pitches as Local Green Space as this would restrict the ability to construct changing rooms or equipment stores on the site.

*See the later board for details on how playing fields are protected.*

### Policy B&R 12 – Area of Local Landscape Sensitivity

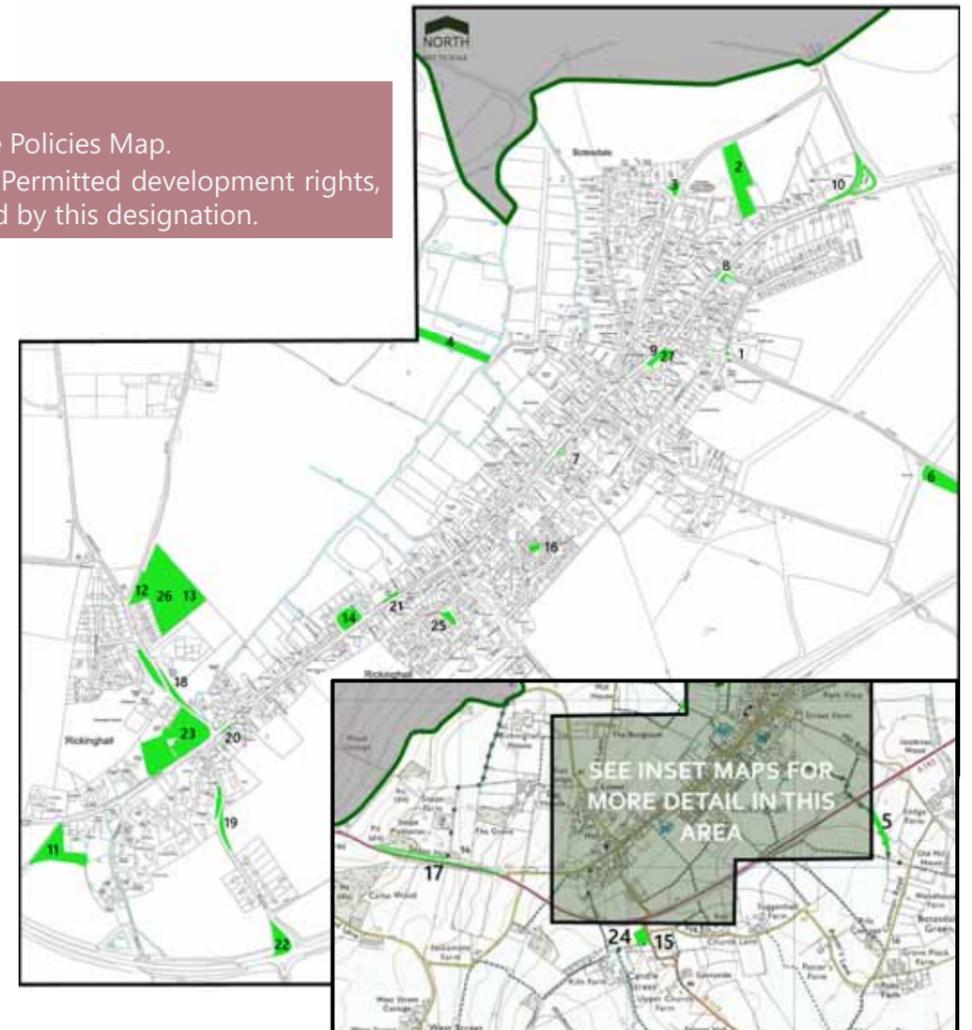
Development proposals in the Area of Local Landscape Sensitivity, as identified on the Policies Map, will be permitted only where they:

- protect or enhance the special landscape qualities of the area, identified in the Landscape Character Assessment; and
- are designed and sited so as to harmonise with the landscape setting.

### B&R 13 – Local Green Spaces

The following Local Green Spaces are designated in this Plan and identified on the Policies Map. Development on these sites will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. Permitted development rights, including the operational requirements of infrastructure providers, are not affected by this designation.

- 1 The Horse Pond or Watering Triangle
- 2 Wood next to Primary School
- 3 Botesdale Knoll
- 4 Fen Lane and verges towards Broomhills
- 5 The Marl Pits
- 6 Millers Orchard, off Mill Road, Botesdale
- 7 Hedge and Verge, between Warren's Lane and Seven Bells, The Street, Botesdale
- 8 Grass Verge adjoining and opposite Parkview Chapel, Botesdale
- 9 Grass Verge by Chapel of Ease, Crown Hill, Botesdale
- 10 Grass Verges by Toll House, Diss Road, Botesdale
- 11 Low Meadow, Rickinghall
- 12 Wherry Land, Rickinghall
- 13 Northfield Wood, off Mill Lane, Rickinghall
- 14 Green space by the Chestnuts, formerly Accommodation Meadow, Rickinghall
- 15 Rickinghall Superior Triangle, Rickinghall
- 16 Ryders Way Green Space, Rickinghall
- 17 Snape Hill, Rickinghall
- 18 Hinderclay Road grass verges, Rickinghall
- 19 Hedges and grass verges on Rectory Hill, Rickinghall
- 20 Green verge outside Rickinghall Street, Rickinghall
- 21 Front of Jubilee House, The Street
- 22 Junction of Rectory Hill and A143
- 23 Churchyard, St Mary's Church, Rickinghall Inferior
- 24 The graveyard St Mary's Church, Rickinghall Superior
- 25 Wheatfields amenity space
- 26 Allotments off Mill Lane, Rickinghall
- 27 Churchyard of Chapel of Ease Botesdale



DO YOU SUPPORT THESE POLICIES?



# 10. Heritage and Design

## Heritage Assets

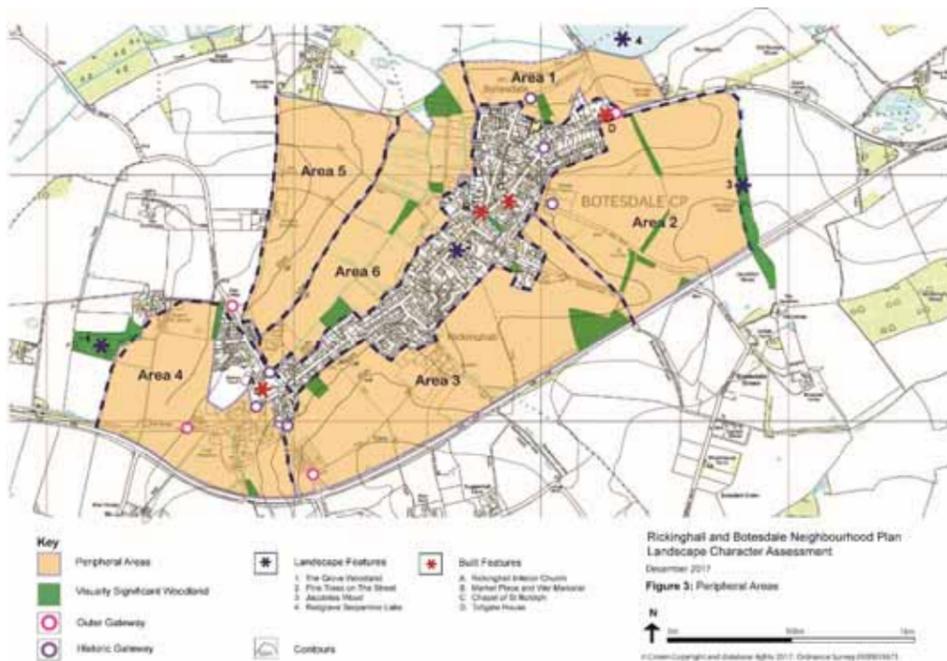
- We already have an extensive Conservation Area centred on The Street and many Listed Buildings.
- As part of the background work on the Plan we have prepared a separate Historic Character Assessment
- We have also identified a large number of buildings that are not Listed but are worthy of being protected as Local Heritage Assets.
- We will pursue the designation of them the relevant authorities.

### Policy B&R 14 – Local Heritage Assets

The retention and protection of local heritage assets and buildings of local significance, including buildings, structures, features and gardens of local interest must be secured.

Proposals for any works that would lead to the loss of or substantial harm to a local heritage asset or a building of local significance should be supported by an appropriate analysis of the significance of the asset together with an explanation of the wider public benefits of the proposal.

Appendix 3 identifies properties and structures



## Design Considerations

- New development should achieve a high-quality design that enhances the unique characteristics of the villages and ensures a better quality of life for residents.
- Unsympathetic and poorly designed development can have a significant detrimental impact on the area.
- While it would not be appropriate to rigidly copy the architectural styles and designs of the village, the Plan does seek to ensure that new development is of high quality and has regard to its surroundings.
- The Landscape Appraisal identified key features which contribute to sense of place and orientation. They include the following:
  - Redgrave Park lake;
  - Jacobites' Wood;
  - Tollgate House (Grade II);
  - Market place and war memorial;
  - Chapel of St Botolph, Botesdale (Grade II\*)
  - Pine trees on The Street;
  - St Mary's Lower Church, Rickinghall Inferior;
  - The Grove woodland;
  - St Mary's Upper Church, Rickinghall Superior;
- It is essential that they are protected from any harmful impact when proposals for new development are considered.

### Policy B&R 15 – Protection of Heritage Assets

To ensure the conservation and enhancement of the villages' heritage assets, proposals must:

- preserve or enhance the significance of the heritage assets of the villages, their setting and the wider built environment, including views into, within and out of the conservation area as identified on the Policies Map;
- retain buildings and spaces, the loss of which would cause harm to the character or appearance of the conservation area;
- contribute to the villages local distinctiveness, built form and scale of its heritage assets, as described in the Landscape Character Appraisal, Built Environment Character Appraisal and the Botesdale and Rickinghall Conservation Area Appraisal, through the use of appropriate design and materials;
- be of an appropriate scale, form, height, massing, alignment and detailed design which respects the area's character, appearance and its setting;
- demonstrate a clear understanding of the significance of the asset and of the wider context in which the heritage asset sits, alongside an assessment of the potential impact of the development on the heritage asset and its context; and
- provide clear justification, through the submission of a heritage statement, for any works that would lead to harm or substantial harm to a heritage asset yet be of wider substantial public benefit, through detailed analysis of the asset and the proposal.

Proposals will not be supported where the harm caused as a result of the impact of a proposed scheme is not justified by the public benefits that would be provided.

Where a planning proposal affects a heritage asset it must be accompanied by a Heritage Statement identifying, as a minimum, the significance of the asset, the development proposal and an assessment of the impact of the proposal on heritage assets.

### Policy B&R 16 – Design Considerations

Proposals for new development must reflect the local characteristics and circumstances in the Neighbourhood Plan area and create and contribute to a high quality, safe and sustainable environment. Planning applications should, as appropriate to the proposal, demonstrate how they satisfy the requirements of the Development Design Checklist in Appendix 4 of this Plan and, as appropriate to the proposal:

- recognise and address the key features, characteristics, landscape/building character, local distinctiveness and special qualities of the area and/or building as identified in the Character Assessment and, where necessary, prepare a landscape character appraisal to demonstrate this;
- maintain or create the villages' sense of place and/or local character avoiding, where possible, cul-de-sac developments which do not reflect the lane hierarchy and form of the settlement;
- not involve the loss of gardens and important open, green or landscaped areas which make a significant contribution to the character and appearance of that part of the village;
- incorporate sustainable design and construction measures and energy efficiency measures including, where feasible, ground/air source heat pumps, solar panels and grey / rainwater harvesting;
- taking mitigation measures into account, not affect adversely:
  - any historic character, architectural or archaeological heritage assets of the site and its surroundings, including those locally identified heritage assets listed in Appendix 3;
  - important landscape characteristics including trees and ancient hedgerows and other prominent topographical features as set out in the Character Assessment;
  - identified important views into, out of or within the village as identified on the Policies Map;
  - sites, habitats, species and features of ecological interest;
  - the amenities of adjacent areas by reason of noise, smell, vibration, overlooking, overshadowing, loss of light, other pollution (including light pollution), or volume or type of vehicular activity generated; and/or residential amenity;
- not locate sensitive development where its users and nearby residents would be significantly and adversely affected by noise, smell, vibration, or other forms of pollution from existing sources, unless adequate and appropriate mitigation can be implemented;
- produce designs that respect the character, scale, density of the locality;
- produce designs, in accordance with standards, that maintain or enhance the safety of the highway network ensuring that all vehicle parking is provided within the plot and seek always to ensure permeability through new housing areas, connecting any new development into the heart of the existing settlement;
- wherever possible ensure that development faces onto existing lanes retaining the rural character and creates cross streets or new back streets in keeping with the settlement's hierarchy of routes;
- not result in water run-off that would add-to or create surface water flooding.

DO YOU SUPPORT THESE POLICIES?

# 11. Jobs and the Economy

- At the time of the 2011 Census, over 500 people worked in the villages.
- An increasing number work from home but there are also businesses and services that attract people to travel into the parishes for work.
- It is important that existing employment opportunities are protected and given the opportunity to expand if they're not having a detrimental impact on the environment or infrastructure, including roads.
- One of the main concentrations of jobs can be found at Rickinghall Business Centre on Finningham Road. These former agricultural buildings have been converted to provide units for a number of small businesses and provide employment opportunities for residents from the local area. The site is identified for retention as a business park.
- The Neighbourhood Plan supports the creation of new jobs where such development wouldn't have a detrimental impact on the character of the area, the local road network and the amenity of residents living near the site or on the access route to the site.
- It is envisaged that employment premises would remain small in terms of the size of the premises and the number of people employed on the site.
- Where new commercial development, including farm diversification, is proposed it is important that buildings reflect the rural and agricultural building styles typically found in the area and the landscape within which they sit.

## Policy B&R 17 – Retention of Existing Employment Sites

Proposals for non-employment uses on sites and premises currently or last used for such purposes and that are expected to have an adverse effect on employment generation, will only be permitted where one or more of the following criteria has been met (as appropriate to the site/premises and location):

- there is a sufficient supply of alternative and suitable employment land available to meet local employment job growth requirements;
- evidence can be provided that genuine attempts have been made to sell/let the site in its current use, and that no suitable and viable alternative employment uses can be found or are likely to be found in the foreseeable future;
- the existing use has created over-riding environmental problems (e.g. noise, odours or traffic) and permitting an alternative use would be a substantial environmental benefit that would outweigh the loss of an employment site;
- an alternative use or mix of uses would assist in urban regeneration and offer greater benefits to the community in meeting local business and employment needs;
- it is for an employment related support facility such as employment training/education, workplace crèche or café;
- an alternative use or mix of uses would provide other sustainability benefits that would outweigh the loss of an employment site.

The retention and intensification of employment uses at Rickinghall Business Centre on Finningham Road, as identified on the Policies Map, will be supported provided that proposals do not have a detrimental impact on the local landscape character, the amenity of residents or will generate unacceptable levels of vehicular traffic on local roads.

## Rickinghall Business Centre



## Policy B&R 18 – New businesses and employment

Proposals for new business development will be supported where sites are located within the settlement boundary identified on the Policies Map, unless the proposal:

- is located on land designated in the development plan for business uses; and/or it
- relates to small scale leisure or tourism activities, or other forms of commercial/employment-related development or agriculture related development of a scale and nature appropriate to a countryside location and that can satisfactorily demonstrate a need to be located outside the settlement boundary.

Where possible, business developments should be sited in existing buildings or on areas of previously developed land and be of a size and scale that do not adversely affect the character, highways, infrastructure, residential amenity and environment of the Neighbourhood Plan area, including the important characteristics identified in the Landscape Character Appraisal and the Historic Character Appraisal.



## Policy B&R 19 – Farm Diversification

Applications for new employment uses of redundant traditional farm buildings will be supported, providing it has been demonstrated that they are no longer viable or needed for farming. Re-use for economic development purposes is preferred, but proposals which harm the rural economy will not be supported.

DO YOU SUPPORT THESE POLICIES?



# 12. Services and Facilities

## Village Services and Facilities

Community facilities and services in the villages make an important contribution towards maintaining the health and wellbeing, social, educational, spiritual, recreational, leisure and cultural needs of residents, and in reducing the need to travel.

The retention of these facilities and services is therefore essential to the livelihood of the villages and helps reduce rural isolation and social exclusion.

However, it is recognised that demands change over time and it would be unreasonable to require the retention of facilities if there is no longer a proven need or demand for them. In such circumstances it might be appropriate for those uses to be lost where specific criteria can be met.

### Policy B&R 20 – Protecting existing services and facilities

Proposals that would result in the loss of valued facilities or services which support a local community (or premises last used for such purposes) will only be permitted where:

- it can be demonstrated that the current use is not economically viable nor likely to become viable. Where appropriate, supporting financial evidence should be provided including any efforts to advertise the premises for sale for a minimum of 12 months; and
- it can be demonstrated, through evidenced research, that there is no local demand for the use and that the building/site is not needed for any alternative social, community or leisure use; or
- alternative facilities and services are available, or replacement provision is made, of at least equivalent standard, in a location that is accessible to the community it serves with good access by public transport or by cycling or walking.



## Public Rights of Way

The villages have a good network of public rights of way.

They provide opportunities for getting around the village as well as reaching out into the wider countryside.

It is important that these routes are maintained and enhanced where possible.

New development may provide the possibility to extend the network and this will be explored where appropriate.

### Policy B&R 22 – Public Rights of Way

Development which would adversely affect the character or result in the loss of existing or proposed rights of way, will not be permitted unless alternative provision or diversions can be arranged which are at least as attractive, safe and convenient for public use. This will apply to rights of way for pedestrian, cyclist, or horse rider use. Improvements and additions to such rights of way shall be delivered as an integral part of new development to enable new or improved links to be created within the settlement, between settlements and/or providing access to the countryside or green infrastructure sites as appropriate.

## Sport and Recreation Facilities

Opportunities for participating in exercise are important to the health of residents and reducing pressures on the health service.

The Neighbourhood Plan can play an important role in making sure that there are sufficient and adequate services in the villages to meet the needs of current and future residents.

### Policy B&R 21 – Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities

Proposals for the provision, enhancement and/or expansion of amenity, sport or recreation open space or facilities will be permitted subject to compliance with other Policies in this and other adopted Local Plans. Development which will result in the loss of existing amenity, sport or recreation open space or facilities will not be allowed unless:

- it can be demonstrated that the space or facility is surplus to requirement against the local planning authority's standards for the particular location, and the proposed loss will not result in a likely shortfall during the plan period; or
- replacement for the space or facilities lost is made available, of at least equivalent quantity and quality, and in a suitable location to meet the needs of users of the existing space or facility.

Any replacement provision should take account of the needs of the settlement where the development is taking place, and the current standards of open space and sports facility provision adopted by the local planning authority.

Where necessary to the acceptability of the development, the local planning authority will require developers of new housing, office, retail and other commercial and mixed development to provide open space including play areas, formal sport/recreation areas, amenity areas and where appropriate, indoor sports facilities or to provide land and a financial contribution towards the cost and maintenance of existing or new facilities, as appropriate. These facilities will be secured through the use of conditions and/or planning obligations.

Clubhouses, pavilions, car parking and ancillary facilities must be of a high standard of design and internal layout. The location of such facilities must be well related and sensitive to the topography, character and uses of the surrounding area, particularly when located in or close to residential areas. Proposals which give rise to intrusive floodlighting will not be permitted.



DO YOU SUPPORT THESE POLICIES?



# 13. Jobs and the Economy

Community Actions do not form part of the formal “development plan” but identify local initiatives to address issues and concerns raised during the community engagement undertaken in preparing the Plan. The community actions are identified differently from the planning policies to avoid confusion. The background behind the proposed actions is set out in the Neighbourhood Plan document.

## Community Action 1 – Community Land Trust

The Parish Council should explore the establishment of a Community Land Trust for Botesdale and Rickinghall with a main aim of delivering, and securing for the long term, affordable housing that meets the needs of residents that need it.

## Community Action 2 – Natural and Wildlife Features and Habitats recording

The Parish Councils will support and encourage the preparation of a map of locally important natural and wildlife features for use in informing the Parish Councils responses to consultations on future planning applications.

## Community Action 3 – Blue Plaque Scheme

The feasibility of creating a Blue Plaque scheme in the villages will be investigated that will:

- i) seek to identify people and their associated buildings that should be recognised;
- ii) identify ways of funding the project;
- iii) get property owners’ consent to having a plaque;
- iv) encourage local people to design the plaques; and
- v) use local artists/potters to manufacture the plaques.

## Community Action 4 – Local History Information Boards

Opportunities for providing history information boards, designed and made by local artists / craftspeople, to be located in the Rickinghall churchyards and Botesdale Market Place will be explored.

## Community Action 5 - Archive / Museum Facility

Opportunities for the provision of a dedicated building or room for the retention and display of village archives and finds will be explored.

## Community Action 6 – Assets of Community Value

The Parish Councils will seek to have Assets of Community Value designated where they meet the government criteria and are of importance to the village.

## Community Action 7 – Additional Community Facilities

The Parish Councils will seek to identify suitable land for a purpose-built multi-use building for additional facilities for community use. This will be in parallel with initiating further consultation with the local community regarding:

- how to develop the proposed building and the associated multi-sports / play area;
- negotiation with builders over and above the use of the Community Infrastructure Levy; and
- the challenge of funding the ongoing maintenance of the new facilities.

## Community Action 8 – Post Office Counter Services

The Parish Councils will explore innovative opportunities for the provision of Post Office counter services in the villages.

## Community Action 9 – After School Club

The Parish Councils will seek to work with the Primary School , the Botesdale After School Club and other organisations to identify suitable premises for provision of a self - contained building to accommodate the expansion of need for wrap around care as the local population increases.

## Community Action 10 – Permissive Paths

The Parish Councils will seek to work with landowners to establish permissive paths where people can walk, cycle and/or ride horses on the basis that the path is not a formally designated public right of way.

## Community Action 11 – Safe Cycle Routes

The Parish Councils will seek to work with the County Highways Department and neighbouring Parish Councils to establish a network of safe and waymarked cycle routes connecting the villages and further afield to settlements such as Diss and Thornham.

## Community Action 12 – Street Clutter

We will seek to find ways of improving the quality of the High Street environment through the reduction of unnecessary clutter.

## Community Action 13 – Community Infrastructure Levy Delivery Plan

The Parish Councils will work together to coordinate the preparation of an Infrastructure Delivery Plan that has regard to the projects and requirements arising from the content of this Neighbourhood Plan. The Delivery Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis.

DO YOU SUPPORT THE COMMUNITY ACTIONS?



# 14. What Next?

## Consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan ends on **21 December**

At the end of the consultation the Steering Group will review all the submitted comments, including those from organisations such as Suffolk County Council, Natural England, Historic England, the District Council, as well as your comments before deciding if any amendments to the Plan are required.

At the same time a number of required supporting documents will be prepared and submitted to the District Council alongside the Final Draft Plan – known as the “Submission Plan”.

### Further Consultation

The District Council will carry out a further six-week consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan before it is submitted to an Independent Examiner.

### Examination

The Independent Examiner will review the Plan and consider any objections to it. The Examiner must consider:

- whether having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to approve the neighbourhood plan,
- the approval of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development,
- the approval of the neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the Mid Suffolk Local Plan,
- the approval of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations, and

The Examiner’s Report will recommend whether the Plan, possibly with amendments, should proceed to a Referendum in the village.

### Referendum

If the Examiner recommends that a Referendum on the Plan should take place, this will be organised by the District Council in the same way as a local election. Notice will be given of the Referendum and all those living in the parishes that are entitled to vote will be asked whether the Neighbourhood Plan should be approved. No matter how many turn out to vote, if more votes say “Yes” then the Neighbourhood Plan will be adopted.

You can submit your comments on the Draft Neighbourhood Plan online at [www.botesdale.onesuffolk.net](http://www.botesdale.onesuffolk.net) or [www.rickinghall.onesuffolk.net](http://www.rickinghall.onesuffolk.net) or, if you don’t have the internet, by completing a comments form and sending it to the address on the form

## Your Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Jo Broadbent  
Sue Coe  
Jordan Fox  
Clive Matthews  
Diana Maywhort

Phil Schofield  
Desmond Bavington-Lowe  
William Sargeant (Botesdale Parish Council)  
Robin Brown (Rickinghall Parish Council)

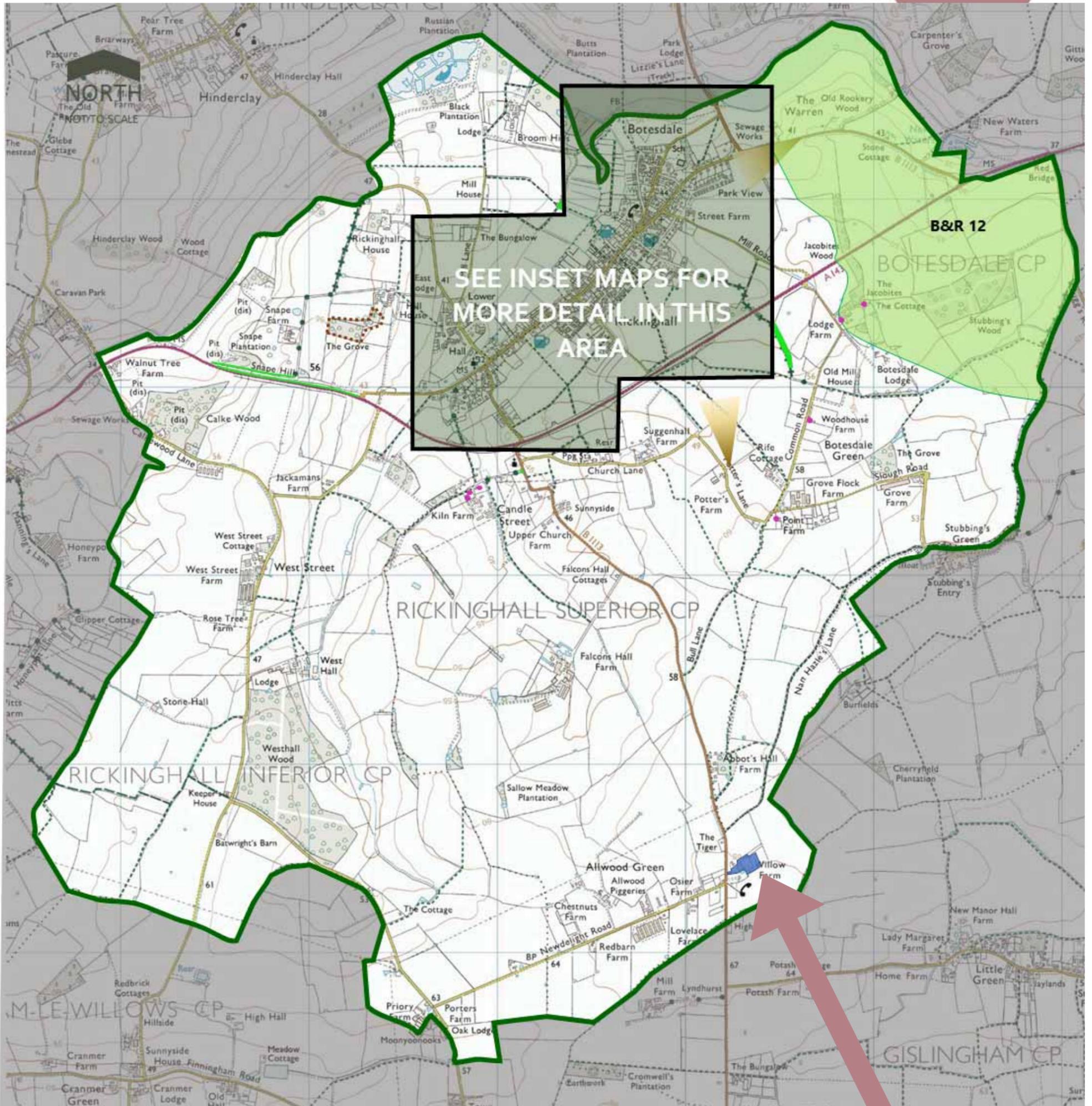
The Steering Group are supported by their consultant,  
Ian Poole,  
Places4People  
Planning Consultancy



Thank you for visiting the Neighbourhood Plan consultation event today



# Policies Maps



## KEY

-  Settlement Boundary (B&R1 B&R2)
-  Housing Site (B&R3, B&R4, B&R5, B&R6, B&R7)
-  Existing Employment Site (B&R 17)
-  Conservation Area (B&R 15)
-  Local Heritage Assets (B&R14, B&R15)
-  Local Green Space (B&R13)
-  Area of Local Landscape Sensitivity (B&R12)
-  Sport and Recreation Facilities (B&R21)
-  Important Views (B&R 15, B&R16)
-  Important Woodland (B&R 16)
-  Plan Area Boundary



# Policies Maps

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