



# **Hargrave**

# **Neighbourhood Plan**

## **2017-2031**

**REFERENDUM VERSION**

MAY 2018

HARGRAVE PARISH COUNCIL



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# 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Localism Act 2011 introduced new rights and powers to allow local communities to shape new development in their community by preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan, which can establish general planning policies for the development and use of land in the neighbourhood. This document is a Neighbourhood Development Plan (the Plan) as defined in the Act and has been prepared by Hargrave Parish Council, which is a qualifying body as defined by the Localism Act 2011.
- 1.2 The Plan focuses on local planning related matters and provides the village with greater opportunities than ever before to influence change and development within our area, based upon a fair and democratic consultation process supported by St Edmundsbury Borough Council and Hargrave Parish Council.
- 1.3 The local community wishes to preserve the village as much as possible. It has a charming and unique character but is vulnerable to external change and, hence, needs to be protected and preserved. There is a recognition that outside pressures will have a growing impact upon the village, and we will need to be prepared to respond.
- 1.4 There will undoubtedly be pressures from house building and local development over time. This Plan contains our collective response to managing such pressures in Hargrave and, together with the local plan, guides possible new building, its location and its design. Opportunities for appropriate development and investment will be considered in a fair and balanced manner, each case on its own planning merits having regard to the policies of the neighbourhood plan and the local plan.
- 1.5 The small details also matter. How to keep and maintain our village greens and verges in the best of condition and appearance are important challenges to us all. These are shared responsibilities which, tackled together, represent the best options to secure a healthy future for the village for years to come.
- 1.6 The Plan is structured to provide information about the neighbourhood plan process; the village's distinct character, history and geography; and the Vision, Objectives and Plan. The Plan itself contains planning policies and community actions. The latter do not form part of the 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.

## Why a Neighbourhood Plan for Hargrave?

- 1.7 The genesis for Hargrave's Neighbourhood Plan arose from four separate but related events:
  - 1) In 2013 the Parish Council undertook a survey of villagers' opinions across a range of local interests and issues and the results were published in the Village Review 2013. It showed keen interest in the preservation, protection and enhancement of the natural and built environment, with little appetite for significant change to Hargrave's distinctive character. The challenge to the Parish Council was how to respond to local priorities within the Borough-wide, largely generic planning policy framework of St Edmundsbury's local plan documents.
  - 2) The local plan makes very little reference to Hargrave. The document removed the Village's settlement boundary, consigning Hargrave to the lowest level of settlement hierarchy and, in the view of the Parish Council, constraining the future evolution of this 1,000 year old rural settlement. The Parish Council was concerned that this would negatively impact on the village's future vitality and viability.
  - 3) In February 2014 two Parish Councillors attended a seminar in Lavenham on "Neighbourhood Planning & Your Community". From the information given on this day it was apparent that a Neighbourhood Plan offered just the sort of vehicle to address the emerging issues outlined in (1) and (2) above; to craft local planning policies and community actions to address local priorities within the overarching Borough-wide policy framework of Vision 2031.
  - 4) A small working group was established to examine this opportunity and their preliminary findings presented to the 55 villagers attending the Annual Parish Meeting in May 2014 with a recommendation to continue investigations. The meeting endorsed this recommendation.

- 1.8 The key stages in the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan to date are listed below.
- July 2014 onwards** – the working group has been expanded to 7, 3 Parish Councillors and 4 villagers. It has met on a number of occasions.
- July 2014 onwards** – open Neighbourhood Plan briefing established on the village website <http://www.zen105193.zen.co.uk/nplan/> (subsequently transferred to <http://hargrave-suffolk.co.uk/>)
- July 2014 onwards** – regular liaison has been established with the Borough Council planning officers and support identified and received. Contact made with other community groups such as the local Housing Association.
- July 2014 onwards** – County Councillor briefed and financial support granted.
- July 2014 onwards** – Informal liaison with adjacent parishes of Ousden, Depden, Chevington and Barrow.
- May 2015** – a draft Vision and Objectives presented to the Annual Parish Meeting and approved by the 50 villagers present.
- September 2015** – Neighbourhood Plan Area submitted to the Borough Council for approval. Approved
- May 2016** – more detailed objectives presented to attendees at the Annual Parish Meeting and approved.
- November 2016** – following a competitive process, professional planning consultant appointed to advise on, and support the preparation and processing of, the Neighbourhood Plan.
- April 2017** – grant for the Neighbourhood Plan preparation secured from Locality.
- May 2017** – Annual Parish Meeting, at which final options for policies and actions were displayed and residents’ comments sought ahead of drafting Neighbourhood Plan.
- September 2017** – Pre-submission consultation stage of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- January 2018** – Plan submitted to St Edmundsbury Borough Council
- February 2018** – Submission consultation by St Edmundsbury Borough Council
- April 2018** – Examination by Independent Examiner
- July 2018** – Referendum
- 1.9 The Pre-submission consultation stage comprised considerable and widespread consultation both in the village and to a wider audience, as detailed in the separate Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Statement. Following the pre-submission consultation stage, the Working Group reviewed all the comments and made the necessary amendments to the Draft Neighbourhood Plan. The Parish Council subsequently approved the submission of the Plan to St Edmundsbury Borough Council to undertake a further round of consultation prior to an independent examiner being appointed to examine the content of the neighbourhood plan. The Examination was undertaken by Ann Skippers BSc (Hons) MRTPI FRSA AoU and the Examiner’s Report was published on 8 May 2018.



### Who are the Authors of Hargrave's Neighbourhood Plan?

- 1.10 From the beginning of the above timeline, a working group of volunteers was established outside the Parish Council to investigate, research, formulate and progress the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan. The members come from a variety of backgrounds, including banking, surveying, architecture, accountancy, industry and planning but all sharing a passion for their village. As at September 2017 the members are:

**Colin Painter (chairman)**

**Peter Reddick**

**Doug Gidney**

**James Perry**

**Simon de Laat**

**Ron Ambridge**

**Paul Rogers**

- 1.11 The working group are supported by their consultant, Ian Poole, Director of Places4People Planning Consultancy. Photographs in this Plan have been contributed by Richard Jozefowski, Places4People Planning Consultancy, Paul Rogers and Ben Hamilton-Baillie of Hamilton-Baillie Associates

## 2. The Plan Area and Planning Policy Context

2.1 The Hargrave Neighbourhood Plan must:

- i. have appropriate regard to national planning policy;
- ii. be in general conformity with strategic policies in the development plan for the local area and contribute to sustainable development; and
- iii. be compatible with European Union (EU) obligations and human rights requirements.

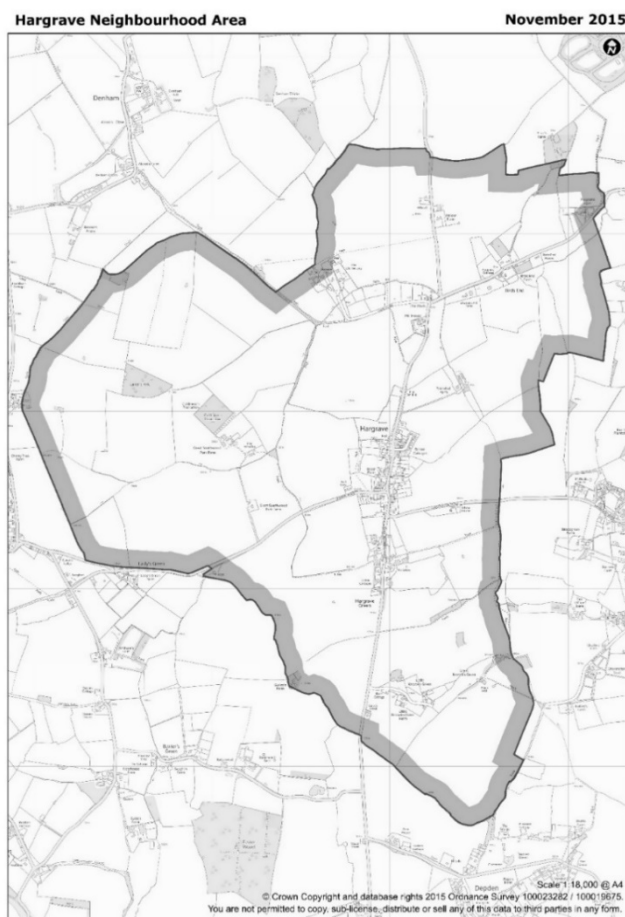
2.2 The Neighbourhood Plan Area was designated by St Edmundsbury Borough Council on 18 November 2015. It followed a six-week consultation and covers the whole of the parish, as identified on the map below. There are no other designated neighbourhood plan areas within this boundary and the Parish Council is the “appropriate body” responsible for the preparation of the neighbourhood plan for this area.

2.3 At the time of the preparation of this Neighbourhood Plan the following local plans relevant to the area were in place:

- a. St Edmundsbury Core Strategy (2010)
- b. St Edmundsbury Rural Vision 2031 Local Plan document (2014)
- c. Joint Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury Development Management Policies Local Plan document (2015)

2.4 The **Core Strategy** primarily sets the strategic planning framework for the borough identifying the scale and broad location of planned growth for the period to 2031. Policy CS<sub>4</sub> identifies the settlement hierarchy of the local plan directing most growth to the towns of Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill, with some minor growth identified for Key Service Centres and Rural Service Centres. It also designated a large number of villages as “Infill Villages”. Hargrave, along with other smaller villages across the borough, was designated as “countryside” due to their lack of services and facilities at the time the plan was prepared. As such, it was considered that Hargrave was an unsustainable location for development due to the lack of services and facilities.

2.5 **Rural Vision 2031** reaffirmed the Core Strategy approach, primarily addressing the allocation of development sites in Key and Rural Service Centres. However, the document also includes a number of aspirations for the rural parts of St Edmundsbury that have been taken into consideration in preparing this Plan.



*1 Designated Neighbourhood Area*



The vision for the rural areas is that, by 2031:

*Well designed, safe and integrated sustainable communities will provide appropriate housing to meet the needs of the local people.*

*There will be a range of thriving and accessible local rural services, local employment opportunities, community, leisure and cultural facilities, and open spaces which will be well connected to nearby towns.*

*The unique and special qualities of the natural and built environment have been protected and enhanced wherever possible.*

*There will be excellent transport options for pedestrians, cyclists and users of public transport and new development will have regard to the local environmental and infrastructure capacity*

2.6 The **Joint Development Management Policies** local plan document did recognise that the “countryside” villages could offer some opportunities for limited development that would meet a local need without contradicting the overall sustainability of the Core Strategy. Policy DM27 allows the development of plots within a group of 10 or more dwellings for a single or a pair of semi-detached dwellings. This policy applies to Hargrave.

2.7 The **National Planning Policy Framework** (NPPF) sets out the Government’s high-level planning framework which must be taken in to account in the preparation of development plan documents and when deciding planning applications. The Framework sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

2.8 Paragraph 14 states:

*“At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking. For plan-making this means that:*

- *local planning authorities should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area;*
- *Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs, with sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change, unless:*
  - *any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or*
  - *specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.”*

## Plan Period, Monitoring and Review

2.9 The Hargrave Neighbourhood Plan will run concurrently with the St Edmundsbury Local Plan documents identified above until superseded by the strategic policies of any new local plan documents that include the area. It will apply for the period 2017 - 2031 and reflects the identified needs and aspirations of the local community as understood at the time of its preparation. It is recognised that current challenges and concerns are likely to change over the plan period. Hargrave Parish Council, as the Qualifying Body, will be responsible for maintaining and periodically revisiting the Plan to ensure relevance and to monitor delivery.

### 3. Hargrave's Character, History and Geography

#### *Haragrava (according to the Little Domesday Book 1086)*

- 3.1 The parish is very rural in nature having an area of just over 720 hectares and sitting within a landscape reliant on arable farming and, to a lesser extent, equine establishments. The population in the 2011 Census was recorded as 310 resulting in a density of just 0.4 persons per hectare compared with 1.7 per hectare across the whole of St Edmundsbury.
- 3.2 The nearest large villages with a higher level of services are Barrow (2 ½ miles to the north) and Wickhambrook (3 ½ miles to the south). The nearest town is Bury St Edmunds, which is seven miles to the east while the smaller town of Newmarket is nine miles to the west.
- 3.3 The roots of Hargrave lie hidden in the Dark Ages but we can be sure that in 1086 (Domesday date) Aelfgyth, a Free Woman of Bury St Edmunds, was resident in a village of 17 households with a church, five plough teams and numerous livestock. In short, Haragrava was a regular rural village based on subsistence farming and feudal hierarchy.<sup>1</sup>
- 3.4 For the next seven hundred and fifty years not a lot changed as the industrial revolution had little direct impact on Hargrave; even the coming of the train kept a respectful distance. The population grew and subsistence strip farming was swept away by the Enclosure Acts transforming the landscape. The village had three centres of population - around the church and Bird's End, Hargrave Green (now just called Hargrave and the village centre), and Knowle's Green. These, together with The Grove, remain distinct centres today, albeit that the areas around the church and at Bird's End are now distinctly separate.
- 3.5 By the mid-19th century the village was still inward looking and very much focused on agriculture and supporting services. In 1844 the population had grown to 573 with a wide range of skills - tricker, thatcher, miller, shoemaker and a twice weekly "carrier" to Bury St Edmunds. These inhabitants probably still carried the genes of Aelfgyth. They married within the village and died here.
- 3.6 The great agricultural depression of the late 19th century and the toll wreaked by the two world wars (13 residents died in the two wars) meant we entered the second half of the 20th century with a population halved from that of 1844. The old certainties of son following father into the fields disappeared as the population was more educated and, more importantly, mobile. Farming was revolutionised by mechanisation in the 1940's and 1950's thus reducing the need firstly for skilled labour and later for unskilled labour and the workforce looked outside the village for employment. This is one of the biggest changes in the history of Hargrave. No longer do men quench their thirst on the way back from the fields at the three pubs that existed at the time and nor do they need the services of a blacksmith.



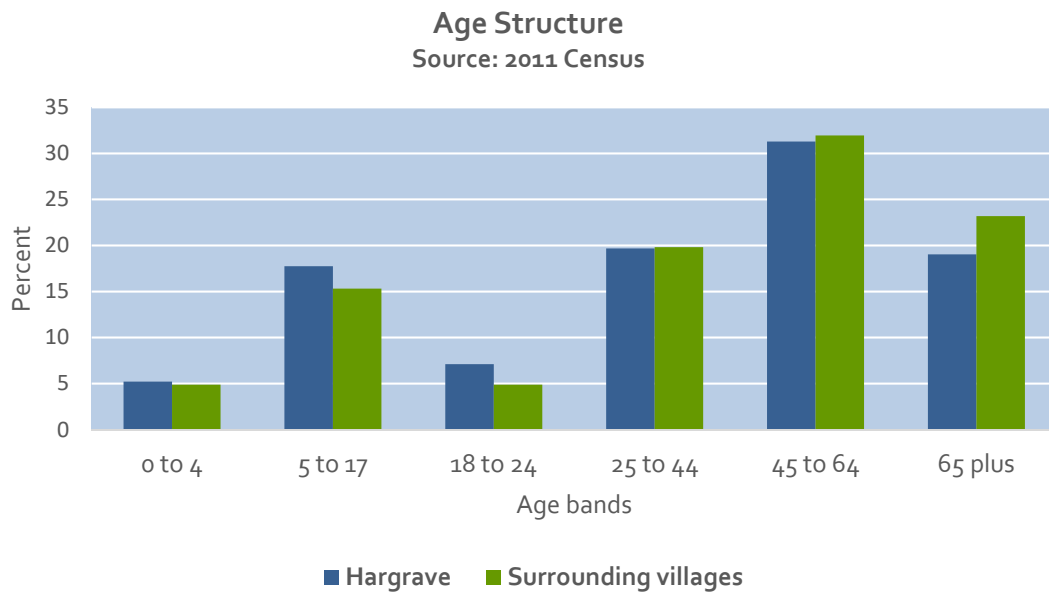
<sup>1</sup> Sources. Public Records Office. Domesday Book. Whites Suffolk 1844. PO directory 1865

- 3.7 In the 21st century we have evolved from an inward looking mono-industry village based on the seasons to an outward looking community where most employment is now outside of the village. We have become a markedly more affluent and ageing village, although since the turn of the millennium we have seen a significant increase in the number of school age children in the population.



## 4. Local Issues and Characteristics

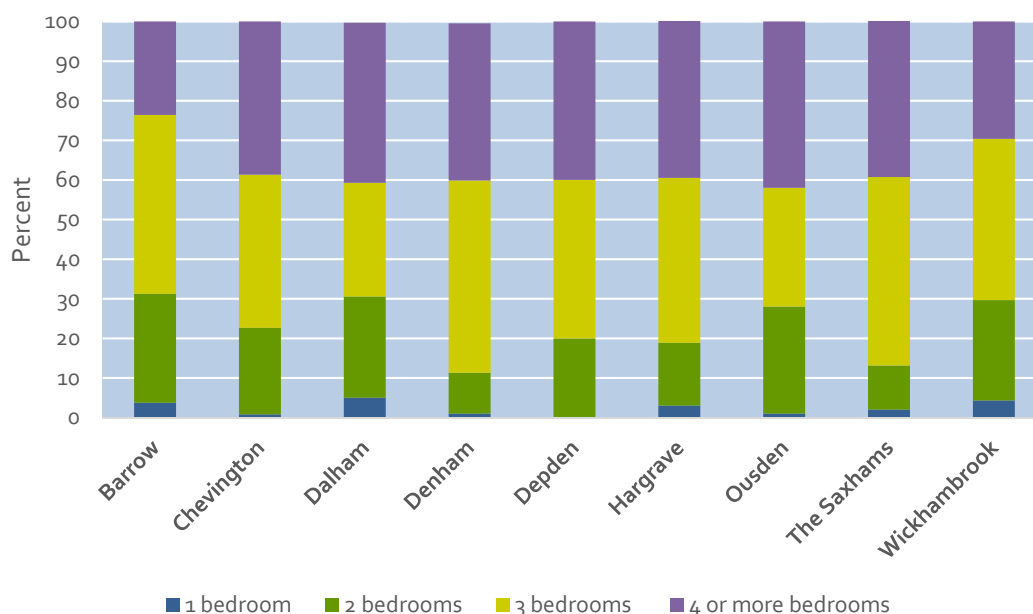
- 4.1 The most recent population estimate shows that Hargrave had a population of 291 in 2015, less than half what the population was in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. More recently the population of the village has fluctuated between 228 in 1961 and 310 in 2011.
- 4.2 The age profile of residents in the village shows that the proportion of younger people (up to 24 years old) is higher than compared with the surrounding villages. Thirty percent of the residents were aged under 24 at the time of the 2011 Census, compared with 25% in the villages that surround Hargrave.



- 4.3 Hargrave has a significantly higher proportion of larger homes when compared with the whole of St Edmundsbury. Forty percent of homes in the village have four or more bedrooms compared with 22% across the borough. However, there is a much smaller proportion of smaller homes with only 18% having one or two bedrooms compared with 33% across the borough. While this is not unusual given the size of the village, it does demonstrate that there are few opportunities in the village either for young families or for people to downsize but remain in Hargrave.



**House sizes**  
Source: 2011 Census



## Economic activity

- 4.4 Although there are no major employers in the village the 2011 Census recorded that over 70 people worked in Hargrave including over 40 people travelling into the village to work. That situation is, unfortunately, unlikely to be the same today as some key businesses like Go-Ape and David Pettit Engineering have since ceased trading in the village. A sizeable proportion of the village residents work from home, while the majority that work out of the village do so in either St Edmundsbury or Forest Heath districts.

## Landscape setting

- 4.5 The village is close to the highest point in Suffolk and, as a consequence, enjoys many fine views out of the village. The landscape therefore plays an important part in defining the character and environment of the built-up areas. Across Suffolk a Landscape Character Assessment has been undertaken that identifies the many varied types of landscape found across the county. In the Neighbourhood Plan Area there are three distinct character areas, defined as:
- Undulating Ancient Farmlands
  - Undulating Estate Farmlands; and
  - Wooded Chalk Slopes
- 4.6 Typical of these landscapes are the dispersed settlement pattern of loosely clustered villages, hamlets and isolated farmsteads within an undulating landscape with ancient woodlands. The villages in this area are often associated with greens or former greens and this feature remains and has shaped the built-up area of Hargrave. The distinctive features of these typologies have been used to inform the objectives and policies of this Plan.

4.7 There are relatively few landscape or built environment designations in Hargrave. Although there is no conservation area, there are a number of Listed Buildings located around the older parts of the village, especially in the vicinity of The Green. Suffolk County Council maintains the Historic Environment Record, which comprises a database of information on recorded archaeological sites in the County. Non-designated archaeological heritage assets would be managed through the National Planning Policy Framework, and Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service advises that there should be early consultation of the Historic Environment Record and assessment of the archaeological potential of the area at an appropriate stage in the design of new developments, in order that the requirements of the NPPF and Local Plan policies are met. Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service is happy to advise on the level of assessment and appropriate stages to be undertaken. Coldtrench Wood and Carter's Park Wood, to the west of the village centre, are probably remnants of middle age deer parks and are protected by Tree Preservation Orders. There is also a Tree Preservation Order on the eastern edge of Barrow Hill and adjoining Willow Farm. An isolated tree is protected in School Cottages. Furthermore, the verges of Barrow Hill are a County Wildlife Site.



## Flooding

- 4.8 Birds End and The Wash, in particular, sit at the bottom of steep slopes and feature a stream running parallel with Birds End. The area has been subject to flooding on a number of occasions and the immediate vicinity along the course of the stream is designated as Flood Zone 3 as defined by the Environment Agency. Flood Zone 3 is the area most likely to flood from rivers. Works are being undertaken to resolve the recent issues including undertaking road repairs caused by flood damage. Wider areas along the course of the streams are also at medium and low risk of flooding. The flood risk areas, as identified by the Environment Agency, are illustrated on the map.



## Village Assets

- 4.9 The Plan looks at identifying and where possible improving the village Assets and to strengthen and support the community Infrastructure.

The following assets are owned by the Parish Council:

- The Village Hall (freehold)
- The Play Area (Leased from Havebury)
- Further greens and verges
- Knowles Green (freehold)
- Bridge Green (freehold)

There are physical public assets, to which the community has free access, enjoy and value but do not own, namely;

- Listed and unlisted significant buildings or groups of historical interest
- Listed or protected or significant trees or groups of trees
- The Village Green, including the Bus Shelter and Notice Boards
- Significant Greens, open spaces, verges, ponds
- Hedgerows and ditches
- Footpaths and Bridleways
- Public Utilities

There are also Non-Physical Public Assets:

- The Village Hall Committee and its programme / agendas
- The Parochial Church Council and its services and activities
- The Hargrave Charity
- The Parish Council and its programme / agendas
- Employment generators
- The Police Service
- Local Transport
- Access to Social and Health services
- The Mobile Library

4.10 In March/April 2013 a "Village Review" survey was undertaken. It took the form of a household survey and the results have informed the content of this Plan. A copy of the report is available on the Neighbourhood Plan webpages but the key outcomes were:

- 22% of respondents experienced transport difficulties getting out of the village;
- of those that expressed an opinion, most thought that there had been too little housing in the village over the previous ten years;
- most people also felt that Hargrave could not accommodate more new housing, although there was strong support for small groups of new houses;
- the tranquillity and openness of the countryside around Hargrave is especially valued by residents;
- reducing the amount of speeding traffic, the number of lorries and damage to roadside verges caused by vehicles was high on the priority list to make the countryside more attractive.
- The unique character and setting of Hargrave should be maintained through the protection and enhancement of its most valuable assets for the future benefit of the local community, young and old.



## 5. Vision and Objectives

5.1 Arising from the outcomes of the research and surveys, our over-arching vision for Hargrave in 2031 is:

**To protect and enhance the distinctive character and assets of the Village for the community both young and old**

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

<p><b>Prosperity and Welfare</b></p> <p>Assess the scope to improve the residents' access within the village and within the region to provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A range of housing to meet lifetime and generational needs</li> <li>• Employment, including the facilities necessary to support home working</li> <li>• Communication and technology</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Health and welfare</li> <li>• Shops, services and amenities</li> <li>• Sports, leisure and culture</li> </ul>	<p><b>Highways, Transport and Access</b></p> <p>Assess the needs of our community and define its existing and future requirements by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rebalancing the competitive demands on highways between dominant vehicular traffic and a safer pedestrian environment</li> <li>• Improving public footpaths to enhance accessibility and connectivity</li> <li>• Improving access to bridleways to offer safer equestrian facilities</li> <li>• Securing access to public transport</li> </ul>
<p><b>Green Infrastructure and Natural Environment</b></p> <p>Appraise, define, protect and enhance all the green features of the village and the parish. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public and private open space</li> <li>• The road environment, in particular grass verges, hedges and trees</li> <li>• Protect and encourage wild life</li> <li>• Liaise with, support and protect agriculture and its husbandry of productive land within the parish.</li> </ul>	<p><b>The Character of the Village and Countryside</b></p> <p>Identify, define, protect and enhance the distinctive features of the village settlement and its setting within the parish, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local heritage and historical references</li> <li>• Building and streetscape</li> <li>• Community infrastructure and assets</li> <li>• Local design exemplars and benchmarks for new building and extensions</li> </ul>

5.3 The remainder of this Plan identifies planning policies and community actions that have a direct relationship to the Vision and will deliver the identified Objectives.

## 6. Hargrave Spatial Planning Strategy

- 6.1 This neighbourhood plan has been prepared having regard to the content of both the National Planning Policy Framework and the adopted local plan documents for St Edmundsbury. It is acknowledged that Hargrave is designated as “countryside” in the St Edmundsbury Core Strategy because it only has limited services and facilities and that there is a reliance on the motor car to get to work, shops or other facilities. However, the village itself does provide a number of jobs, as noted above, and a significant proportion of residents work from home. In addition, Policy DM27 of the Local Plan Development Management Policies allows for limited infill within identifiable groups of 10 or more homes which could, if opportunities existed, operate in the main village centre and in The Grove, to the south of the village centre. But, because there is no Housing Settlement Boundary, there is no opportunity to provide affordable housing in the village under the auspices of Policy DM29 (Rural Housing Exception Sites) of the same local plan document. Given the current population and housing characteristics of the village, the inability to provide such housing threatens to create a major imbalance to Hargrave’s demographic structure.



- 6.2 Residents of the village are reliant on surrounding, larger villages or the nearby towns for access to health, schools, shops and other services. However, this is the case with many villages in St Edmundsbury that are designated as Infill Villages in the Core Strategy where current policies allow infill development and make provision for affordable housing for local identified needs. Paragraph 55 of the NPPF recognises that housing can promote sustainable development in rural areas through enhancing or maintaining the vitality of rural communities and supports the approach for Hargrave being designated as an Infill Village. Such a designation is in accordance with the NPPF and the objectives of the St Edmundsbury Rural Vision 2013 local plan document (2015).
- 6.3 A reasoned and balanced approach has therefore been taken to identifying a spatial strategy for Hargrave that respects the planning policy context while providing a positive approach to addressing the need to

accommodate housing for those with a local need. The approach has particular regard to the content of the adopted local plan documents including **Core Strategy Strategic Objective C**, which seeks:

*To sustain and enhance rural communities by providing, where infrastructure and environmental capacity exists, new housing to grow settlements and safeguard existing rural services while maintaining and, where possible, improving the rural environment.*

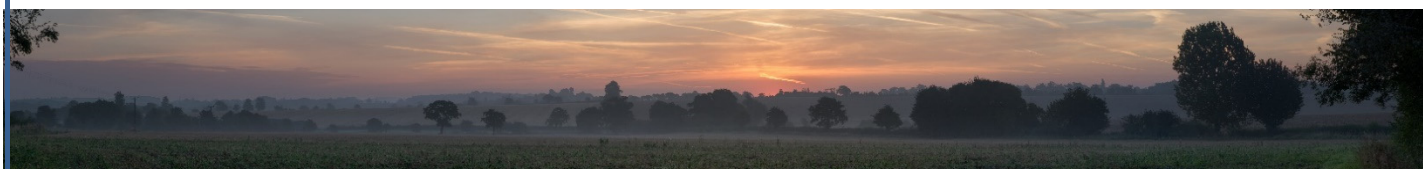
and **Rural Vision 2031 Objective 1** which seeks:

*To meet the housing needs of the rural areas, with a particular emphasis on the provision of affordable homes and an appropriate mix of house types for local people and of appropriate housing for an ageing population.*

- 6.4 The absence of a Housing Settlement Boundary at Hargrave renders the delivery of the latter objective almost impossible to deliver in respect of delivering affordable housing to meet local needs. Therefore, the Hargrave Spatial Strategy promotes a sustainable approach to allowing limited growth in the village to meet local needs and support opportunities for the improvement or introduction of local services and facilities.
- 6.5 The settlement pattern of Hargrave contributes significantly to the character of the village and will therefore be retained. A Housing Settlement Boundary is designated for the main part of the village which will be the main focus for limited future growth. Outside this area, Policy DM27 of the St Edmundsbury Local Plan Development Management Policies will apply to The Grove and proposals for development outside these locations will be treated as being in the Countryside and will need to conform with the appropriate planning policies for these areas.

#### **POLICY HAR 1 – Hargrave’s Spatial Strategy**

**In order to allow the village to respond to locally identified needs, Hargrave will accommodate limited development focused on the main built-up area and having particular regard to environmental constraints.**



## 7. Prosperity and Welfare

### Objective:

Assess the scope to improve the residents' access within the village and within the region to provide:

- A range of housing to meet lifetime and generational needs
- Employment, including the facilities necessary to support home working
- Communication and technology
- Education
- Health and welfare
- Shops, services and amenities
- Sports, leisure and culture

- 7.1 The NPPF emphasises the need to “support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable development”. With the NPPF in mind, the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to recognise that there is a need to improve the sustainability of the village, manage the recent decline in population and to seek to provide for day-to-day needs in the village. This can potentially only be achieved by enabling the provision of services and facilities; limited business growth; the protection of agriculture; allowing sustainable rural tourism and allowing housing that is designed to meet the needs of those that need to live in the village.

### Housing

- 7.2 There is not a huge demand for new housing in Hargrave, but throughout the life of this Neighbourhood Plan there will be a need for minor growth that will provide opportunities to maintain and slightly increase the population of the village. Across the borough, the latest government household and population forecasts suggest that the average number of persons per household will decrease from 2.38 in 2015 to 2.25 in 2036. This means that, when broadly applied to Hargrave, an additional 7 homes would be required just to sustain the current population level. That would represent a five percent growth in the number of dwellings in the village, lower than the projected nine percent increase across St Edmundsbury. By way of contrast, the number of homes in rural St Edmundsbury has increased by 18% between 2001 and 2015.
- 7.3 In June 2017 there were 2 households on the St Edmundsbury Housing Register needing homes with a maximum of two bedrooms in Hargrave. The village has an under-representation of smaller homes when compared with surrounding villages and this supports a need for such homes to create a better population balance and provide opportunities for smaller families to live in the village.
- 7.4 Local planning policy identifies Housing Settlement Boundaries in villages, allowing infill development to take place within the existing built-up area as long as environmental and infrastructure constraints can be overcome. To provide some certainty for future housing in Hargrave, a Housing Settlement Boundary for the central part of the village is identified, reflecting the boundary that was designated in both the 1998 and 2006 St Edmundsbury Local Plan.
- 7.5 Paragraph 4.58 of the St Edmundsbury Core Strategy states that, within Infill Villages, “only infill development comprising single dwellings or small groups of five homes or less within the designated housing settlement boundary would be permitted”. There are few if any opportunities that can be identified for developments of groups of up to five homes within the Housing Settlement Boundary at this time. This is particularly so given the historic and natural environment quality of the area and the need to ensure that proposals would not have a detrimental impact on the quality of the environment. However, during the lifetime of this Plan there may be opportunities that come to light and the Plan will support such proposals as long as the environmental and infrastructure constraints can be overcome.

### **POLICY HAR2 – Hargrave Housing Settlement Boundary**

A Housing Settlement Boundary is defined on the Proposals Map. Within the Housing Settlement Boundary, planning proposals for:

- i. new residential development comprising single dwellings or small groups of five homes or less, and/or;
- ii. residential conversion schemes, and/or;
- iii. the replacement of an existing dwelling with a new dwelling or dwellings

will be permitted where they are not contrary to other policies in the development plan.

- 7.6 The Housing Settlement Boundary enables limited housing development to take place within the defined area and, importantly, Policy DM29 of the Joint Development Management Policies local plan to apply in terms of the provision of rural affordable housing to meet locally identified needs, as an exception, outside the housing settlement boundary. Policy DM29 notes that,

*"in exceptional circumstances, a small number of market homes will be permitted where demonstrated to be essential to facilitate the delivery of affordable units".*

It may be possible, if sufficient need is identified for affordable housing, to identify a site adjoining the boundary to provide a development to meet this need. The housing could be provided by a registered social landlord or through a Community Land Trust.

### **Infill Development**

- 7.7 Hargrave has an open, rural character with Greens, verges and attractive open spaces contributing to the particular features that make up its distinct charm and appeal. But where wide gaps exist between properties there may be scope for limited infill development. In terms of such infill, it is important the development does not damage the village's essentially open character, and does not adversely affect the rural landscape setting. The Neighbourhood Plan supports infill development provided it incorporates good quality design, which maintains or enhances the character and appearance of existing buildings which surround the site, the existing street scene and surroundings, and does not have an unacceptable impact upon the amenities of neighbouring occupiers.

### **House sizes**

- 7.8 Hargrave has a smaller proportion of one and two-bedroom homes than surrounding villages. This limits the opportunities for smaller households to move into or stay in the village, for example when starting out or when downsizing from larger homes. This Neighbourhood Plan does not seek to restrict the size of any new individual homes that are built but will require a mix of homes when developments of groups of three or more homes are proposed to include provision for one or two bedroomed homes. The precise number of one or two bedroom dwellings will be negotiated on each scheme. Where developers consider that accommodating one or two bedroom units would have serious implications for development viability, an 'open book' approach to assessing viability will be encouraged and, where necessary, the policy will be operated flexibly.

### **POLICY HAR3 – Housing Mix**

Proposals for three or more dwellings located within the Housing Settlement Boundary will be permitted where they incorporate one or two bedroom homes.

## Employment

7.9 Ten percent of the Hargrave residents that work do so mainly from home, a much higher proportion than larger nearby villages of Barrow and Wickhambrook. This demonstrates that the village residents are not adding significantly to journeys on the rural road network. However, the 2011 Census also demonstrated that a significant number of people travel into the village to work, although the loss of Go-Ape and David Pettit Engineering from the village will have had an impact on this.

7.10 Rural areas such as Hargrave often offer local opportunities for small employment enterprises. However, retaining and improving prospects for appropriate levels and types of employment in the village can be dependent upon many factors including:

- availability of premises;
- quality of physical and virtual communication networks; and
- the ability to accommodate appropriate businesses into a high quality rural environment.

Throughout the parish, initiatives for employment provision could come forward during the lifetime of this neighbourhood plan. However, it is important that any such proposals have careful regard to the potential impact of the use on residents, the natural and historic environment and infrastructure. The village already suffers from high levels of HGVs passing through the village on narrow roads and anything that was going to make this worse would not be supported.

7.11 The policies in the existing St Edmundsbury Local Plan documents both protect against the loss of existing employment premises and enable the provision of new employment. The policies, in general and subject to caveats, allow:

- Farm diversification such as the development of farm shops, leisure and recreation uses, tourism facilities, sporting facilities, equestrian facilities and farm based food processing and packaging.
- The re-use, conversion and alteration of existing buildings in the countryside to employment uses, tourist accommodation, recreational uses, community facilities and, where justified, residential.
- The development of visitor accommodation such as self-catering facilities, holiday lodges, static and touring caravans and tenting fields.

### Community Action 1

**The Parish Council will seek to identify and promote small scale employment opportunities in Hargrave that are in keeping with the rural nature of the village and will not have an adverse impact on residents and the environment.**

7.12 Tourism opportunities could be particularly viable given Hargrave's location, equidistant between Bury St Edmunds and Newmarket and, also, being within 30 minutes' drive of Cambridge. Carefully planned, designed and located new visitor accommodation that takes full account of the local landscape and potential highways impact, such as barn conversions or camping facilities, could be popular with tourists and provide sources of additional incomes in the local community. However, it is unlikely that a static caravan park would be appropriate given the potential for a detrimental impact on the open and rolling landscape of the village.

### Community Action 2

**The Parish Council will seek to proactively utilise communications to positively promote Hargrave.**

- 7.13 Subject to improvements, the Village Hall could provide opportunities for business start-ups through the provision of flexible office space with high speed broadband and communal facilities including meeting facilities.

## Communications and Technology

- 7.14 Broadband and Mobile Communications are important to the sustainability of rural communities by enabling working from home and online shopping. Broadband speeds in the village centre are generally very good but this is not necessarily the case in locations away from the current fibre-optic broadband cabinets. It will be important to ensure that future broadband provision in the village keeps pace with improvements to technology. Mobile phone signals are surprisingly poor given the village's elevated position. The location of mobile phone masts can have a detrimental impact on the character of the countryside and this can cause a conundrum between trying to improve mobile phones signals and protecting the character of the village. Policy DM9 of the Development Management Policies local plan states that masts should be "designed and sited to minimise intrusion and visual impact" and proposals will need to be accompanied by a landscape and visual assessment. In Hargrave, in addition to Policy DM9, the following policy will also apply to the consideration of proposals for mobile phone masts or equipment.

### **POLICY HAR<sub>4</sub> – Communications Technology**

**Proposals from mobile phone network operators to improve mobile coverage will be supported where:**

- i. the numbers of radio and telecommunications masts are kept to a minimum consistent with the efficient operation of the network; and**
- ii. proposals have been sited and designed to minimise the impacts on the rural character of Hargrave, having particular regard to the important views identified on the Proposals Map and described in the Character Appraisal.**

### **Community Action 3**

**We will actively monitor, lobby and influence improvements to optimise communications technology infrastructure within the parish.**

## Supporting Local Agriculture

- 7.15 Agriculture is an important part of the parish, not only in the production of food but also in the way that it shapes and manages the rural landscape. Farm diversification, as noted earlier in the Plan, is an opportunity for farm enterprises to support their business and put redundant buildings to use. However, there may be additional opportunities in the locality to support the agricultural businesses to the mutual benefit of the village as a whole and the Parish Council is well positioned to act as a conduit for such co-operation.

### **Community Action 4**

**We will develop positive co-operation with the local agricultural community to optimise mutual benefits.**

## Education

- 7.16 There is currently no school provision in the Neighbourhood Plan area. The nearest primary schools are Ickworth Primary at Horringer and at Barrow and Wickhambrook with secondary school provision in Bury St Edmunds. The size of the village is such that it is unable to justify its own primary school given that in 2011 the number of primary school age children (5 – 11 years old) in the parish was 36.
- 7.17 Given that all children have to travel out of the village to school, it is important that they are able to get to and from school in convenient and safe modes. Suffolk County Council does not provide free school transport for children beyond 16 years old. This can be a financial barrier to pursuing education beyond GCSE level.

## Sports, Leisure and Culture

- 7.18 The 2013 Village Review asked residents which clubs and activities they would attend in Hargrave if they were provided. The most popular response was a gardening club, followed by a rambling club and art club.

Suggestion	Votes	Suggestion	Votes
Gardening Club	18	Rambling Club	12
Art Club	12	Senior Citizens Group	8
Music Society	7	Youth Club	6
Dance Club	6	Drama	5
Whist Drive	3	Other suggestions	7

- 7.19 Many of these suggestions would require a meeting place, such as the Village Hall, to function as well as volunteers and possibly resources to get the groups established. While the Parish Council could facilitate the establishment of clubs and societies, ultimately if they are to be sustainable they will need to be self-sufficient.

### Community Action 5

**The Parish Council will investigate ways of supporting the establishment of additional groups and societies in the village, including organising a Clubs meeting at the Village Hall and identifying support mechanisms to get clubs established.**

## The Village Hall

- 7.20 The Village Hall was originally constructed in 1926 about the same time as the Methodist Chapel. On 20 June 1926 a group of villagers formed a trust to purchase the Village Hall site and construct the hall. Responsibility for ownership relied on groups of villagers working together until the Parish Council assumed responsibility in 1973. The Village Hall is now the only public amenity available for the use of villagers. The hall is used on a regular basis by several groups within the village including a Carpet Bowls Club, Keep Fit group, Table Tennis Club, Youth Group, Messy Church sessions and, of course, for Parish Council Meetings. Most village events like Quiz Nights, Summer BBQs, Auctions, Craft Fairs etc. either take place in or around the Village Hall and it is also available to hire for private parties and functions.
- 7.21 The hall is generally well maintained and in good decorative order. The kitchen was refitted, insulated and decorated in 2008. More work has been undertaken to improve the heating and electrics. The ongoing problem is with condensation, no doubt due to the outer skin not being a cavity wall. This requires the regular use of a dehumidifier to reduce the water on the walls and to prevent damp from



affecting the furnishings and fabric of the building. Car Parking also restricts the opportunities for large functions such as wedding receptions and large family parties.



The Kitchen



The Main Hall

- 7.22 Consideration has been given as to whether the existing hall should be refurbished and improved or whether it might be feasible to build a new village hall that could provide additional facilities and which would be more efficient in terms of energy consumption and heating. The consultations at the time of the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan have proven inconclusive but it is considered worthwhile pursuing options, in full consultation with residents and the existing and potential new users of the hall, in order to ascertain what action could be taken.

#### Community Action 6

**The Parish Council will seek to establish a Working Group to investigate opportunities for the improvement of the existing village hall or the possible construction of a new village hall for the village in full liaison with residents and the users of the existing facility.**

- 7.23 Should it be deemed appropriate to seek a new site for the Village Hall, it should be well related to the centre of the village and provide facilities that are an improvement on the existing hall. One possible approach would be to identify a site that could accommodate local needs affordable housing, in accordance with Policy DM29, along with the new village hall and, only if required to make the scheme viable, a limited amount of market housing.

## Shops and Services

7.24 The village does not currently benefit from having any permanent shops or other service, although it does have visits from the Suffolk Mobile Library and milk and newspaper deliveries. The nearest permanent facilities are in Barrow where there are:

- Two small convenience stores
- Post Office
- Doctor's surgery and pharmacy
- Hot Food Takeaway
- 2 public houses



7.25 However, for those without access to a car, getting to these or any other facilities can cause problems. While car ownership in Hargrave is currently high, where a family only has one car which is used by one member of the household for travelling to work during the day, other members of the household can be isolated and unable to get out of the village to get to the shops, health facilities or even to work. The Village Review 2013 identified that up to 27 residents would be prepared to take part in a scheme to share private vehicles for shopping, school, social or leisure trips.

### Community Action 7

**The Parish Council will investigate opportunities for the introduction of a car sharing initiative to help residents to make trips to the shops, school, or social and leisure events.**

## Flooding

7.26 As highlighted above, parts of the village around The Wash and Birds End suffer from occasional flooding as a result of the stream overflowing and is at high risk from surface water flooding, exacerbated by the fact that it sits in a steep sloped valley. The NPPF requires the following in relation to the preparation of neighbourhood plans:

- *"seek to ensure neighbourhood ..... are informed by an appropriate assessment of flood risk;*
- *ensure policies steer development to areas of lower flood risk as far as possible;*
- *ensure that any development in an area at risk of flooding would be safe, for its lifetime taking account of climate change impacts;*

- *be able to demonstrate how flood risk to and from the plan area/ development site(s) will be managed, so that flood risk will not be increased overall, and that opportunities to reduce flood risk, for example, through the use of sustainable drainage systems, are included in the plan/order.”*



7.27 The Neighbourhood Plan does not identify locations for new development and it is not therefore possible to undertake an appropriate assessment of flood risk. However, the areas identified as being of high flood risk are outside the identified Housing Settlement Boundary and therefore where new development will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances. The Plan does not, therefore, contain proposals that would increase the risk of flooding, but all proposals will need to have regard to Policy DM6 of the Joint Development Policies local plan document. That policy requires proposals for new development to submit schemes on how on-site drainage will be managed so as not to cause, or make worse, flooding.

## 8. Highways, Transport and Access

### Objective

Assess the needs of our community and define its existing and future requirements by:

- Rebalancing the competitive demands on highways between dominant vehicular traffic and a safer pedestrian environment
- Improving public footpaths to enhance accessibility and connectivity
- Improving access to bridleways to offer safer equestrian facilities
- Securing access to public transport

8.1 Concerns relating to highways and transport were a consistent topic raised by residents during the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Village Review 2013 highlighted the following issues:

- 19 people either often or occasionally had transport difficulties;
- some residents experienced frequent or occasional difficulties in getting to the shops in Bury St Edmunds, Newmarket or Barrow;
- most residents considered that the state of the roads, pavements, verges and street lighting was reasonable, but a large number also felt that the verges were poor;
- the number of HGVs passing through the village; and
- traffic speed

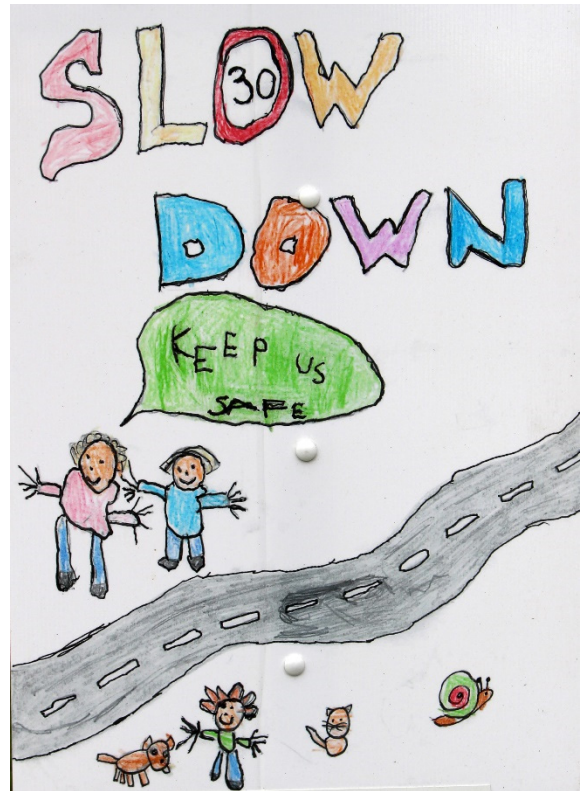
8.2 At the time of preparing this Neighbourhood Plan, the only options for residents of Hargrave to leave the village is by bus: the school day bus is also open to regular passengers; and the Connecting Communities service run by the Volunteer Network. There are also regular services in the adjoining villages of Chevington and Ousden as well as the larger villages of Barrow and Wickhambrook, but this does not help residents of Hargrave. Given that some residents experience difficulties getting out of the village, and the tendency towards people living longer in their own homes, it is considered essential that the village should be served by a bus service. The County Council is responsible for public transport services, including co-ordinating volunteer and community transport initiatives. Therefore, any service provision in Hargrave will need to be agreed with them.

### Community Action 8

**The Parish Council will work with local bus companies and Suffolk County Council to lobby for an increase in availability of public transport.**

8.3 Traffic speed is also an issue that has been frequently highlighted during the course of preparing this Plan. A 30 mph speed limit is in operation in the village centre, from just north of The Old Bull to immediately south of The Grove, as well as west along the Ousden Road and east along Chevington Road. In addition, there is a 40 mph speed limit at Birds End. The remainder of the village, including The Wash and Church Lane, do not have any speed restrictions. A flashing speed warning sign is being used in an attempt to reduce traffic speeds and the police have agreed to carry out more speed checks.

- 8.4 The use of signs and painted lines bring an urban solution to the rural environment and are therefore not always appropriate. Large traffic signs in particular can have a detrimental impact on the natural environment while the removal of white lines in some villages has been proven to reduce traffic speeds.
- 8.5 Given the concerns raised above, it would be fitting to investigate a project to find suitable measures to reduce the impact of traffic in the village in a sympathetic way. One possible example of such an initiative is contained in "Traffic in Villages" produced by the Dorset AONB Partnership in conjunction with Hamilton-Baillie Associates and using the checklist of features contained within the document to inform an action plan.



Village Traffic Calming Scheme, Buriton, Dorset  
*Photo courtesy of Ben Hamilton-Baillie*

### Community Action 9

The Parish Council will seek to work with the County Council Highways Department to implement environmental sympathetic and self-enforcing traffic calming measures in the village.

## Heavy Goods Vehicles

- 8.6 During the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan concerns were raised about the number and size of HGVs travelling through the village. The lorries appear to be passing through the village taking a short-cut between the A14 north of Barrow and the A143 at Chedburgh. As a result, damage is being caused to the grass verges of the narrow roads through the village and, left unmanaged, the lorries could lead to a deterioration of the quality of life of residents.

### Community Action 10

The Parish Council will seek to work with neighbouring parish councils to lobby for a reduction of non-essential HGVs passing through the village.



## Public Rights of Way

- 8.7 There is a good network of public rights of way in the Plan area and these are celebrated and promoted in the Map of Public Rights of Way produced by the Parish Council. A village footpaths map was produced in 2015 and a board outside the Village Hall illustrates the village network. The Parish Council has a footpaths warden who monitors the condition of the paths. There are, however, some gaps in the network and routes that need improvement. Horse riding is popular in the parish although there is limited availability of bridleways or other public routes off the highway. The Borough Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy promotes the establishment of a green corridor long distance route between Thetford and the Stour Valley that is envisaged to pass through the parish. One particular opportunity that could be explored is the improvement of the paths to Ousden and to the rear of Ickworth Park.

### Community Action 11

Gaps have been identified in the public rights of way network, including bridle paths around the village and the Parish Council will seek to work with landowners and the County Council to create additional paths to complete the network.



## 9. Green Infrastructure and the Natural Environment

### Objective

Appraise, define, protect and enhance all the green features of the village and the parish. In particular:

- Public and private open space
- The road environment, in particular grass verges, hedges and trees
- Protect and encourage wild life
- Liaise with, support and protect agriculture and its husbandry of productive land within the parish.

### Green Infrastructure

- 9.1 Green infrastructure is defined by the NPPF as “a network of multi-functional green space, both new and existing, both rural and urban, which supports the natural and ecological processes and is integral to the health and quality of life of sustainable communities.” It includes parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, street trees, private gardens and streams and ponds.
- 9.2 In Hargrave, while the availability of formal open space is limited to the Playing Field, the high level of access to the countryside as well as the wide roadside verges provides a sense of a village where residents have a good and easy access to green infrastructure. St Edmundsbury Borough Council produced a district wide Green Infrastructure Strategy in 2009 and identifies Hargrave as being located within the Historic Park and Woodland Action Zone. The Strategy seeks the following for this Action Zone, some of which is relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan area:
- restoration of field boundary network;
  - creation of woodlands to form woodland corridors linking existing ancient woodland;
  - maintenance of existing public rights of way;
  - improved linkages with new connections to Lark and Linnet river valleys and into villages; and
  - the creation of a Green Corridor between Thetford and the River Stour valley through the Neighbourhood Plan area

The Neighbourhood Plan has had regard to the aspirations of the Strategy in the development of the actions and policies.

- 9.3 Within Hargrave, work undertaken in the preparation of this Plan has identified important Local Green Infrastructure that we are seeking to retain and improve.

### Landscape Character

- 9.4 The three landscape character areas referred to in paragraph 4.5 above have been used to identify the important landscape characteristics of the area and inform the strategy and policies of the Plan. In addition, important trees and woodland, hedgerows and water features that contribute to the setting of the village and its character and distinctiveness have also been identified in the Landscape Character Appraisal Maps published as a separate background document and supplementing the current designations (County Wildlife Site and Tree Preservation Orders). Proposals that would result in the loss of the identified features will not be supported unless the loss is unavoidable and the benefits of the development proposals can be demonstrated to outweigh any impacts. In such cases we would expect provision to be made for replacement features.



#### **POLICY HAR5 – Protecting and Maintaining Features of Landscape and Biodiversity Value**

All development proposals will be expected to retain existing features of landscape and biodiversity value (including ponds, trees, woodland, hedgerows and verges) and, where practical to do so, provide a net gain in biodiversity through, for example:

- the creation of new natural habitats;
- the planting of additional trees and hedgerows (reflecting the character of Hargrave's traditional hedgerows); and
- restoring and repairing fragmented biodiversity networks.

Where loss or damage is unavoidable, the benefits of the development proposals must be demonstrated clearly to outweigh any impacts and the development shall provide for appropriate replacement planting on site together with a method statement for the ongoing care and maintenance of that planting.

Where a new access is created, or an existing access is widened through an existing hedgerow, a new hedgerow of native species shall be planted on the splay returns into the site to maintain the appearance and continuity of hedgerows in the vicinity.

### **New Woodland**

- 9.5 We want to increase the amount of woodland in the village to reflect the objectives of the Green Infrastructure Strategy. However, we recognise that achieving this will, by and large, be subject to the willingness of farmers to make land available for new woodland. The Woodland Trust offers grants for woodland creation and community woodland initiatives are common in a number of villages in Suffolk. However, there are few projects in the Hargrave area despite the landscape being traditionally characterised by woodland.

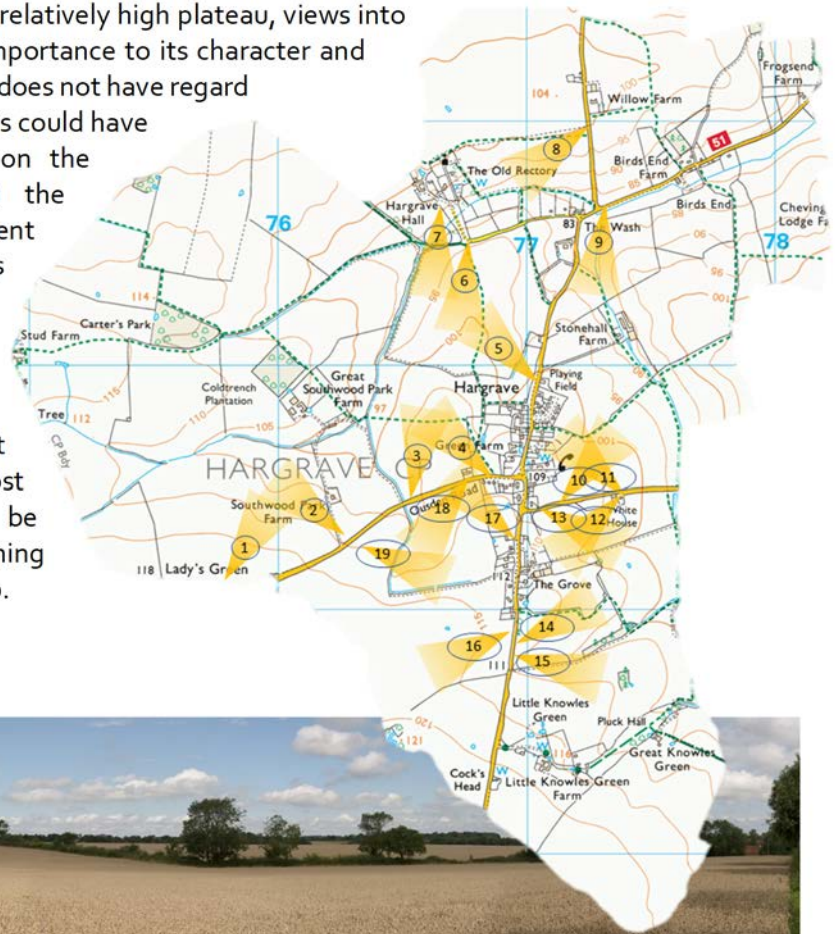
#### **Community Action 12**

The Parish Council will seek to work with landowners, including farmers, to identify opportunities to plant additional broadleaved woodland in line with the objectives of the St Edmundsbury Green Infrastructure Strategy. We will also seek to identify means of funding and managing new woodland, possibly through a community woodlands project.



## Important Views and Gaps

- 9.6 Given the location of Hargrave on a relatively high plateau, views into and out of the village are of high importance to its character and sense of rurality. Development that does not have regard to its potential impact on these views could have a significant detrimental impact on the setting of the village. During the preparation of the Plan, an assessment of views from public areas was undertaken to determine which are most important in terms of the setting of the village in the landscape. The separate Character Appraisal identifies the important views and, as a result, the most significant views that need to be protected are identified on the adjoining map as well as on the Proposals Map.



- 9.7 The nature of the settlement pattern in the village means that there are important gaps between the clusters of homes that, if filled with development, would change the character of the village. In particular, the gap between the main village centre and The Grove is especially important. The Plan seeks the protection of important gaps, as identified on the Proposals Map, from all but essential development that cannot be located elsewhere.

## POLICY HAR6 – Protecting the Landscape Setting of Hargrave

Outside of the Housing Settlement Boundary, priority will be given to protecting and enhancing the countryside from inappropriate development. A proposal for development will be permitted where:

- a) it is in conformity with Policy DM27 of the St Edmundsbury Joint Development Management Policies Local Plan Document 2015;
- b) it would not have significant adverse impact on the landscape setting of Hargrave;
- c) it would not result in the loss or erosion of an important settlement gap as identified on the Proposals Map; and
- d) it would maintain the distinctive views of the surrounding countryside from public vantage points within, and adjacent to, the built-up area, as defined on the Proposals Map and described in the Character Appraisal.

## Local Green Spaces

9.7 Consultation during the preparation of the Plan showed that people place a high value on the relationship between the village, the countryside and on the open spaces that help to define the landscape and character of the area. Paragraph 76 of the NPPF enables Neighbourhood Plans to identify green areas of particular importance to them for special protection and to rule out new development, other than in very special circumstances. Paragraph 77 provides criteria for the consideration of identifying Local Green Space, requiring that they should:

- be in reasonably close proximity to the community they serve;
- 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; and
- is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

9.8 It is recognised that the designation of Local Green Spaces (LGS) should not be used simply to block development but that they should be in close proximity to Hargrave village, are used and valued by local residents and are not extensive tracts of land.



- 9.9 The Local Green Spaces form, in the main, the distinct and extensive grass verges that are so distinctive to Hargrave. Community engagement undertaken during the preparation of the Plan highlighted the importance of the verges to residents although it has also identified questions around the ownership of the verges which remain unsolved. These verges fully meet the NPPF criteria and are demonstrably special to the local community, as identified through the Plan preparation process.

#### **Community Action 13**

**The Parish Council will seek to identify the ownership of all the verges in the village and will prepare a management plan for the maintenance and improvement of them including, where appropriate, positive management mechanisms for biodiversity purposes.**

- 9.10 In addition, the green area at Little Knowles Green is identified as Local Green Space. The land is in the ownership of the Parish Council and is maintained as accessible open space for the whole community.



#### **POLICY HAR7 – Local Green Spaces**

Local Green Spaces are identified on the Proposals 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.



### Village Playing Field

- 9.11 A small site off Bury Road and opposite the Village Hall which has been used as the village Playing Field for many years, provides an important meeting and play facility for the children of the village and, to some extent, their parents. In 2016 new play equipment was installed and current plans are to provide a wildlife area as well as a Teen Shelter. It is leased and maintained by the Parish Council and the Playing Field provides the only equipped play area in the village. All homes in the main part of the village are within 500 metres walking distance of the play area, albeit that parts of the route do not have footways and are therefore not attractive for walking with children.

#### **POLICY HAR8 – Village Playing Field**

The village Playing Field as shown on The Green Inset Map will be protected from development that detracts from the use of the areas as a recreation facility. Proposals which would reduce the quality or size of the Playing Field will only be permitted if a replacement of an equivalent or better standard is provided in an equally accessible location.

## 10. The Character of the Village and the Countryside

### Objective:

Identify, define, protect and enhance the distinctive features of the village settlement and its setting within the parish, including:

- Local Heritage and historical references
- Building and streetscape
- Community infrastructure and assets
- Local design exemplars and benchmarks for new building and extensions

- 10.1 Community engagement carried out during the preparation of the Plan provided a strong steer to protect, preserve and future proof the village and its surrounding area, together with enhancing the quality of life for its inhabitants.
- 10.2 The Neighbourhood Plan provides a powerful tool to assist the local community identify and preserve the essential character of the village and its local surroundings. The adopted Local Plan documents do not provide a detailed local identification of important features that will assist developers and decision takers to ensure proposals reflect and have regard to the local character.

### Historical Assets

- 10.3 There are many designated heritage assets located in and around the village, the most significant being the Grade II\* Listed Church of St Edmund's. In addition, there are a further thirteen Grade II Listed Buildings within the parish. (source Historic England). Details of these are contained in Appendix 1. Although spaced apart in a seemingly random pattern these valuable properties contribute greatly to the distinctiveness of the village, and represent valuable architectural and historical anchors to the Hargrave of the past. The act of Listing properties provides for robust protection against unsympathetic alteration or expansion leading to possible damage to irreplaceable building fabric.
- 10.4 This Plan develops a strategy to best safeguard those elements that contribute to the importance of these historic assets, to ensure they can be enjoyed by future generations of the area. Where a building is Listed, consent will be required for any external alterations which affect its special and unique interest. Whilst all proposals would be considered on their merits, certain works to Listed buildings are most unlikely to be acceptable in principle. This Plan supports sympathetic alterations to Listed Buildings provided it would improve, restore or maintain the fabric of the building. Development which would have a negative impact upon a Listed Building, its curtilage or its setting will not be supported.
- 10.5 Listed Buildings already benefit from robust statutory protection, but there are other properties, some quite historic and/or of architectural merit, that are unlisted but should receive recognition and are signalled as making an important contribution to the street scene and overall character of the village. We have identified that the Old School House and School Hall are worthy of being protected as Local Heritage Assets and will pursue this with the relevant authorities. In the meantime, we have identified them as buildings of local significance. Both buildings are identified on the Proposals Map.



### POLICY HARg – Local Heritage

The retention and protection of local heritage assets and buildings of local significance, including buildings, structures, features and gardens of local interest will be sought. 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 benefits of the proposal

The following properties are identified as buildings of local significance:

- Old School House
- School Hall

- 10.6 In addition, the Plan recommends that an assessment is made as to whether areas of the village could be designated as a Conservation Area which would protect the character of the designated area including buildings and trees at a stroke. The Neighbourhood Plan itself cannot designate a conservation area as it is subject to separate legislation. However, the Parish Council will take the lead and approach St Edmundsbury Borough Council seek support for such a designation.

### Community Action 14

**The Parish Council will approach the Borough Council to work with the local community to identify and designate a conservation area in Hargrave.**

### Protecting the Character of the Village – Design Guidance

- 10.7 Policy DM2 of the Development Management Policies local plan document provides a comprehensive policy for the detailed consideration of all development proposals across St Edmundsbury. This is supplemented by Policy DM22 which concerns residential design. To support these policies, the following paragraphs provide some local context on character and design.
- 10.8 New development proposals require careful and detailed consideration, particularly where they could impact upon the general aspiration of the local community to maintain its unique rural and unspoilt character as far as possible. It is accepted that to attempt to 'preserve the village in aspic' and prevent all new development is both unrealistic and ultimately detrimental to the future health of the village, its community and its facilities. However, this should be balanced with the view that any future development should be appropriate to the size of the village and the maintenance of its character as a small rural community.
- 10.9 Hargrave is a diverse mix of a settlement set within a wider rural landscape, with evidence of small scale 'ribbon development' along the primary routes in and out of the village. However, a continuation of this

'creep' will result in the loss of the distinct clusters identified earlier in this Plan and will change the character of the village irreversibly. What does exist is a mix of historic and more recent contemporary houses, single and two storey, with often generous land around and between plots within an open landscape with extensive views across the rolling countryside.

- 10.10 This Plan provides a framework which, together with the operation of the St Edmundsbury Local Plan and the NPPF, will ensure that future developments are in keeping with their immediate surroundings and communities. The approach being to harmonise with the existing character and street scene, to make sure they look like they belong.
- 10.11 The guidance below aims to inspire designers to rise to the challenge to deliver and maintain high quality, well designed buildings and to protect the rural settings and spaces we value so much.



### Guidance - Building Settings and Landscape

- 10.12 Well designed and well-kept public spaces contribute significantly to the enjoyment of places. Roads, verges, hedges and places that are stimulating and attractive can encourage social interaction, act as meeting points, places to walk, places to sit, rest and contemplate in relative peace. Hargrave is rich with character with ample opportunities to enjoy the vistas in and out of the village, many from the matrix of public footpaths that abound.
- 10.13 The interface and boundary treatment of plots and the street and surrounding areas should be reflective of the general character of the settlement. The Hargrave 'Greens' are particularly special as oases of green, with boundaries of historic hedge, ditch and verge. Understanding the relationship of rural buildings and the landscape is critical in successfully integrating new development into the countryside.

### Guidance - New Buildings and Development

- 10.14 It is important that the design of buildings and their overall appearance is borne from the place and therefore contribute positively to the character of the existing environment. The elevational style and layout of new buildings should be drawn from the characteristics and vernacular of the context. The visual

impact of buildings can be more significant within the rural scene than those within more urbanised areas.

- 10.15 New development should be sympathetic to the existing form, scale, and character and setting of its location, and importantly appropriate to its rural context. Development should respond to the character of both the built and natural environment and, in particular, have appropriate regard to the setting of heritage assets. Innovative contemporary creative building design solutions that successfully integrate modern architectural design into the local vernacular.

### Guidance - Building Extensions

- 10.16 Extensions to dwellings can have a significant impact upon the character and appearance of a dwelling itself and the street scene in which it is located. A well-designed extension can enhance the appearance and value of a property, whereas an unsympathetic extension can have a harmful impact, create problems for neighbouring residents from over-shadowing and over-looking, and affect the overall character of the area. The design of extensions should be sympathetic, set back from the road and subordinate in size to the original building, together in keeping with the general character of the village. The scale, form and massing of an extension and how it relates to the original dwelling and its amenity space are critical considerations.



### Guidance - Building Materials

- 10.17 Materials and boundary treatments need to be sympathetic to the character and landscape of the area in which they are proposed, to include such features as the Greens, ancient hedgerows, verges and trees. The decision on choice of materials should be driven by the local context, and its appropriateness within its setting. Local materials should be sought with a preference for using a variety of multi-red stock brick or Cambridgeshire yellow buff facing brickwork, flint and lime render to walls, with clay pan tiles, plain tiles and natural slate to roofs.
- 10.18 Similarly roof pitches, windows and colour schemes should be in harmony with the original palette. Dormer windows should be small and unobtrusive, with flat roofs avoided to garages and other outhouses. Fortunately, there are few flat roofs to be found in the village, which often give buildings a modern look, generally out of keeping within the majority of the village.



Element

Typical examples

Architectural and Historical Anchors



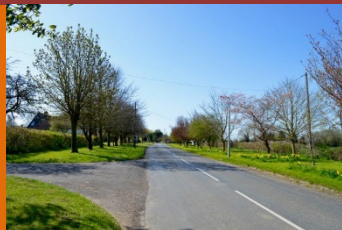
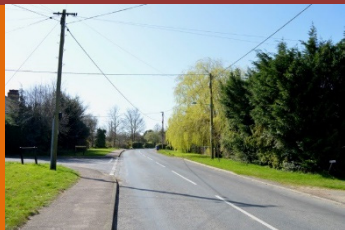
House Styles



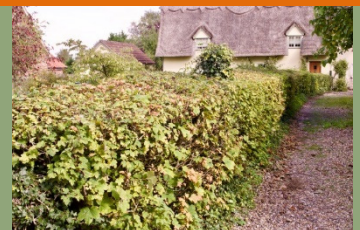
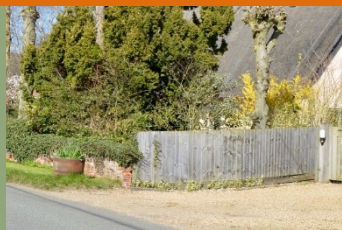
A Palette of Quality Materials



A Green Village



Green and Other Boundaries



Fit for the Skyline



## Typical examples



## Positive features

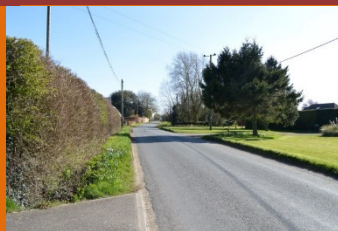
The Village's 1000 year+ history has provided many examples of quality sustainable buildings that anchor its distinctive character and guide its future.



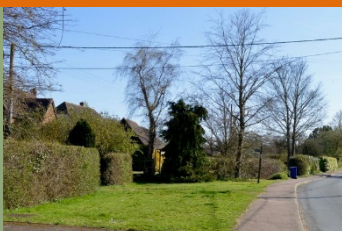
The Village offers exemplars across a range of styles and ages that contribute to a memorable and loved place.



Many of the Village's buildings display quality materials that positively guide selection for future development.



The Village street scene is greened with verges, hedges and trees, and buildings are invisible or subordinated to nature.



Property boundaries predominately follow the natural, historical and rural form of hedges, plants and trees to contribute strongly to the Village's character.



The Village's buildings blend seamlessly in to its hilltop skyline without intrusion or discomfort to the attractive rolling countryside of this part of West Suffolk.

- 10.19 Planning policies seek to encourage the retention and re-use buildings wherever possible, particularly when the building makes a positive contribution to the character of the area in which it is located. Such proposals must be handled with care to ensure that the essential character of the original building is not lost, or that the contribution the building makes to the wider area is not compromised.

### POLICY HAR10 – Village Character

To maintain the character of Hargrave, all new developments should:

- a) have regard to the design characteristics of the village as identified in the Neighbourhood Plan;
- b) be designed to a high quality;
- c) ensure that the specific context of the site and the wider character of the street scene are fully taken into account in relation to scale, appearance and materials; and
- d) seek to maintain reasonable residential privacy and the character of the area by preserving existing grass verges, front boundary hedges and tree screens where practicable.

Subdivision of an existing property shall preserve the external character of the building.

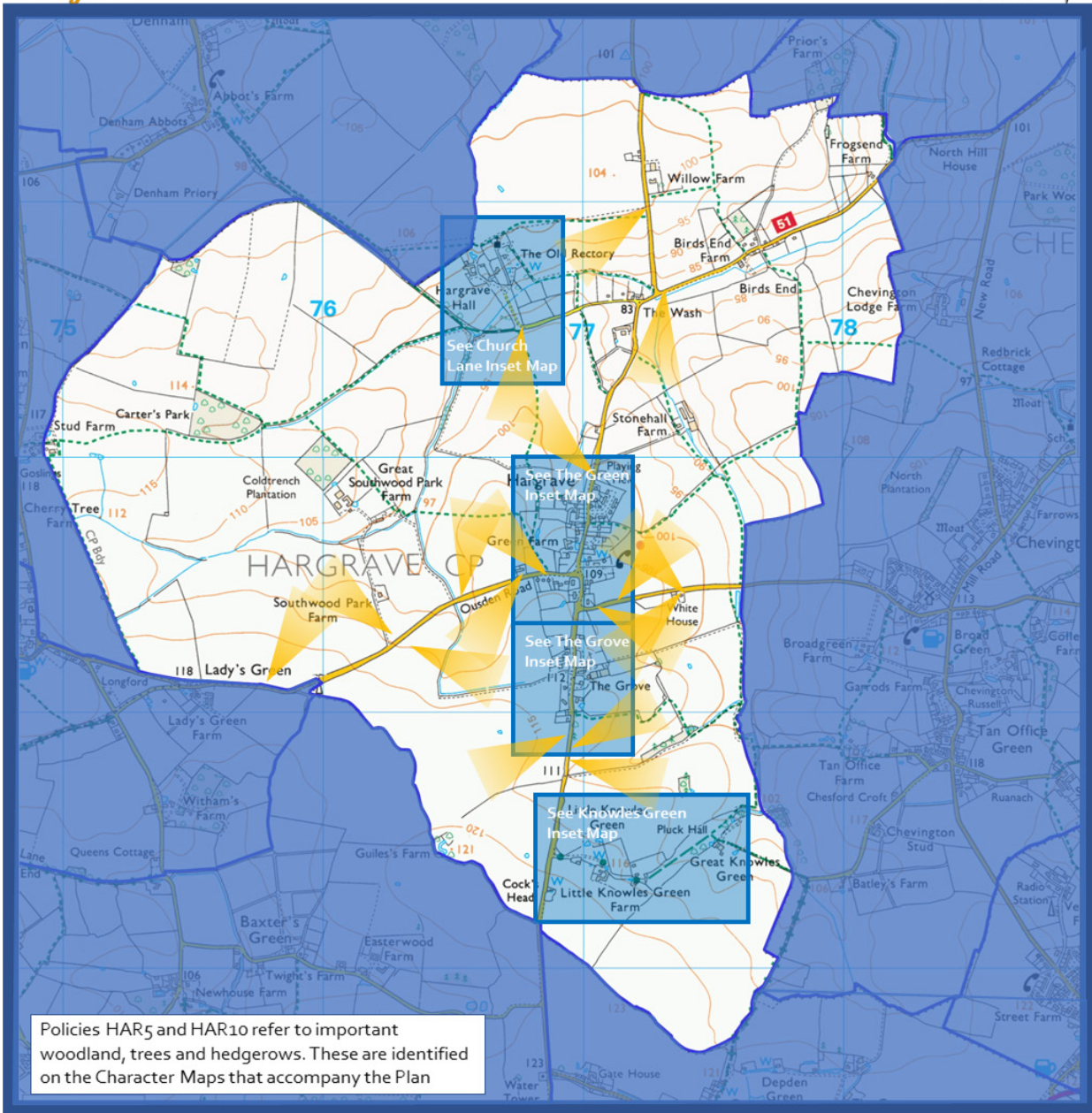


# Proposals Maps

## Proposals Map

ParishOnline

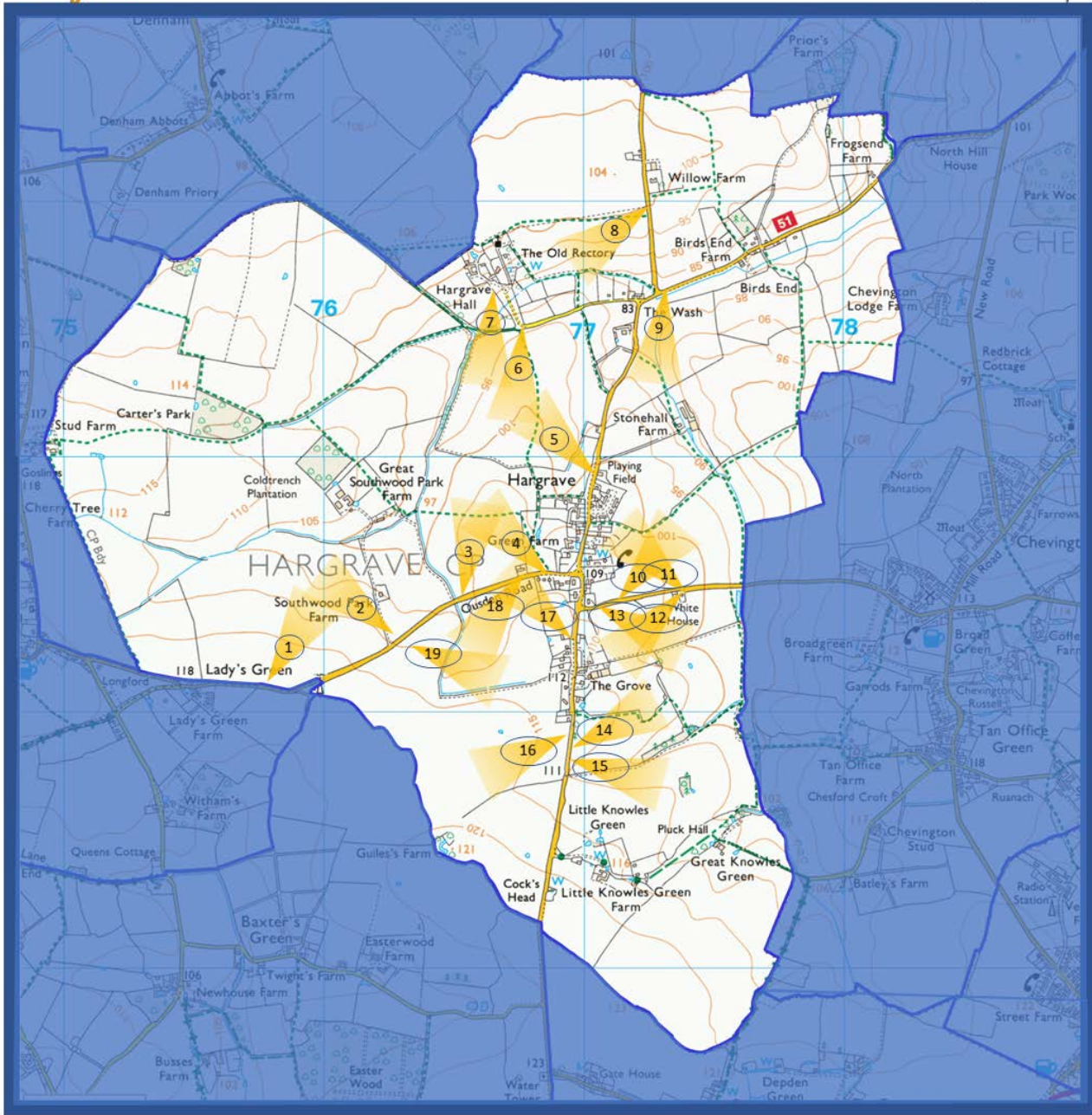
Hargrave CP 



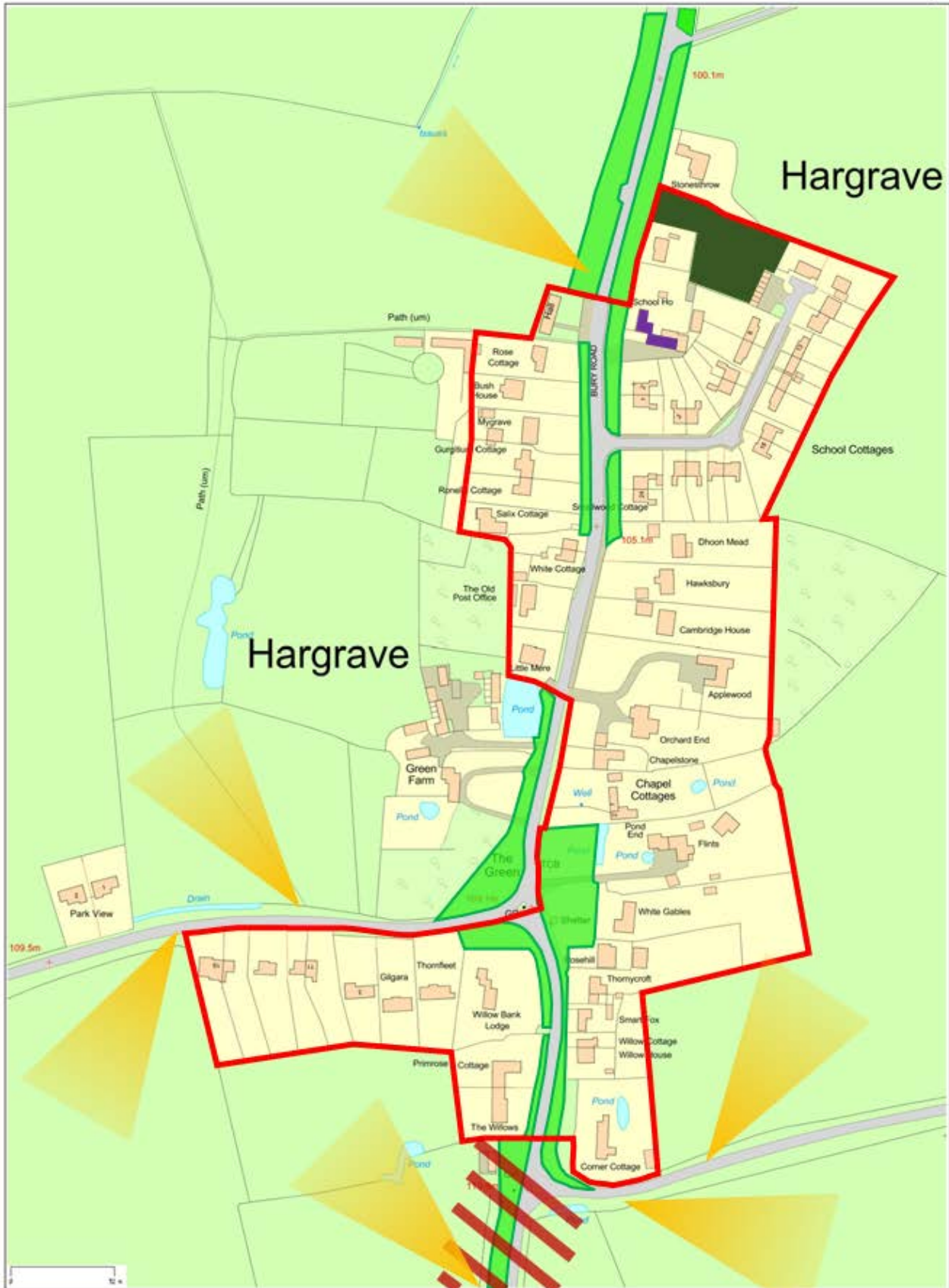
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### Proposals Map and Inset Maps Key

- |   |                                    |   |                               |
|---|------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
|  | Housing Settlement Boundary (HAR2) |  | Local Green Space (HAR7)      |
|  | Important Settlement Gap (HAR6)    |  | Playing Field (HAR8)          |
|  | Important Views (HAR4, HAR6)       |  | Locally Heritage Asset (HAR9) |



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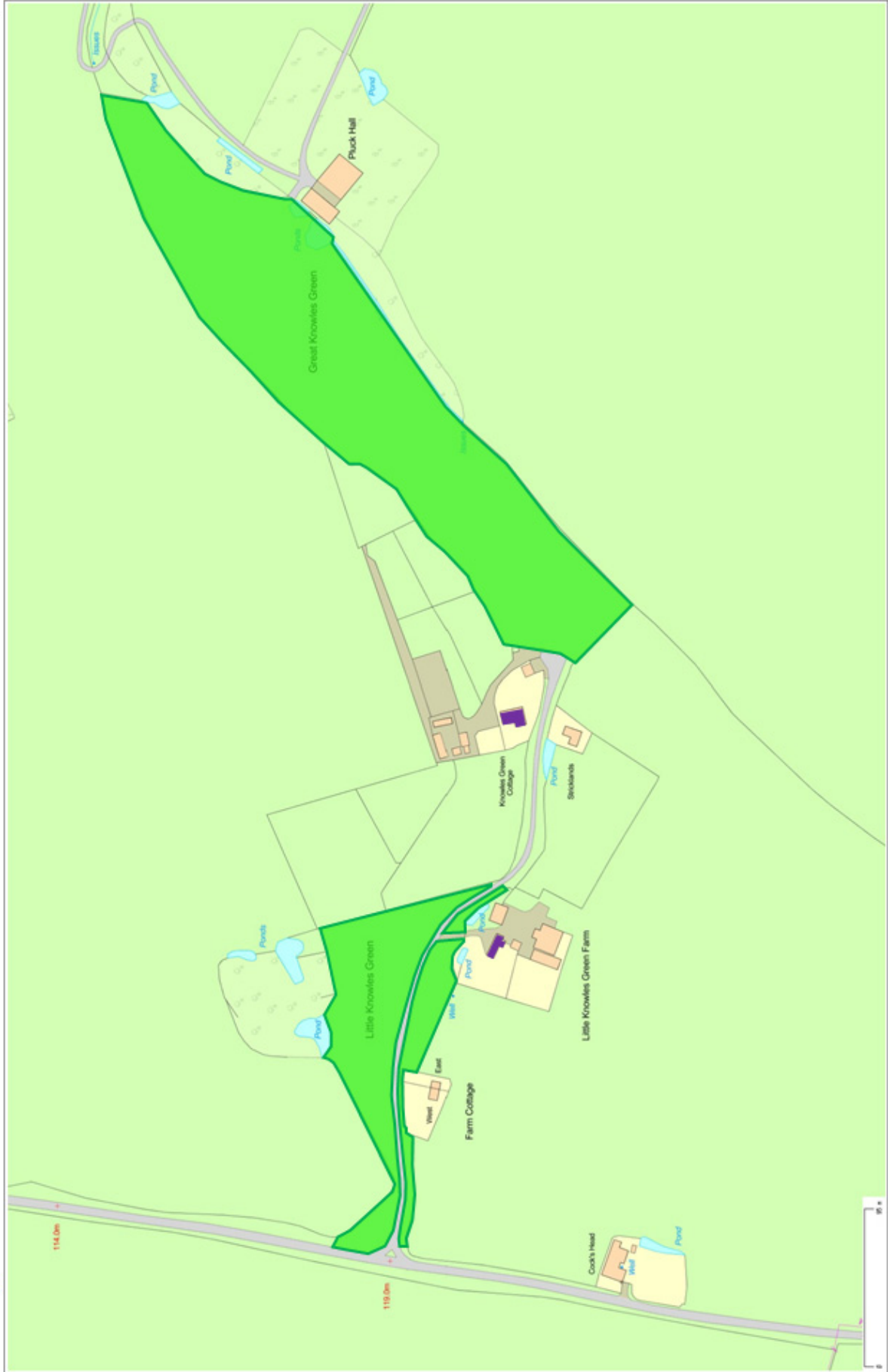


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# Proposals Map – Knowles Green Inset Map



## APPENDIX 1 - Listed Buildings

June 2017

Listed Property	Grade
Frogsend Farmhouse, Bird's End	II
Green Farmhouse, The Green	II
Chapel Cottages, 1 and 2 The Green	II
Little Knowles Green Farmhouse, Little Knowles Green	II
Little Knowles Green Cottage, Little Knowles Green	II
The Mill House, Bury Road	II
Meadow Cottage, Wickhambrook Road	II
The Grove, Wickhambrook Road	II
Corner Cottage, Wickhambrook Road	II
The Old Grove, Wickhambrook Road	II
Hargrave Hall, Bridge Green	II
Church of St Edmund, Bridge Green	II*
Wash Cottage, The Wash	II
Barn 300 yards north of Southwood Park Farmhouse, Ousden Road	II

