

Hartest Neighbourhood Plan

2024 - 2037

Submission Draft Plan



Hartest Parish Council
July 2025



Prepared on behalf of Hartest Parish Council by
Hartest Neighbourhood Plan Working Group
Supported by Places4People Planning Consultancy

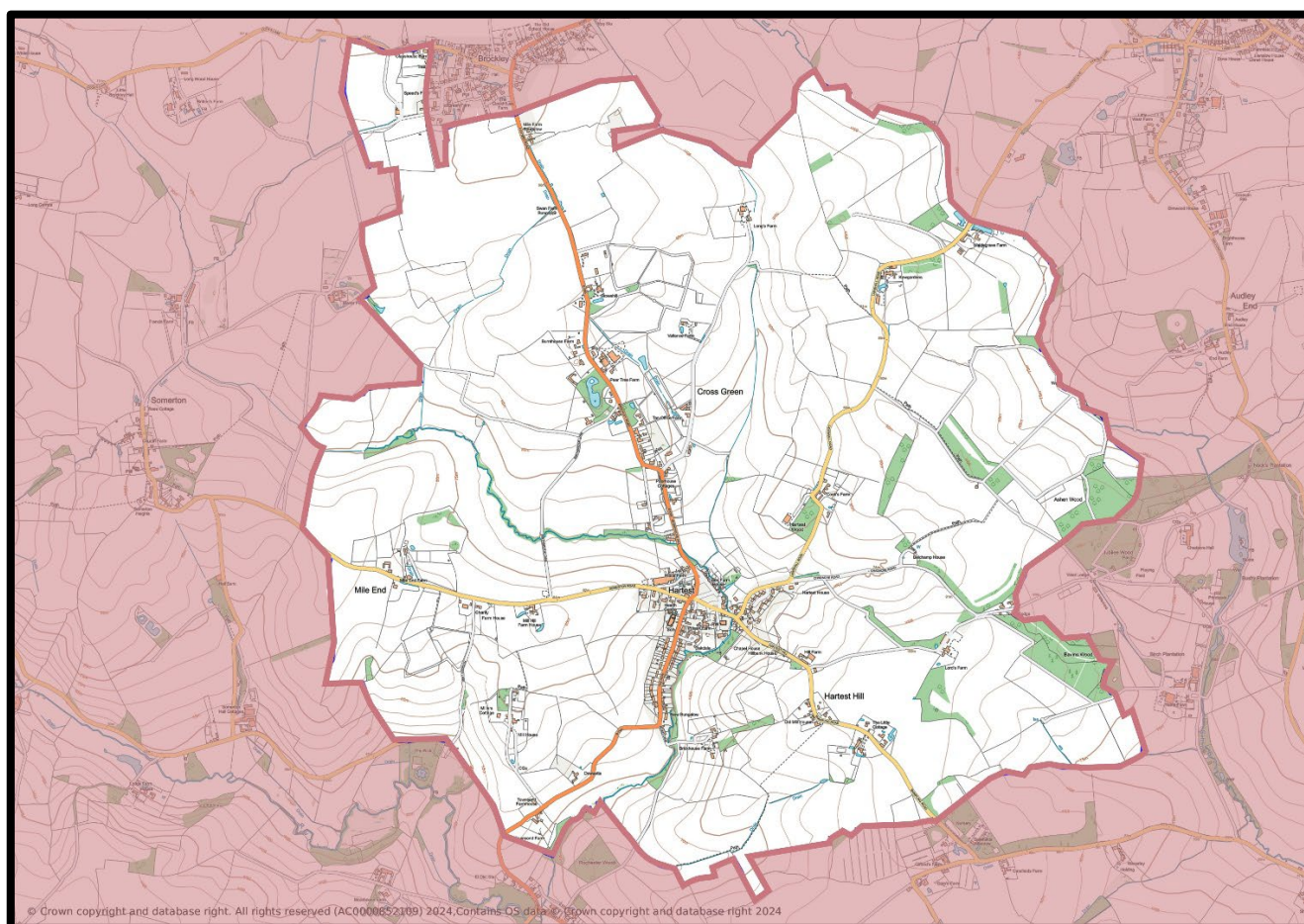


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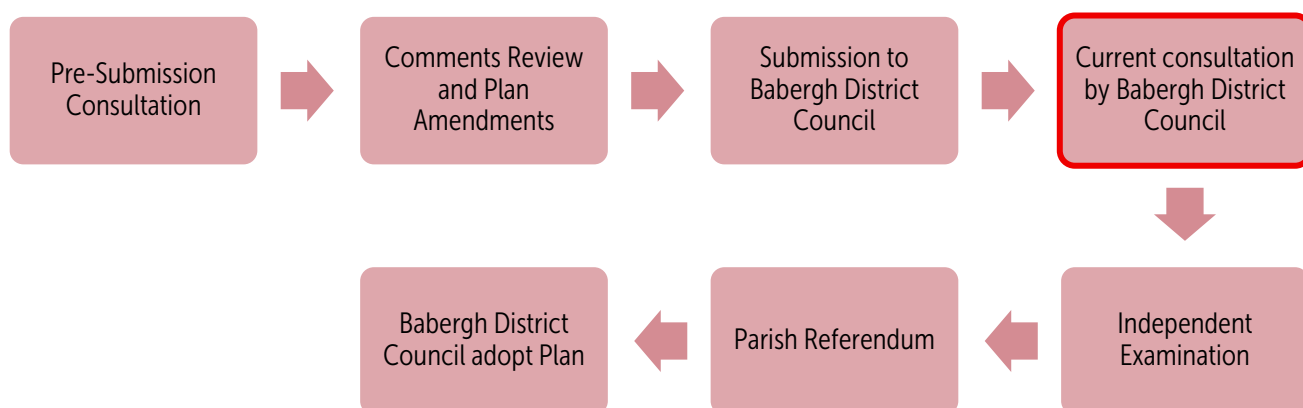
1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Localism Act 2011 provides the opportunity and tools for communities to shape how areas will change and grow through the preparation of their own Plans. These Neighbourhood Plans, if passed by an independent examination and supported in a local referendum, must be “made” by the local planning authority (Babergh District Council) and then will become part of the legal planning framework for the designated area.
- 1.2 In 2012, following consultation with all residents via an information sheet, a questionnaire and a public meeting, Hartest Parish Council decided to develop a Neighbourhood Plan. A Working Group of volunteers was formed to prepare the Plan and, in June 2014, in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations, Babergh District Council formally designated the parish (illustrated on **Map 1**) as a Neighbourhood Plan Area. Details of the application, publication and designation can be viewed on the District Council’s website under Neighbourhood Planning in Hartest.
- 1.3 In the period since the formal designation, the Working Group has gathered information, undertaken consultation and considered which matters should be addressed by the Plan. A draft of the Plan was previously consulted on in 2017, 2018 and 2021, each time being impacted on external matters and changes in local planning policies that meant it would be unwise to proceed as there would potentially be a number of major changes to the examination stage. A final “pre-submission” consultation was carried out in October 2024, representing the conclusion of all the previous work as well as bringing previous draft policy coverage up-to-date. It provides a Plan that conforms with the strategic planning policies of Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan, the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and, most importantly, reflects the aspirations of the local community.



Map 1 - The Designated Neighbourhood Plan Area

- 1.4 Before a neighbourhood plan can be brought into force it needs to complete the stages illustrated in the flow chart below:



"Pre-submission" consultation on draft Plan by Parish Council

- 1.5 This is the stage we've now reached. The plan must be widely consulted on for a minimum of six weeks allowing residents, businesses, landowners and a range of government bodies and service providers to comment on the Draft Plan. Although the Draft Plan has already been the subject of extensive consultation, because of the nature of the changes made to the previous version it is necessary to carry out further consultation before it can continue its journey towards the Parish Referendum and adoption by Babergh District Council.

Submission of draft Plan to Babergh District Council

- 1.6 All comments received from this consultation will be considered and reviewed and any necessary amendments to the Plan will be made. The Plan, together with supporting documents will then be submitted to Babergh District Council, who then manage the following stages:
- "Submission" consultation – minimum 6 weeks
 - Independent examination of draft Plan
 - Parish Referendum
 - The Plan is then 'made' (adopted) by Babergh District Council and then becomes part of the Development Plan for making decisions in response to planning applications.
- 1.7 The Neighbourhood Plan will, when complete, form part of the statutory "Development Plan" for Babergh District, meaning that its planning policies and content will be taken into account when decisions on planning applications are made.
- 1.8 The Neighbourhood Plan Regulations require a neighbourhood plan to:
- be appropriate, having regard to National Planning Policy;
 - contribute to achieving sustainable development;
 - be in general conformity with strategic policies in the Development Plan for the local area; and
 - be compatible with EU obligations (despite BREXIT) and Human Rights requirements.

Purpose and scope of Plan

- 1.9 When work on the Neighbourhood Plan started, its purpose and scope were agreed and published. In summary, the Neighbourhood Plan was to be an approved, legally recognised, planning document that would describe how Hartest might develop as a sustainable, mixed, thriving community of residents and businesses over the next 30 years. Any recommendations for development would be driven by the expressed views and opinions of the community, informed by analysis of the historical and current physical characteristics and demographic composition of the Parish, with research into and discussion about likely future development needs.
- 1.10 The Plan would be confined to the Hartest Parish boundary. It was agreed that it would include a summary of opinions, needs and planning aspirations of all residents regarding a wide range of aspects of the Parish environment. It would identify:
- the predominant 'Character' of the various areas within the Parish, including a physical description of surrounding landscapes and the houses;
 - the demographic development of the Parish over the past 30 years and consider likely changes in the future;
 - the likely requirements for the range of accommodation needed for a sustainable mixed community of businesses and homes;
 - those valued environmental, material and social assets that must be protected;
 - possible locations which may provide suitable sites for development and the planning restrictions necessary to protect the character of the Parish.

- 1.11 It was always intended that the Plan would focus on those planning related matters of importance to Hartest's residents, namely the provision of homes but also consider the transport; education; health and wellbeing; leisure; employment; energy and communications requirements needed to support the community in the future.
- 1.12 The Neighbourhood Plan will, when complete, form part of the statutory "Development Plan" for Babergh District, meaning that its planning policies and content will be taken into account when decisions on planning applications are made.
- 1.13 The content of the Neighbourhood Plan has been informed by information gathering and community consultation undertaken by the Working Group. This included a detailed questionnaire distributed to all households. A summary of the responses is available on the Hartest website. The results of these consultations have been taken into account in shaping the content of the Plan and its policies and potential community actions. The working group has also prepared an assessment of the Village's strengths and weaknesses as well as the opportunities and threats (a SWOT analysis). These were tested through community engagement at the Drop-In event in September 2015 and were refined as a result of the feedback from the consultation. The key points of the SWOT analysis which remain today are:

Strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attractive location (immediate topography / wider geography) • A desirable place to live • Quality buildings (individual / group) • The Green • Community activities / organisations • Village church • Pre-school / Primary school • Trees / hedgerows (with high species diversity), including Hartest Wood • Footpaths network • No street lighting 	Weaknesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through road traffic (amount / speed & HGVs) • Lack of "affordable" housing • High proportion of older residents • Lack of children's play facilities • No general store / post office • Lack of other recreational facilities • Above average house prices • Limited regular bus service • Inadequate drainage (surface / foul) • Overhead cables • Mobile phone signal
Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation / support of local employment initiatives • Community initiatives • Amelioration of traffic issues • Attracting people to Hartest (tourism) • Creation of public children's play / general sports facilities • Exploitation of available public / charitable funding 	Threats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inappropriate new development • Damage to views / natural environment • Sustainability of current services • Increasing house prices • Unviable Primary school pupil numbers • Endangered viability of Village church • Decline in volunteering • Through traffic (amount / speed and HGVs)

Themes

- 1.14 The Plan focuses on seven themes which emerged as a result of identifying issues and concerns during the surveys and information gathering stage of preparing the Plan.



- 1.15 These themes form the foundation for the content of the Plan and distinct chapters for each theme. Within each chapter there is a statement of objectives, a summary of what the evidence showed, with further discussion culminating in planning policies and, where appropriate, potential community actions.

Policies and Community Actions

- 1.16 The planning policies will form part of the statutory Development Plan and will be used by Babergh District Council when determining planning applications in the parish. The community actions do not form part of the “statutory” Neighbourhood Plan but are included for completeness to identify other areas of improvement and change that residents have identified during the preparation of the Plan. The planning policies are identified to be distinct from the general body of the Plan and are prefixed HAR1, HAR2 etc. The community actions are also distinctly different to avoid any potential confusion with policies.



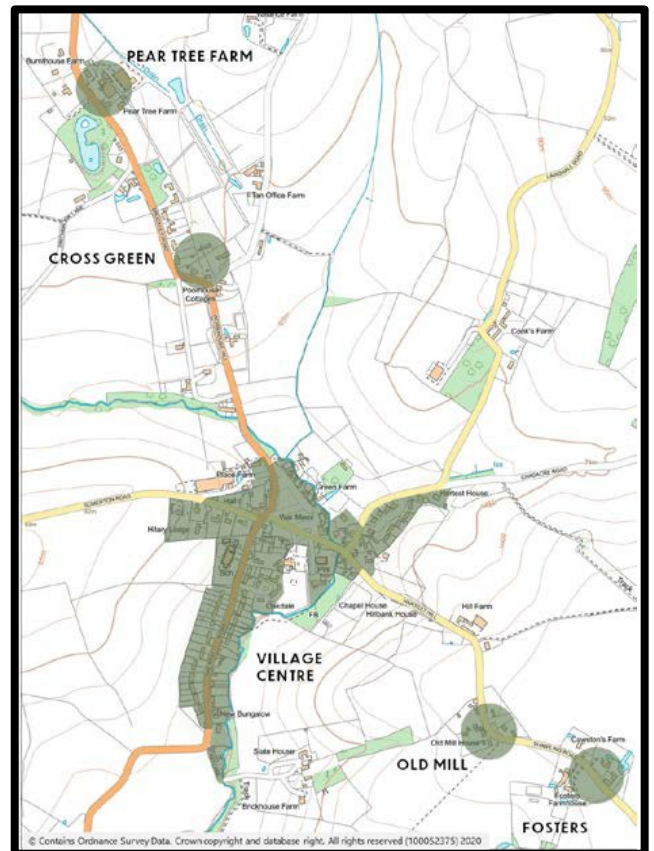
2. Hartest Past & Present

- 2.1 The Parish of Hartest is situated in the area known as High Suffolk at the north-western extremity of Babergh district, on the B1066 and midway between Bury St Edmunds and Sudbury. Hartest Hill is said to be the steepest hill in Suffolk. The land is characterised by heavy loam and clay soils, originally covered by woodland and forest. Indeed, the name 'Hartest' derives from the wooded nature of the landscape.
- 2.2 The main development part of the Parish is set in the bottom of a distinctive valley, formed by a tributary of the River Glem, A section of the stream runs through the central part of the Village, in some cases forming part of the gardens of houses alongside it.



Map 2 - The location of Hartest

- 2.3 The Village centre lies at the intersection of four roads which run roughly north-south and east-west and meet at a crossroads towards the southwest corner of the Green. The Parish is distinct in that, while there is one main built-up area focused around the vicinity of the Green, there are also a number of smaller groups of houses (clusters) dispersed around the parish, primarily developed during the course of history around farms or former farms. Within the Parish there are several farm buildings and barns associated with working farms.
- 2.4 The core of the Village, the Green, has an unusual triangular shape which relates directly to these historic features. This was originally larger and it appears the eastern edge was formerly on the other side of the stream, and that the tightly packed houses along the present eastern edge are later encroachments. A timber-framed Wealden house, between 'Hunters' and 'Green Farm', dates from c1470, which suggests that the encroachment is an early change to the Village. At the south side of the Green, at the lower end, near the fording point of the stream, stands the Church, (which was already there by 1086); the Hall or Manor House, now the Crown Inn, higher up the slope, and the Rectory to the south of the Church. On the western side the Green originally tapered into Somerton Road, as it still does on the North side, into Workhouse Hill. The surrounding landscape is an integral part of the Village setting with access to extensive views across it from many of the houses and public spaces, from the footpaths and the four roads.
- 2.5 Today the central part of the Village and a considerable area of land around it, the Village setting, is designated as a Conservation Area and within it there are many listed buildings as well as, non-listed buildings and features of local



Map 3 - The Village centre and its clusters

importance.

Facilities and Services

- 2.6 The central built-up area of the Village is also the focal point for the location of services and facilities. It is here that the Village primary school, the Crown public house, All Saints' Church, and the Institute function rooms can be found. For a village of its size, there is a good range of services and facilities but there are ongoing concerns as to how secure they will remain in the long term, as demonstrated by the recent loss of the GP Surgery and butcher. The Village's location primarily in a rural valley means that mobile phone signals are poor although the availability of high-speed broadband coverage has recently been improved. These factors are increasingly important considerations in determining decisions about living and working in the Village.

Key Statistics

- 2.7 The 2021 Census resident population of the Parish was 477, representing a 12% increase over the past 10 years, as illustrated in **Figure 1**. The biggest change in that period is those aged 65 and over, which has increased by 22% since 2011 whilst there has been a decrease in the proportion of residents aged under 45.

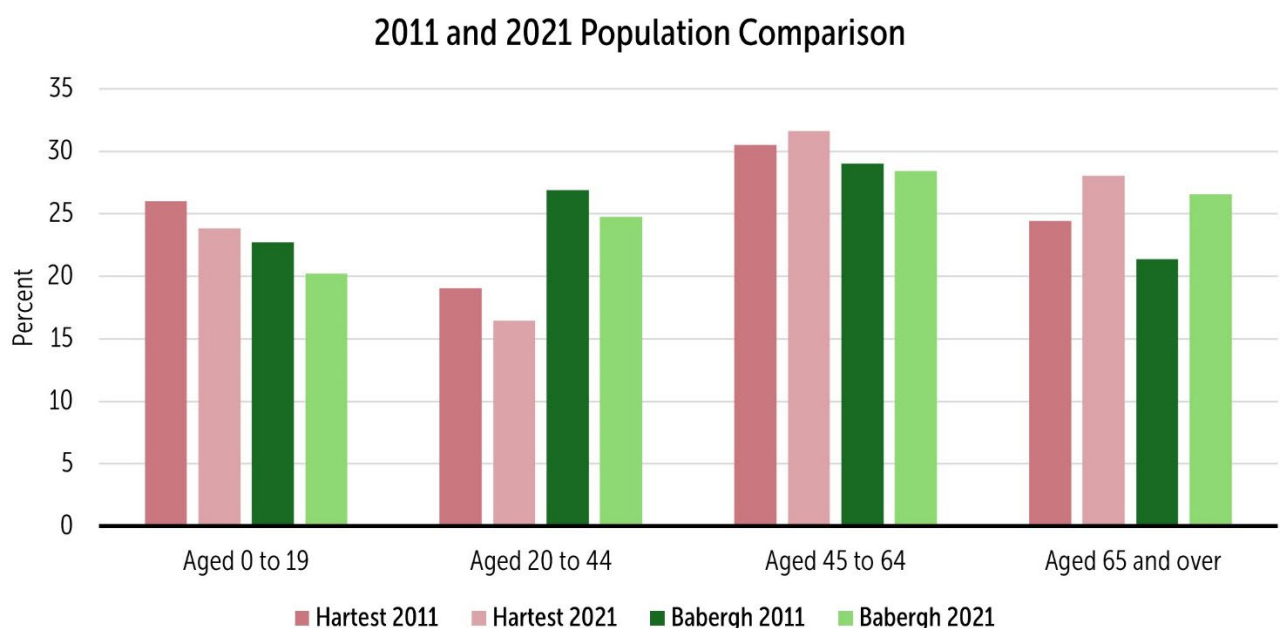
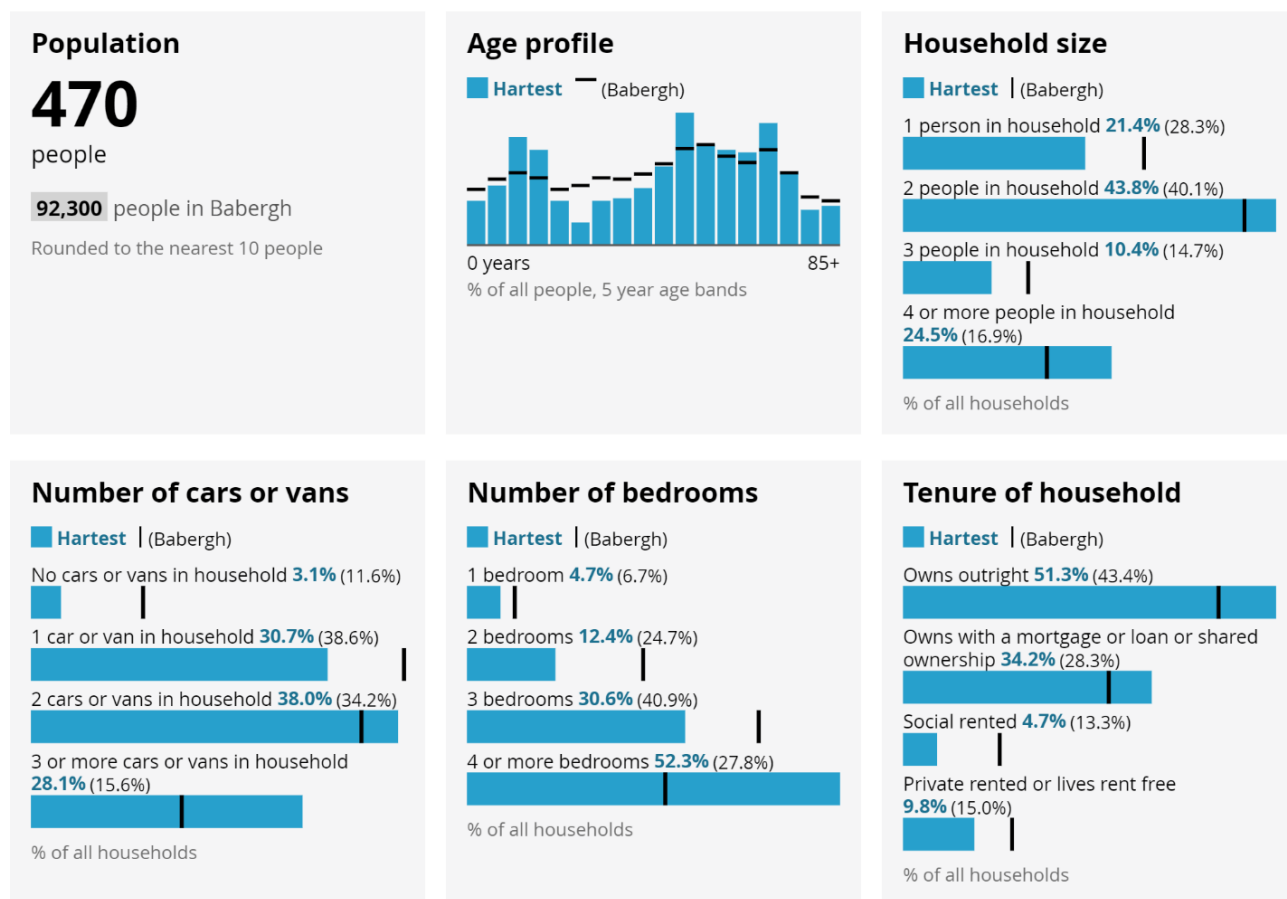


Figure 1 – Population Change 2011 to 2021

- 2.8 The Office for National Statistics publishes key Census data as an area profile. Data for Hartest relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan, and compared with Babergh as a whole, is illustrated in **Figure 2**. The data shows significantly high levels of homes with three or more cars in the household when compared with Babergh and almost twice the proportion of homes with four or more bedrooms when compared with Babergh. There is also only a small proportion of homes that are social rented when compared with the Babergh figures.



Hartest



Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

Figure 2 – Key Census data comparison for Hartest and Babergh

Parish Plan 2006

- 2.9 In Spring 2006 a Parish Plan was prepared by residents in the Village with the support of Suffolk ACRE. The Plan contained 16 recommendations relating to:
- Leisure
 - Community help and support
 - Religion
 - The school and the community
 - Parish Council and Local Government
 - Transport and communication
 - The village environment
 - Business or work based in Hartest
 - Retail and allied facilities
- 2.10 This Neighbourhood Plan has a very different purpose to that of the Parish Plan but, during its preparation the Parish Council has reflected on the recommendations of the Parish Plan, albeit that it was prepared nearly twenty years ago, to assess whether any may still be relevant today.

3. Planning Policy Context

- 3.1 The regulations governing the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans require that they conform with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the strategic policies of the local Development Plan.

National Planning Policy

- 3.2 In December 2024, the Government published a Revised NPPF and the Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared within the context of the revised NPPF. It notes that the national planning system has three overarching objectives:
- a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation, and improved productivity, and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
 - b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
 - c) an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built, and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 3.3 The NPPF acknowledges that neighbourhood plans can “shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development” but that they “should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies.”

Local Planning Policy

- 3.4 At a more local level, the Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in the context of the current Babergh Local Plan, which comprises the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan – Part 1, adopted in November 2023 and referred to as JLP1 in this Neighbourhood Plan. It provides a set of strategic and local development management policies, which will be used to inform decisions on planning applications and appeals. These do not need to be repeated in the Neighbourhood Plan but which the Neighbourhood Plan can complement by adding locally based detail. As at September 2024, Policies SP01 to SP10 are the strategic policies of the Local Plan.
- 3.5 In February 2025, reflecting the publication of the new NPPF and the introduction of a new local plan making system, the District Council made the decision to carry out a Joint Local Plan Review which will plan to at least 2044. The first public consultation is not expected to take place until Spring 2026 and the new Local Plan is not expected to be adopted until 2029.
- 3.6 In July 2020, Suffolk County Council adopted the Minerals and Waste Local Plan which is part of the strategic policy framework for the area. Part of the parish falls within a Minerals Consultation Area and the District Council will consult the County Council on planning applications that fall within this area.

4. Vision and Objectives

- 4.1 This section sets out the community's vision for Hartest and the objectives developed to guide the policies that will deliver the Vision. The planning policies that follow are the delivery tools for realising the vision and objectives. The Vision has been informed by community engagement that supported the protection of the special qualities of the historic and natural environment of Hartest should shape how and where the Village grows.

The Vision set out below has been agreed and for the purposes of this consultation it is unchanged from the previous draft Neighbourhood Plan.

The parish of Hartest will:

- **continue to be a thriving and inclusive community; and**
- **retain the unique and special character of the built and natural environment.**

- 4.2 To deliver this Vision, the following Objectives have been established for the Plan:

OBJECTIVES

- 1 Protect and enhance the landscape, biodiversity and natural habitats**
- 2 Protect and enhance the historic environment**
- 3 Manage the provision of housing to meet identified local needs**
- 4 Preserve existing and promote an increase in green spaces and provide better access to them**
- 5 Improve movement to, from and around the Village**
- 6 Support and improve the provision of social, community, recreational and other leisure facilities**
- 7 Ensure that the level of services and infrastructure reasonably required to meet the day-to-day needs of the Village are available**
- 8 Increase opportunities for local economic investment and growth**

- 4.3 These Objectives were tested at the Issues and Options Workshop held at The Institute in March 2016 and consultations on the draft Neighbourhood Plan and have been adjusted to take account of the outcomes of that community involvement.

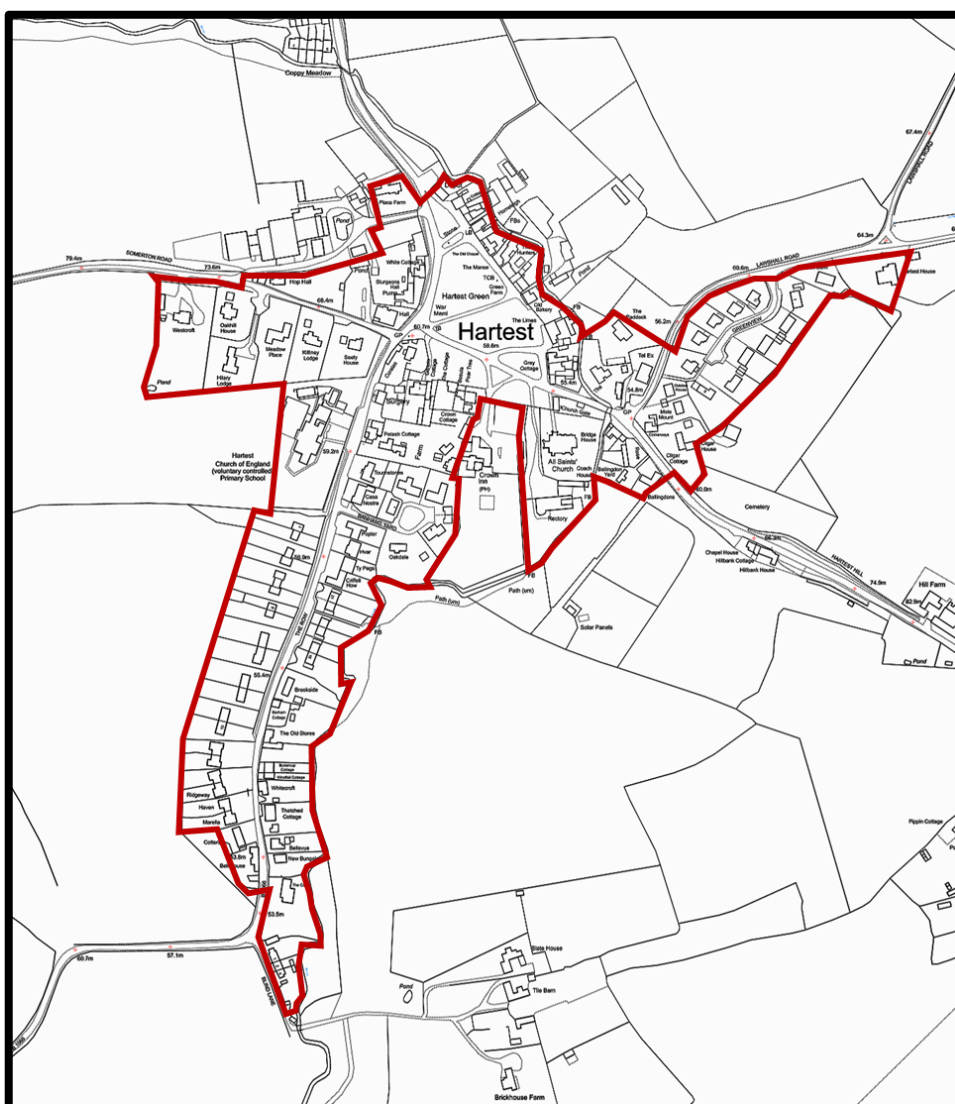


5. Hartest's Spatial Strategy

- 5.1 As noted earlier, the built-up area of the Village is centred around The Green with later “ribbons” of development found along adjoining roads. It is the location for the Primary School, Parish Church and The Crown public house. Away from this Village centre, there are distinct and primarily small clusters of dwellings that have traditionally been associated with farmsteads.

Policy Context

- 5.2 The high-level planning policy framework for the Parish is established in the adopted JLP1 (November 2023), although it does not define a settlement hierarchy across Babergh nor allocate sites for housing development. These matters are being addressed in the emerging Part 2 of the Joint Local Plan, planned for completion in 2026.
- 5.3 Policy SP03 of JLP1 sets out a strategic approach to where new development will be located in Babergh, noting that the principle of development within Settlement Boundaries is supported where it is in accordance with other relevant planning policies. Only in specific circumstances will development outside Settlement Boundaries be supported, where it is supported by specific Development Plan or national policies.
- 5.4 A Settlement Boundary is identified in JLP1 reflecting the Built Up Area Boundary defined in the Babergh Local Plan 2006 and enclosing the main developed area of the Parish at that time. It is illustrated on **Map 4**. There is no need to amend the Settlement Boundary as a result of development that has taken place in the interim.



Map 4 – Adopted Local Plan Settlement Boundary

- 5.5 One instance where the Joint Local Plan does support development outside the defined Settlement Boundaries is where there are clusters of ten “well related dwellings.” Policy LP01 states that infill development would be supported within such locations where the proposal is “not detrimental to the character and appearance of the settlement, landscape, heritage or residential amenity or would result in consolidating sporadic or ribbon development.” It states further that development within such clusters would usually be for only one or two dwellings.

Neighbourhood Plan approach to the location of development

- 5.6 The existing settlement pattern contributes significantly to the character of the Village and provides a starting point for the strategy for the location of new development. The Neighbourhood Plan confirms the Settlement Boundary as that which is adopted in JLP1.
- 5.7 It is essential that any future development in Hartest is focused on the existing built-up area of the Village in order to limit potential detrimental impact on the surrounding landscape and designated sites and features and ensure that it is located in a location that is close and accessible to what services remain in the Village centre. The importance of the heritage and landscape designations also requires that the location of new development is carefully considered and, where necessary, mitigation of any impact on the historic and natural landscape and existing infrastructure will be necessary.
- 5.8 In accordance with Policy SP03 of the Joint Local Plan, the spatial strategy for Hartest supports the principle of development within the defined Settlement Boundary subject to the consideration of the impact of the proposal as assessed against other policies in the Joint Local Plan – Part 1 and Neighbourhood Plan, such as
- the presence of heritage assets;
 - the landscape setting of the Village;
 - the capacity of services and infrastructure;
 - the potential impact on the amenity of existing residents; and
 - the impact of development on the wider area.

This approach will ensure that the largely undeveloped countryside will remain preserved.

- 5.9 There may be situations where it may be adequately demonstrated that it is necessary for development to take place outside the Settlement Boundary. Policy SP03 states:

“Outside of the settlement boundaries, development will normally only be permitted where:

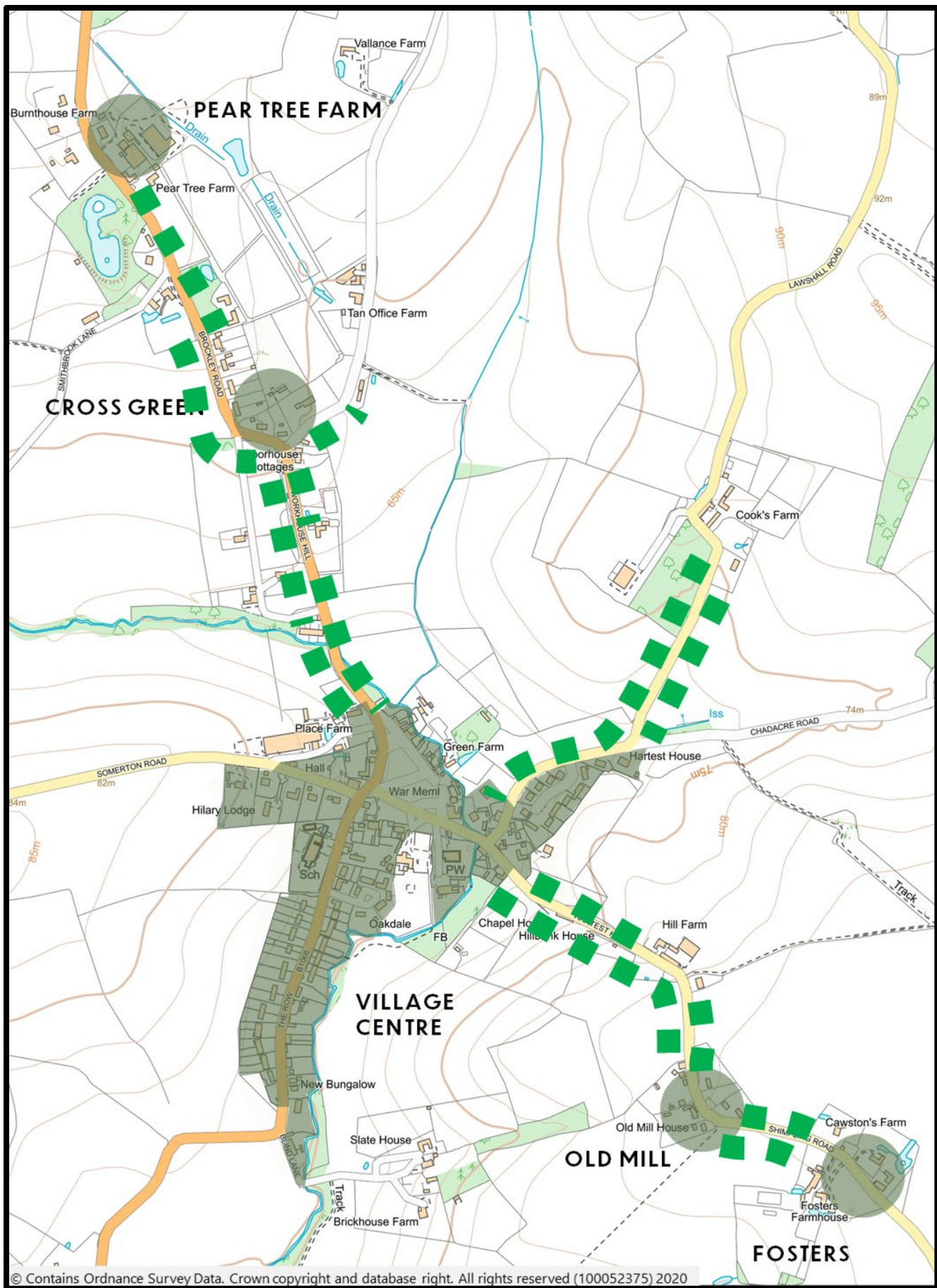
- a) the site is allocated for development, or*
- b) it is in accordance with a made Neighbourhood Plan, or*
- c) it is in accordance with one of the policies of this Plan listed in Table 5; or*
- d) it is in accordance with paragraph 80 of the NPPF (2021).”*

By way of clarification as to how this applies to Hartest, at the time of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan:

- There are no sites allocated for development in Hartest parish;
- The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate sites for development but proposals outside the Settlement Boundary identified in Policy HAR 1 will also be considered in the context of the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan;
- Table 5 of JLP1 identifies the Local Plan policies permitting development outside settlement boundaries, subject to the development's accordance with the other relevant policies of the Local and Neighbourhood Plan; and
- Paragraph 80 of the NPPF (now paragraph 84 of the NPPF December 2023) applies to specific circumstances where a dwelling in the countryside would be supported.

Table 5 of JLP1 and paragraph 84 of the NPPF are reproduced in Appendix 1 of this Plan.

- 5.10 In preparing the Neighbourhood Plan residents' have identified that the gaps between clusters of buildings outside the defined Settlement Boundary are features that they especially wish to see preserved. They are identified on Map 5. The distinct clusters, accentuated by these gaps, are historically significant to the character of the Parish. Accordingly, a number of gaps between settlements have been identified as being of such importance that it is considered they should be preserved from all but essential development that cannot be located elsewhere.



Map 5 – Important Gaps

Policy HAR 1 - Hartest's Spatial Strategy

The Neighbourhood Plan area will accommodate development commensurate with Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan.

The focus for new development will be within the defined Settlement Boundary, as shown on Map 4 and the Policies Map, where the principle of development is accepted.

Proposals for development located outside the Settlement Boundary will only be permitted where they are in accordance with national, district and neighbourhood level policies and where they would not have a detrimental impact on heritage and landscape designations and overall landscape character of the parish.

The generally open and undeveloped nature of the Settlement Gaps, as identified on the Policies Map and described in the Hartest Character Assessment - Built Environment Report, will be protected from development to help prevent coalescence and retain the separate identity of the settlements.

Development will only be permitted within the identified gap if:

- i) it would not undermine the physical and/or visual separation of the settlements;
 - ii) it would not compromise the integrity of the Settlement Gap, either individually or cumulatively with other existing or proposed development; and
 - iii) there is no detrimental impact on the key features of important views identified on the Policies Map.
-





6. Housing

OBJECTIVE

3. Manage the provision of housing, including affordable housing, to meet identified local needs.

Context

- 6.1 Information has been gathered to guide and shape the Neighbourhood Plan policies for housing. In summary, the key points are:

52% of homes have 4 or more bedrooms, nearly twice the proportion for Babergh as a whole

67% of residents live in 1 or 2 person households

35% of the population are aged over 60

20 new homes were built in the Parish between 2001 and 2021, an average of one a year.

- 6.2 Traditionally the Village has grown by single plots or small groups and has evolved this way over hundreds of years, typically around the farmsteads that are (or were) a common feature of this ancient agricultural landscape. Consequently, there are a number of smaller groups of houses around the parish including the clusters identified in Policy HAR 1, although the nucleus of the Parish remains focused around The Green where the majority of the recent housing development is located. In September 2015, when consulted on the amount of housing growth that should take place in the Parish, most residents felt that it should remain at about the same rate of growth that had been experienced in recent years, which had averaged at around one house a year.
- 6.3 At the time of preparing this draft Neighbourhood Plan, there was planning consent for one additional dwelling in the Parish (at the former Garage on The Green) that had yet to be built.

Policy Context

- 6.4 The NPPF identifies that the strategic policies of a local plan should “set out a housing requirement for designated neighbourhood areas which reflects the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development”. However, for Babergh this requirement is to be addressed in Part 2 of the Joint Local Plan and is therefore unlikely to be confirmed until 2026.
- 6.5 As identified in Section 5, Policy SP03 of JLP1 limits the location of most new housing to within the Settlement Boundary. Outside of the Settlement Boundary, JLP1:
- makes provision for the replacement of dwellings outside of defined boundaries (Policy LP04).
 - allows for dwellings for rural workers outside of settlement boundaries where it can be demonstrated that particular criteria can be met (Policy LP05).
 - caters for the provision of affordable and community led housing to meet local needs as a rural exception site should a local need for the housing be identified (Policy LP07).

In all instances, proposals must not be to the detriment of the character and appearance of the settlement, landscape, heritage or residential amenity.

Neighbourhood Plan approach to housing development

- 6.6 At the Neighbourhood Plan Issues and Options Consultation event in March 2016, attendees were asked to consider whether they wanted to focus on the delivery of new homes in the Parish or whether the historic and natural environment should inform and guide the capacity for and location of new development. The results of that consideration, as illustrated in **Figure 3**, indicate an overwhelming preference for an environmental led approach to the Plan.

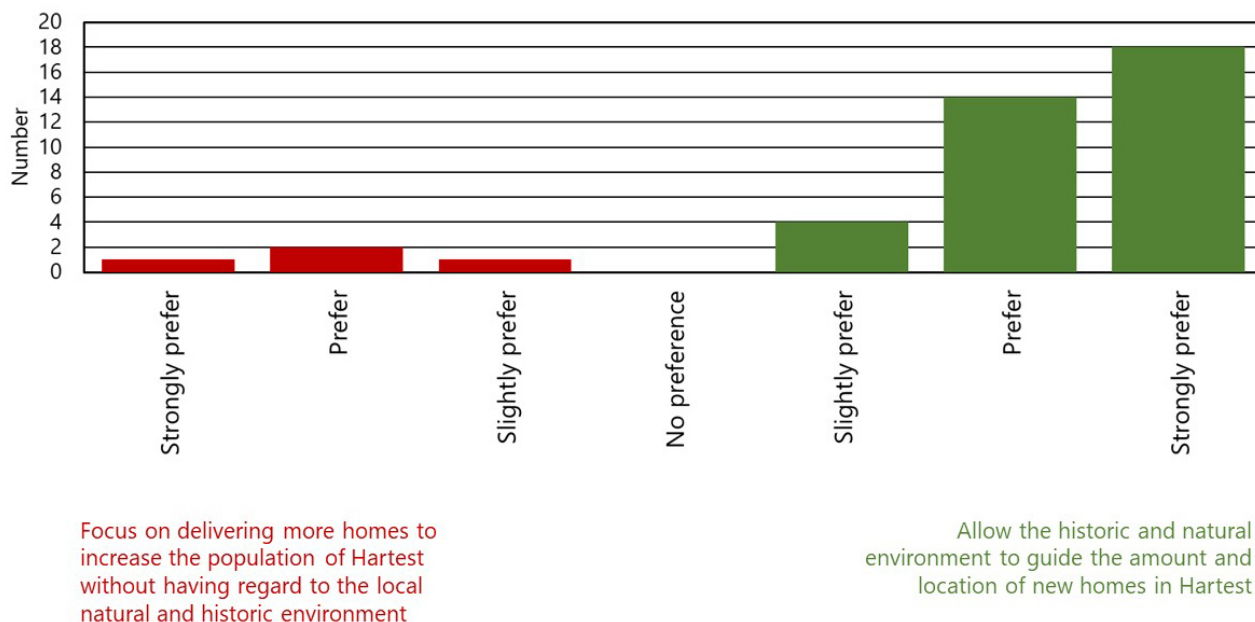


Figure 3 - Residents preferences for housing verses the environment

- 6.7 Having had regard to the NPPF and the Joint Local Plan, the Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate any new sites for residential development. The Settlement Boundary is wholly within the conservation area and, at the time this Plan was prepared, there appear to be limited prospects for acceptable development coming forward in the foreseeable future within the Village Centre, other than possible conversions or small scale infill that would have regard to the historic and natural environment setting of the site.

Policy HAR 2 - Housing Development

Within the Settlement Boundary, as defined on the Policies Map, there is a general presumption in favour of housing development in the form of small brownfield "windfall" sites and infill plots of one or two dwellings where proposals would not have a detrimental impact on the built and natural character of the site and its surroundings, the amenity of residents and infrastructure, including highways.

- 6.8 Across the parish there are a number of farmsteads where traditional farm buildings have become redundant to the needs of agriculture. In such instances there may be opportunities to convert these buildings to residential uses where the building lends itself to conversion without requiring significant works to make it suitable for residential use. Proposals of this nature must result in a dwelling of the highest quality and should not result in the creation of a residential curtilage and any associated domestic paraphernalia that would have a harmful effect on the character of the site or setting of the building, any wider group of buildings, or the surrounding area.

House Sizes

- 6.9 The preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan has identified that there is a high proportion of larger homes in the Parish when compared with nearby parishes. Typically, this will have been achieved by extensions to small cottages and houses with larger gardens. Over half of the homes in Hartest have four or more bedrooms whereas the average the surrounding parishes is 36%. This is illustrated clearly in **Figure 4**.

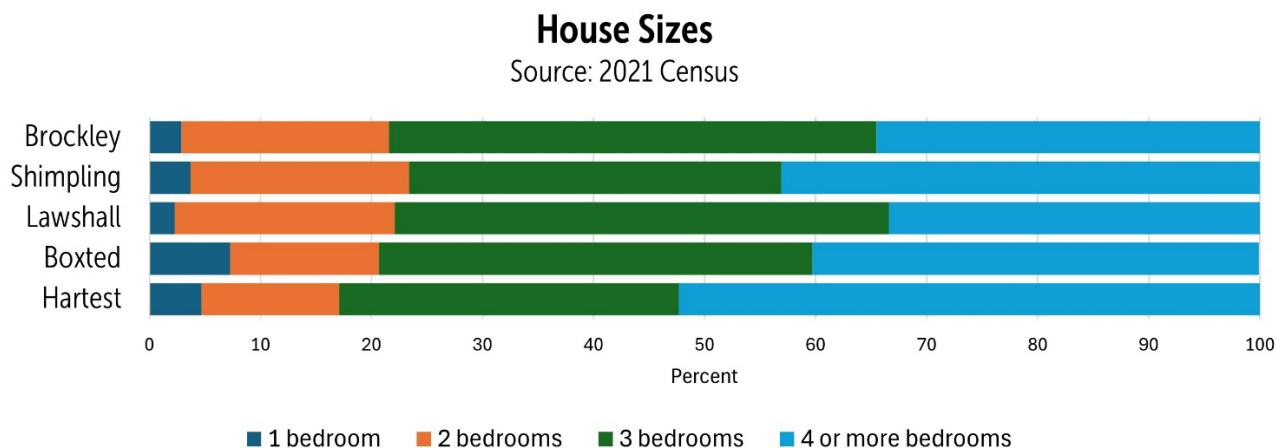


Figure 4 - House size comparison

- 6.10 Despite the already high proportion of larger homes, 35% of the Household Survey respondents wished to move into larger properties. However, with such a large proportion of one and two person households there is clear evidence that there needs to be a push towards providing more smaller houses to cater for those starting out or those wishing to downsize from larger properties. This is supported by the Ipswich and Waveney Strategic Housing Market Assessment update for Babergh (January 2019) which identified a need, in 2036, for 36% of all new owner-occupied housing across Babergh to be two-bedroomed properties and 30% to be three-bedroomed..
- 6.11 As this Neighbourhood Plan is not planning for a significant amount of new housing, it will be difficult to redress the balance to reflect the local average. However, the Plan supports proposals for new housing that will provide for two and three bedroomed dwellings and especially where those homes are to adapt to and accommodate the needs of the occupier over their lifetime. As such, homes that are built to accessible standards in Building Regulation Part M4(2) and the wheelchair user standards in Part M4(3) will be supported. JLP Part 1 requires 50% of dwellings in new developments of ten or more homes to meet the requirements for accessible and adaptable dwellings under Part M4(2) of the Building Regulations. While there are unlikely to be such developments in Hartest, proposals for all new dwellings are encouraged to meet these minimum requirements.
- 6.12 In March 2015 the government published “Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standard” which sets out a prescription to encourage enough space in homes to ensure that they can be used flexibly by a range of residents. The standards also aim to ensure that sufficient storage can be integrated into dwelling units. It is emphasised that these standards are expressed as minimum standards. Policy LP24 ‘Design and Residential Amenity’ of JLP Part 1 requires all new homes to meet the Nationally Described Space Standard.
- 6.13 Externally, it is also important that homes meet modern day requirements for the storage of wheelie bins and for storing cycles. Without sufficient and appropriate space reserved for these uses, the consequences are added clutter and a deterrent to use cycles as a mode of travel.

Policy HAR 3 - Housing Mix

Housing development must contribute to meeting the existing and future needs of the Parish. Otherwise policy compliant proposals for new dwellings will be supported where they provide two or three bedroom dwellings designed to be adaptable for lifetime occupation.

Replacement Dwellings

- 6.14 The retention and refurbishment of existing dwellings, rather than their demolition and replacement, is much more sustainable in the long term. The University College of Estate Management has stated that “While a new building might be more energy efficient, it can take 10-80 years to offset the amount of energy consumed in its construction.” ([What is adaptive reuse \(and why is it important\)? - University College of Estate Management ; May 2024](#)) The retention of existing homes is therefore a starting principle when considering the future life and form of dwellings. However, and as a last resort, there may be situations where the replacement of an existing house is more economic than the cost of repairing or altering an existing building. As the principle of development is established by the existing dwelling, wherever it is located in the parish, its replacement will generally be acceptable. The relocation of a building within a plot will generally be acceptable provided it is in keeping with the placement of nearby houses in their plot.

- 6.15 Given the imbalance in house sizes in the Parish, it is considered essential that proposals for replacement dwellings should not result in a significant increase in the floorspace of the original dwelling. The replacement of small dwellings outside the Settlement Boundary with significantly larger houses can radically change the character of a site to one of a more suburban nature, and also reduce the supply of smaller dwellings in the Parish. When clearly disproportional to the original, a replacement dwelling can be equivalent in its impact to that of a new dwelling and can therefore undermine both national and local policies on restriction of new development in the countryside. Even where a site is well screened there is a wider concern to maintain the essential rural nature and qualities of the area. JLP Part 1 includes Policy LP04 - Replacement Dwellings and Conversions which forms the basis for Policy HAR 4, while local factors have also been added.

Policy HAR 4 - Replacement Dwellings

Where it can be demonstrated that options for the reuse and refurbishment of existing dwellings is not economically viable, proposals for the replacement of existing dwellings will be permitted where:

- i. The original dwelling has a lawful permanent residential use.
- ii. The replacement dwelling would not have a more harmful impact, or be more intrusive in the landscape, or countryside setting, or on heritage assets and their settings, or on the residential amenity of existing dwellings than the original dwelling, by virtue of its siting, scale, height, character and design and uses materials to achieve a high standard of design in response to the context;
- iii. The replacement dwelling is positioned on or close to the footprint of the existing dwelling, unless design, landscape, highway safety, residential amenity or other environmental grounds indicate that a more appropriate location on the plot can be justified;
- iv. The size of the replacement dwelling is not significantly larger than the original dwelling, irrespective of any outbuildings demolished on the site, and is appropriate to the countryside setting; and
- v. The site has or is capable of having a safe and suitable access and the provision of parking spaces will meet adopted standards; and
- vi. The development includes an acceptable landscape scheme to retain and improve the rural nature of the locality.

Applications for a replacement dwelling outside the Settlement Boundary would be expected to provide a detailed analysis of the visual impacts and effects of the new dwelling on the landscape or countryside setting through Landscaper and Visual Appraisals (LVA) or Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments (LVIA).

Proposals for conversion of buildings to residential must demonstrate the structure is capable of accommodating the use and the development would reuse redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting.

Increases in plot size to form additional garden, parking or amenity land will not be permitted.

Residential Parking Standards

- 6.16 Car ownership levels across the Parish are generally higher than Babergh as a whole, as illustrated in **Figure 5**. The 2021 Census identifies that few households did not have access to a car or van and those with three or more cars or vans were at much higher levels than across Babergh as a whole. The high levels of car ownership are expected to continue, especially given limited availability of bus services and lack of day-to-day services in the Village. These higher levels of car ownership result in an increased pressure on space both within the grounds of established dwellings and on the roads in the vicinity.

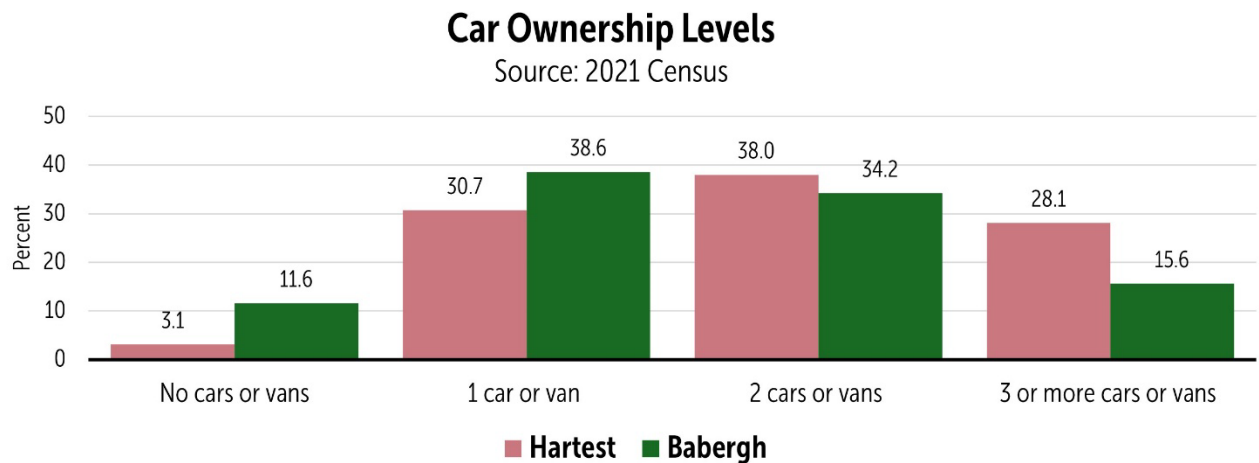


Figure 5 – Car Ownership Levels

- 6.17 The Hartest Conservation Area Appraisal prepared by Babergh District Council noted that parking on verges in Hartest is causing damage to the road edge in places and the narrowness of the roads throughout Hartest are not conducive to allowing on-street parking.
- 6.18 Paragraph 111 of the NPPF states that, “If setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential development, policies should take into account:
- the accessibility of the development;
 - the type, mix and use of development;
 - the availability of and opportunities for public transport;
 - local car ownership levels; and
 - the need to ensure an adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.”
- 6.19 The Suffolk County Council Parking Guidance (2023) for residential development acknowledges that providing a reduced number of parking spaces at a travel origin does not effectively discourage people from owning a car unless heavily restricted and alternative modes of transport are available. It states that parking guidance for origins should be used as a minimum advisory standard. The 2023 standards for residential development are reproduced below:

Dwelling Size	SCC Guidance
1 bedroom	1 space per dwelling
2 bedrooms	2 spaces per dwelling
3 bedrooms	2 spaces per dwelling
4+ bedrooms	3 spaces per dwelling

- 6.20 Given the higher levels of car ownership in Hartest, it is reasonable that parking standards should also be set at a higher level than the recommended minimum requirements. For all residential developments, the minimum parking spaces required for each new dwelling shall be as set out below:

Dwelling Size	Neighbourhood Plan Standard
1 bedroom	2 spaces per dwelling
2 bedrooms	2 spaces per dwelling
3 bedrooms	3 spaces per dwelling
4+ bedrooms	3 spaces per dwelling

- 6.21 The transition from petrol/diesel vehicles to electric during the lifetime of the Neighbourhood Plan is going to require retrofitting vehicle charging points at homes and businesses. For new developments, it is essential that adequate provision is made for the emergence of electric vehicles. Although the 2023 “County Council Guidance for Parking” provides minimum requirements for electric vehicle charging, it is considered that the residential requirements (to provide ducting and suitable consumer unit to allow the installation of one charging unit per dwelling when required by householder) does not future proof development and that, given the higher levels of car ownership in the Parish, every new dwelling should have two charging units.

Policy HAR 5 – Residential Parking Standards

Development proposals should maintain or enhance the safety of the highway network ensuring that all vehicle parking is designed to be integrated into the site without creating an environment dominated by vehicles.

In residential developments the following minimum provision shall be made:

House Size	Minimum Requirement
1 bedroom	2 spaces per dwelling
2 bedrooms	2 spaces per dwelling
3 bedrooms	3 spaces per dwelling
4+ bedrooms	3 spaces per dwelling

One electric vehicle charging point shall be installed for each off-street residential parking place created.

Affordable Housing

- 6.22 The most recently published Government data on house prices identifies that the average prices in Babergh in September 2023 were the highest across all Suffolk districts at £331,250. When average incomes are taken into account, house prices were 11.6 times the average gross annual incomes, again the highest ratio across the Suffolk districts. The Land Registry records identify 20 houses being sold in Hartest in the two years since January 2023 and an average sale price of just under £595,000, significantly above the Babergh average. This means that house prices in the village would be significantly higher than many starting out on the housing ladder could afford. One way that the planning system can address this problem is through the provision of affordable housing as defined by the NPPF and set out in the Glossary. National planning policy enables an alternative mechanism for meeting locally identified housing needs through “rural exception sites” which would not normally be used for housing. Policy LP07 of JLP 1 indicates that such sites must be well-connected to an existing settlement and proportionate to both its location and the locally identified housing need. This approach has the benefit of being on land where there is no “market” development value, thereby reducing the land value and enabling a viable affordable housing scheme. Both national and local policy allows for some open market housing on rural exception sites as a means of enabling development; this being the minimum necessary to cross-subsidise the affordable housing. In order to convincingly demonstrate the need for open market homes to deliver the affordable homes without grant, a viability appraisal needs to be submitted as part of the application.
- 6.23 To deliver affordable housing through the “exception sites” approach, the following steps would normally be required:
1. A local need has to be established, usually through a detailed parish housing needs survey; and
 2. A willing landowner prepared to sell land at a price significantly below the market value for housing land; and
 3. A registered social landlord (housing association) or a Community-led Development Organisation such as a Community Land Trust willing to work with the Parish Council and District Council to fund and manage a scheme.
- 6.24 Every household in the Parish was invited to participate in a Housing Needs Survey in September 2015. A total of 97 responses were received, representing a response rate of just under 50% of the households in the Parish. The Survey did not identify a significant need for the provision of an affordable housing development to meet the needs of people with a local connection. That Survey is now out-of-date and it will be necessary to review needs during the lifetime of this Neighbourhood Plan to ascertain whether the situation has changed. The Parish Council will work with the District Council and other organisations to commission such surveys in order that changing demands for affordable housing to be assessed during the plan period.

Community Action 1 – Housing Needs

Housing Needs Surveys will be commissioned on an occasional basis to ascertain whether there is a need for the provision of an affordable housing development to meet the needs of people with a local connection.

- 6.25 Should surveys identify a need during the Plan period (to 2037) the provision of a small scheme appropriately located close to the heart of the Village will be supported.



Policy HAR 6 - Affordable Housing on Rural Exception Sites

Proposals for the development of small-scale affordable housing on rural exception sites outside but well connected to an existing settlement, where housing would not normally be permitted by other policies, will be supported where there is a proven local need and provided that the housing:

- i remains affordable in perpetuity; and
- ii. is for people that are in housing need because they are unable to buy or rent properties in the Parish at open-market prices; and
- iii. is offered, in the first instance, to people with a demonstrated local connection, as defined by the Babergh District Council Choice Based Lettings Scheme. Where a property cannot be filled from within the Parish, it should then be offered to those with a demonstrated need for affordable housing in neighbouring parishes and thereafter to the rest of Babergh District.

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 otherwise be met by applying normal planning policy for the provision of affordable homes in association with market housing.

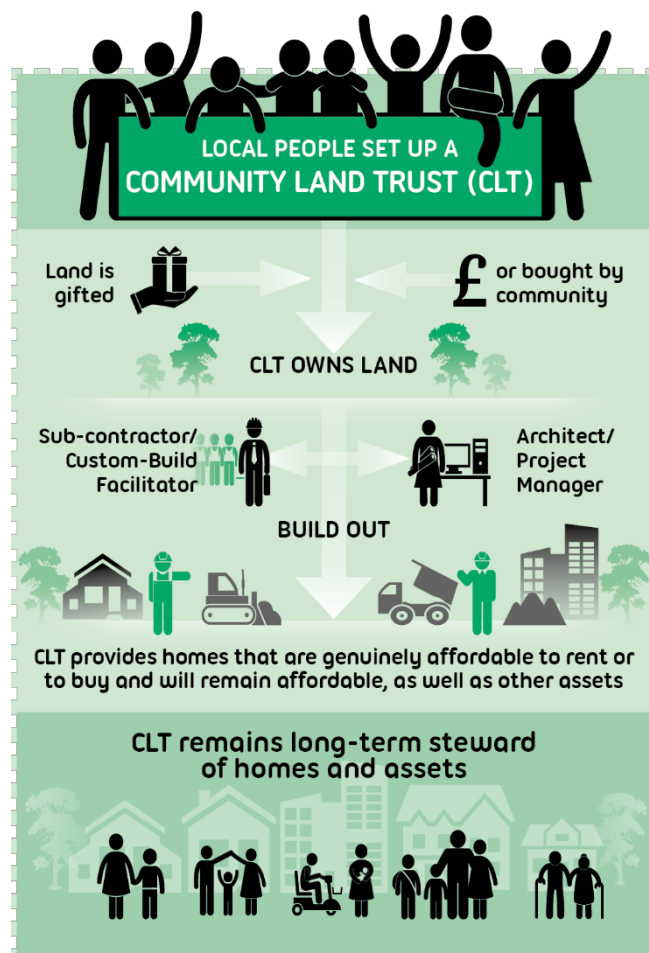
Any application for affordable housing in respect of this policy should be accompanied by a detailed need assessment, and the accommodation proposed should contribute to meeting this proven need.

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

- a. that no other means of funding the construction of the affordable homes is available; and
- b. 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.

- 6.26 As referred to above, one option for securing affordable housing that remains available for the local community for all time is through the establishment of a Community Land Trust (CLT). This is a form of community-led housing, set up and run by local people to develop and manage homes as well as other assets. CLTs act as long-term stewards of housing, ensuring that it remains genuinely affordable, based on what people actually earn in their area, not just for now but for every future occupier. Such a scheme was recently delivered at Lavenham and opportunities for a similar scheme in Hartest can be considered should there be an identified local need for affordable housing for those with a local connection and sufficient interest is forthcoming from residents to form a local Community Land Trust.



7. Natural Environment

Objective

1. Protect and enhance the landscape, biodiversity and natural habitats

4. Preserve existing and promote an increase in green spaces and provide better access to them

Context

7.1 The following matters have been taken into account in considering policies for Hartest's natural environment:

- The only statutory landscape and habitat designations in the parish are Ashen Wood and Bavins Wood on the eastern edge of the parish
- There are two county wildlife sites, valued for their wildflower habitats
- The former Babergh Local Plan identified a Special Landscape Area across the district that included part of the Neighbourhood Area. It was based on the landscape qualities of the upper Stour valley and its tributaries
- There are a number of important views in and around the Village
- The stream running through the centre of the Village is locally important as a corridor for a diversity of species, but it has no formal protection
- Land in the Parish is primarily classified as Grade 2 or Grade 3 agricultural land
- An extensive species-rich hedgerow network extends throughout the parish and, together with the scattered copses and broader strips of trees, these provide important habitats and corridors for wildlife. The many veteran trees within the hedgerows add to the diversity of habitats for a range of species
- Small areas of the Parish are identified as "priority habitats"
- Hartest Wood, towards the eastern edge of the Plan area, is one of the Woodland Trust's 'Woods on Your Doorstep', created to commemorate the Millennium. It was planted with mixed broadleaf trees by local Villagers and school children, and features a central sculpture called 'The Gift'
- The Dedham Vale and Stour Valley Project Area borders the southernmost edge of the built-up area of the Village

Planning Policy Context

7.2 JLP1 Policy LP17 covers landscape and requires development proposals to:

- a. integrate positively with the existing landscape character of the area and reinforce the local distinctiveness;
- b. be sensitive to the landscape and visual amenity impacts (including on dark skies and tranquil areas) on the natural environment and built character; and
- c. consider the topographical cumulative impact on landscape sensitivity.

Planning applications must also be informed by any landscape character assessment or other local guidance in place at the time.

Wildlife Habitats

7.3 Although there are relatively few natural habitat designations in the Parish, Hartest is rich in habitats and natural features that are important for their biodiversity value and also for making Hartest distinctive and an attractive place to live. At the eastern edge of the parish there are two ancient woodlands, Ashen Wood and Bavins Wood, that are designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest. Where development proposals have the potential to have a detrimental impact on these woodlands, additional information will be required when planning applications are submitted to demonstrate how any impact might be mitigated.

7.4 Elsewhere in the Parish, there are two County Wildlife Sites, The Cemetery and a site adjacent to Stowe Hill off Bury Road. Each is valued for their wildflower species and managed accordingly. Several other important but unprotected habitats are present across the parish and have been identified during the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan. Every effort should be made to protect and enhance these features.

7.5 The stream is a tributary of the River Glem though there appears to be no official name to the stream from its source in Somerton and through Hartest. Two recent surveys have been undertaken by Suffolk Wildlife Trust on behalf of the Neighbourhood Plan Group. The first (September 2015) focused on the length of stream within the built-up part of the Village, where it noted that there had been some examples of interference with the stream by residents, including restructuring of banks and tipping of compost and rubble into the stream. Evidence of otter activity was recorded as well as kingfisher, fish and signal crayfish. The report stated:

"The survey found that the river which flows through Hartest is of high ecological value and acts as a wildlife corridor for species such as otter. The river is a reactive water course with fluctuating water levels reflecting rainfall patterns ..."

The survey concluded that:

- the tributary is of high ecological value and acts as a wildlife corridor for species such as otter;
- the stones and gravels of the riverbed provide good habitat for fish such as bullhead;
- Himalayan balsam occurs frequently along this section of stream and it is recommended that it is controlled;
- adjacent habitat is dominated by gardens and, where possible, if a buffer of grass is left uncut this will enhance the stream habitat and increase the overall biodiversity.

7.6 The second survey (November / December 2015) was undertaken from the bridge on Smithbrook Lane towards the Parish boundary with Somerton. The surveyors showed considerable enthusiasm for this stretch of stream as an example of relatively undisturbed habitat (including the banks and field margins either side) and a fine example of a natural meandering watercourse. There was evidence of badger activity, and it is likely that the otters from downstream may also use this stretch of stream. The report stated:

"the river is a natural meandering watercourse of high ecological value which provides an undisturbed wildlife corridor for mammals, avifauna and invertebrates ... The stones and gravels of the riverbed provide potential habitat for fish and the woody debris will promote terrestrial and aquatic invertebrate communities ..."

The reports of both surveys are available on the Hartest Neighbourhood Plan website.

7.7 In preparing this Neighbourhood Plan, a local landscape character assessment has been undertaken by the Working Group. The Assessment is available to download on the Neighbourhood Plan pages of the Parish Council website. It forms a background evidence document for the Plan and has informed the policies contained herein. The character assessment found that:

- the land is gently sloping with heights ranging between 45 and 90m (above sea level), on clay overlying chalk.
- field sizes are mainly large (up to about 20 hectares) with some smaller ones, with boundaries mostly defined by hedgerows and, in some cases, by tracks, footpaths and roads or sometimes by ditches.
- distribution of hedgerows across the parish is fairly even though there are a few "gappy" areas.
- much of what remains is probably ancient hedgerow given the nature of the landscape.
- trees are a notable feature of the landscape and many mature trees are found within the hedgerows.
- isolated trees occur occasionally within fields, but these are probably relics of hedges that have been removed rather than indicators of former parkland or wood pasture.
- over 55 "veteran" trees have been recorded within the hedgerows though the total number in the parish is certainly higher. These veteran trees contribute to the potential range of habitats, encouraging ecological diversity as well as being cherished for their aesthetic value within the landscape.
- there are a few isolated areas of woodland best described as copses or expanded hedgerows along the edges of fields, with some blocks of more recent plantations.
- Hartest Wood, was planted in 1999 as a "Millennium" woodland project.
- a map dated 1839 shows approximately 83 ponds across the parish of Hartest. While some of these still exist as ponds, many have now disappeared. Those that remain play an important role in providing habitats and also help manage run-off of water from nearby fields and hard surfaces.



- 7.8 Paragraph 180 d) of the NPPF notes that decisions should “contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by.....minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures”. The National Planning Practice Guidance notes that; “Biodiversity net gain delivers measurable improvements for biodiversity by creating or enhancing habitats in association with development. Biodiversity net gain can be achieved on-site, off-site or through a combination of on-site and off-site measures.” Development proposals that deliver such improvements will be particularly supported.
- 7.9 Paragraph 185 of the NPPF states that plans should “promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats.” These are defined in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and across the parish there are a number of ‘priority habitats’. Under the Environment Act 2021, there is now a statutory requirement for development, with a few exceptions, to deliver a minimum 10 per cent measurable net gain in biodiversity. This is to be measured using DEFRA’s biodiversity metric and all net gains will need to be secured and monitored for at least 30 years. A Local Nature Recovery Strategy is being prepared for Suffolk which will include:
- a local habitat map showing where valuable areas for nature are currently located;
 - a statement of biodiversity priorities - a locally agreed list of priority areas where new and improved habitats would bring the most benefit; and
 - a map of locations and actions showing where and how habitats can be created and connected, and how the wider environment and economy can benefit.

When complete, it will provide a blueprint for how Suffolk’s local communities, landowners, local authorities, private companies, and government bodies can work together to; broaden protection, restore, and recover nature on the ground. JLP1 Policy LP16 “Biodiversity and Geodiversity” requires all development to follow the “biodiversity mitigation hierarchy” which is illustrated in **Figure 6**.

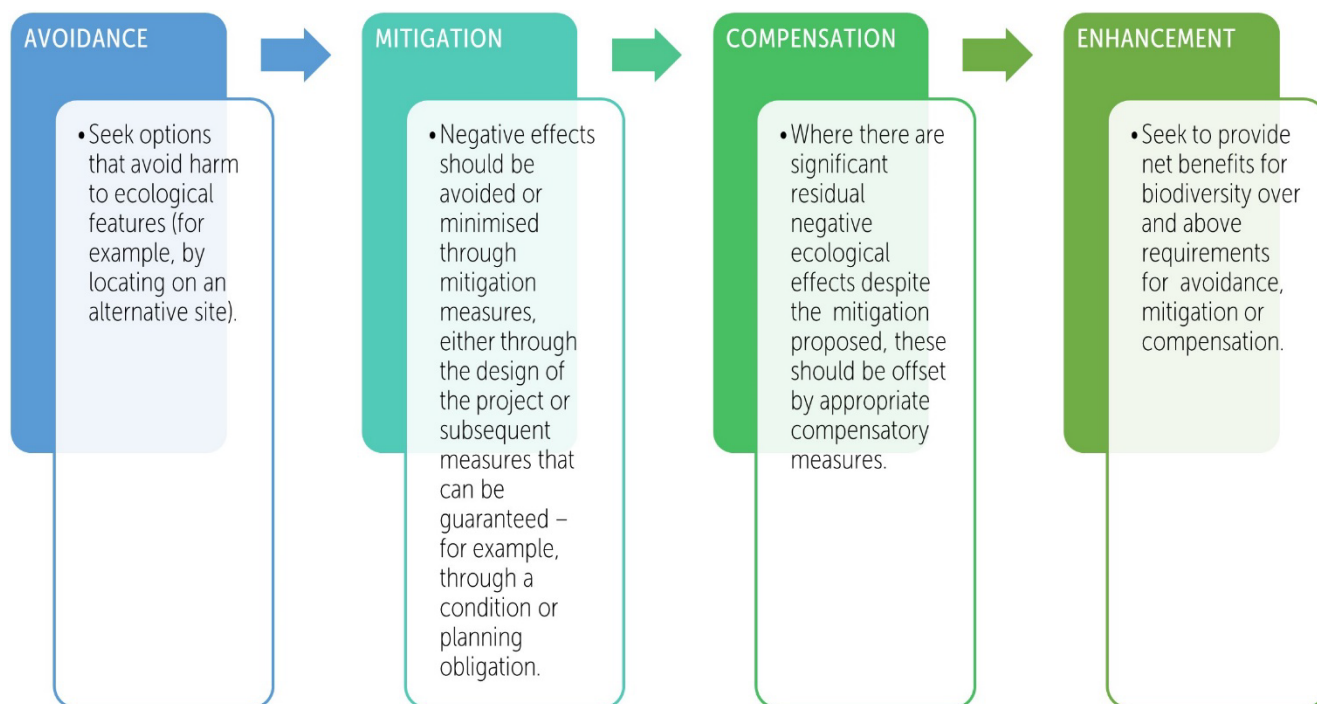


Figure 6 - Biodiversity Mitigation Hierarchy (Source: Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management - Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment 2019)

- 7.10 In addition to the requirements of the Environment Act, there are other relatively small features that can often achieve important benefits for wildlife, such as incorporating ‘swift bricks’ and bat boxes in developments and providing safe routes for hedgehogs between different areas of habitat, specifically hedgehog tunnels in any new development. All development proposals will be encouraged to incorporate such measures, as appropriate to the development, as an integral element of the scheme.
- 7.11 There may be occasions where a new access to an otherwise acceptable development site would result in the loss of part of an existing hedgerow. Where this is necessary, a new hedgerow should be planted using native species of a local provenance on the visibility splay returns to minimise the loss of hedgerow and habitat and maintain the character of the area.

Policy HAR 7 – Biodiversity

Development proposals should avoid the loss of, or material harm to trees, hedgerows and other natural features such as ponds.

Where such losses or harm are unavoidable, adequate mitigation measures or, as a last resort, compensation measures will be sought. If suitable mitigation or compensation measures cannot be provided, then planning permission should be refused.

Where 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.

Otherwise acceptable development proposals will only be supported where they provide a measurable net gain in biodiversity through, for example:

- a. The creation of new natural habitats including ponds, hedgerows and natural boundary treatments;
- b. The planting of additional native trees and hedgerows of local provenance (reflecting the character of Hartest's ancient woodland and hedgerows); and
- c. Restoring and repairing fragmented biodiversity networks.

In addition to the statutory requirements, development will be supported where it incorporates provision within dwellings for measures including swift bricks, bat boxes and holes in fences which allow access for hedgehogs.

Area of Local Landscape Sensitivity

7.12 The landscape setting of the central area of the Parish is unique in Suffolk settlements. The oldest part of Hartest sits in a distinct valley formed by the stream that runs through the Parish and forms a tributary to the River Glem. The significance of the valley is illustrated by the steepness of Hartest Hill heading from the Village centre to Fosters cluster on Shimpling Road.

7.13 The Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment identifies that the valley running through the Parish is "Rolling Valley Farmland" and notes that "the growth and development of villages and small towns in this landscape has been driven by the quality of the land and the agricultural prosperity that it brought." The landscape around the valley is described as "Undulating Ancient Farmland" an area of clay upland that only occurs in one place in the county bordering the Stour and Glem rivers in south-west Suffolk.

The Assessment further describes this landscape as:

"predominantly an area of 'ancient enclosure', with an irregular pattern of fields bounded by large, long-established hedges...the settlement pattern is one of dispersed farmsteads and hamlets, scattered between moderately sized green-edge settlements. Some of the greens are well preserved...but many of the others were enclosed or in-filled with housing in the 18th and 19th centuries."

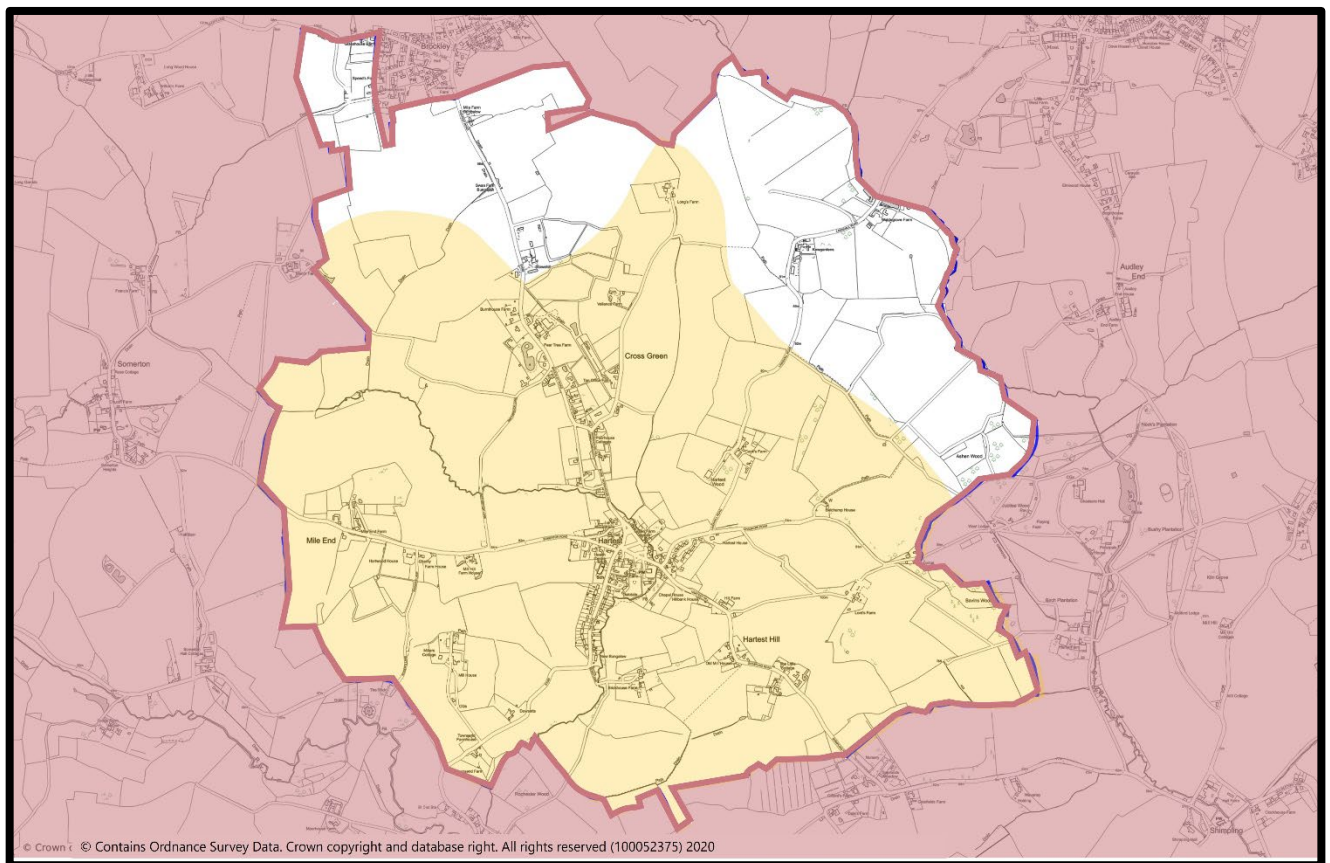
"There is a rich stock of medieval and Tudor timber-framed and brick buildings, some of which lie within moated sites...or on the green edges."

"In general there are long open views across this undulating landscape in which trees, either in hedges or in woods, are always a prominent feature. This is in direct contrast with the plateau claylands of High Suffolk where the views, although open, are of gently rolling farmland on which woodland is almost entirely absent."

7.14 This landscape setting within which Hartest sits is clearly of very high quality and is one which needs protection from inappropriate development. In earlier Development Plan documents, much of the parish was within a designated Special Landscape Area (SLA), originally designated in the Suffolk County Structure Plan in the 1980s. The designation was not carried forward in the Joint Local Plan. The SLA was part of the wider area covering the Stour Valley to the north of Sudbury. A detailed review of the boundary of the SLA in Hartest has been undertaken as part of the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan taking account of the context of the valley, the setting of the Village and purpose of the designation. This assessment is available on the Neighbourhood Plan website. The area exhibits a distinct undulating landscape that not only provides a distinct backdrop for the main built-up area of the Village, but extends north and east along the distinct valleys that converge on The Green and which have clearly informed the location of development within the Parish over time.

7.15 Given the local quality of this landscape, a new "Area of Local Landscape Sensitivity" is designated in the Neighbourhood Plan. It reflects the boundaries of the former Special Landscape Area and has regard to the Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment, in particular the Undulating Ancient Farmland characteristics. It is further supplemented at the local level by the Neighbourhood Plan Landscape Character Appraisal. The extent of the Area of Local landscape Sensitivity is illustrated on **Map 6** The designation does not stop development taking place, but provides protection from inappropriate development

that would result in harm to the special characteristics of the area.



Map 6 - Area of Local Landscape Sensitivity

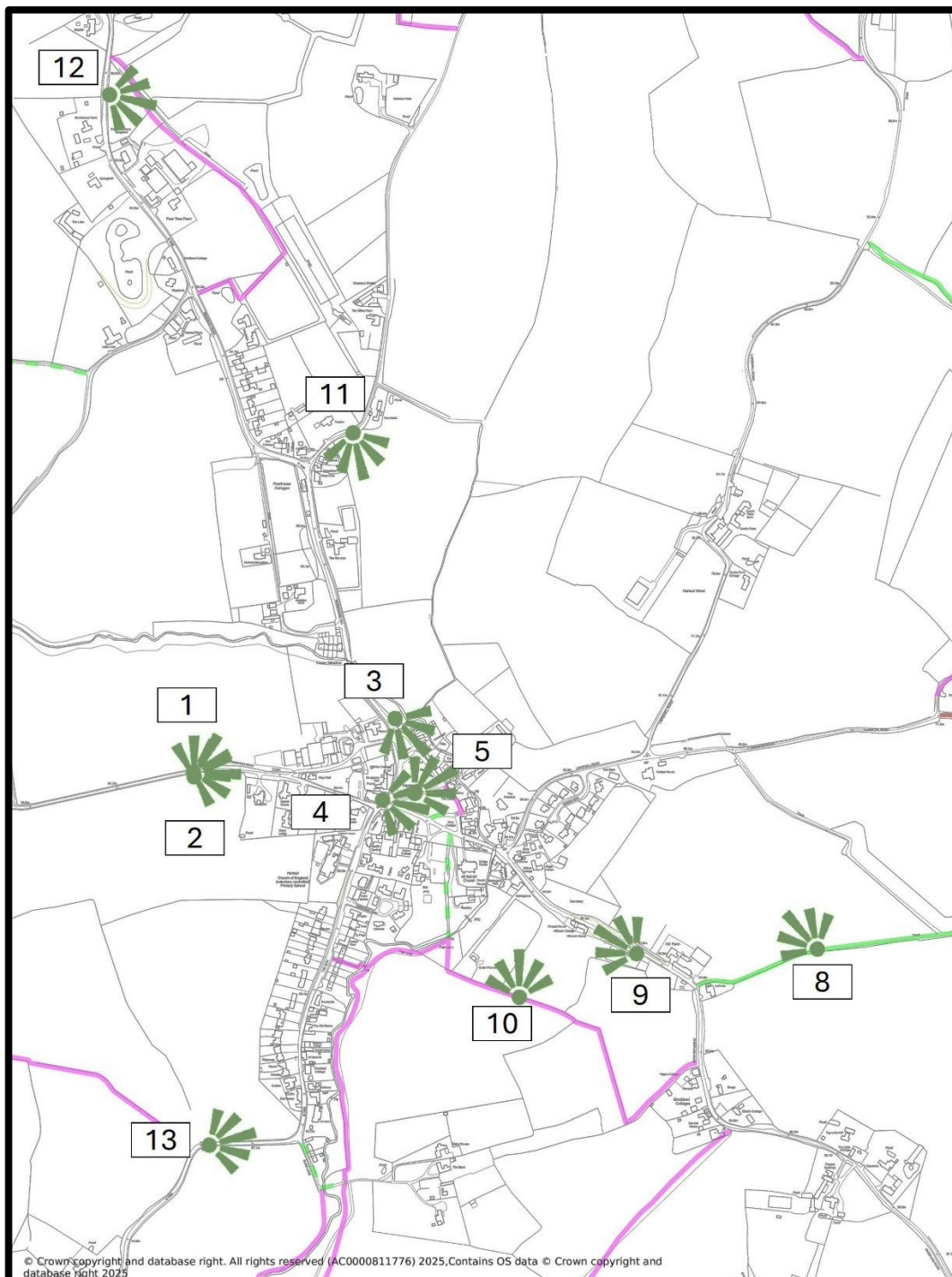
Policy HAR 8 - Area of Local Landscape Sensitivity

Development proposals in the Hartest 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; and
 - are designed and sited so as to harmonise with the landscape setting.
-

Identifying Important Views

7.16 In preparing this Neighbourhood Plan it has become apparent that residents place a high value on the contribution that views into and out of the Village from public locations make to the character and setting of the Village. Typical views are illustrated in the photographs in Appendix 2. These views clearly have a bearing on the original reason for the designation of the SLA around the Parish and for the extensive conservation area that encompasses both the historic centre of the Village and the surrounding hillsides. A separate Appraisal of Important Views has been prepared which identified the key features of views from publicly accessible locations across the parish, which are illustrated on **Map 7** and referred to in Policy HAR 9. Inconsiderate development could have a significant and unwanted detrimental impact on the landscape setting of the Parish and will not be supported. These are by no means all the important views and when proposals for development in the Parish are being prepared, it will be necessary to take account of the impact on views and demonstrate how the buildings and structures can be satisfactorily accommodated within the landscape. Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments (LVIA) are a recognised tool that specifically aims to ensure that all possible effects of change and development both on the landscape itself and on views and visual amenity are considered in decision-making.



Map 7 - Important views from public vantage points

Policy HAR 9 - Protection of Important Views

Important views from public vantage points within or into the built-up areas or into or out of the surrounding countryside are identified on the Policies Map. Any proposed development should not have a detrimental visual impact on the key landscape and built development features of those views as identified in the Neighbourhood Plan Assessment of Important Views.

Proposals for new buildings outside the Settlement Boundary will be required to be accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment or other appropriate and proportionate evidence that demonstrates how the proposal can be accommodated without having a significant adverse impact, by reason of the buildings scale, materials and location, on the key features of the views.

Local Green Spaces

- 7.17 There are a number of important open areas within the Parish that not only make important contributions to the character and setting of the built environment, but also play important roles in providing space for recreation. The Green is a registered Village Green and, as such, is protected from development. The trees are protected by Preservation Orders and the area is actively managed by the Parish Council. Paragraph 105 of the NPPF states that "The designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them. Designating land as Local Green Space should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or updated, and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period." Paragraph 106 states that the designation should only be used where the green space is:

- a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- b) 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
- c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

Planning policies for managing development within a Local Green Space are consistent with those in the NPPF for development proposals in Green Belts.

- 7.18 Based on the NPPF criteria, three areas of green space in the Parish are identified as Local Green Spaces in the Neighbourhood Plan, namely The Green, The Crown Garden and Hartest Wood. **Map 8** illustrates their location and Appendix 3 sets out how these areas satisfy the criteria in paragraph 106 of the NPPF.

Policy HAR 10 - Local Green Spaces

The following Local Green Spaces are designated in this Plan and identified on the Policies Map.

- | | | |
|-------------|--------------------|----------------|
| 1 The Green | 2 The Crown Garden | 3 Hartest Wood |
|-------------|--------------------|----------------|
-



Map 8 - Local Green Spaces





8. Historic Environment and Design

Objective

1. Protect and enhance the historic environment

Context

- 8.1 The following matters have been taken into account in considering policies for Hartest's natural environment:
- a large conservation area covers the main built-up area of the Village and the countryside surrounding it.
 - there are 52 listed buildings in the parish, the majority of which are within the conservation area. The current list (September 2024) is included in Appendix 4 of the Plan.
 - many of the listed buildings are of timber framed construction.
 - some local distinctive and historic buildings are not listed but are worthy of protection eg The Institute.
 - development that has taken place over recent decades has not always had regard to the local design and building materials.
 - parts of the conservation area, including around the Green, suffer from excessive overhead wiring.
 - there was support from the community for identifying views that are important to the setting of the conservation area that should be protected from inappropriate development.
 - community consultation supported identifying and protecting features, such as walls, hedges and trees that are important to the character and appearance of the Village.

Policy Context

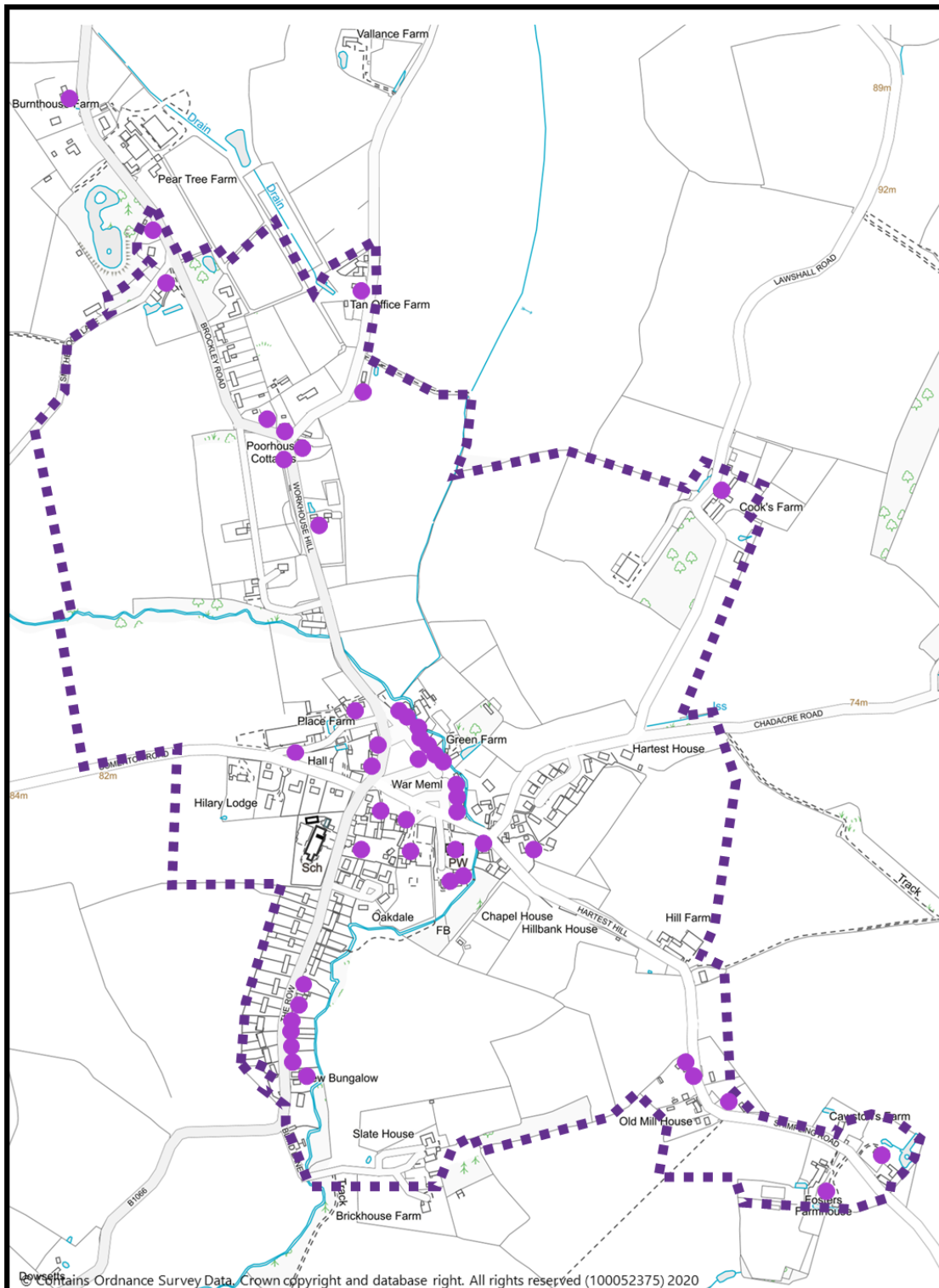
- 8.2 For the historic environment, the NPPF defines heritage assets as "a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).
- 8.3 In terms of non-designated heritage assets Paragraph 209 of the NPPF states "The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset."
- 8.4 The NPPF places significant weight on achieving well-designed and beautiful places. Paragraph 131 states "The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this." It continues, in paragraph 132, by stating "Plans should, at the most appropriate level, set out a clear design vision and expectations, so that applicants have as much certainty as possible about what is likely to be acceptable."
- 8.5 At a local level, JLP1 Policy LP19 "The Historic Environment" sets out a comprehensive policy response to all elements of the historic environment. Also, of relevance in relation to development design, are:
- Policy LP23 - Sustainable Construction and Design
 - Policy LP24 - Design and Residential Amenity
 - Policy LP27 – Flood risk and vulnerability

Conservation Area

- 8.6 A Conservation Area was designated to cover much of the Parish, including the landscape setting, in 1973. The extent of the area is illustrated on **Map 9** together with the location of listed buildings. Conservation area designation means that the area has special architectural and historic interest and proposals within it to make alterations to buildings, cutting down or lopping trees or demolishing buildings may need permission. It also means that designs for new buildings or alterations to existing buildings should consider the setting and characteristics of the site within the conservation area.
- 8.7 A Conservation Area Appraisal was prepared by Babergh District Council in 2012 and subsequently adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance for referral to in determining planning applications within the areas or on sites that might impact on the character of the conservation area. The Appraisal is a short document describing the Village and features of the conservation area and lacks the comprehensiveness of appraisals as promoted by Historic England. Their Advice Note number 1 - "Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management" (February 2016) suggests that an appraisal should include, amongst other things:

- townscape analysis: for example, spatial issues such as important views into and out of the conservation area, landmarks, and open or green spaces; or temporal issues, including pre-urban landscape features (such as the lines of former field boundaries) which survive in the current townscape; and
- designated and undesignated heritage assets, including buildings of townscape merit and unlisted buildings or groups of buildings that contribute positively to the character or appearance of the area, scheduled monuments and areas of archaeological interest (this could be combined with the townscape analysis map, depending on the size and complexity of the area).

8.8 Although some character appraisal work has been undertaken to inform the content and policies of this Neighbourhood Plan, it is considered that, given the distinctiveness and importance of Hartest Conservation Area, a more detailed Area Character Appraisal, using the Historic England guidance as a framework for its content, would help to provide greater detail for the consideration of proposals in Hartest.



Map 9 - Conservation Area and Listed Buildings

- 8.9 The Conservation Area Appraisal noted that “Parts of the conservation area, including around the Green, suffer from excessive overhead wiring.” The Appraisal suggested that, should funds become available, putting the cables underground would improve the situation. This is an expensive exercise but, nevertheless, would make a significant difference to the setting of the numerous listed buildings that surround the Green. Should opportunities arise, an initiative to underground these cables will be pursued.

Community Action 2 – Undergrounding Overhead Wires

Opportunities to underground the unsightly overhead cables, especially around The Green, will be pursued.

- 8.10 AECOM were commissioned in 2023 by the Parish Council as part of the Government’s neighbourhood planning support package, to prepare the Hartest Design Codes and Guidance (November 2023) to inform the Neighbourhood Plan. The final document is available to view on the Neighbourhood Plan pages of the Parish Council website. The document noted that the grass verges along The Row have been eroded over time by vehicle overrun. It suggested that planting of new hedgerows and trees would help restore the quality of this area.

Community Action 3 – Additional Planting at The Row

The Parish Council will seek to identify opportunities to add appropriate planting along the western side of The Row.

Heritage Assets

- 8.11 In addition to the Listed Buildings, there are a number of locally recorded heritage records, the details of which can be found on Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service’s Historic Environment Record. 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 Development Plan policies are met.
- 8.12 There are also buildings and features present in the Parish that are of local importance and which are not, in themselves, protected. The preparation of a new conservation area appraisal would identify these features and help to reinforce their importance to ensure that development proposals will not harm their character and setting. Local lists of heritage assets play an important role in building and reinforcing a sense of local character and distinctiveness in the historic environment. They enable the significance of any building or site on the list to be better taken into account in planning applications affecting the building or site or its setting.
- 8.13 In the meantime, and in accordance with the guidelines published by Historic England (Local Heritage Listing: Historic England Advice Note 7 – May 2016) the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan has identified the following buildings and features that, due to their local historic significance and importance, may be worthy of being protected as Local Heritage Assets.

The Institute, overlooking the Green, was built in 1888 as a Reading Room and its design was based on the work of the English Arts and Crafts movement, in the style of William Morris, which is of particular significance locally, regionally and nationally. It was designed by Sir Reginald Blomfield who was later one of the first Commonwealth War Graves Commission’s principle architects and who was appointed to design the Menin Gate in Ypres.

The Hartest Stone, located on The Green, it was brought from Somerton to Hartest to mark the celebrations of the signing of the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713.

Policy HAR 11 - Buildings and Features of Local Significance

The retention and protection of the following buildings and features of local significance. As identified on the Policies Map, including their setting, will be secured.

1. The Institute, The Green

2. Hartest Stone, The Green

Proposals for any works that would lead to the loss of, or substantial harm to the above should be supported by an appropriate analysis of the significance of the asset.

Design and distinctiveness

- 8.14 The extensive and distinct historic assets across the Parish, but particularly within the conservation area, require proposals for new development to have regard to design and use of materials. The Conservation Area Appraisal notes that a range of locally distinct materials are found in the older buildings, including timber-frames, Suffolk red and Suffolk white bricks and some use of flint. Black stained or painted weatherboarding is also to be found on some elevations. It further comments that: *“roofs are variously thatched on the older buildings, or plain tiles where this has been replaced. Slate can be found on the more recent brick buildings and there is also a scattering of clay pantiles, most often on outbuildings, and some of them are the black glazed variety.”*
- 8.15 The design features of new homes can have a significant impact on the character of an area. JLP1 Policy LP24 “Design and Residential Amenity”, sets out a number of parameters for new development to comply with including ‘all new development must be of high-quality design, with a clear vision as to the positive contribution the development will make to its context’. The design of new buildings across the Parish needs to take account of modern living requirements which will require managing matters such as the use of energy, minimising the use of water, not increasing the risk of flooding from surface water run-off
- 8.16 Proposals for new development will need to respect the distinct built and natural environment features of the Parish. However, the use of modern materials and design solutions would not necessarily be out of place in such surroundings. The Character Assessment for Hartest, prepared as a background document for this Neighbourhood Plan, should be referred to in preparing proposals for new buildings.
- 8.17 The Hartest Design Codes and Guidance is intended to be used in the preparation and consideration of planning applications to ensure that they remain sympathetic to the distinct character of the Parish. They include general design guidelines that proposals for new development should take into account.

GENERAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

- Integrate with existing paths, streets, circulation networks and patterns of activity;
- Reinforce or enhance the established settlement character of streets, greens, and other spaces;
- Harmonise and enhance existing settlement in terms of physical form, architecture and land use;
- Relate well to local topography and landscape features, including prominent ridge lines and long-distance views;
- Reflect, respect, and reinforce local architecture and historic distinctiveness;
- Retain and incorporate important existing features into the development;
- Respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing;
- Adopt contextually appropriate materials and details;
- Provide adequate open space for the development in terms of both quantity and quality;
- Incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained features;
- Ensure all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space are well related to each other;
- Positively integrate energy efficient technologies;
- Make sufficient provision for sustainable waste management (including facilities for kerbside collection, waste separation, and minimisation where appropriate) without adverse impact on the street scene, the local landscape or the amenities of neighbours;
- Ensure that places are designed with management, maintenance and the upkeep of utilities in mind; and
- Seek to implement passive environmental design principles by, firstly, considering how the site layout can optimise beneficial solar gain and reduce energy demands (e.g. insulation), before specification of energy efficient building services and finally incorporate renewable energy sources.

- 8.18 The Design Codes and Guidance also provides a development design checklist which development proposals should seek to respond to. The checklist is attached as Appendix 5 of the Plan.

Policy HAR 12 - Design Principles

Proposals for new development must reflect the local characteristics and circumstances in the Neighbourhood Plan Area as described in both the Hartest Character Assessment and the Hartest Design Codes and Guidance and create and contribute to a high quality, safe and sustainable environment.

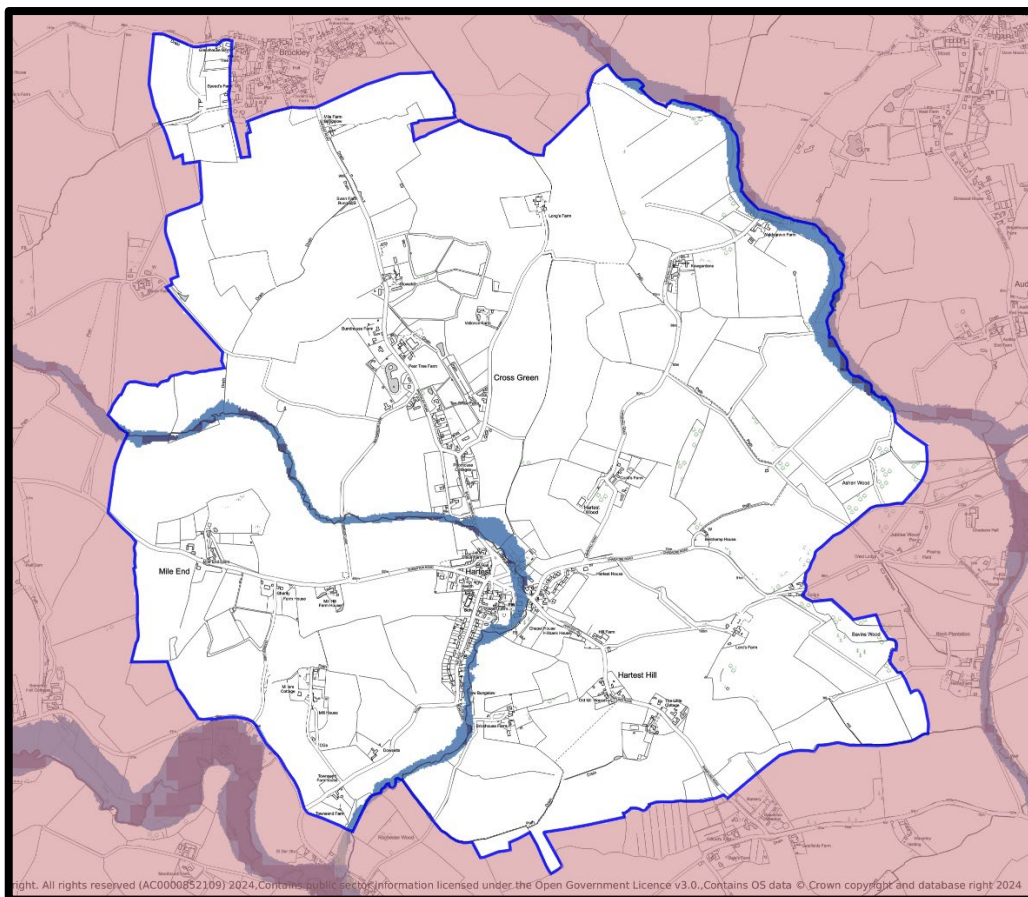
Planning applications should demonstrate how they satisfy the requirements of the Development Design Checklist in Appendix 5 of the Neighbourhood Plan, as appropriate to the proposal.

In addition, proposals will be supported where they:

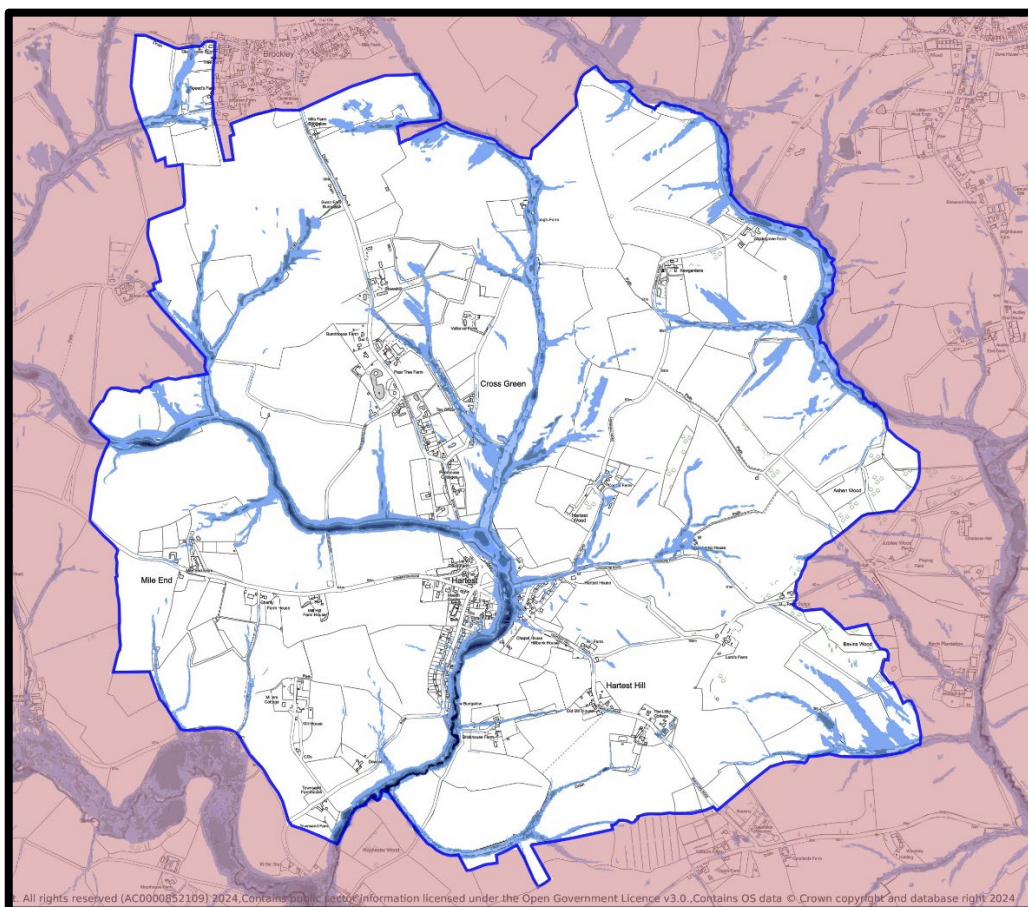
- a. recognise and address the key architectural features, characteristics, landscape/ building character, local distinctiveness and special qualities of the area;
 - b. maintain the Village's sense of place and/or local character, as identified in the Hartest Design Codes and Guidance and, as appropriate, the Hartest Conservation Area Appraisal ;
 - c. do not involve the loss of gardens and important open, green or landscaped areas or the erosion of the Settlement Gaps identified on the Policies Map, which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of that part of the Parish;
 - d. taking mitigation measures into account, do not affect adversely and where appropriate enhance:
 - i. any historic, architectural or archaeological heritage assets of the site and its surroundings, including those locally identified buildings and features of local significance identified in Policy HAR 11;
 - ii. important landscape characteristics including trees and ancient hedgerows and other prominent topographical features;
 - iii. sites, habitats, species and features of ecological interest;
 - iv. the amenities of nearby residents by reason of noise smell, vibration, overshadowing, loss of light, other pollution (including light pollution), or volume or type of vehicular activity generated, and/or residential amenity;
 - e. produce designs that respect the character, setting, height and density of the locality;
 - f. do not result in water run-off that would add-to or create surface water flooding through, for example, the use of permeable surfaces for vehicle access and parking;
 - g. where appropriate, make adequate provision for the covered storage of all wheelie bins and covered secure cycle storage in accordance with adopted cycle parking standards;
 - h. include suitable ducting capable of accepting fibre to enable connection to superfast broadband.
-

Water supply and flooding

- 8.19 In relation to water supply and foul sewerage networks, there are no overriding constraints which would prevent the scale of development proposed in the Neighbourhood Plan. JLP1 Policy LP23 – 'Sustainable Construction and Design' includes a requirement for all new residential development to meet water efficiency standards of 110 litres per person per day. The environs of the stream, as illustrated in blue on **Map 10**, are classified as Flood Zone 3 by the Environment Agency. It means that there is a 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of the stream flooding the identified area and proposals that come forward within the flood risk zone will be considered in the context of the sequential approach to development set out in the NPPF.
- 8.20 Remedial works have been carried out but surface water flooding remains a problem in some parts of the Parish, as illustrated on **Map 11**. New development will be required, where appropriate, to make provision for the attenuation and recycling of surface water and rainwater through Sustainable Drainage Systems (SDS) that might include on-site rainwater harvesting and stormwater harvesting and greywater recycling, and the management of run-off and water management in order to reduce the potential for making the situation worse.



Map 10 - Areas susceptible to flooding from rivers



Map 11 - Areas susceptible to flooding from surface water

Details of areas susceptible to flooding can be found on the government website at <https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/long-term-flood-risk>

Policy HAR 13 - Flooding and Sustainable Drainage

Proposals for all new development will be required to submit schemes appropriate to the scale of the proposal detailing how on-site drainage and water resources will be managed so as not to cause or exacerbate surface water and fluvial flooding elsewhere. Proposals should, as appropriate include the use of above-ground open Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). These could include:

- wetland and other water features, which can help reduce flood risk whilst offering other benefits including water quality, amenity/recreational areas, and biodiversity benefits; and
- rainwater and stormwater harvesting and recycling; and
- other natural drainage systems where easily accessible maintenance can be achieved.

Proposals that would involve the creation of new culverts or result in the loss of an open watercourse will not be permitted, unless the culvert is essential to the provision of an access and it can be demonstrated that the culvert will have no adverse impact on the ability to manage and maintain surface water drainage.

Community Action 4 – Surface Water Drainage

The Parish Council will seek to work with the relevant risk management authorities to prepare a strategic plan for the improvement of surface water drainage in Hartest to alleviate the negative effects of flooding. This should include a publicly available plan of the existing drainage infrastructure.

Community Action 5 – Watercourse Flooding Management

The Parish Council will work with the regulatory body for water courses (currently the Environment Agency) to produce guidance on the future management of the stream, including its banks to improve ecology and habitats. Review flood risk maps and assessments for Hartest and encourage the Environment Agency to update them.



Energy consumption

- 8.21 Energy use in the construction and operation of development is currently a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. In 2019, Babergh District Council voted to support Suffolk's county-wide aim of becoming carbon neutral by 2030. The Centre for Sustainable Energy has developed a community carbon calculator in response to a demand from smaller settlements to have robust and accurate data on their carbon footprint, so that they can best direct their efforts to tackle the climate emergency. It assesses consumption through housing, travel, goods and services, food and diet and waste and, usefully, enables comparison with other areas. For Hartest, it identifies that the housing is the biggest source of CO₂ followed by the consumption of goods and services and then travel. **Figure 7** illustrates this consumption in comparison with Babergh as a whole.

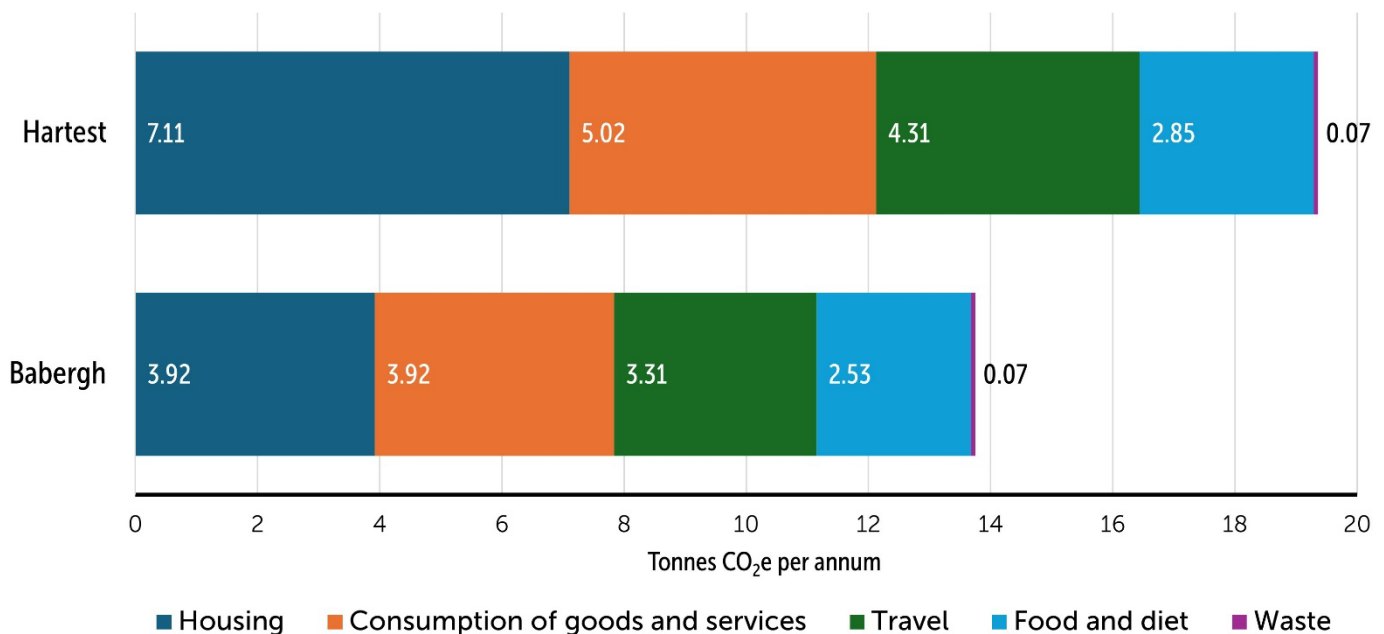


Figure 7 – Energy consumption comparison, Hartest and Babergh. Source: Centre for Sustainable Energy

- 8.22 Minimising energy demands from development and increasing the generation of energy from renewable sources can make a significant contribution to reducing carbon emissions. The starting point for minimising energy use is to maximise energy efficiency, both in new developments and through the retrofitting of existing buildings. This can have a direct economic benefit in terms of significantly lowering the running costs of new and existing buildings, helping to address fuel poverty, as well as tackling the Climate Crisis. Exceeding the minimum energy efficiency requirements of Building Regulations will be necessary if emission reduction targets are to be met.
- 8.23 Where energy use is necessary, then priority should be given to utilising the most sustainable sources. Many energy saving initiatives can be installed on homes within permitted development rights (when full planning permission is not required) but there may be occasions where schemes that do require planning permission could have a potential adverse impact on the character of the area and the amenity of nearby residents. In line with national policy, the long-term aim should be to reduce the overall use of all fossil fuels - gas, oil and coal.
- 8.24 The Neighbourhood Plan has limited powers to require developments to meet energy saving standards, especially in the construction of new homes. However, that does not stop the encouragement of the incorporation of measures in development that meet the energy hierarchy (in order of preference) of:
1. Minimising energy demand;
 2. Maximising energy efficiency;
 3. Utilising renewable energy;
 4. Utilising low carbon energy; and
 5. Utilising other energy sources.
- 8.25 JLP1 Policy LP23 "Sustainable Construction and Design" contains a number of criteria to reduce CO₂ emissions, reduce water consumption, climate change adaptation, minimise energy demand including the introduction of energy efficiency measures, installing on-site renewable and other low-carbon energy generation, incorporating sustainable building materials and planning for the future risks associated with climate change. Given these requirements, there is no need to include a separate policy in the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 8.26 Community energy projects are initiatives that involve the delivery of community-led renewable energy, energy demand

reduction and energy supply projects, whether wholly owned and/or controlled by communities or through a partnership with commercial or public sector partners. There may be opportunities to establish such a project in Hartest if there is sufficient interest amongst residents. Opportunities may also exist, as technology develops, to integrate energy saving or generation measures within listed buildings that do not result in unacceptable harm to the heritage asset.

Community Action 6 – Community Energy

The Parish Council will encourage Community Owned Green Energy projects within the Village as well as appropriate energy upgrades of listed buildings.

Lighting

- 8.27 There is currently no street lighting in the Village and its introduction could have a significant detrimental impact on the rural character of the Village and add to wider light pollution. Paragraph 191 (c) of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should: “limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation”. Artificial lighting of development, while increasing security, can also impact upon residential amenity, the character and appearance of an area (particularly rural locations) and the environment. Aspects such as poor design, location or the expulsion of unnecessarily high levels of light can also have a harmful impact. It will be essential to maintain the ‘dark skies’ feeling of Hartest and its environs by avoiding the introduction of street lighting. Proposals for lighting in developments will only be supported where they have been designed to minimise wider light pollution and their impact on residential amenity and the wider “dark skies” environment.

Policy HAR 14 - Light Pollution

Dark skies are to be preferred over lighting while ensuring that new developments are secure in terms of occupier and vehicle safety. Any future outdoor lighting systems should have a minimum impact on the environment, minimising light pollution and adverse effects on wildlife, subject to highway safety, the needs of particular individuals or groups, and security. Schemes should reduce the consumption of energy by promoting efficient outdoor lighting technologies, keeping the night-time skies dark and reducing glare.



9. Local Economy

Objective

8. Increase opportunities for local economic investment and growth.

Context

- 9.1 The 2021 Census identifies that 54% of the residents aged 16 to 74 were in employment, a drop from 61% in 2011. Some 32% were retired, compared with 22% in 2011.
- 9.2 It is difficult to gauge how far people travel to work as, at the time of the 2021 Census COVID pandemic restrictions meant many in employment were working from home. However, it is clear that many more people work from home on a regular basis than before the pandemic and this has changed the travel patterns and demands for infrastructure both inside the home and generally to support new ways of working.
- 9.3 Of those in employment, most worked in the public administration, education and health sector, closely followed by financial, real estate, professional and administrative activities, as illustrated in **Figure 8**.

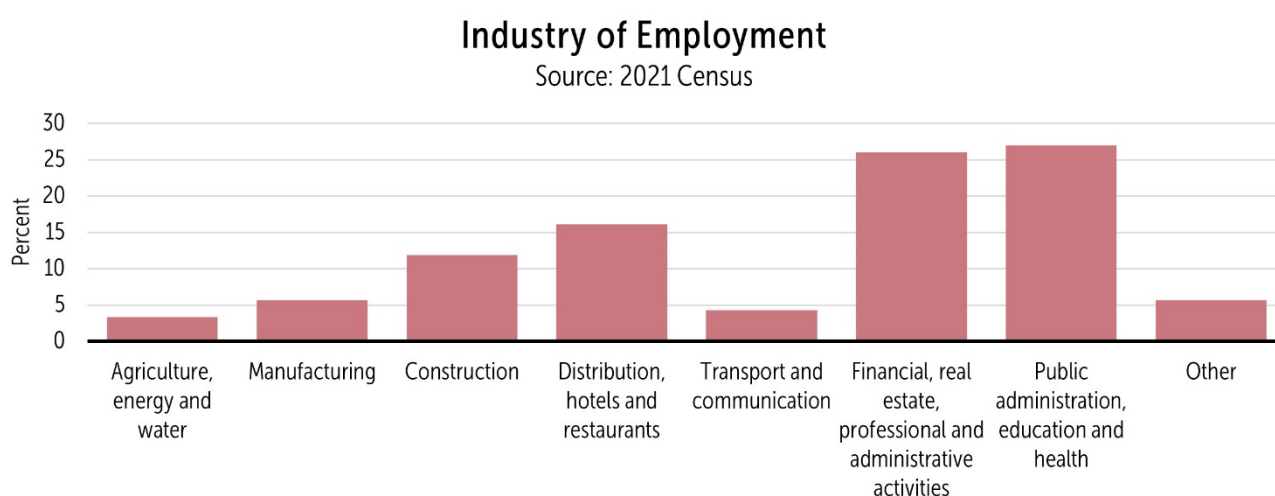


Figure 8 – Sector of Residents in Employment (SOURCE: 2021 Census)

Policy Context

- 9.4 Paragraph 88 of the NPPF provides a solid policy basis for the consideration of the rural economy. It states that planning policies should enable:
- a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed, beautiful new buildings;
 - b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;
 - c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and
 - d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.
- 9.5 At a local level, JLP1 contains policies to support the provision for new employment uses where they are sensitive to their location and surroundings (Policy LP09) and limit the loss of existing employment uses (Policy LP10). Major employment uses will be directed to the towns across Babergh, such as Sudbury and Hadleigh.

Encouraging employment opportunities

- 9.6 Providing appropriate local opportunities for people to live and work in the Parish is important for the local economy and the potential to support local services. In small Villages like Hartest, such opportunities will be limited due to the potential impacts of establishing new business buildings in a village environment or in the countryside. However, opportunities often exist to convert existing buildings, such as barns and redundant agricultural buildings in a sympathetic way that ensures that the building stays in use and that local opportunities for employment are available.
- 9.7 Tourism could become an increasingly important part of the local economy, especially given the proximity of Bury St Edmunds, Cambridge and the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The NPPF supports sustainable rural tourism

that respects the natural and historic character of the countryside. There is a lack of tourist accommodation in the area and, in appropriate circumstances, proposals will be supported where they would not have a significance detrimental impact on the historic and natural assets of the Parish or the wellbeing of its residents.

- 9.8 JLP1 provides policy guidance for the consideration of proposals for tourist accommodation in the countryside (Policy LP13). It does not have a specific farm diversification policy but local policy LP09 does apply. This neighbourhood plan seeks to add to this by setting out its own additional guidance for the consideration of proposals for the diversification of agricultural businesses. The sympathetic conversion of redundant buildings that are built from traditional materials or are of historical or architectural merit to employment uses or to provide tourist accommodation will be supported. Where new buildings are proposed as part of such a diversification scheme, it is important that they reflect the rural and agricultural building styles typically found in the area. It will be particularly essential to have regard to the character of the area particularly in respect of whether the proposal can overcome potential landscape impacts through appropriate siting, design and impact-mitigation measures.
- 9.9 The conversion of underused buildings in the countryside to residential and tourist / holiday accommodation will be regarded as the least preferred option.

Policy HAR 15 – Farm Diversification

Applications for new employment uses of redundant traditional farm buildings and other rural 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 would result in unacceptable harm to the rural economy or would adversely affect the character, highways, infrastructure, residential amenity, environment (including national and international designated sites) and landscape character as identified in the Neighbourhood Plan Landscape Character Assessment, will not be supported.



10. Facilities and Services

Objectives

6. Support and improve the provision of social, community, recreational and other leisure facilities

7. Ensure that the level of services and infrastructure reasonably required to meet the day-to-day needs of the Village are available

Context

10.1 For a Village of its size, Hartest is relatively well provided for in terms of service provision. In May 2024 the following facilities were available:

- Village church
- Pre-school / Primary school
- The Institute
- The Crown pub
- Mobile library
- Regular Farmers Market
- Fish van

The Institute

10.2 The Hartest and Boxted Institute was built in 1888 as a Reading Room for “the education of the men of the two villages.” The Institute was restored in 2002 with the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund and Babergh District Council and today provides a meeting place for residents and a venue for weddings, parties, performances and meetings of the Parish Council. It is also open for 1½ hours a week for the collection of prescriptions. At other times a round trip of 10 miles is necessary to collect prescriptions and see the GP which especially causes problems for the elderly and those without transport.

10.3 The Village primary school was established on its current site in 1966 and was expanded in the early 2000s to take two further school years as a result of the county council change from a three tier to two tier structure in the Sudbury area. It is part of the St Edmundsbury and Ipswich Diocesan Multi-Academy Trust and has space for 105 pupils. In November 2020 there were 74 pupils on the school roll. Opportunities to make the school swimming pool and play area available for the community are also being explored. Some additional smaller homes and/ or starter homes in the Village and school catchment area would potentially help continue the increase in the number of pupils.

10.4 Joint Local Plan Policy LP28 therefore provides a strong policy framework to support the provision of new facilities, but also to resist the loss of existing facilities, including open spaces. Proposals will need to address matters such as including the need for compensatory provision in an equally accessible location and that there is evidence submitted to demonstrate that the use is not economically viable and for this to be demonstrated through a sustained marketing period of normally six months.

Village shop

10.5 The most significant facility missing from the Village is a shop. Residents have long expressed a desire to have a local shop in the Village and this has been repeated during the consultation stages of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan. Since the Parish Plan was produced, efforts have been made to establish a community shop but, as yet, no suitable site has been found. It remains a high priority to find ways of establishing a shop to provide for the day-to-day needs of residents.

Community Action 7 – Community Shop

Investigations will continue to identify a means of financing the running of a community shop to serve the day to day needs of residents and to find a suitable building from which to run it.

The Crown Public House

10.6 The Crown PH is registered as an Asset of Community Value with Babergh District Council. The initiative was introduced by the Localism Act 2011 and provides community groups the ability to nominate non-residential buildings or land within their communities as assets of community value which cannot be sold without the community group being given the opportunity to put together a bid to purchase the asset. The consultation undertaken during the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan reinforced the importance of the Crown within the community and, reflecting this support, it may be necessary for the business to expand or diversify to remain competitive and viable. The expansion of the pub to provide rooms could be acceptable if designed and located sympathetically to its setting in the conservation area, having regard to the Crown being a listed building and provided that any use is ancillary to the main use of the Crown.

Policy HAR 16 - Crown Public House

Proposals that make a positive contribution to securing the economic future of the Crown Public House and which provide overnight accommodation will be supported where:

- i) such uses are compatible and ancillary to the main use of the public house; and
 - ii) the design and siting of proposals preserve and enhance the special historic character and appearance of heritage assets, including the conservation area and listed buildings and their settings.
-



Allotments

- 10.7 Although the Hartest & District Gardening Club is an active organisation within the Village, there are currently no allotments in Hartest. Nationally there has been an increase in demand for allotments and the consultation undertaken in preparing the Neighbourhood Plan identified some support for local provision. The Neighbourhood Plan does not identify a site for allotments, but it is considered worthwhile investigating the feasibility of providing some allotments in the Village.

Community Action 8 - Allotments

The viability and feasibility of providing allotments in the Village will be investigated.

11. Communications

Objective

5. Improve movement to, from and around the Village

Context

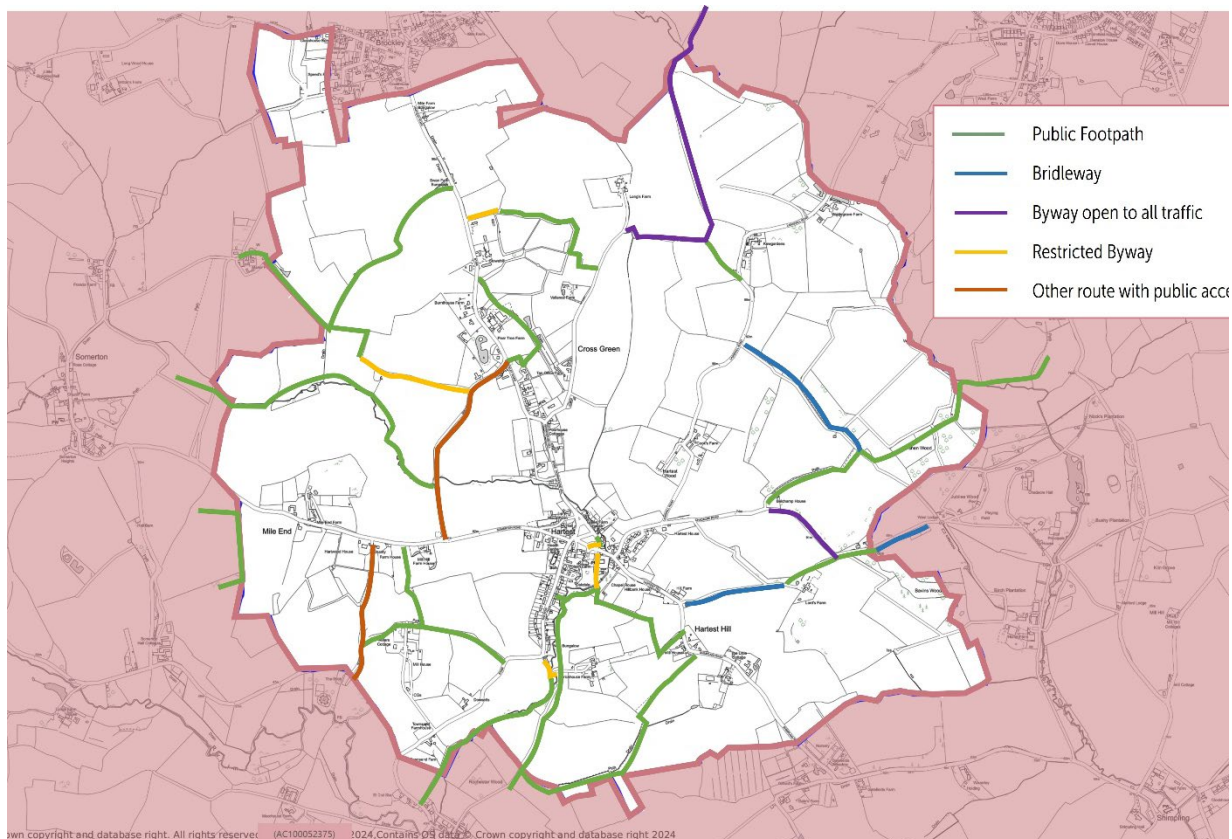
- 11.1 What the evidence shows:
- high levels of car ownership;
 - published data indicates two slight injury accidents in the Parish in the last ten years;
 - the village centre suffers from the volume and speed of vehicles, including HGVs passing through along the B1066;
 - mobile phone signals are published as poor for indoor users from most network providers;
 - ultrafast fibre broadband is available in the main built-up area of the Village.
- 11.2 The Village is located on the B1066 road that connects Bury St Edmunds with Glemsford and Long Melford. The road passes through the centre of the Village forming the western perimeter of the Green and also links the centre to the clusters at Cross Green and Pear Tree Farm. The Design Codes and Guidance identifies that the tranquillity of the village centre and its function as a "place" is challenged by the volume and speed of traffic on the B1066. Traffic speeds along the B1066 have been highlighted as a concern by residents, despite the existence of a 30 mph speed limit and a flashing speed warning sign is being used in an attempt to reduce speeds. Hartest Hill / Shimpling Road is a narrow lane fronted by a number of homes as it extends towards the clusters at old Mill and Fosters and is used by many to walk into the village centre. However, the national speed limit applies from the edge of the village centre to these clusters. Given its narrowness and use, there is strong support for extending the 30 mph speed limit up the hill.
- 11.3 The use of signs and painted lines bring an urban solution to the historic village environment and are therefore not always appropriate. Large traffic signs in particular can have a detrimental impact on the setting of the conservation area and the removal of white lines has been proven to reduce traffic speeds.
- 11.4 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. The Design Codes and Guidance also contains a palette of potential solutions that would be appropriate and maintain or improve the quality of in the village centre.

Community Action 9 – Traffic Calming

The County Council will be encouraged to work with the Parish Council to implement environmentally sympathetic and self-enforcing traffic calming measures in the Village.

Public Rights of Way

- 11.5 As identified on **Map 12**, a network of public rights of way runs throughout the parish, connecting also to the neighbouring parishes of Somerton, Brockley, Lawshall, Shimpling and Boxted. In addition, there are two lanes (Smithbrook Lane and Rogers Lane) and these provide useful links with the footpath network. Darney Lane, towards the northern edge of the parish, is another important and ancient track, leading out of the parish through to Whepstead. In most cases, access to the footpath is from appropriate points along the paved roads - the exception is Parsons Walk, directly from The Green. There are many circular walks around the Village starting from The Green and taking in nearby villages.
- 11.6 These footpaths are used frequently, some on a daily basis, particularly those close to the Village centre. They are used mainly by residents, enjoying the walking, but also from time to time by visitors to the area exploring the various footpath routes. The footpaths provide access to the "countryside", with opportunities for extensive views across the landscape and into the village as well as more detailed observations of plant and animal life in the hedges, across the fields and patches of woodland.



Map 12 – Public Rights of Way

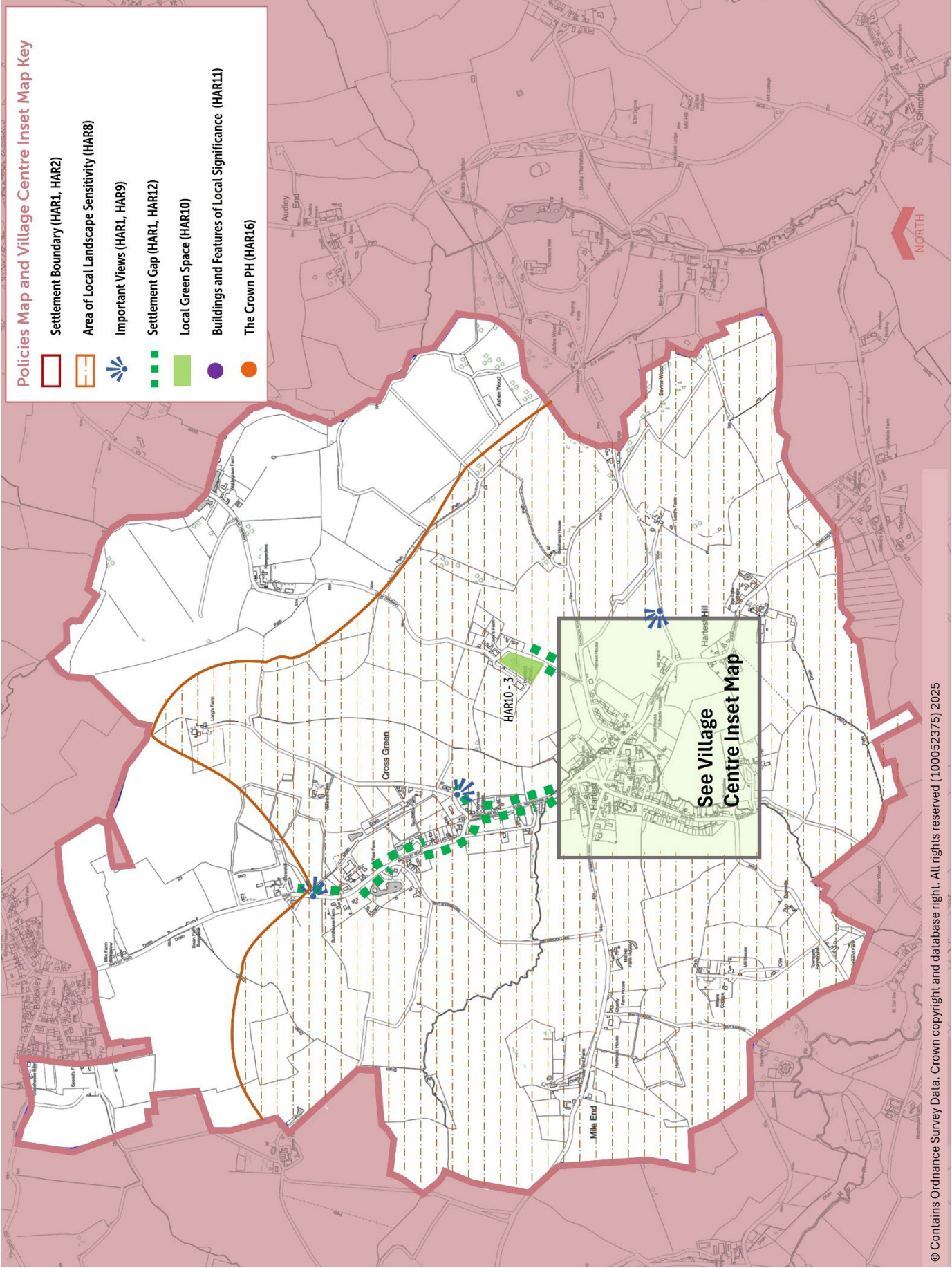
Mobile phones and Broadband

- 11.7 The availability of mobile phone signals and, more especially high-speed broadband, can be a significant determinant in decisions to live and work in a rural community. Mobile phone signals in the Parish are especially poor for indoor users, especially in the valley, which can lead to problems when emergency calls need to be made or received. However, the 'listed' public call box on The Green remains in use. The provision of superfast broadband has recently been rolled out across the Village, proving an increasingly essential utility as more and more people shop or work from home. There is little actual action that this Neighbourhood Plan can achieve to improve these services but further lobbying for improved services is essential.

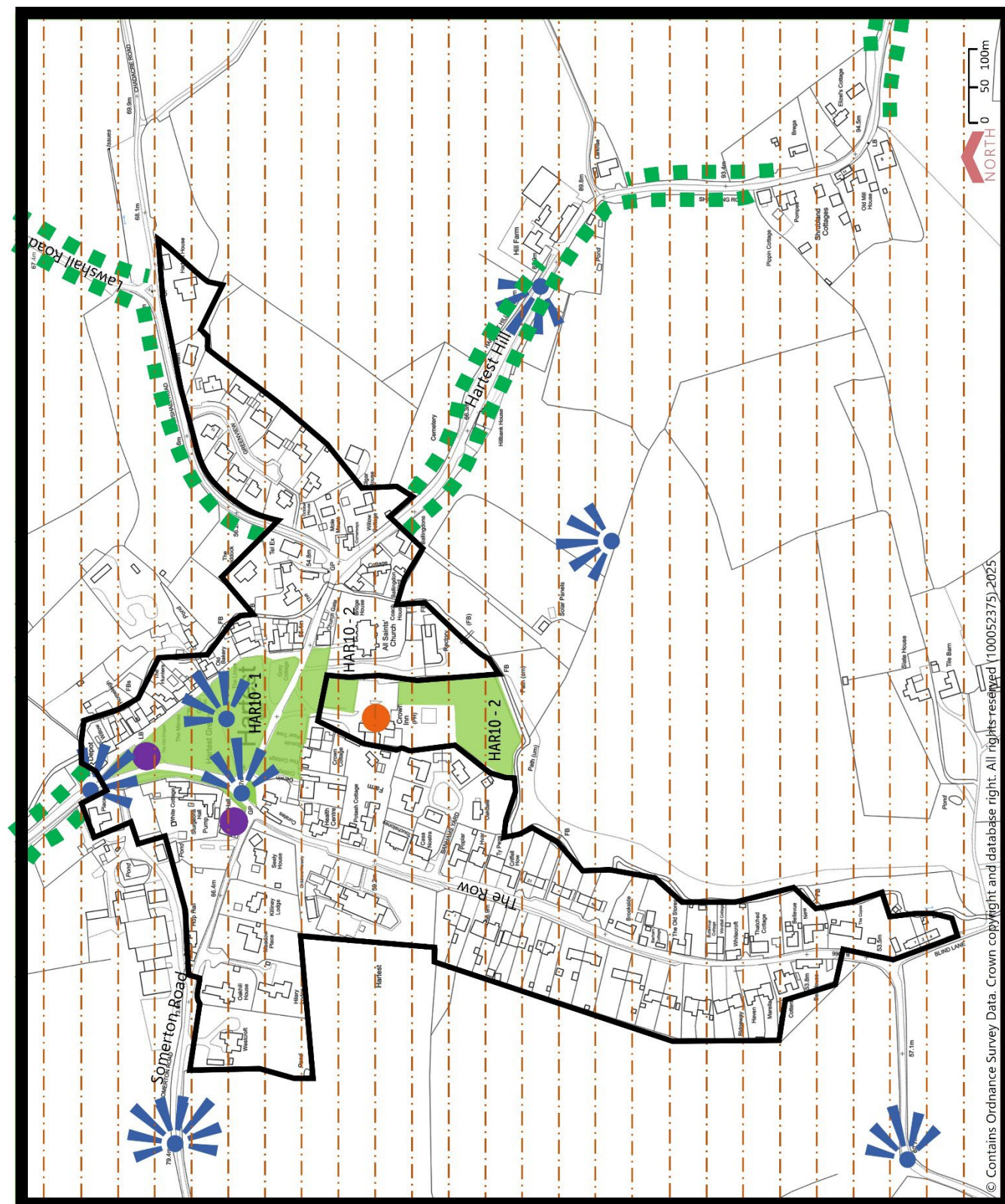
Community Action 10 – Mobile Phone Signals

The Parish Council will lobby service providers for an improvement in the provision of mobile phone signals will continue.

Policies Map



Village Centre Inset Map





Appendix 1 - Joint Local Plan Policy SP03 – Development outside Settlement Boundaries explanation

Policy SP03 (2) refers to circumstances where development outside Settlement Boundaries may be permitted. It refers to Table 5 of JLP1 and paragraph 80 of the NPPF (2021). This appendix reproduces Table 5 and paragraph 80 (which is now paragraph 84 in the December 2023 NPPF)

JLP1 Table 5

Policies permitting development outside settlement boundaries, subject to the development's accordance with the other relevant policies of the Plan

Policy / paragraph	Comments
SP04 (1) – Gypsies and Travellers	Development of sites for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople
SP05 (1, 2 and 5) – Strategic employment site	Development on strategic employment sites, at Brantham and along strategic transport corridors
SP07 (1 and 2) – Sustainable tourism	Sustainable tourism development where it accords with Policy LP12 (2)
SP08 (1) – Delivery of key infrastructure projects	Development enabling the delivery of key strategic infrastructure projects
LP01 (1) – Infill housing	
LP02 (1) – Residential annexes	
LP03 (1) - Residential extensions and conversions	
LP04 (1 and 2) - Replacement dwellings and conversions	
LP05 (1) – Rural worker dwellings	
LP07 - Community-led housing and rural exception site affordable housing	
LP09 – Change of use to small scale employment development	
LP10 – Change from employment use	
LP12 – Tourism and leisure development	
LP13 - Tourist accommodation and removal of holiday occupancy conditions	
LP14 - Intensive livestock and poultry farming	Intensive livestock and poultry farming, subject to Policy LP14 (2)
LP19 - Re-use /redevelopment of a heritage asset	
LP20 - Change of use of land for equestrian purposes or other similar animal-based uses	
LP21 - Change of use of agricultural land to residential garden	
LP22 - New agricultural buildings where there is demonstrable evidence to justify the need for them	
LP25 - Sources, storage and distribution of energy	
LP28 - New accessible local services and community facilities	New accessible local services and community facilities where in accordance with Policy LP28 (1b)
LP31 - New health or education facilities	

NPPF Paragraph 84 (December 2023)

84. Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:
- there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside.
 - the development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets;
 - the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting;
 - the development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential building; or
 - the design is of exceptional quality, in that it:
 - is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and
 - would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.

Appendix 2 – Typical views around Hartest

The views illustrated in this Appendix represents typical views across the Parish and do not represent the important views identified in Policy HAR 9 or on the Policies Map

Ref	Type of view and location	Ref	Type of view and location
1	 <p>A medium length view across village showing the integrated relationship of built and natural environment.</p>	2	 <p>A long view showing significant tree corridors along the river and a track.</p>
3	 <p>A long view over centre of village showing green corridor along road leading into village, itself hidden in the valley.</p>	4	 <p>An entry into village and view to hill beyond village.</p>
5	 <p>A medium view into the centre of the village with farmland beyond.</p>	6	 <p>A long view over village towards Boxted and beyond, with village screened by trees along the river corridor.</p>

Ref	Type of view and location	Ref	Type of view and location
7	 <p>A short view showing entry into village framing a view of a significant building (the Church).</p>	8	 <p>A long view over village, showing network of hedgerows around the fields.</p>
9	 <p>A long view, between farm buildings and trees, across village with a glimpse of the countryside beyond.</p>	10	 <p>A short view into village and back of listed buildings on the Green.</p>
11	 <p>A short narrow view out of village from the centre to nearby countryside (<i>from the Green</i>)</p>		

Appendix 3 – Local Green Space Assessment

The Green – forming the focal point of the Village and surrounded by many listed buildings. It is formally designated as a Village Green and is dissected by a number of access tracks and the B1066 runs along the western edge while the road leading to Hartest Hill runs through the south.



Statutory designations	In Conservation Area
Site allocations	None
Planning permissions	None
Area	1.1 hectares
Ownership	
NPPF criteria assessment	
Close to the community it serves	The Green forms the heart of the Village overlooked by many dwellings and with direct access to the Church, The Institute and The Crown PH.
Public access	Publicly accessible at all times
Ecologically significant	A large area of grass surrounded by mature trees, many of which are protected by TPOs
Historically significant	Then Green forms the focal point for the village and has always been the historic centre surrounded by homes and businesses. Its significance remains today.
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	The Green is of wider significance being featured in many publications of "typical" Suffolk villages. It provides the location for the annual Village fair, provides an important green wildlife corridor and important views linking the open countryside to the east.
Local in character and not extensive	The proposed designation is approximately 1.1 hectares in area

The Crown Garden - located to the rear of the Crown public house in the centre of the Village. It is in the ownership of the public house and currently contains play equipment.



Statutory designations	In Conservation Area
Site allocations	None
Planning permissions	None
Area	0.2 hectares
Ownership	Gusto Pronto Ltd
NPPF criteria assessment	
Close to the community it serves	The Green Space is centrally located within the heart of the Village and the Primary School, Church and The Institute are all within 300 metres walk
Public access	Public access permitted at all times
Ecologically significant	Borders onto the stream. Suffolk Wildlife Study referred to in Plan notes it is of high ecological significance
Historically significant	The green space is in the Conservation Area and adjoins a number of listed buildings, primarily the Crown Inn which dates back to the 16 th century.
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	The Green Space provides an important focal point for the community being located adjacent to the public house and also provides an important green wildlife corridor and important views linking the open countryside with Hartest Green to the north.
Local in character and not extensive	Self-contained green area

Hartest Wood – located off Lawshall Road, this is one of the Woodland Trust’s “Woods on Your Doorstep” created to commemorate the Millennium. It was planted with mixed broadleaf trees by local villagers and school children, and features a central sculpture called “The Gift”.



Statutory designations	None
Site allocations	None
Planning permissions	None
Area	1.18 hectares
Ownership	Hartest Parish Council
NPPF criteria assessment	
Close to the community it serves	The entrance to the woodland is approximately 500 metres from the Church
Public access	Public access at all times
Ecologically significant	The area is managed for habitat creation and management and contains many trees and hedgerows
Historically significant	
Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance	The relatively recently established woodland provides a community asset that is growing in importance as it becomes more established.
Local in character and not extensive	Self-contained green area

Appendix 4 – Listed Buildings in Hartest

As at 1 September 2024

Source - Historic England's Register of Listed Buildings <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list>

The entries below are as they appear in the Historic England list. Where properties are now known by different names from those used in this list, the local names are included in square brackets. Up to date information on listed buildings and other heritage assets should be sought from Historic England or another reliable source.

Grade I

- Church of All Saints, The Green

Grade II

- Hatch Cottage, Pilgrims Lane
- Potash Cottage, The Row
- The Old Stores and Tebbit, The Row
- Windfall Cottage and adjoining cottage, The Row
- Gladwin and Thatched Cottage, The Row
- Millhill Farmhouse, Somerton Road
- Poorhouse Cottages, Workhouse Hill
- Northend Cottages, Bury Road
- Stowe Hill, Bury Road
- Appleby Cottage, The Green
- Wheelwrights, The Green
- Old Bakery, The Green
- Green Farmhouse, The Green
- The Hunters, The Green
- Congregational Chapel, The Green
- Brook House, The Green
- Boshula and Peartree Cottage, The Green
- Derwins Cottage and House adjoining on the west, The Green
- Rectory, The Green
- Sturgeons Hall, The Green
- Bridge House, Hartest Hill
- Pippin Cottage, Hartest Hill
- Cawston's Farmhouse, Hartest Hill
- Dowsetts, Melford Road
- Chapel House, The Green
- Place Farmhouse, The Green
- Baynton's Farmhouse, Hartest Hill
- Pompes, Shimpling Road
- Fosters Farmhouse, Hartest Hill
- Orchard Cottage, Workhouse Hill
- K6 Telephone Kiosk, Hartest Green
- Barham Cottage, The Row
- Isbury, The Green
- Crown Inn, The Green
- Stables to Rectory, The Green
- The Limes, The Green
- House and Shop adjoining Green Farmhouse on the north, The Green
- Candler's, Cross Green
- Hartest Place, Bury Road
- Burnthouse Farmhouse, Bury Road
- The Thatched Cottage, Cross Green
- White Cottage, The Green
- Elizals Cottage, Shimpling Road
- Cooks Farmhouse, Lawshall Road
- The Chestnuts, Pilgrims Lane
- Brookside, Melford Road
- Whitecroft, The Row
- Hop Hall, Somerton Road
- West View and High View, Workhouse Hill
- Kew Gardens Farmhouse, Lawshall Road
- Hartest War Memorial, Hartest Green

Appendix 5 – Development Design Checklist

Source : Hartest Design Codes and Guidance. AECOM 2023

A. Street grid and layout:

- A1. Does it favour accessibility and connectivity? If not, why?
- A2. Do the new points of access and street layout have regard for all users of the development; in particular pedestrians, cyclists and those with disabilities?
- A3. What are the essential characteristics of the existing street pattern; are these reflected in the proposal?
- A4. How will the new design or extension integrate with the existing street arrangement?
- A5. Are the new points of access appropriate in terms of patterns of movement?
- A6. Do the points of access conform to the statutory technical requirements?

B. Local green spaces, views and character:

- B1. What are the particular characteristics of this area which have been taken into account in the design; i.e. what are the landscape qualities of the area?
- B2. Does the proposal maintain or enhance any identified views or views in general?
- B3. How does the proposal affect the trees on or adjacent to the site?
- B4. Can trees be used to provide natural shading from unwanted solar gain? i.e. deciduous trees can limit solar gains in summer, while maximising them in winter.
- B5. Has the proposal been considered within its wider physical context?
- B6. Has the impact on the landscape quality of the area been taken into account?
- B7. In rural locations, has the impact of the development on the tranquility of the area been fully considered?
- B8. How does the proposal impact on existing views which are important to the area and how are these views incorporated in the design?
- B9. Can any new views be created?
- B10. Is there adequate amenity space, including gardens, for development?
- B11. Does the new development respect and enhance existing amenity space?
- B12. Will any communal amenity space be created? If so, how this will be used by the new owners and how will it be managed?
- B13. Have opportunities for enhancing existing amenity spaces been explored?
- B14. Are measures included to increase biodiversity and have any opportunities to increase biodiversity in the area been taken?
- B15. Can green space be used for natural flood prevention e.g. permeable landscaping, swales etc.?
- B16. Can water bodies be used to provide evaporative cooling?
- B17. Is there space to consider a ground source heat pump array, either horizontal ground loop or borehole (if excavation is required)?

C. Gateway and access features:

- C1. What is the arrival point, how is it designed?
- C2. Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing gaps between settlements?
- C3. Does the proposal affect or change the setting of a listed building?
- C4. Is the landscaping to be hard or soft?

D. Building layout and grouping:

- D1. What are the typical groupings of buildings?
- D2. How have the existing groupings been reflected in the proposal?
- D3. Are proposed groups of buildings offering variety and texture to the townscape?
- D4. What effect would the proposal have on the streetscape?
- D5. Does the proposal maintain the character of dwelling clusters?
- D6. Does the proposal overlook any adjacent properties or gardens? How is this mitigated?
- D7. Subject to topography and the clustering of existing buildings, are new buildings orientated to incorporate passive solar design principles, with, for example, one of the main glazed elevations within 30° due south, whilst also minimizing overheating risk?
- D8. Can buildings with complementary energy profiles be clustered together such that a communal low carbon energy source could be used to supply multiple buildings that might require energy at different times of day or night? This is to reduce peak loads. And/or can waste heat from one building be extracted to provide cooling to that building as well as heat to another building?

E. Household extensions:

- E1. Does the proposed design respect the character of the area and the immediate neighbourhood, and does it have an adverse impact on neighbouring properties in relation to privacy, overbearing or overshadowing impact?
- E2. Is the roof form of the extension appropriate to the original dwelling (considering angle of pitch)?
- E3. Do the proposed materials match or work in harmony with those of the existing dwelling?
- E4. In case of side extensions, does it retain important gaps within the street scene and avoid a 'terracing effect'?
- E5. Are there any proposed dormer roof extensions set within the roof slope?
- E6. Does the proposed extension respond to the existing pattern of window and door openings?
- E7. Is the side extension set back from the front of the house?

E8. Does the extension offer the opportunity to retrofit energy efficiency measures to the existing building?

E9. Can any materials be re-used in situ to reduce waste and embodied carbon?

F. Building materials and surface treatment:

F1. What is the distinctive material in the area?

F2. Does the proposed material harmonise with the local materials?

F3. Does the proposal use high-quality materials?

F4. Have the details of the windows, doors, eaves and roof details been addressed in the context of the overall design?

F5. Do the new proposed materials respect or enhance the existing area or adversely change its character?

F6. Are recycled materials, or those with high recycled content proposed?

F7. Has the embodied carbon of the materials been considered and are there options which can reduce the embodied carbon of the design?
For example, wood structures and concrete alternatives.

F8. Can the proposed materials be locally and/or responsibly sourced? e.g. FSC timber, or certified under BES 6001, ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems?

G. Car parking:

G1. What parking solutions have been considered?

G2. Are the car spaces located and arranged in a way that is not dominant or detrimental to the sense of place?

G3. Has planting been considered to soften the presence of cars?

G4. Does the proposed car parking compromise the amenity of adjoining properties?

G5. Have the needs of wheelchair users been considered?

G6. Are electric vehicle charging points provided?

G7. Can secure cycle storage be provided at an individual building level or through a central/ communal facility where appropriate?

G8. If covered car ports or cycle storage is included, can it incorporate roof mounted photovoltaic panels or a biodiverse roof in its design?

Glossary

Affordable housing: housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one or more of the following definitions:

- a) **Affordable housing for rent:** meets all of the following conditions: (a) the rent is set in accordance with the Government's rent policy for Social Rent or Affordable Rent, or is at least 20% below local market rents (including service charges where applicable); (b) the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and (c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. For Build to Rent schemes affordable housing for rent is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision (and, in this context, is known as Affordable Private Rent).
- b) **Starter homes:** is as specified in Sections 2 and 3 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and any secondary legislation made under these sections. The definition of a starter home should reflect the meaning set out in statute and any such secondary legislation at the time of plan-preparation or decision-making. Where secondary legislation has the effect of limiting a household's eligibility to purchase a starter home to those with a particular maximum level of household income, those restrictions should be used.
- c) **Discounted market sales housing:** is that sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households.
- d) **Other affordable routes to home ownership:** is housing provided for sale that provides a route to ownership for those who could not achieve home ownership through the market. It includes shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). Where public grant funding is provided, there should be provisions for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for any receipts to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision, or refunded to Government or the relevant authority specified in the funding agreement.

Archaeological interest: There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially may hold, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them.

Best and most versatile agricultural land: Land in grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification.

Biodiversity: Describes the range and variety of living organisms within an ecosystem. It can include all living organisms, plants, animals, fungi and bacteria and is often used to indicate the richness or number of species in an area. Such an area can be defined at different levels across the globe or be limited to a local area such as a parish.

Community-led developments: A development instigated and taken forward by a not-for-profit organisation set up and run primarily for the purpose of meeting the housing needs of its members and the wider local community, rather than being a primarily commercial enterprise. The organisation is created, managed and democratically controlled by its members. It may take any one of various legal forms including a community land trust, housing co-operative and community benefit society. Membership of the organisation is open to all beneficiaries and prospective beneficiaries of that organisation. The organisation should own, manage or steward the homes in a manner consistent with its purpose, for example through a mutually supported arrangement with a Registered Provider of Social Housing. The benefits of the development to the specified community should be clearly defined and consideration given to how these benefits can be protected over time, including in the event of the organisation being wound up.

Conservation (for heritage policy): The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.

Designated heritage asset: A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.

Development Plan: This includes adopted Local Plans and neighbourhood plans as defined in section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Exception sites for affordable housing: Sites for affordable housing development in rural locations where market housing would not normally be acceptable because of planning policy constraints. Homes can be brought forward on these sites only if there is a proven unmet local need for affordable housing and a legal planning agreement is in place to ensure that the homes will always remain affordable, will be for people in housing need and prioritised for those with a strong local connection to the parish.

Habitat: The natural home of an animal or plant often designated as an area of nature conservation interest.

Heritage asset: A term that includes designated heritage assets (e.g. listed buildings, world heritage sites, conservation areas, scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered parks and gardens and battlefields) and non-designated assets identified by the local planning authority. Non-designated heritage assets include sites of archaeological interest, buildings, structures or features of local heritage interest listed by, or fulfilling criteria for listing by, the local planning authority.

Hinterland Village: Defined in the Babergh Core Strategy 2014 as villages that tend to be small, with very limited facilities and so are dependent on

nearby larger villages or urban areas for many of their everyday needs.

Historic environment: All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.

Infill plot: development within a small gap within an otherwise built-up road frontage

Infrastructure: The basic physical and organisational structures and facilities (e.g. buildings, roads and power supplies) necessary for development to take place.

International, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity: All international sites (Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, and Ramsar sites), national sites (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) and locally designated sites including Local Wildlife Sites.

Local planning authority: The public authority whose duty it is to carry out specific planning functions for a particular area which in this case is Babergh District Council.

Local Plan: The plan for the future development of the local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community.

Neighbourhood plans: A plan prepared by a Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum for a particular neighbourhood area (made under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

Renewable and low carbon energy: Includes energy for heating and cooling as well as generating electricity. Renewable energy covers those energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment - from the wind, the fall of water, the movement of the oceans, from the sun and also from biomass and deep geothermal heat. Low carbon technologies are those that can help reduce emissions (compared to conventional use of fossil fuels).

Rural exception sites: Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. Small numbers of market homes may be allowed at the local authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding.

Setting of a heritage asset: The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

Significance (for heritage policy): The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

Site of Special Scientific Interest: Sites designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Strategic Environmental Assessment: A procedure (set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) which requires the formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

Use Classes: The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) puts uses of land and buildings into various categories known as 'Use Classes'.

Wildlife corridor: A wildlife corridor is a link of wildlife habitat, generally native vegetation, which joins two or more larger areas of similar wildlife habitat. Corridors are critical for the maintenance of ecological processes including allowing for the movement of animals and the continuation of viable populations of plants and animals.

Windfall sites: Sites not specifically identified in the development plan.

Hartest Neighbourhood Plan

2024 - 2037



Hartest Parish Council
July 2025

