



Orwell Neighbourhood Plan

Planning Policy Context Analysis

Report prepared by Cambridgeshire ACRE's Neighbourhood Planning Service

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About the Report's Author

Cambridgeshire ACRE is an independent organisation, a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. We are part of the national ACRE Network of 38 similar organisations in England.

Our vision is to have thriving rural communities across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. We therefore strive for positive change and work with others to improve the lives of those living and working in rural communities.

Our action-driven approach is supported by our team of staff who are experts in their field and not influenced by any other body. Communities can therefore have peace of mind knowing that their ambitions are in the best possible hands.

Our aim is to help rural communities seize opportunities and drive their projects forward, which includes improving their accessibility to services, information and funding.

As part of our work, we provide a Neighbourhood Planning service for local communities. We have developed this service by building on our skills, knowledge and competencies gained in other project areas such as rural affordable housing and community-led planning and by working with local planning consultants to broaden our capacity. Our current partners are [Modicum Planning Limited](#) and [Nupremis Cambridge Limited](#).



More information can be found on Cambridgeshire ACRE's wider work with rural communities at <https://www.cambsacre.org.uk>.

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Part 1 Introduction

Orwell Neighbourhood Plan: The Planning Policy Context

1.1 This paper sets out the current strategic planning policies that will need to be considered in developing the Orwell Neighbourhood Plan. It also sets out the proposals for planning reform at national level and new proposals for Greater Cambridge prepared by Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils.

Part 2 Basic Conditions

2.1 The Neighbourhood Plan must meet a set of basic planning conditions before it can be put to a referendum and be formally adopted. A Neighbourhood Plan (NP) meets the basic conditions if:

- having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the plan;
- the making of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
- the making of the neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority;
- the making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations; and
- the making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach the requirement of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

2.2 The submission Neighbourhood Plan will need to be accompanied by a Basic Conditions Statement.

Part 3 National Planning Policy Framework

3.1 National planning policy is mainly set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) July 2021. It states that planning should contribute to the achievement of sustainable development: economic, social and environment. Paragraph 11 of NPPF 2021 currently states:

“Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For plan-making this means that:

a) all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects;

b) strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas, unless:

- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area; or

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.”

3.2 The NPPF emphasises the link between themes such as climate change and health, provides guidance on the vitality and vibrancy of towns and rural areas including retail, town centres and employment. It provides advice on transport, high quality infrastructure, beautiful design and healthy communities, whilst conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment.

3.3 The 2021 NPPF requires Local Planning Authorities to significantly boost the supply of housing. Where a local authority does not have a 5 year housing land supply, existing plans are considered out of date and local planning authorities should grant permission unless adverse impacts of doing so would demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

3.4 The Greater Cambridge Housing Trajectory and Five Year Housing Land Supply Report (1 April 2022) concludes that the two authority areas jointly have 6.5 years of housing land supply for the 2022-2027 five-year period. This conclusion is based on the five-year housing land supply being calculated jointly, using the Liverpool methodology, and applying a 5% buffer.

3.5 The Housing Delivery Test (HDT) is an annual assessment of actual housing delivery over the previous three years, measured against the housing requirement for the district for that same time period. To calculate the HDT measurement for each plan area, the government has divided the number of new homes built ('delivered') in the past three financial years by the number of new homes required in the same period. It has made some provision for the impact of the Covid Pandemic on housing delivery by subtracting 4 months from the housing requirement. The latest set of HDT results published in January 2022 report 175% delivery and therefore no action is required.

3.6 The current NPPF adds emphasis to its design policies by promoting area-based character assessments, design guides and codes and masterplans creating beautiful and sustainable places, and by the refusal of permissions for developments of poor design.

National Planning Reform

3.7 The Government consultation on 'The Levelling-Up and Regeneration Bill' sets out reforms to national planning policy. It includes 'tracked changes' to the current NPPF which will take immediate effect following conclusions on the consultation. The consultation can be viewed [here](#) and a copy of the proposed NPPF with tracked changes is attached as a separate document to this report. The consultation ended on 2nd March 2023.

3.8 The planning reforms include proposal to:

- make clear how housing figures should be derived and applied so that communities can respond to local circumstances;
- address issues in the operation of the housing delivery and land supply tests;
- tackle problems of slow build out;
- encourage local planning authorities to support the role of community-led groups in delivering affordable housing on exception sites;
- set clearer expectations around planning for older peoples' housing;

- promote more beautiful homes, including through gentle density;
- make sure that food security considerations are factored into planning decisions that affect farm land;
- and enable new methods for demonstrating local support for onshore wind development.

3.9 Much of the media coverage on Planning Reform has concentrated on changes to how housing need is calculated and then delivered in plans. Government proposes to end the rolling 5 year land supply requirement, and confirms that the housing need calculations are an advisory starting point only. It states that housing needs are required to be met as far as possible 'unless adverse impacts where meeting need in full would mean building at densities significantly out of character with the existing area' or there is clear evidence of 'over delivery'. However, authorities are expected to ensure that they meet the need for retirement housing, housing with care and care homes.

3.10 Neighbourhood Planning is seen to be strengthened. The current protection afforded to a Neighbourhood Plan will be extended from 2 to 5 years from the date it was made where it allocates land for housing. The Bill also states that it will 'prescribe in more detail what communities can address in their neighbourhood plans and amend the 'basic conditions' to ensure that neighbourhood plans are aligned with wider changes to the planning system'.

3.11 The Bill states that it begins to put communities at the heart of the planning system offering communities a better say in what is built and where by giving increased weight to neighbourhood plans. The Bill also enables 'gentle densification through Street Votes and design codes', allowing communities to consent to add storeys to existing dwellings with the increase in value going to local people. The details of how this will work will be set out later this year.

3.12 A new neighbourhood plan tool is to be introduced called a 'neighbourhood priorities statement' which will provide communities with a way in which it can set out its key priorities and preferences for their local areas. Local Planning Authorities will need to take account of these when preparing their local plans.

3.13 Neighbourhood Plans are likely to be asked to show how they are addressing climate change. It is recommended that in preparing the plan, the Neighbourhood Plan Group addresses this at an early stage and continually throughout the plan's preparation.

3.14 A new levy is proposed to replace Section 106 planning obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy. The rates and thresholds will be set out in schedules set and raised by local planning authorities. Affordable housing should be maintained at existing levels or exceeded.

3.15 Reinforcing the design emphasis in the 2021 NPPF, the government anticipates that the planning reforms should result in homes that are locally led, well-designed, and of a consistent and high quality standard. It seeks to ensure that proposals support beauty and placemaking – the word beautiful is liberally spread around the document. It sees the primary means of improving the design of development through the use of local design codes in line with the National Model Design Code.

3.16 Changes are proposed which would ensure that heritage assets such as Registered Parks and Gardens (relevant to Wimpole Hall Estate) would enjoy the same statutory protection in the planning system as listed buildings and conservation areas.

3.17 It will be important for the Neighbourhood Plan Group to ensure that its work aligns with and is cognisant of an evolving planning policy framework.

Part 4 Regional and Sub Regional Initiatives

Oxford to Cambridge ARC

4.1 In February 2021, the government published a policy paper that set out how it intended to develop a Spatial Framework to help realise an ambition to support sustainable economic growth in the Oxford to Cambridge Arc - the area that spans the five counties of Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire and Cambridgeshire.

4.2 The consultation document, 'Creating a Vision for the Oxford to Cambridge Arc - July 2021', sets out the government's first public consultation on the Oxford to Cambridge Arc Spatial Framework on future growth of the area to 2050. Albeit a potentially significant and important strategic policy agenda, it lies outside the potential scope of the NP process.

4.3 The Spring Budget Statement 2023 published in March states that 'East West Rail - the rail line joining Oxford and Cambridge - will support further growth in life sciences and other high-productivity sectors across the region, connecting businesses and talent. In May, the government will confirm the route for the new Bedford-Cambridge section, and will provide capacity funding to support local authorities to develop their plans for strategic economic growth around new stations'.

Part 5 South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 and Greater Cambridge Plan First Proposals

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan

5.1 The Neighbourhood Plan must be in conformity with the strategic policies in the adopted Development Plan. South Cambridgeshire's Local Plan was adopted on 27th September 2018. The development plan also comprises Area Action Plans such as the Northstowe Area Action Plan and adopted Neighbourhood Plans (e.g. Foxton, Cottenham, Waterbeach and West Wickham). The Development Plan also includes the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan July 2021.

5.2 The South Cambridgeshire Local Plan includes a list of strategic policies in the Local Plan. The list (Appendix 1) includes almost all of the local plan policies with the exception of public art, protected village amenity areas, local green space and allocation of open space policies.

5.3 The Policies areas are also identified on maps. The planning policies for Orwell can be found on the District Wide Policies Map, the Inset Map for Orwell, the Inset Map for Wimpole (where the parish boundary abuts the development framework for Wimpole) together with the updated Minerals and Waste Local Plan (Appendix 2).

5.4 Whilst Neighbourhood Plan policies cannot conflict with the Local Plan Policies, they can provide more distinctiveness, definition or finer grain of detail by applying them to specific sites or relating them specifically to the designated Neighbourhood Plan area. In this report the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018 is referred to as the Local Plan.

Emerging GCSP First Proposals

5.5 Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council are working together to create a joint Local Plan for the two areas, Greater Cambridge, for the period to 2041. The Plan is at an early stage of development and there are no confirmed proposals to build anything anywhere yet.

5.6 In November 2020, the councils published an initial evidence base, findings and development strategy options assessments. In November to December 2021 the council's held a full public consultation on the First Proposals for the Plan and the Councils published a Development Strategy Update Report on 4th January 2023.

5.7 The update highlights that meeting housing need is contingent on no unacceptable harm to the environment. It states that a draft Greater Cambridge Plan will be published in Autumn 2023 for a further round of consultation which will include a housing target, full details of proposed sites and detailed themed policies. In this report the latest consultation document, Greater Cambridge Local Plan First Proposals, is referred to as the GCSP First Proposals. Again, the NP will need to be aware of, and have regard to the emerging policies proposed in the Greater Cambridge Plan.

Part 6 – Spatial Topic Areas

Spatial Strategy

6.1 The Local Plan's spatial strategy up to 2031 is set out in Chapter 2 of the Local Plan. This chapter includes the Local Plan vision, objectives and spatial strategy. The Local Plan's vision is set out in Policy S/1. It states: 'South Cambridgeshire will continue to be the best place to live, work and study in the country. Our district will demonstrate impressive and sustainable economic growth. Our residents will have a superb quality of life in an exceptionally beautiful, rural and green environment'.

6.2 The spatial strategy set out across the two planning authority areas is for Cambridge to remain the focus of development (comprising 54% of the housing requirement of both Councils 2011 to 2031). For South Cambridgeshire, the spatial strategy can be summarised as:

- Maintaining a Green Belt around Cambridge with the intent of defining the urban edge
- Delivering development that will facilitate provision during 2011 to 2031 for 22,000 additional jobs to support the Cambridge cluster and 19,500 new homes including affordable homes
- Focusing development in order of preference on a) the edge of Cambridge b) at new settlements and c) in the rural area at Rural Centres and the Minor Rural Centres.

6.3 Sites for residential development have been allocated across the district in the 2018 Local Plan to ensure that sufficient land is brought forward to meet the identified need for housing in the district. The 2018 Local Plan did not include housing allocations in Orwell. However, it is clear that the lack of a 5 year housing land supply has led to development being allowed outside of these allocations, including the development at Hurdleditch Road.

6.4 The GCSP First Proposals broadly have the same spatial strategy but seek to increase the number of new homes to 44,400 and 58,500 new jobs to 2041. The council's update in January 2023 suggests that they are testing an increase in these figures to 51,723 homes and

66,600 jobs. It is important to note that many of the homes and jobs are included within the existing Local Plan including the expansion of Cambridge, and new settlements at Northstowe and Waterbeach. However, the councils are considering whether it is possible to create a sustainable and deliverable plan to meet those needs. It notes water supply and housing delivery as key constraints whilst also noting the issues of affordability.

6.5 The GCSP First Proposals identifies a total of 19 new sites that might be suitable for additional development to meet the needs of Greater Cambridge up to 2041. These were chosen from over 900 sites that were assessed. The Councils are not proposing to allocate sites in Orwell, however, the site submissions by landowners and developers around Orwell can be seen via the interactive map [here](#).

Housing

6.6 Local Plan Policy S/10 identifies Orwell as a group village (maintained in the GCSP First Proposals Policy S/SH) where development will be permitted within the development framework identified on the Policies Inset Maps. The 'Group Village' designation secures an indicative maximum scheme size of 8 dwellings.

6.7 Local Plan Policy S/7 supports development and redevelopment of unallocated land and buildings within development frameworks subject to safeguarding criteria. The policy goes on to state 'Outside development frameworks, only allocations within Neighbourhood Plans that have come into force and development for agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor recreation and other uses which need to be located in the countryside or where supported by other policies in this plan will be permitted.' Given the built up area has changed since the adopted plan, the Neighbourhood Plan Group may wish to amend the boundary to take account of the development and any existing anomalies.

6.8 SCDC has provided an indicative housing figure for the Neighbourhood Plan Area. The indicative housing requirement for Orwell Parish (as % of windfalls) is 8 dwelling units for the current Local Plan period. This figure takes account of the housing trajectory published in the Local Plan, the census information and apportions the windfall housing requirement to the neighbourhood area based on its population. Clearly, with the Westcroft Development, the parish has far exceeded this indicative housing requirement.

6.9 Local Plan Policy H/8 requires housing developments to achieve 30 dwellings per hectare. The GCSP First Proposals states that it will set site specific appropriate net densities across Greater Cambridge.

6.10 Local Plan Policy H/9 requires development of 10 or more market homes to have a mix of home sizes; broadly 30% 1 or 2 bedroom homes, 30% 3 bedroom homes and 30% 4 or more bedroom homes with a 10% flexibility. The GCSP First Proposals requires fewer larger homes (informed by a Housing Needs Study for Greater Cambridge 2021). For market housing it states 0-10% should be 1 bedroom homes; 20-30% for 2 bedroom homes, 35-45% to be 3 bedroom homes and 25 to 35% to be homes with 4 beds or more. Affordable housing for ownership and rent should have a greater proportion of 2 bed homes (45%) and significantly less homes with 4 beds or more.

6.11 Local Plan Policy H/10 requires all developments of 11 or more to provide 40% affordable homes on site and the type of tenure will be determined by local housing needs evidence. This is reflected in the GCSP First Proposals which include the new Government policy on First Homes.

First Homes

Government guidance published by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) on 24th May 2021, states that a minimum of 25% of all affordable housing units secured through developer contributions should be First Homes. First Homes are a specific kind of discounted market sale housing and should be considered to meet the definition of 'affordable housing' for planning purposes. Specifically, First Homes are discounted market sale units which:

- a) must be discounted by a minimum of 30% against the market value;
- b) are sold to a person or persons meeting the First Homes eligibility criteria;
- c) on their first sale, will have a restriction registered on the title at HM Land Registry to ensure this discount (as a percentage of current market value) and certain other restrictions are passed on at each subsequent title transfer; and,
- d) after the discount has been applied, the first sale must be at a price no higher than £250,000 (or £420,000 in Greater London).

6.12 Local Plan Policy H/11 supports rural exceptions sites which is affordable housing to meet identified local housing needs on small sites adjoining development frameworks. GCSP First Proposals includes a similar proposal for rural exception sites and First Homes Exception Sites.

Major Development Sites

6.13 Over the past 5 years the most significant planning applications are:

- Development of 49 dwellings (40% affordable homes) at Hurdleditch Road allowed on appeal, outside the development framework, due to the lack of a 5 year housing land supply in South Cambridgeshire (S/3190/15/OL).
- 5 self-build units north west of West Croft refused planning consent due to its location outside the development framework and the intrusion into the open countryside (22/04392/OUT).

6.14 Within Orwell a number of planning applications have come forward for residential development including:

- One detached dwelling and pair of semidetached dwellings north west of Leaden Hill approved in 2018 (S/4393/18/FL).
- Bungalow to the rear of 11 Lotfield Street approved in August 2019 (S/2335/19/FL).
- Dwelling between 69 and 75 High Street approved in the Conservation Area in February 2019 (S/4756/18/FL).
- Dwelling adjacent to 55 Hillside refused due its location outside the development framework and potential harm to biodiversity to Eversden and Wimpole Woods Special Protection Area. An appeal against refusal is outstanding (21/04955/FUL).
- Dwelling at Butts Farm allowed on appeal in July 2022 to support the operation of a livery and self-storage business (21/04556/FUL).

- Conversion and extension of dwelling to form two dwellings at 22 High Street granted consent in November 2022 (22/02956/FUL).

6.15 Other development proposals have included:

- Agricultural Barn at Butts Farm, Malton Road approved in May 2022 (22/01308/FUL)
- Change of use of agricultural land to recreation ground at Hurdleditch Road. Application withdrawn (20/02790/FUL).

Employment and Retail

6.16 The Local Plan makes provision for 22,000 new jobs across the district and employment sites have been allocated to meet this demand. The GCP First proposals identified a need for a total of 58,400 new jobs in the Greater Cambridge area. The figures reported have changed: in 2022 reports suggest a new job figure of 43,300 whereas the January 2023 updates report a new job figure of 66,600.

6.17 Within development frameworks planning permission for B Class (office, light industry, storage and warehousing) uses are acceptable (Local Plan Policy E/12) provided the development is in keeping with the category and scale of the village and is in character and scale with the location. In appropriate cases the Local Plan Policy E/13 also supports new employment development on the edge of or very close to the development framework of villages. Local Plan Policy E/14 seeks to resist the loss of employment land to non employment uses within and on the edge of villages. Such policies need to be updated to align with the new Use Class E which includes a wide range of retail, business and commercial activities and where planning permission between them is not required. Use Classes B2 (industrial) and Class B8 (warehousing) still remain.

6.18 Local Plan Policy E/18 supports proposals for diversification schemes which enable continued operation of agricultural and other land based rural businesses particularly where they are engaged in sustainable land management or renewable / low carbon energy, where they are appropriate in scale to their location and, where possible, reuse existing buildings. The policy supports the re-use of rural buildings in the countryside for employment purposes, where they are of permanent and substantial construction and in keeping with their surroundings. It allows the replacement of such buildings where it would bring about environmental improvement and a more sustainable development. GCSP First Proposal similarly support such appropriate diversification.

6.19 Local Plan Policy E/22 supports shops appropriate to the scale of the villages and wherever possible retail uses should be located close to each other in the centre of villages. GCSP First Proposals will establish a similar retail hierarchy of centres across Greater Cambridge.

Protecting Village Character

6.20 The Local Plan seeks to protect village character by identifying positive planning designations and additional safeguarding policies. A Design Code, supported by national policy, will be an important document in setting out the key design principles, particularly given the emphasis in the planning reforms.

6.21 Local Plan Inset maps identify development frameworks which define the built-up area of a village (Local Plan Policy S/7). Development and redevelopment of land and buildings will be permitted provided that:

- the proposal is of a scale, density and character appropriate to the location;
- the site in its present state does not form an essential part of the local character;
- development would protect and enhance local features of green space, landscape, ecological or historic importance; and
- there is the necessary infrastructure capacity to support development.

6.22 Local Plan Policy HQ/1 sets out the generic design principles which seeks to ensure that new development makes a positive contribution to the local context. The policy is supplemented by a [District Design Guide](#).

6.23 The GCSP First Proposals seeks to sustain the unique character of Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, and complement it with beautiful and distinctive development, creating a place where people want to live, work and play. It proposes district wide guidance on achieving high quality design. The design guidance is to build upon the Cambridgeshire Quality Charter for Growth, the National Design Guide, and the National Model Design Code.

6.24 Local Plan Policy NH/11 identifies Protected Village Amenity Areas. Development will not be permitted within or adjacent to these areas if it were to have an adverse impact on the character, amenity, tranquillity or function of the village. There is one Protected Village Amenity Areas shown on the Orwell Inset map comprising allotments to the rear of properties on Fishers Lane.

6.25 Local Plan Policy NH/12 defines Local Green Space Sites. These sites are protected from development that would adversely impact on the character and particular local significance placed on such green areas which make them valued by their local community. Inappropriate development, as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework, would not be approved except in very special circumstances and in discussion with the local community. Two Local Green Spaces are identified in the Neighbourhood Plan Area. NH/12-060 – land south of Lordship Close and NH/12-061 – Recreation Ground at Town Green Road.

6.26 The NPPF states that Local Green Space designations through local and neighbourhood plans allow communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them (paragraph 101). The NPG may wish to consider identifying further Local Green Spaces. The criteria for Local Green Space designation are set out at NPPF (paragraph 102) which states designations 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.

6.27 The GCSP First Proposals continue to support Protected Village Amenity Areas, Local Green Spaces and Important Countryside Frontages.

6.28 Local Plan Policy NH/14 supports development that sustains and enhances Heritage Assets including the special character and distinctiveness of the district's historic environment and supports new quality environments with a strong sense of place. Orwell Conservation Area was designated on 2nd March 1973. Orwell does not have the benefit of a Conservation Area Appraisal. Wimpole Hall Estate shown on the Inset Maps is identified as a registered

park and garden. Development will be supported which sustains and enhances the significance of the heritage asset, including its setting as appropriate to their significance.

6.29 GCSP First Proposals seeks to include consideration of impacts on designated and undesignated heritage assets. The Neighbourhood Plan may wish to consider whether it wants to add a layer of specificity and identify non – designated heritage assets.

Landscape

6.30 The Local Plan offers a combination of district wide guidance on landscape whilst also identifying some specific safeguarded sites.

6.31 Orwell parish lies on the boundary of the East Anglian Chalk and Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands National Character Areas. The claylands are a broad, gently undulating, lowland plateau dissected by shallow river valleys. The Chalk is a simple and uninterrupted landscape of smooth, rolling chalkland hills and large regular fields enclosed by low hawthorn hedges, with few trees and expansive views.

6.32 The East of England Landscape Typology is a little more sophisticated and describes Orwell within the Chalk Hills and Scarps. It is described as prominent chalk hills and a narrow band around the south of the Wooded Village Farmlands. The chalk hills form distinct edges in places, elsewhere incised by dry valleys to create a rounded rolling landform that is often well wooded with long distance views. It is a large scale landscape with an ordered pattern of fields and woodlands

6.33 The Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines describe Orwell within Chalklands: an area where the complex history of settlement and the impact of people on the landscape over the centuries is particularly apparent. This is a largely arable and broad scale landscape of large fields with low, trimmed hedge boundaries and limited tree cover.

6.34 The [Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment](#) (2021) prepared as part of the evidence base to the Greater Cambridge Plan identifies the parish of Orwell within two character areas. Firstly, Wimpole Chalk Hill Character Area 7E which is described as:

- Designed parkland landscape associated with Wimpole Hall, including deciduous woodland, a serpentine lake, folly and carriage drive with planned views
- Scattered areas of priority habitat including deciduous woodland and pockets of lowland calcareous grassland, orchards and mosaic habitats
- Strong sense of time depth
- Highly accessible landscape, that is valued for recreation, particularly access to Wimpole parkland and long distance footpaths

6.35 The recommendations include a need

- to manage historic parkland to maintain and enhance its distinctive features and enhance the ecological value of the landscape and
- to conserve areas of deciduous woodland, lowland calcareous grassland and mosaic habitats.

6.36 Secondly, Orwell is defined within the Rhee Tributaries Lowlands Farmlands Landscape Character Area (3C) which is described as:

- Wide valley of the River Rhee and its tributaries
- Predominantly medium to large rectilinear fields organised in a haphazard pattern with pockets of regularity
- Small woodland blocks combine with shelterbelts and clumps of trees to create well treed horizons
- Small scale fields often found at the edge of villages
- Ecological richness including lowland meadows, lowland fen and floodplain grazing marsh
- Dense settlement pattern comprising large, nucleated villages in the south
- Distinctive linear features including Ermine Street Roman road, Wimpole Hall Avenue and the railway

6.37 The sensitivities include the small scale fields often found at the edge of villages and distinctive linear features including Ermine Street Roman road, Wimpole Hall Avenue and the railway. The guidelines include recommendations to conserve and enhance the regular small-scale pastoral fields, shelter belts and hedgerows at village edges and maintain distinctive linear features.

6.38 Local Plan Policy NH/2 ensures development respects and retains or enhances the local character and distinctiveness of the local landscape and of the individual National Character Area. The GCSP First Proposals seeks to respect, retain or enhance local landscape character as set out in the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment. The NP may wish to include the layer of distinctiveness provided by the Greater Cambridge Landscape Assessment or its own more detailed landscape assessment.

6.39 Local Plan Policy NH/5 seeks to ensure that there is no adverse effect on land within or adjoining a Site of Biodiversity or Geological Importance. Such sites include Orwell Clunch Pit designated as an SSSI for its grassland flora and also identified as a Local Geological Site. The risk impact zones of other SSSIs fall within the parish namely Barrington Chalk Pit SSSI, Barrington Pit SSSI and Eversden and Wimpole Woods SSSI (of particular importance for its breeding colonies of the rare Barbastelle bat). The Orwell Inset map and District Wide Policies Map identifies a Roadside Nature Reserve either side of Wimpole Road - recognising their status as the largest area of unimproved grassland in the county and their role as important habitat. Additionally, the River Cam / Rhee is identified as a County Wildlife Site.

6.40 The policies in the Local Plan predate the Environment Act which will require 10% biodiversity net gain on almost all proposals from November 2023. The Greater Cambridge [Biodiversity SPD](#) provides detailed guidance on biodiversity net gain. Recent planning consents have included conditions which require a lighting design strategy for biodiversity and details of bat and bird box installation, hedgehog connectivity, and other enhancements as applicable and in line with the Greater Cambridge Planning Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document (2022). The NPG may wish to consider whether elements of the SPD guidance should be elevated to policy status.

6.41 Local Plan policy NH/13 defines sites as Important Countryside Frontages. These are areas where a strong countryside character penetrates into the built up area providing a significant connection between the street scene and the surrounding rural area or provides an important rural break between two detached parts of the development framework. The Orwell Inset Maps do not include Important Countryside Frontages. GCSP First proposals proposes to review designations such as PVAA and Local Green Spaces and therefore the NP is an opportunity to secure their landscape policy protection.

Flood Risk and Climate Change

6.42 Local Plan Policy CC/1 ensures proposals demonstrate and embed the principles of climate change mitigation and adaptation into the developments. Local Plan policy CC/2 supports renewable and low carbon energy generation. Policy CC/3 requires proposals to demonstrate a minimum of 10% carbon emissions through the use of onsite renewable energy and low carbon technologies to ensure an energy efficient and sustainable development. Planning permissions have included a condition requiring an Energy Statement to be approved which demonstrates compliance with the policy. Local Plan policy CC/4 secures water efficiency equivalent to 110 litres per person per day.

6.43 Local Plan Policy CC/9 identifies flood risk tests and mitigation measures and opportunities for sustainable drainage systems which are to be incorporated into developments (Local Plan policy CC/8).

6.44 Detailed guidance on flooding and dealing with planning applications is provided in paragraphs 159-169 of the NPPF.

6.45 The Adopted Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD provides detailed advice which the NPG may wish to consider including within policy. For example, the SPD states that in a new development there should be no flooding of any properties as a result of that development for a 1 in 100 annual probability (critical) rainfall event plus an appropriate allowance for climate change. This is missing from the Local Plan policy. Additionally, the SPD states that where multi-functional SuDS include open space, they must still be able to function and be accessible as useable open space for the majority of the time for them to be included within the open space calculations.

6.46 The GCSP First Proposals has a more significant focus on climate change than the adopted Local Plan. The GCSP First Proposal include detailed and specific policies on how housing and non domestic building should achieve the objective of net zero carbon new buildings (Policy CC/NZ).

6.47 For example, given the unsustainable level of water abstraction from chalk aquifers, water efficiency policies propose a standard of 80 litres/person/day (CC/WE). Policy CC/DC seeks to ensure all dwellings are designed to achieve a lower overheating risk using the Good Homes Alliance Overheating in New Homes Tool and Guidance, include passive design addressing the issues of changing climates. Policy CC/FM sets out a policy requiring development to provide flooding and integrated water management with development directed to the areas with the least likelihood of flooding from all sources. The topic paper on Climate Change sets out detailed rationale for such approaches which the Neighbourhood Plan Group might like to consider.

Local Services and Facilities

6.48 The Local Plan allocates sites for open space and recreation uses where a shortage was identified in the SCDC Open Space Study 2013. Although now dated, the study reported a shortfall of 0.37 ha of outdoor sport provision, and a good provision of informal and formal play space in Orwell. This is based upon a calculation of 0.8 hectares per 1,000 population. The study also identified a shortfall of 0.34ha of allotments and a shortfall in burial grounds.

6.49 Local Plan Policy SC/3 seeks to protect village services and facilities and sets out criteria on which any assessment will be based including marketing of the premises for at least

12 months. The GCSP First Proposal similarly seek to protect existing facilities and services. Additionally, the GCSP First Proposals seek to safeguard public houses, only allowing their loss where they are no longer needed whilst supporting the diversification of public houses.

6.50 Local Plan Policies SC/4, SC/6, SC/7 support contributions from housing development towards the provision of services and facilities. Local Plan Policy SC/7 sets out open space standards and Local Plan Policy SC/8 protects existing recreation areas, allotments and community orchards. The GCSP First Proposals have a greater emphasis on wellbeing and social inclusion seeking to create healthy new development. It does this, in part, by requiring the submission of Health Impact Assessments. More specifically, the GCSP First Proposals are seeking to restrict hot food takeaways close to schools and leisure centres; and limiting hot food takeaways premises in village centres.

Transport and Infrastructure

6.51 The Local Plan sets out generic policies to support sustainable transport. Local Plan Policies TI/1 and T1/3 seeks to promote sustainable travel and car parking provision. Local Plan Policy TI/8 states that planning permission will only be granted where suitable arrangements have been made for infrastructure.

6.52 Local Plan Policy TI/8 requires new development to have made suitable arrangements for infrastructure to make the development acceptable in planning terms. Separate policies set out the requirements for education facilities (TI/9) and broadband (TI/10). Contributions may also be required towards the maintenance and upkeep of facilities. Similar policy approaches are included within the GCSP First Proposals.

6.53 The Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2021 identifies areas for safeguarding where the County Council need to be notified of major development. Areas to the north of the parish are included in Chalk Safeguarding Areas. Areas to the south of the parish are included within a Sand and Gravel Safeguarding area. These areas are not currently shown on the South Cambridgeshire Policies Map.

6.54 The parish are also in proximity to the Mullard Radio Astronomy Observatory (Lordsbridge). The Local Plan details that the Lordsbridge Consultation Area 2 covers most of the parish (Local Plan Policy T1/7). The GCSP First Proposals include similar safeguarding policies.

Part 7 Key Policy Issues for the Workshop

7.1 The Local Plan and the Supplementary Planning Guidance documents provide a district wide approach to several spatial policy areas. However, the more recent 2021 NPPF's emphasis on local design, the proposed planning reforms on the strength of Neighbourhood Plans, the greater emphasis being placed on Climate Change, Health and Wellbeing in the GCSP First Proposals and the more recent landscape assessments suggest the Neighbourhood Plan could add a more distinctive and locally appropriate layer and provide policy advice to positively influence and guide new development. In addition, a broad range of issues will emerge through early consultations for the Neighbourhood Plan to consider.

7.2 The policy context raises several issues that the Neighbourhood Plan could consider:

Built Character and Design

- How to meet specific demand / delivery of types of housing to meet local needs including the impact of an increasing ageing population

- Retention and enhancement of the village's natural, historic and important design characteristics, external appearance and style particularly those that should be included in new developments through Design Guidelines, Codes or Character Assessments
- Identify and protect historic and conservation interests
- Identify, protect and enhance the best of what you have by identifying positive planning designations and safeguarding policies including Views and Vistas or other amenity areas within the village
- Update and amend the development framework boundary

Natural Environment and Green Infrastructure

- Build upon the recommendations of the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment 2021
- Identify, protect and enhance areas of wildlife, ecology, green corridors and the permeability between those spaces including landscape characteristics including interventions / action plan setting biodiversity targets
- Protect and safeguard key environment, biodiversity environments such as Glebe Field
- Identify and protect Local Green Spaces

Flooding and Climate Change

- Local response to climate change building upon the Climate Change SPD and proposals included within the GCSP First Proposals on energy, water efficiency and sustainable construction
- Distinctive response to Flood Risk utilising the outputs of the Flood and Water SPD
- Safeguard tranquillity and dark skies

Transport

- Secure permeability between developments and the village centre
- Secure access to countryside
- Sustainable Travel and access by non-car modes
- Improve and enhance character and appearance through street furniture, lights and signage that reflect the village character

Services, Facilities and Infrastructure

- Identify and safeguard the health, wellbeing and vitality of village retail and service offer as far as possible
- Safeguard specific village facilities and fill gaps in existing service offer
- Identify more precisely the location, type, design and intervention of new infrastructure services and facilities (education, health, surface water and foul sewerage utilities) to meet existing and potential future demands

Economy

- Approach to existing key employment areas
- Define the type and location of business development needs, opportunities to support employment locally including home working

Appendix 1: Strategic Policies for Neighbourhood Plans for South Cambridgeshire

There is a list of basic conditions in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 that must be met by a Neighbourhood Plan before it can be successful at independent examination and ultimately adopted by a Local Planning Authority. One of these is that any draft Neighbourhood Plan must be in “general conformity” with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the district. According to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) a local planning authority should set out clearly the strategic policies for their area. South Cambridgeshire has set out a list of the identified strategic policies to provide clarity for neighbourhood plan purposes (Appendix E of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan). These are detailed in grey below. The Basic Conditions Statement will assess how the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan are in conformity with the strategic policies of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan.

<u>S/4: Cambridge Green Belt</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective. Essential to delivery of development strategy of plan</u>
<u>S/5 Provision of New Jobs and Homes</u>	<u>Strategic to delivery of homes and jobs</u>
<u>S/6 The Development Strategy to 2031</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>S/7 Development Frameworks</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>S/8 Rural Centres</u>	<u>Strategic to deliver development strategy of Local Plan</u>
<u>S/9 Minor Rural Centres</u>	<u>Strategic to deliver development strategy of Local Plan</u>
<u>S/10 Group Villages</u>	<u>Strategic to deliver development strategy of Local Plan</u>
<u>S/11 Infill Villages</u>	<u>Strategic to deliver development strategy of Local Plan</u>
<u>S/12 Phasing, Delivery and Monitoring</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective of plan</u>
<u>SS/1 Orchard Park</u>	<u>Strategic to delivery of homes and jobs. Site allocation</u>
<u>SS/2 North West Cambridge - Land between Huntingdon Road and Histon Road</u>	<u>Strategic to delivery of homes and jobs. Site allocation</u>

<u>SS/3 Cambridge East</u>	<u>Strategic to delivery of homes and jobs. Site allocation. Needs to be read with Cambridge East Area Action Plan.</u>
<u>SS/4 Cambridge Northern Fringe East and land surrounding the proposed Cambridge Science Park Station</u>	<u>Strategic to delivery of homes and jobs. Site allocation</u>
<u>SS/5 Waterbeach New Town</u>	<u>Strategic to delivery of homes and jobs. Site allocation</u>
<u>SS/6 New Village at Bourn Airfield</u>	<u>Strategic to delivery of homes and jobs. Site allocation</u>
<u>SS/7: Northstowe Extension</u>	<u>Strategic to delivery of homes and jobs. Site allocation</u>
<u>SS/8: Cambourne West</u>	<u>Strategic to delivery of homes and jobs. Site allocation</u>
<u>CC/1 Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change</u>	<u>Strategic to deliver climate change mitigation and adaption</u>
<u>CC/2 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Generation</u>	<u>Strategic to deliver climate change mitigation and adaption</u>
<u>CC/3 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy in New Developments</u>	<u>Strategic to deliver climate change mitigation and adaption</u>
<u>CC/4 Sustainable Design and Construction</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective. Policy seeking to shape broad characteristics of development</u>
<u>CC/5 Sustainable Show Homes</u>	<u>Strategic to deliver climate change mitigation and adaption</u>
<u>CC/6 Construction Methods</u>	<u>Policy seeking to shape broad characteristics of development</u>
<u>CC/7 Water Quality</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>CC/8 Sustainable Drainage Systems</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>CC/9 Managing Flood Risk</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>HQ/1 Design Principles</u>	<u>characteristics of development</u>

<u>HQ/2 Public Art and New Development</u>	<u>Policy that local community could review to be specific for their area.</u>
<u>NH/1: Conservation Area and Green Separation at Longstanton</u>	<u>Strategic to the setting of new town of Northstowe</u>
<u>NH/2 Protecting and enhancing Landscape Character</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>NH/3 Protecting Agricultural Land</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>NH/4 Biodiversity</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>NH/5 Sites of Biodiversity or Geological Importance</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>NH/6 Green Infrastructure</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>NH/7 Ancient Woodlands and Veteran Trees</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>NH/8 Mitigating the Impact of Development in and adjoining the Green Belt</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective.</u>
<u>NH/9 Redevelopment of Previously Developed Sites and Infilling in the Green Belt</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>NH/10 Recreation in the Green Belt</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>NH/11 Protected Village Amenity Areas</u>	<u>Local communities may have parish specific policy for protecting green spaces within their area.</u>
<u>NH/12 Local Green Space</u>	<u>Local communities may have parish specific policy for protecting green spaces within their area.</u>
<u>NH/13 Important Countryside Frontage</u>	<u>Local communities may have parish specific policy to protect views for their area.</u>
<u>NH/14 Heritage Assets</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>NH/15 Heritage Assets and Adapting to Climate Change</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>H/1 Allocations for Residential Development at Villages</u>	<u>Strategic to delivery of homes and jobs. Site allocation</u>

<u>H/2 Bayer CropScience Site, Hauxton</u>	<u>Strategic to delivery of homes and jobs. Site allocation</u>
<u>H/3 Fulbourn and Ida Darwin Hospitals</u>	<u>Strategic to delivery of homes and jobs. Site allocation</u>
<u>H/4 Papworth Everard West Central</u>	<u>Local community may have parish specific aspirations for this area</u>
<u>H/5 Fen Drayton Former Land Settlement Association Estate</u>	<u>Local community may have parish specific aspirations for this area.</u>
<u>H/6 South of A1307, Linton</u>	<u>Local community may have parish specific aspirations for this area.</u>
<u>H/7 Residential Moorings</u>	<u>Site allocation</u>
<u>H/8 Housing Density</u>	<u>Policy seeking to shape broad characteristics of development</u>
<u>H/9 Housing Mix</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>H/10 Affordable Housing</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>H/11 Rural Exception Site Affordable Housing</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>H/12 Residential Space Standards for Market Housing</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>H/13 Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>H/14 Replacement Dwellings in the Countryside</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>H/15 Countryside Dwellings of Exceptional Quality</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>H/16 Development of Residential Gardens</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>H/17 Re-use of Buildings in the Countryside for Residential Use</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>H/18: Working at Home</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>H/19 Dwellings to Support a Rural-based Enterprise</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>

<u>H/20 Provision for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>H/21 Gypsy and Traveller Provision at New Communities</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>H/22 Proposals for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople Sites on Unallocated Land Outside Development Frameworks</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>H/23 Design of Gypsy and Traveller Sites, and Travelling Showpeople Sites</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>E/1 New Employment Provision near Cambridge – Cambridge Science Park</u>	<u>Strategic to delivery of homes and jobs. Site allocation</u>
<u>E/2 Cambridge Biomedical</u>	<u>Strategic to delivery of homes and jobs. Site allocation</u>
<u>E/3 Fulbourn Road East (Fulbourn)</u>	<u>Strategic to delivery of homes and jobs. Site allocation</u>
<u>E/4 Allocations for Class B1</u>	<u>Strategic to delivery of homes and</u>
<u>Employment Uses</u>	<u>jobs. Site allocation</u>
<u>E/5 Allocations for Class B1, B2 and B8 Employment Uses</u>	<u>Strategic to delivery of homes and jobs. Site allocation</u>
<u>E/6 Papworth Hospital</u>	<u>Strategic to delivery of homes and jobs. Site allocation</u>
<u>E/7 Imperial War Museum at Duxford</u>	<u>Museum as special case as nationally important.</u>
<u>E/8 Mixed-use development in Histon & Impington Station area</u>	<u>Local community may have parish specific aspirations for this area.</u>
<u>E/9 Promotion of Clusters</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>E/10 Shared Social Spaces in Employment Areas</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>E/11 Large Scale Warehousing and Distribution Centres</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>

<u>E/12 New Employment Development in Villages</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>E/13 New Employment Development on the Edges of Villages</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>E/14 Loss of Employment Land to Non Employment Uses</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>E/15 Established Employment Areas</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>E/16 Expansion of Existing Businesses in the Countryside</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>E/17 Conversion or Replacement of Rural Buildings for Employment</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>E/18 Farm Diversification</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>E/19: Tourist Facilities and Visitor Attractions</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>E/20 Tourist Accommodation</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>E/21 Retail Hierarchy</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>E/22 Applications for New Retail Development</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>E/23 Retailing in the Countryside</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>SC/1 Allocation for Open Space</u>	<u>Only proposed sites put forward by parish councils allocated in local plan. Did not use results of Recreation Study to allocate sites in villages where under provision of open space. Local community may have parish specific aspirations.</u>
<u>SC/2 Health Impact Assessment</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>SC/3 Protection of Village Services and Facilities</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>SC/4 Meeting Community Needs</u>	<u>Policy seeking to shape broad characteristics of development</u>

<u>SC/5 Community Healthcare Facility Provision</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>SC/6 Indoor Community Facilities</u>	<u>Strategic as minimum standard to ensure provision in new developments</u>
<u>SC/7 Outdoor Play Space, Informal Open Space and New Developments</u>	<u>Strategic as minimum standard to ensure provision of open space in new developments</u>
<u>SC/8 Protection of Existing Recreation Areas, Allotments and Community Orchards</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>SC/9 Lighting Proposals</u>	<u>Policy seeking to shape broad characteristics of development</u>
<u>SC/10 Noise Pollution</u>	<u>Policy seeking to shape broad characteristics of development</u>
<u>SC/11 Contaminated Land</u>	<u>Policy seeking to shape broad characteristics of development</u>
<u>SC/12 Air Quality</u>	<u>Policy seeking to shape broad characteristics of development</u>
<u>SC/13 Hazardous Installations</u>	<u>Policy seeking to shape broad characteristics of development</u>
<u>SC/14 Odour and other fugitive emissions to air</u>	<u>Policy seeking to shape broad characteristics of development</u>
<u>TI/1 Chesterton Rail Station and Interchange</u>	<u>Strategic to delivery of homes and jobs. Site allocation</u>
<u>TI/2 Planning for Sustainable Travel</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>TI/3 Parking Provision</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>TI/4 Rail Freight and Interchanges</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>TI/5 Aviation-Related Development Proposals</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective. Policy seeking to shape broad characteristics of development</u>
<u>TI/6 Cambridge Airport Public Safety Zone</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective. Essential to have public safety zone around airport</u>

<u>T1/7 Lord's Bridge Radio Telescope</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective. Essential to protect operation of internationally important telescope.</u>
<u>T1/8 Infrastructure and New Developments</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective. Vital for delivery of development strategy of plan.</u>
<u>T1/9 Education facilities</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>
<u>T1/10 Broadband</u>	<u>Policy setting out an overarching objective</u>

Appendix 2: Local Plan Policy maps for Orwell Neighbourhood Plans Area