

# Sawtry Village Neighbourhood Plan 2022 to 2036



**Made Version**

**December 2023**



# Sawtry Village Neighbourhood Plan 2022 to 2036

‘Made’ - 13 December 2023

Following a Referendum on 9 November 2023

The Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish of Sawtry produced in accordance  
with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012



The Parish Council received professional planning support from NEIGHBOURHOOD-PLAN.CO.UK during the production of this Neighbourhood Plan.



NEIGHBOURHOOD-PLAN.CO.UK

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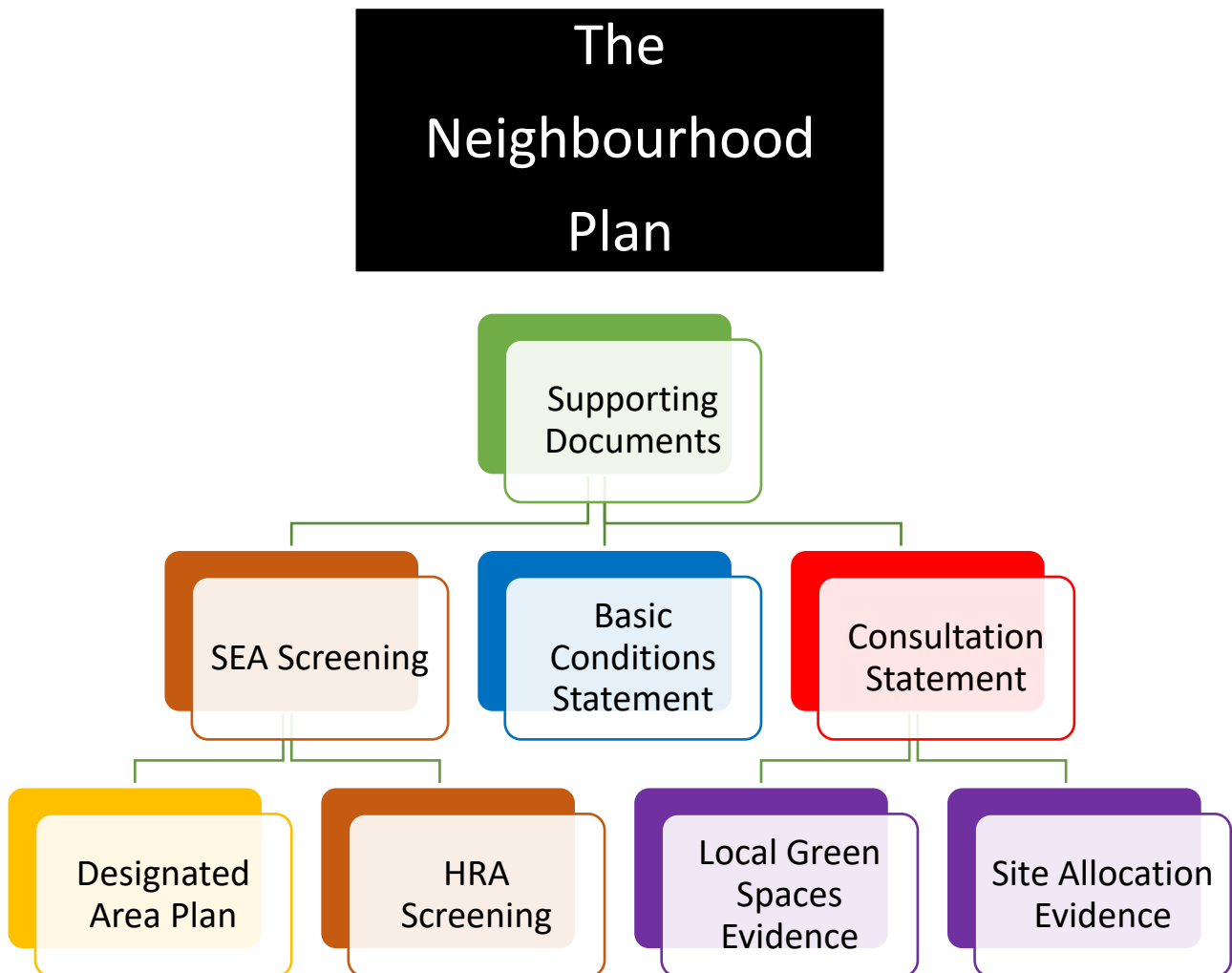
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# Sawtry Village Neighbourhood Plan 2022 to 2036



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# Sawtry Village Neighbourhood Plan 2022 to 2036



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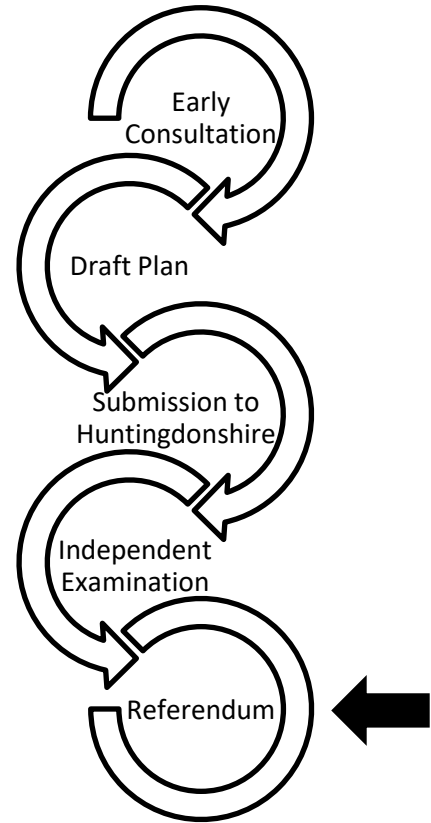
**Appendix 2 - The Neighbourhood Planning Project**

## 1. Foreword

1.1 This document contains Sawtry’s Neighbourhood Plan (referred to both as the ‘Plan’, the ‘Neighbourhood Plan’ and as the ‘Neighbourhood Development Plan’). It has been developed by the Parish Council supported by the Neighbourhood Planning Group and our Planning Consultant. It is now available on the websites of Huntingdonshire District Council and Sawtry Parish Council for public viewing.

1.2 The Neighbourhood Plan has been drawn up by Sawtry Parish Council which is the designated body for the plan area. The Neighbourhood Plan had to go through a number of stages including statutory public consultation and an Independent Examination to be followed by a local referendum requiring a majority ‘yes’ vote of all those voting in the referendum for it to be accepted. In the event of a ‘yes’ vote, Huntingdonshire District Council will proceed to ‘make’ the Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish of Sawtry.

1.3 Before submitting this Plan to the Local Planning Authority, the Parish Council publicised and consulted on a draft plan under Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. After consideration of the comments made at that consultation stage, revisions were incorporated. The Parish Council forwarded the Submission Plan to Huntingdonshire District Council; they undertook a second round of statutory consultation under Regulation 16. Huntingdonshire District Council appointed an Independent Examiner who issued seventeen modifications and recommended that the Plan, once modified, proceeds to Referendum. His modifications have been incorporated into this version of the Plan which was voted upon by the local electorate in a Referendum on 9 November 2023. A majority of 88% in favour determined that the Plan would be ‘made’.



1.4 The key sections of this document are:

- Neighbourhood Planning – its purpose, benefits and the legislative background.
- The Village Scene and Contemporary Challenges.
- The Community Consultation.
- **The Vision, Objectives and Policies – the ‘core’ of the Plan.**
- Further sections covering referencing data; non-planning objectives; maps; tables; implementation and delivery; monitoring and review; and the Glossary.
- Two appendices provide details of the Local Green Spaces and describe the Neighbourhood Planning Project.

1.5 Please read and consider the Policies (coloured in blue) in particular. The Neighbourhood Plan sets down a series of planning policies which will form part of Huntingdonshire’s wider statutory development plan. The Neighbourhood Plan has to be in general conformity with the Huntingdonshire Local Plan. This Plan, when formally approved, will carry legal weight alongside the Huntingdonshire Local Plan and other material considerations such as the National Planning Policy Framework when planning applications are determined.

## 2. Neighbourhood Planning: purpose, benefits and legislative background

2.1 In broad terms, neighbourhood planning allows communities, residents, employees and business to come together through a local parish council or neighbourhood forum and have a say in where they think new houses, businesses and shops should be located and how they should be designed. Our neighbourhood

plan has been devised to influence developments and the use of land in the period from 2022 to 2036. In themselves, these are major benefits for the future of our community. Furthermore, there are financial advantages in having a neighbourhood plan: the proportion of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) received by the Parish Council would be increased from 15% (and subject to an annual cap) to 25% (with no annual cap). For example, in a development project raising £500,000 in CIL, the contribution to the Parish Council would rise from £75,000 to £125,000. The main priorities for the Parish element of CIL contributions will be to go towards the delivery of the Greenfields extension and the extension to St Andrew's Cemetery.

- 2.2 The Sawtry Neighbourhood Plan forms part of the statutory Development Plan. This means that Huntingdonshire District Council will determine planning applications within the Parish in accordance with the development plan which includes this Neighbourhood Plan unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise (see [Section 38\(6\)](#)<sup>1</sup> of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
- 2.3 Designation of Neighbourhood Planning Area. Sawtry Parish Council's application for the designation of a Neighbourhood Area relating to the whole of the parish was [approved](#)<sup>2</sup> on 23 October 2019. Sawtry Parish Council is the 'qualifying body' under Section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) for the designated neighbourhood area in order to develop a neighbourhood plan. The area of the Neighbourhood Plan is based upon the parish boundary, which was seen as appropriate as this area is recognised as the distinct community of Sawtry. This Neighbourhood Plan is a Community Led Plan. It has been prepared by the Parish Council with professional support. It has been informed by public participation and early consultation with the local community. The formal Neighbourhood Plan preparation process involved two statutory periods of public consultation as prescribed in [Regulations](#)<sup>3</sup>.
- 2.4 A Neighbourhood Plan is a planning document and is about the use and development of land. Neighbourhood planning gives communities more control over the future of their area by giving local people the chance to have their say in what happens where they live.
- 2.5 A neighbourhood plan can establish general planning policies for the development and use of land in a particular area. Plans can include local priorities, planning policies, proposals for improving an area or providing new facilities or infrastructure and allocation of key sites for development.
- 2.6 Neighbourhood planning is a tool to promote sustainable growth and will not be able to prevent development in an area. Neighbourhood plans can only include proposals for an equal (or greater) amount of growth than is set out in the [Local Plan](#)<sup>4</sup>. They must also accord with national planning policy.
- 2.7 **The Localism Act 2011** ([LA 2011](#)<sup>5</sup>) introduced measures under four main headings: new freedoms and flexibilities for local government, new rights and powers for communities and individuals, reform to make the planning system more democratic and more effective, reform to ensure that decisions about housing are taken locally. With regard to neighbourhood plans, the Localism Act provided new powers for people to make such plans and to delegate decision-making from central government.



<sup>1</sup><http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/5/section/38>

<sup>2</sup><https://huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/4040/sawtry-designation.pdf>

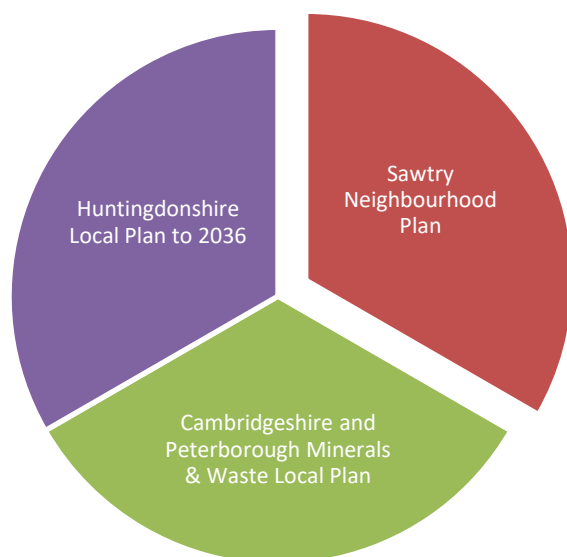
<sup>3</sup><https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/637/contents/made>

<sup>4</sup><http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/3872/final-adopted-local-plan-to-2036.pdf>

<sup>5</sup><https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents>



- 2.8 **The Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (TCPA 1990<sup>6</sup>)** is the main planning legislation that includes the legal framework for local plans and neighbourhood plans. Schedule 4B paragraphs 8(1) and 8(2) define the criteria to be satisfied by a draft neighbourhood plan in order to meet the ‘Basic Conditions’.
- 2.9 **The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (PCPA 2004<sup>7</sup>)** Section 38A explains the meaning of ‘neighbourhood development plan’; and Section 38B describes its allowable provisions.
- 2.10 **Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)**. Every Neighbourhood Plan needs to consider the requirement for a Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment) for the Neighbourhood Plan. SA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the impacts of an emerging plan, and potential alternatives in terms of key sustainability issues.
- 2.11 The Parish Council considers that there will be no significant environmental effects arising from the Neighbourhood Plan. They have produced SEA and Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) Screening Assessments for the Neighbourhood Plan which has demonstrated that a SEA is not required. Consequently, no SA incorporating an SEA has been undertaken for the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 2.12 **The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF<sup>8</sup>)** sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally-prepared plans for housing and other developments can be produced. Applications for planning permission are required to be determined in accordance with the relevant development plan; they should also contribute to the achievement of sustainable development which is explained in NPPF paragraph 8 as meeting three objectives: economic, social and environmental. These objectives should be achieved through plans which apply the policies contained in the NPPF.
- 2.13 **Planning Practice Guidance** sets out the government’s [advice<sup>9</sup>](#) on how to undertake neighbourhood planning within England. This is set out in detail within Section 41 of Planning Practice Guidance.
- 2.14 The ‘**Development Plan**’ for Sawtry comprises 3 main components as follows:



<sup>6</sup><https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/8/contents>

<sup>7</sup><https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/5/contents>

<sup>8</sup><https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

<sup>9</sup><https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>



- 2.15 **All policies within the Neighbourhood Plan should be read in conjunction with the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036<sup>10</sup>. When determining proposals for development, no policy will be applied in isolation and account will be taken of all relevant policies.**
- 2.16 The policies in the Neighbourhood Plan must be in 'general conformity' with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. Huntingdonshire District Council as the Local Planning Authority defines which policies are to be considered 'strategic' with regard to the production of a neighbourhood plan. It is clear that some of the policies and all the allocations within the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 are to be considered 'strategic' for the purposes of neighbourhood planning. Details of which policies are deemed 'strategic' is set out in the introduction of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036<sup>11</sup>.
- 2.17 **The Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036** adopted in May 2019 provides a framework for sustainable development and is complementary to the NPPF. The [Local Plan](#)<sup>12</sup> includes some 38 policies under which planning applications are considered and also identifies areas of land (allocations) for development. The purpose of the Local Plan is to set out the strategy for development in the whole of Huntingdonshire; policies for managing development; and details of sites for development to meet the needs of Huntingdonshire. Sawtry is designated as a 'Key Service Centre' (KSC) in the Local Plan and as such has a role in meeting the development needs of the district through a series of allocations for development in the Local Plan. The strategy also sets out a role for further sustainable development at KSCs in contributing to the social and economic sustainability of these settlements and supporting a thriving rural economy.

2.18 During the development of Sawtry's Neighbourhood Plan some adjacent parishes have applied for the designation of their Neighbourhood Areas. Those approved include: Alconbury Weston in August 2022; Glatton on 5 September 2022; the Giddings; Winwick and Hamerton on the 30 March 2023. No further progress on their Neighbourhood Plans has taken place to date.

2.19 The other neighbouring parishes are Conington; Wood Walton; Abbots Ripton; Upton and Coppingford. None of these Parishes is working on Neighbourhood Plans.

2.20 In addition to the Development Plan there are also a number of **other planning documents** known as Supplementary Planning Documents ([SPDs](#)<sup>13</sup>) which cover the whole of Huntingdonshire. These include: Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPD (2017); Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD (2017); Wind Energy Development in Huntingdonshire SPD (2014); Developer Contributions SPD (2011) (with updated costs annually or successor documents); and Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape SPD (2022).



<sup>10</sup> For example, Policy LP8 on Key Service Centres in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan sets out the overall strategic policy framework when considering proposals in relation to the principle of development in the Built-up Area and the Countryside. Other policies in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan will also be relevant to planning applications that come forward in Sawtry

<sup>11</sup> See the yellow box between paragraphs 1.12 and 1.13 on Page 4 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036

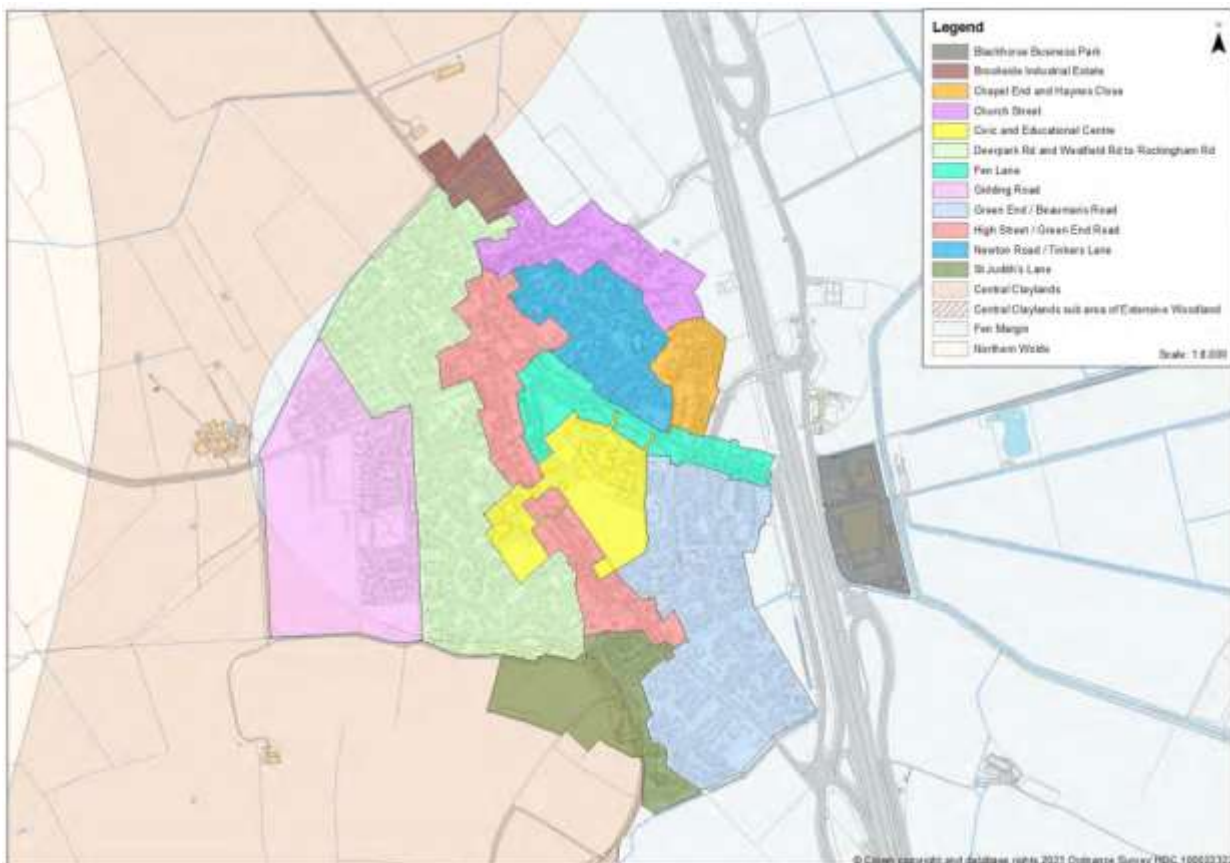
<sup>12</sup> <http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/3872/final-adopted-local-plan-to-2036.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy-documents/>

2.21 Part of Sawtry is covered by the Sawtry Conservation Area. There is unfortunately no published Conservation Area Character Statement or appraisal for this Conservation Area. A character appraisal where published has a purpose to identify and record those special qualities that make up the architectural and historic character.

2.22 **The Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape SPD<sup>14</sup>** supports the delivery of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 by guiding the preparation and consideration of planning applications to enhance the quality of new development within Huntingdonshire; and providing a methodology for neighbourhood planning groups to produce their own landscape and townscape assessments to support policies within neighbourhood plans.

2.23 The revised SPD is accompanied by an interactive map. The SPD forms a material planning consideration in determination of planning applications and appeals alongside the Local Plan and any ‘made’ neighbourhood plans. [Chapter 12<sup>15</sup>](#) of the SPD deals with Sawtry as a Key Service Centre and sets out the key features for twelve character areas situated within the village. Sawtry Parish Council responded to the consultation on the draft SPD in 2021 with a number of recommendations in four character areas primarily relating to the historic core of the village, the development of shopping facilities, and the location of new industrial sites.



**Character Areas for Sawtry in the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape SPD**

2.24 The above documents, taken into consideration with the present-day character of Sawtry, and its history, strongly influence the content of this emerging neighbourhood plan.

<sup>14</sup><https://huntingdonshire.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy-documents/landscape-and-townscape-spd-2022>

<sup>15</sup><https://huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/6104/15-chapter-12-sawtry.pdf>

### 3. The Village Scene and Contemporary Challenges

3.1 **Sawtry History.** The origins of 'Saltrede', an area for salt making, can be traced back several thousand years. Archaeological evidence points to a settlement around Sawtry from pre-Roman times, including an Iron Age farmstead. The site of a medieval village, now protected as a Scheduled Monument which includes a Civil War Gun Platform, lies to the north east of the village. It was listed in the Domesday Book in 1086 as having three churches: All Saints, St Andrew and Judith, the latter surviving until 1573.



*Artefacts from Judith's Grange*

3.2 For many centuries, the three separate parishes existed until their amalgamation. Sawtry Abbey was built in 1147 and destroyed in 1540 following the dissolution of the monasteries. In 1879, the churches of All Saints' and St Andrews were demolished, and their materials used in 1880 to construct the present All Saints' church on the site of its predecessor. In September 1979, a major archaeological dig near Archer's Wood unearthed many artefacts in the site of Judith's Grange, including buckles, coins, knives, rings and scissors.

3.3 Sawtry is situated midway between Peterborough and Huntingdon. The great majority of its built-up area is close to the A1M and on its west side. The eastern area of the Parish comprises flat Fenland and, in the southern extremity, the Monks Wood National Nature Reserve. The western area of the Parish includes the undulating Central Claylands Landscape, Aversley Wood and Archer's Wood. Much of the Parish land surrounding the village is given over to agriculture.

3.4 **Local Shops Past and Present.** In the early 1900s Sawtry enjoyed the charm of an idyllic rural setting. Many local shops were based around the village green. On the corner of Church Street and High Street there was once a sweet shop (Dora Garrett's) adjacent to the cobbler (Mr Gaunt's). Further down toward the Green was Newton's the Bakers and a newsagent (now Boots the chemists). In a cottage overlooking the Green resided Percy Slater the photographer. Opposite, on the west side of the Green were Burtons Drapers, Lamberts Grocers and the Post Office. Chequers, a popular public house of its time, is now a private residence.



*Sawtry Mill 1864*

3.5 On the south side of the Green is Greystones, one of the two public houses remaining in the village. The Cross Keys public house opposite was demolished and in the 1970s was replaced on the site by a parade of small shops and businesses known as Greenways. Further down Green End Road are more retail outlets including J R Green Newsagents, The Co-operative Funeralcare and The Bell Inn.

3.6 At the north end of Sawtry, on the Glatton Road, the Co-operative supermarket opened, having been transferred from its Green End Road premises.





*Mr Gaunt the Cobbler (about 1920)*



*Local Drapers in the 1920s*

3.7 **Heritage Assets.** In terms of designated heritage assets, Sawtry has some 17 listed buildings as shown in the table below. Apart from these formally listed buildings, there are many other local ‘assets’ (buildings, structures, archaeological sites, parks, gardens and public works of art) of importance to the character of our parish. These are termed ‘non-designated heritage assets’ and the recently created Cambridgeshire Local Heritage List [Project](#)<sup>16</sup> has been formed to identify suitable candidates for local listing. Another useful website is the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record ([CHER](#)<sup>17</sup>). Searches via the [Heritage Gateway](#)<sup>18</sup> which pulls together numerous heritage records, including the CHER, indicate that Sawtry has over 60 non-designated heritage assets which could be considered for inclusion in the Heritage List Project. War time history in Sawtry included a Prisoner of War camp on Woodwalton Lane.

<b>Sawtry Listed Buildings</b>		
<b>Grade 2*</b>	<b>Grade 2:</b>	
<b>Manor House Farmhouse, St Judiths Lane</b>	<b>Barn about 20 Yards East of Manor House Farmhouse</b>	<b>Greystones, The Green</b>
	<b>Boundary Post, Old Great North Road</b>	<b>Lowcote House, Woodwalton Lane</b>
	<b>Thatched Cottage, Chapel End</b>	<b>The Manor, Tinkers Lane</b>
	<b>Church of All Saints, Church Causeway</b>	<b>The Manor House, High Street</b>
	<b>The Francis Pottery, Church Street</b>	<b>Mells, Cottage, Tinkers Lane</b>
	<b>Grange Farm Cottage, Woodwalton Lane</b>	<b>Row of Five Headstones in Churchyard of former Parish Church of St Andrew</b>
	<b>Green End House, Scotney Way</b>	<b>St Bosworths House, St Judiths Lane</b>
		<b>Village Lockup, The Green</b>
		<b>White Cottage Green End Road</b>

<sup>16</sup><https://local-heritage-list.org.uk/cambridgeshire>

<sup>17</sup><https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/libraries-leisure-culture/archaeology/cambridgeshire-historic-environment-record-cher>

<sup>18</sup><https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/>

3.8 As part of our work on the Neighbourhood Plan, we shall contribute to the list compiled by Huntingdonshire District Council. At the time of writing, the project has been publicised to households in and around Sawtry. Several candidates for local listing have already been identified such as the Fire Pump accommodation adjacent to the Green.



*Fire Pump Accommodation*



*Plaque*

3.9 The Parish also contains four scheduled monuments as follows:

- Site of Sawtry Judith village adjoining Archers Wood
- Sawtry moat and shrunken medieval village
- Sawtry Abbey: A Cistercian abbey on the southern edge of Sawtry Fen
- Monk's Hole barrow, 630m NNE of Monk's Wood Farm



*Sawtry Abbey Earthworks*

3.10 **Transport.** Sawtry is well-served by transport links. The A1M, formerly the Great North Road, runs north-south close to the village on its east flank. A few miles south of Sawtry, the newly extended A14 provides east-west access. Railway links are provided by the East Coast Main Line between London and Edinburgh. Cross-country services are available through Peterborough station. Local bus services provide access to Huntingdon, St Ives, Cambridge, Peterborough and outlying villages (except on Sundays). However, recent economy measures have reduced the frequency of services and resulted in cancellations – a source of major concern especially to the elderly and disabled.



The A1M from St Andrew's Flyover

3.11 In 2021, Census statistics (Table 10.7<sup>19</sup>) revealed that some 88.8% of Sawtry households owned 1 or more cars, significantly more than Cambridgeshire (83.1%) and England (76.5%); the difference may be due to the rural location of the village and the need for personal mobility: 53.2% of households owned two or more cars, significantly more than the county or country percentages.

3.12 **Population and Employment.** Census figures reveal the growth of Sawtry, especially in the past sixty years.

1911	1921	1931	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011	2018 (est)
994	909	915	1113	986	1749	3651	4865	5568	6540	6960

3.13 These figures are based on the **Ward** of Sawtry and are not strictly comparable year on year because of boundary changes; for example, 2018 boundary changes amended the parishes to be included in the Ward. More useful figures for the Neighbourhood Plan relate to the **Parish** of Sawtry. The 2011 Census figure reported 5250; Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) estimates yield 5675 for mid-2018 and 5825 for mid-2020. The 2021 Census figure for the Parish of Sawtry was 5,900 (rounded to nearest 100).

3.14 In 2021, Census data (Table 10.1<sup>20</sup>) showed that ethnicity in Sawtry was predominantly 'white' at 95.6%, compared with 88.6% (Cambridgeshire) and 81.0% (England). Table 10.2<sup>21</sup> age distributions were broadly similar in Sawtry to Cambridgeshire and England.

3.15 Census data from 2021 revealed broadly similar occupational category levels in Sawtry, Cambridgeshire and England (Table 10.3<sup>22</sup>). The professional level was noticeably lower in Sawtry to Cambridgeshire. Activity analysis (Table 10.4<sup>23</sup>) indicated 62% of Sawtry were engaged in full-time or part-time employment, a percentage above the County and country figures. The Census 2021 figures show a higher rate of Economically Active in Employment in Sawtry to both Cambridgeshire and England.

3.16 **Dwelling Stock.** For the Parish of Sawtry, the dwelling stock figures are:

- 2011 Census 2,200
- 2018 Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) estimate 2,425, and
- 2020 CCC estimate 2,530 (from Cambridgeshire Insight).

The 2021 Census figure for dwelling stock is not available. Current [projections](#)<sup>24</sup> (on a 2020 base) for 2026 suggest a population of 7,260 and a dwelling stock of 3,180 and by 2036 suggest a population of 7,450 and a dwelling stock of 3,315. However, these projections are based on just 440 dwellings being built from 2020 to 2036. Furthermore, the number of successful planning applications in recent years is already for some

<sup>19</sup> See Table 10.7 on page 59 in section 10

<sup>20</sup> See Table 10.1 on page 57 in section 10

<sup>21</sup> See Table 10.2 on page 57 in section 10

<sup>22</sup> See Table 10.3 on page 57 in section 10

<sup>23</sup> See Table 10.4 on page 58 in section 10

<sup>24</sup><https://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/population/population-forecasts/>







shown on the extract from the Local Plan Policies Map above. The planning applications for SY1, SY2 and for Glatton Road have caused concern amongst local residents for several reasons. The development on both sides of Gidding Road has already affected patterns of traffic flow, mainly in Green End Road, with consequent congestion and parking difficulties. Residents fear that traffic from the Glatton Road proposal will exacerbate matters to an unreasonable degree.

3.19 Pedestrians regularly complain of the hazards in traversing busy roads with insufficient crossing points. Other concerns refer to the lack of infrastructure development and the attendant risk of flooding witnessed in various parts of the village. Some palliative solutions have been proposed to improve the flow of traffic, such as additional double yellow lines and possible one-way routes through the village. However, infrastructure improvements appear to have been overlooked and certainly fail to match the growth of residential accommodation

3.20 **Education.** Meridian Trust (MT), formerly Cambridge Meridian Academies Trust (CMAT), exists to provide, support, and champion high-quality education at the heart of local communities. Sawtry Village Academy, part of the MT family, is a mixed secondary and sixth form college for students aged 11 to 18 years. In 2021 its roll was some 850 with a capacity of 1200. Ofsted rated the Academy as good in 2018.



3.21 Sawtry Junior Academy is also part of the MT family and caters for pupils aged 7 to 11 (Key Stage 2); in 2021 it had some 229 children on its rolls with a capacity for 260. The majority of its pupils come from the village of Sawtry; the remainder are from surrounding villages. In the 2019 Ofsted inspection it was rated good. Sawtry Infants School, for pupils aged 4 to 7, was also rated good in July 2019, and appears to be full to capacity, nominally 180.

3.22 Following the anticipated population growth, a further need has been identified for a single form entry mixed primary school in the new Glatton Road proposal and 2.3 hectares of land was secured in the Planning Obligation for the provision of a primary school. It was initially suggested to have a proposed entry date of September 2023 but is now more likely to be 2024, 2025 or even later. This is dependent upon the delivery of the housing development and associated infrastructure.

3.23 **Religious Observance.** As shown in Table 10.8<sup>28</sup>, just over 47% of individuals in Sawtry identified as Christian with almost 45% as having no religion; the remaining percentage comprised six other faiths and 'faith not stated'. These figures are similar to those of Cambridgeshire and England, although Sawtry has a higher percentage of 'no religion'.

3.24 All Saints' Parish Church is located in Church Causeway. Services are conducted on Sunday mornings (both in person and live broadcast online) and Morning Prayer each Monday morning. There is also a monthly Messy Church and both weekly and monthly Connect groups active in both the church building and wider community. These include weekly Alpha+ held at Greystones public house each Monday, Weekly Little Saints (Carer and Toddler group) held in Methodist Hall, Monthly Causeway (Older persons group) held in All Saints' Church.

3.25 Sawtry Methodist Church is located in Green End Road. Sunday worship is offered weekly, either in the Church building, online or both. St Benedict's Catholic Community does not currently celebrate Mass in Sawtry Methodist Church although St Luke's, Orton Malborne, Peterborough is available

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<sup>28</sup> See Table 10.8 on page 59 in section 10

**3.26 Medical and Dental Services.** Wellside Surgery provides medical care to approximately 8,200 patients living in Sawtry and the surrounding villages. Recently, Wellside Surgery closed its dispensary. Repeat prescriptions can now be obtained online and collected from a local pharmacy. The present partnership comprises four GPs supported by a comprehensive integrated team including a Practice Manager, Practice Nurses, Health Care Assistant, Receptionists, Dispensers, Administrators and a Medical Secretary. A surgery has existed on the current site in the High Street for over 30 years. The practice is housed in purpose-built premises which have been extended over time to support the needs of our practice population. Sawtry Dental is located in Gidding Road and has provided private services for more than 25 years.

**3.27 Community Services.** CARESCO is a registered charity which has served the local community in Sawtry and its satellite villages for some forty years. [CARESCO](http://www.caresco.org.uk/)<sup>29</sup> operates its many services from a purpose-built headquarters in the heart of the village. As notified in their annual report, these include an adult day care club called the Green End Day Club, the Cave workshop, a Friday drop-in cafe, a carers support group, a music-based social group, a Christmas Day party, and a Charity Shop which helps to fund these activities. In partnership with other organisations CARESCO also hosts the local foodbank and the village car scheme. CARESCO publishes the popular Sawtry Eye [magazine](#)<sup>30</sup> every two months. In June 2022, CARESCO was awarded the Queen’s Award for Voluntary Services which is the highest award that a local voluntary group can receive. At present, its main challenge involves planning for a new permanent building to replace the ageing modular headquarters.

**3.28 Sawtry Library** operates from the centre of the village under the aegis of Cambridgeshire County Council. In addition to lending services, it provides a number of office facilities.

**3.29 Sports and Leisure Facilities.** Several sports clubs exist for badminton, bowling, cricket, fishing, football, golf, table tennis, walking, and running (Sawtry Walk to Run). Several community groups co-operate in the organisation of a summer event, Sawtry Sport 4 All, to encourage families’ participation in the day’s activities (excluding Covid restriction periods). Over a period of seven years, the Sawtry Youth Project raised funds for the construction of a skatepark on St Judith’s field, which proved a popular attraction when opened in September 2021. The Leisure Centre on Green End Road contained a sports hall, gym and crèche; this was operated by One Leisure, on behalf of Huntingdonshire District Council. Now, the MT Academy Leisure team operate newly upgraded facilities in the same building which is based adjacent to Sawtry Village Academy.



**3.30** At the end of 2022 the swimming pool was closed within the Leisure Centre, although the other facilities remain open. The longer-term impact that the swimming pool closure may have on the overall operation and sustainability of the sports and leisure facilities within Sawtry is unknown.

**3.31** The Parish Council and Sawtry Sports and Leisure Association operate Greenfields which comprises sports fields and buildings on a site to the east of the A1M. Plans are in hand to extend the buildings. The facilities at Greenfields are actively used for football by Sawtry Colts Football Club for both boys and girls; together with Sawtry FC for adult football. It has been used for cricket by Sawtry Cricket Club for senior and junior teams.

**3.32 Surface Water.** The Lead Local Flood Authority is aware that Sawtry was affected by the flood events of December 2020, and there remain potential flood risks within Sawtry as illustrated on Maps 3 and 4. Areas of particular concern for surface water flooding in particular are highlighted on Map 3, this includes large areas at the southern side of the village, together with large parts of the north and west. The

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<sup>29</sup><http://www.caresco.org.uk/>

<sup>30</sup><http://www.caresco.org.uk/?page=sawtryeye&m=sawtryeye>

Neighbourhood Plan encourages increased resilience to flooding through the promotion of rainwater harvesting and the use of sustainable drainage for flood mitigation.

3.33 The NPPF together with the Huntingdonshire Local Plan Policy LP15 Surface Water sets out a comprehensive policy framework addressing flood risk (alongside Local Plan Policy LP5 on Flood Risk); it is not therefore necessary for the Neighbourhood Plan to include policies on this topic. A proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change with reference to surface water flooding needs to be taken. The Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD<sup>31</sup> sets out relevant advice regarding allowing future developments to be built in ways that are considerate of flood risk. The Cambridgeshire County Councils Surface Water Planning Guidance<sup>32</sup> also provides technical guidance for developers. The LLFA would encourage the management of surface water runoff in Sawtry to use Sustainable Drainage Systems in order to mimic the natural drainage properties of a site.

## 4. Community Consultation

- 4.1 The Covid-19 restrictions, which were introduced in March 2020, blocked the normal methods of public meetings and face-to-face discussions as a means of gathering views and opinions. In their place, the NPG adopted a strategy which employed the following approaches:
- Leaflet and paper questionnaire drops to each of the 2,600 households in the Parish.
  - Online questionnaires for residents, community groups and businesses.
  - Notices and articles in the Sawtry Eye magazine distributed to every household.
  - Communication via email, both individually and grouped.
  - Announcements on the Parish Council website.
  - Telephone interviews.
  - Social media groups, such as those hosted by Facebook and Nextdoor.
  - From September 2021, after Covid restrictions had been relaxed, public presentations and displays.
- 4.2 Completed paper questionnaires were collected at specified addresses and using 'drop boxes' situated at several frequently visited locations such as retail outlets and the academies. Security precautions were in place to maintain the privacy of personal data gathered and stored both online and on paper as required by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
- 4.3 The questionnaires for residents, community groups and businesses are shown in the Consultation Statement; equivalent online versions of each were accessible through publicised internet links.
- 4.4 The paper and online responses to 197 residents' questionnaires were combined and analysed under two headings: problems/challenges and ideas for improvements. The results are summarised in the Consultation Statement by two reports:
- a. Problems/challenges: the most common complaints related to the poor state of roads and footpaths, inconsiderate parking, and excessive speeding by vehicles. Some of the issues could be addressed as policies in the neighbourhood plan and some would need to be set aside as non-planning objectives.
  - b. Suggestions for improvements: this report yielded fruitful material towards the formulation of both a vision for Sawtry and objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 4.5 A remarkable initiative by the Principal of Sawtry Junior Academy yielded 164 responses which are also analysed in the Consultation Statement. The volume of this effort shows the young people of Sawtry have very constructive ideas on how the village can be improved in the years ahead.

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<sup>31</sup><http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy-documents>

<sup>32</sup><https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/asset-library/Surface-Water-Planning-Guidance-June-2021.pdf>

4.6 Responses to a further 16 questionnaires were received from businesses and community groups. Many were followed up on an individual basis to obtain more detailed information.

4.7 Early in September 2021, a display was mounted in the Leisure Centre as part of the Sawtry Sport 4 All event which attracted visitors from far and wide. The display explained the role and importance of Neighbourhood Planning and appeared to be well received. Later in the month, a presentation open to the public was given in the CARESCO headquarters. On both occasions, the opportunity to collect further opinions ('preferences') was taken by means of the 'Quick Questionnaire' and its explanatory notes which are shown in the Consultation Statement. The analysis of the 193 replies reveals the popular desire for leisure, medical and health facilities, and for concern over the environment.



4.8 At the start of 2022, green areas across the village were surveyed to obtain possible candidates for designation as Local Green Spaces (LGS). This work is summarised in the chart in the Local Green Space Evidence document. As part of the continuing community consultation, articles were distributed to every household in Sawtry to elicit preferences on the selection of LGS. The details of this substantial project are described in the supporting Local Green Space Evidence document.

## 5. Vision and Objectives

5.1 **Vision:** The following vision has been developed:

**To preserve the rural character of the Parish, promote health and safety, support climate change policies, develop community services and facilities, and encourage business developments.**

5.2 **Objectives:** The following are the objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan:

- 5.2.1. To conserve and enhance the natural environment of Sawtry including through designating new Local Green Spaces and through encouraging woodland planting.
- 5.2.2. To preserve and enhance the historical core of the village and the significance of the Sawtry Conservation Area and to create distinctive, high quality and well-designed places and buildings.
- 5.2.3. To support climate change adaptation and mitigation in the village including in new development.
- 5.2.4. To protect and preserve important community assets including local services and facilities by encouraging the retention and growth of community facilities including through the identification of allocations for additional recreational and leisure facilities.
- 5.2.5. To facilitate the growth of community health infrastructure including health services covering: physical, mental and dental.
- 5.2.6. To facilitate the need for sufficient educational and nursery provision for a growing community.
- 5.2.7. To provide the opportunity for the centre of the village to provide potential accommodation for further retail and charitable activities.
- 5.2.8. To encourage increased use of sustainable transport methods including through the development of active travel including safe cycling and walking routes.
- 5.2.9. To provide off-street parking areas and opportunities for electric vehicle charging as part of an approach to mitigating traffic problems within the village.
- 5.2.10. To implement measures which enhance the personal safety of individuals.



**5.2.11. To support the growth and expansion of business and employment opportunities.**

5.3 The table in Section 8 cross references the objectives to the policies and the NPPF.

**6. Policies**

**6.1. The Built environment**

**6.1.1 Housing.** The NPPF prescribed guidance for ensuring both a sufficient supply of homes (Section 5) and for local needs assessment (paragraph 61). Huntingdonshire’s Local Plan sets the context for sustainable development in paragraph 1.6.

6.1.2 In policy LP8 Sawtry was designated a Key Service Centre; that policy sets out a framework for built development. The Local Plan also allocated two sites for development. Local Plan policies LP1, LP2, LP8, LP10, LP11, LP12, LP13, LP20, LP24, LP25, LP26 and LP28 cover the policy framework for housing adequately. This includes addressing windfall housing proposals and potential rural exception sites (which could be considered in Sawtry if there is local needs evidence). The Local Plan delivers the strategic housing requirement.

6.1.3 There is currently insufficient evidence available at a local level to set out a policy approach towards the provision of First Homes. First Homes are a specific kind of discounted market sale housing<sup>33</sup> and should be considered to meet the definition of ‘affordable housing’ for planning purposes. The forthcoming review of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan will need to consider evidence of need for First Homes and set out a suitable policy framework. In the meantime it is considered that national policy in the NPPF and advice set out in Planning Practice Guidance can be used in decision making on planning applications.

6.1.4 The community consultation revealed a strong local resistance to any further major home-building in the village, with concern that there had been a rapid recent expansion in new housing that is unbalanced with local infrastructure. Furthermore, there was a clear lack of interest in small homes such as flats and maisonettes – surprising, perhaps, in view of the dwelling stock figures in Table 10.2<sup>34</sup>: in comparison with County and Country statistics, Sawtry has a higher proportion of bungalows, semi-detached houses and, markedly, detached houses; the village has a significantly lower proportion of terraced houses, flats and maisonettes.



*295 Bovis Homes under construction in 2022*

**6.2. The Natural Environment**

**6.2.1 Green Spaces.** Despite the growth in housing, Sawtry enjoys an essentially rural setting. There is also a wealth of footpaths within and around the village, often connected by green and other spaces of various sizes and shapes. The community clearly values the amenity and recreational benefits conferred by these areas. As part of the consideration of Local Green Spaces a recent survey identified some 77 green areas across the village as listed in the Local Green Spaces Evidence document.

<sup>33</sup> See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/first-homes>

<sup>34</sup> See Table 10.2 on page 57 in section 10

6.2.2 In 2012, the Government introduced a new designation of Local Green Space through the NPPF allowing local communities to put forward green areas of particular importance to them for protection. Paragraph 103 of the NPPF identifies that policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with those for Green Belts. That means that, once designated, planning permission will only be granted for the development of the sites in very special circumstances or if the development clearly enhances the Local Green Space for the purpose it was designated or is functionally related to it. Local Green Spaces may be suitable to accommodate biodiversity enhancement or flood risk attenuation measures where this doesn't undermine the purpose of identifying the site as Local Green Space in the first place. Biodiversity enhancement measures such as tree, hedge or wildflower planting do not require planning permission. Some of the Local Green Spaces will contain utility infrastructure underneath them, works to the utilities constitutes permitted development.



6.2.3 Local Green Space designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open space. The designation should only be used where the green space meets the criteria set out in the NPPF. Namely that it is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves; where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

6.2.4 Of the 77 green areas across the village, several, listed below, have been selected as candidates for designation as Local Green Spaces. The sites listed in the policy have been assessed as according with the criteria for Local Green Space as set out in the NPPF.

6.2.5 The engagement with the local community has confirmed the strength of interest in maintaining and extending these areas, often by volunteer efforts with the support of the Parish Council: planters provide colour and floral displays around the village; more benches and picnic areas are sought to enhance amenity and recreational opportunities. There may be opportunities within the new housing coming forward in Sawtry for new green spaces to be provided that can provide opportunities for green corridors to be developed between existing Local Green Spaces and new development.

## Policy SNP1 - The natural environment and protecting green spaces

Proposals to enhance the village and surrounding areas through appropriate landscaping and planting, especially around any new developments, will be encouraged.

The Neighbourhood Plan supports proposals that protect and enhance the natural features that are a key component of the landscape and provide habitat for biodiversity enhancement, including:

- Measures to protect and enhance our natural environment and landscape character and to maintain tree cover and hedgerows and to increase tree and woodland cover will be promoted wherever possible;
- Proposals that provide favourable conditions for biodiversity including maintenance and enhancement of habitat connectivity and landscape scale conservation. Mitigation measures will be sought where any loss would be unavoidable and cause significant harm.

The following sites are designated as Local Green Spaces and are identified on Map 5 in Section 9:

1. The Green and adjacent small area
2. Land off Bramble End and Monks Way
3. Land (Playing field) at Rowell Way
4. Land North of Gidding Road along Sawtry Brook
5. Land including wooded area North of roundabout at Green End Road and Bill Hall Way
6. Land South of Woollard Walk and West of Elm Way
7. Land at Deerpark Road, Coppins Close and Shawley Road
8. Land between Farm Close and Westerman Close
9. Land West of Glatton Road along Sawtry Brook
10. Land at Haynes Close
11. Land on the corner of Fen Lane and Newton Road
12. Land West of Chestnut Close including Jubilee Walk
13. Land between St David’s Way and All Saints Way
14. Land at The Maltings
15. Land West of Gloucester Road
16. Land between Saxon Close and Wheatsheaves
17. St Judith’s Field and Dog Walking Area

The designated areas of Local Green Space will be protected in a manner consistent with the protection of land within Green Belts. Proposals to use the areas of Local Green Space for biodiversity enhancement or surface water flood risk attenuation and associated infrastructure will be supported in principle where this does not conflict with their demonstrably special significance indicated in the Appendix to this Plan.

*(Note – detailed maps and descriptions of the Local Green Spaces are contained in Appendix 1)*

**6.2.5.1 Policy Justification.** All three major questionnaires in the community consultation emphasised the importance of protecting the environment and supporting national initiatives such as the Queen’s Green Canopy and the Woodland Trust tree planning scheme. Aside of purely climate change considerations, increased areas of green spaces and woodland will enhance the appearance of the countryside. Paragraph 102 of the NPPF specifies the conditions for the designation of Local Green Spaces which are then protected from development. NPPF paragraphs 174 and 179 supports measures to protect and enhance the natural environment, biodiversity and geodiversity. Local Plan policies 30, 31 and 32 aims to avoid adverse impacts resulting in loss of biodiversity and geodiversity; in paragraph 8.24 the planting of new trees is encouraged. SNP1 extends these Local Plan policies and supports Objective 1 above.



**6.2.6 The Impact of Climate Change.** National policy aims to reduce the reliance on fossil fuels for heating and transport applications. In the local area, only limited progress has been achieved employing practical steps such as setting aside areas for electric vehicle charging points and solar panel systems. For the immediate future, every encouragement should be given to speed the adoption of low-carbon and energy efficient processes. Addressing flood risk is part of responding to the impact of climate change. Surface water flooding is an issue in Sawtry as detailed in paragraphs 3.31 and 3.32. The Huntingdonshire Local Plan Policy LP15 Surface Water sets out a comprehensive policy framework addressing flood risk alongside Local Plan Policy LP5 on Flood Risk.



## Policy SNP2 - Climate change mitigation

To support climate change mitigation proposals for new development which encourage and include the use of renewable energy generation and low-carbon modes of transport will be supported subject to compliance with other policies.

Where planning permission is required, proposals for installing renewable or low-carbon energy generation on existing premises will be supported subject to compliance with other policies.

The installation of renewables or low carbon energy generation must not compromise the visual quality of the building nor streetscene and must be well integrated.

Proposals for small-scale community led renewable energy generation will be supported where the following criteria are met:

- They provide energy to one or more local community facilities;
- They respect the rural and/or settlement character of the locality;
- They will not adversely affect biodiversity;
- Residential amenity is protected.

**6.2.6.1 Policy Justification.** Mitigating and adapting to the effect of climate change will contribute to sustainable development in terms of meeting environmental objectives. Paragraph 152 of the NPPF calls for progression towards a low carbon economy by the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, which is achievable, for example, through the use of renewable energy for transport (NPPF Section 9) and home heating. In practical terms these measures can also be achieved by progression towards zero carbon green hydrogen technologies. SNP2 is compliant with Local Plan policies 16 (Sustainable Travel) and 35 (Renewable and Low Carbon Energy).

### 6.3 Community Infrastructure and Services

**6.3.1 Recreation, Sporting and Leisure.** Open space can take many forms including parks, village greens, play areas, sports pitches, allotments, semi-natural areas and substantial private gardens. Many provide important recreational and sporting facilities or are important for biodiversity. The Village benefits from a wide range of community facilities providing recreation, sporting and leisure opportunities. Consultation feedback in the early questionnaires emphasised the importance placed on sporting and recreational facilities amongst both the young people and adults. Developer contributions may be required to pay for, or contribute towards, the cost of additional infrastructure and services needed as a result of new development. The Huntingdonshire Developer Contributions SPD (2011) (with updated costs annually or successor documents) explains the relationship between developer contributions and the Community Infrastructure Levy and provides guidance on the types of contribution that will be sought and the basis for charges.



**6.3.2** The consultation in relation as to how facilities and provision could be improved or enhanced further covered a wide range of activities, both indoor and outdoor. Specific requests for enhancement to existing provision relate both to the need to improve the current Greenfields facilities (for which planning application 20/01407/OUT, a Glatton Road development, allocated funding of £216,977), and to extend the site, ideally on a new area adjacent to the existing facility; need for a replacement for the Astro Turf pitch in the village centre; and provision of an outdoor table tennis facility. CIL funding has been allocated to provide a full size 3G pitch to replace the small sand dressed pitch at Sawtry

Academy/Leisure Centre. A full size 3G pitch in the village would complement rather than replace the grass football pitches at Greenfields.

6.3.3 The Greenfields site involves two main parts a fishing lake and the sports field. It lies to the east of the A1 and Old North Road so accessibility is limited to a degree by the distance. Footway links between the main village and Greenfields exist for the entire route. Greenfields is owned by the Parish Council and is operated by Sawtry Sports and Leisure Association. Sawtry Fishing Lake is a 2-acre lake actively used for fishing of Carp and various other species. The sports field comprises a clubhouse, car parking, 6 football pitches and a cricket square. Greenfields is used for football by Sawtry FC and Sawtry Colts Football Club; until recently, it has also been used for cricket by Sawtry Cricket Club.

6.3.4 The existing Greenfields site is used to capacity with no space for expansion, there are also only small gaps between the various pitches that limit spectating opportunities and can lead to conflict between games underway on neighbouring pitches. There is overlap between the football and cricket facilities that can lead to difficulties. The car parking available is insufficient to cater for peak activity which can lead to off-site car parking conflict with the neighbouring employment uses. Greenfields has been successful but has simply outgrown the current site and additional space is needed for expansion. The expansion need includes additional football pitches and possibly a new cricket square.



6.3.5 Elsewhere in Sawtry several sports clubs exist for badminton, bowling, cricket, fishing, football, golf, table tennis, walking and running. There is also a skatepark, a kick wall and outdoor gym equipment on St Judith's field. The Leisure Centre on Green End Road contains a sports hall and gym now run by Meridian Trust Academy Leisure team. At the end of 2022 the swimming pool was closed within the Leisure Centre, although the other facilities remain open. The longer-term impact that the swimming pool closure may have on the overall operation and sustainability of the sports and leisure facilities within Sawtry is unknown.

## Policy SNP3 - Recreation and leisure

Land north of Greenfields shown on Map 7 in Section 9 is identified for community use and proposals to create new or enhanced community facilities for recreation and leisure including new pitches together with associated infrastructure including additional parking and/or drainage measures will be supported. Proposals should include appropriate soft landscaping. Proposals to use this land for any alternative use will not be permitted. Developments will be supported which extend or improve the existing sporting, leisure and recreational facilities including the sports pavilion on the existing Greenfield site subject to including suitable landscaping. Proposals to promote sustainable travel modes such as the inclusion of cycle parking will be particularly supported.

Other recreation and leisure developments in the Parish will be supported if they extend or improve the existing sporting, leisure and recreational facilities, including the sports pavilion on the existing Greenfield site subject to including suitable landscaping.

6.3.5.1 **Policy Justification.** NPPF paragraph 92 promotes healthy and safe communities, including the provision of sports facilities and routes which encourage walking and cycling. The recent community consultation revealed a strong demand for additional swimming pools and football fields especially amongst school age students. Local Plan policy 22 enables the development of

community facilities such as sports venues; policy 23 permits sport or leisure allocations in appropriate areas of the countryside.

**6.3.6 Medical and Health Services.** Frequent concerns have been raised over the ability of Wellside Surgery to support the rapidly growing population in and around Sawtry, currently some 8,200. Responses to the residents' questionnaire raised concerns over the current capacity of the local surgery and the consequent difficulty in making appointments with medical staff. The rapid growth in household numbers raised fears that this problem will be exacerbated unless increased medical services are approved. New development can impact on the provision of local infrastructure including medical and health facilities; in appropriate circumstances developer contributions may be required towards medical and health facilities. The Huntingdonshire Developer Contributions SPD (2011) (with updated costs annually or successor documents) explains the relationship between developer contributions and the Community Infrastructure Levy and provides guidance on the types of contribution that will be sought and the basis for charges.



**6.3.7** The analysis of Quick Questionnaire responses indicated that its second most desirable improvement was the expansion of health services in the village in relation to the Wellside Surgery; the pharmacy; and mental health provision. In consultation it had been suggested that an option for an additional site for further facilities could be adjacent to Rowell Way. However, the preference for expansion of health facilities would initially be to explore options to expanding the Wellside Surgery accommodation. NPPF paragraph 92(c) enables and supports the development of identified local health facilities. Local Plan policy 22 describes the conditions under which the development of health centres will be supported.

**6.3.8** The policy looks to cover primary care services that provide the first point of contact in the healthcare system, acting as the 'front door' of the NHS. As defined by NHS England, primary care includes general practice, community pharmacy, dental, and optometry (eye health) services.

## Policy SNP4 - Medical and health

**Development proposals that involve the enlargement, improvement or replacement of the current medical, health, dental and mental health services in Sawtry will be supported and encouraged in order to balance health provision with the growth in housing that has already taken place and is planned.**

**Development proposals that would result in the loss of medical or health facilities will not be supported unless:**

- **evidence is provided to demonstrate that they are poorly used or not viable in terms of community demand or need for that specific type of primary care service; or**
- **adequate replacement provision is made elsewhere nearby, within or close to the community served by the geographical catchment for the specific medical or health facility.**

**6.3.8.1 Policy Justification.** Huntingdonshire Local Plan Policy 22 supports the extension of existing health facilities where required to support the needs of the local community. The expansion of the local surgery, medical and mental health services has not matched the rapid development of housing estates in Sawtry.

**6.3.9 Community Facilities and Volunteer Services.** ‘Community Facilities’ is a generic term used for community infrastructure, services and facilities. This includes village halls, places of worship including any associated halls, community centres and multi-use facilities. These facilities typically provide opportunities for community uses such as events, sports and activities. Community facilities can also provide space for arts or cultural activities, and serve wider purposes such as providing affordable space for events or small businesses to hire. Although medical and health services are community facilities, these are covered by Policy SNP4. In the same way education and nursery facilities are covered by Policy SNP7.



**6.3.10** Sawtry and surrounding villages benefit from a range of services which support young people, families and the elderly. Many such services are delivered by CARESCO, a registered charity created in 1982 and aiming to meet the needs of the community. Its activities are described in detail on its [website](http://www.caresco.org.uk/)<sup>35</sup>, which is a testament to the remarkable achievements of its permanent staff and some 140 regular volunteers.

**6.3.11** CARESCO’s very success has brought problems, notably with regard to its ageing accommodation which will need to be replaced in a few years. They are currently exploring the option of erecting a new community building as replacement accommodation in the medium term. The CARESCO team charged with the new building project and the Parish Council have explored possible opportunities at a number of sites across the village. The need for a replacement for the current headquarters will be needed in the period up to 2036. Work has progressed sufficiently on the feasibility study to specifically look to allocate a site in the Neighbourhood Plan for a mix of activities including a community building alongside some additional car parking provision, and land at Belgrave Square has been identified to be suitable for this joint purpose. The support for proposals which look to improve or replace the community facilities currently provided by CARESCO is important to the sustainability of the village. Support would equally apply if CARESCO were to change its name or if a successor organisation took over the services. The site at Belgrave Square is not subject to surface water flood risk which is an issue in much of the northern and western parts of the village.

**6.3.12** If proposals are to be developed through enabling development then viability evidence would need to demonstrate that all profits are reinvested in the development of enhanced or additional facilities. It should be noted the viability evidence would need to be independently reviewed by Huntingdonshire District Council as part of the determination of any planning application, the cost of this would be at the developer’s expense.

**6.3.13** A mechanism to protect and keep valued buildings or land in use for the community is the Community Right to Bid Scheme. It gives local community groups the opportunity to nominate buildings or other land to be included on the Huntingdonshire Council’s [list](#)<sup>36</sup> of Assets of Community Value. An asset should contribute to the community’s social well-being or social interests. Once on the register, if an asset comes up for sale or lease, a community group has a period of time in which they can register their interest as a potential bidder, delaying a sale on the open market. Currently Sawtry has no recorded Assets of Community Value.

<sup>35</sup><http://www.caresco.org.uk/>

<sup>36</sup><https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/council-democracy/community-right-to-bid/>



6.3.14 Policy LP 22 - Local Services and Community Facilities of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 looks to support new community facilities and to safeguard against their loss. The supporting text to Policy LP22 in paragraphs 6.47 to 6.49 on page 92 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 details the type of evidence necessary to demonstrate how it can be shown that community facilities might be considered to be poorly used or not viable<sup>37</sup>. This is equally relevant to the application of this Neighbourhood Plan policy. Policy LP 32 - Protection of Open Space - is also relevant as it looks to protect against the loss of open space, outdoor recreation facilities, allotments and areas of garden land that provide amenity value. New development can impact on the provision of local infrastructure including community facilities; in appropriate circumstances developer contributions may be required towards community facilities.



6.3.15 The cemetery at All Saints' is now closed, and the adjacent civil cemetery is fully occupied; many burials now occur at St Andrew's cemetery. With the rapidly growing population of Sawtry, and in anticipation of future needs, it is proposed to double the available area of St Andrew's cemetery. The land for the extension is already owned by the Parish Council. This additional space is likely to provide sufficient capacity for burials across the plan period and beyond as alternatives to burials continues to grow.

## Policy SNP5 - Community facilities

Development proposals that result in the improvement and expansion of community facilities or the provision of new community facilities will be supported subject to the following criteria being met:

- The proposal will not adversely affect residential amenity or the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties;
- The proposal will not lead to traffic congestion or adversely affect the free flow of traffic; and
- Access arrangements and off-street parking including cycle parking to promote active travel can be satisfactorily provided.

Proposals to redevelop, extend or replace an existing community facility through enabling development on part or all of the land or buildings occupied by the existing community facility, will be supported where it can be demonstrated through viability evidence that all profits are being reinvested in the development of enhanced or additional community facilities. Proposals which look to improve or replace the community facilities currently provided by CARESCO (or any successor community organisation) will be supported in principle.

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<sup>37</sup>In particular paragraph 6.49 states: "Assessing the level of community support for a local service or facility is a matter of judgement, but could be informed by information such as evidence of the level of recent usage, as well as the number and nature of comments made on an application by members of the local community. For commercially run facilities such as local shops and pubs, the Council considers that a robust marketing exercise is the most transparent way of demonstrating that such facilities are no longer viable. This should be of sufficient duration to allow the local community time to consider making a bid to run or acquire premises of value through the Community Right to Bid. In seeking to justify the loss of local services or community facilities, applicants will also be required to consider whether existing premises or sites can be adapted to retain a viable community facility or service. Effective marketing will in most cases need to be for a continuous period of 12 months at a value reflecting its permitted use with details kept of any offers received and detailed reasoning for declining them. However, in particular circumstances it may be appropriate for alternative arrangements to establish if there is any realistic prospect of maintaining the service or facility."

Land at Belgrave Square shown on Map 10 in Section 9 is identified for community use (alongside off-street car parking under Policy SNP9). Proposals for a community building will be supported in principle. Proposals to use this land for any alternative use will not be permitted.

Land east of St Andrew’s cemetery, as shown on Map 8 in Section 9, is identified for cemetery use and proposals to create new or enhanced cemetery facilities will be supported. An appropriate risk assessment will need to accompany any planning application. Proposals to use this land for any alternative use will not be supported.

Development proposals that would result in the loss of a community facility, as identified on Maps 12 and 13 in Section 9, will not be supported unless

- evidence is provided to demonstrate that the facility is poorly used or not viable in terms of community demand/needs; or
- adequate replacement provision is made elsewhere, within or close to the community served.

**6.3.15.1 Policy Justification.** Although Sawtry does not suffer from a high level of deprivation, there are many individuals and families in need of support, whether for social contact, mental stimulation or food parcels. The current services and facilities are dependent to a large extent on volunteer labour, much of which is organised by CARESCO, and operated within limited accommodation. In pursuit of social objectives, NPPF paragraphs 92 and 93 aims to promote social interaction and to provide social, recreational and cultural facilities for all sections of the community.



**6.3.16 Village Centre Retail and Shopping Facilities.** A century ago, Sawtry’s shops were concentrated around the Green and served the needs of a village much smaller than today. Progressively, the majority of those shops have closed and have largely been replaced by retail outlets along the Green End Road. There is a Co-op store of modest size, but most weekly food shopping is obtained from supermarkets in Huntingdon, Peterborough and Oundle. With the growth in population, there is clearly a commercial opportunity for more and varied retail outlets and for additional food convenience provision.

**6.3.17 Village Centre Opportunity Site.** At the junction of High Street and Gidding Road is the RJ Landowners site, they are an independent Land Rover garage offering servicing and repairs to all makes and models of Land Rover. The site generally contains numerous stored vehicles and two functional buildings. The site lies at the heart of the Conservation Area and the current commercial use does not preserve the character or appearance of the street scene.



**6.3.18** This commercial site is located at the historical centre of village life, and presents an opportunity to restore some of Sawtry’s original historic character which has been lost over the years. In terms of location within the core of the village centre it provides a suitable location for re-use for retail or community uses. Discussions with the current owner have demonstrated a willingness to vacate the site in the fullness of time, subject to continuing business operation and the employment of his staff. The nature of the vehicle servicing use would better suit an industrial unit or similar location elsewhere in Sawtry. As such the site offers an opportunity for redevelopment and enhancement.

## Policy SNP6 - Retail and shopping provision and village centre opportunities

Development proposals that increase the number of shops and retail outlets in Sawtry or diversify the range of retail provision in terms of sizes of units and types of goods and services provided in Sawtry will be supported subject to the following criteria being met:

- The proposal will not adversely affect residential amenity or the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties;
- The proposal will not lead to traffic congestion or adversely affect the free flow of traffic; and
- Access arrangements and off-street parking including cycle parking to promote active travel can be satisfactorily provided; or where on-street parking is required this would not adversely affect the residential amenity of neighbouring properties.

Land at the junction of High Street and Gidding Road shown on Map 9 in Section 9 is identified as an opportunity site for enhancement and re-use. Proposals for development will be supported where they lead to enhancement of the overall site and quality of built form and contribute to the vitality of the village centre. Proposals should be for retail or community uses, or for a mixed-use proposal including retail or community uses that contributes to improved local services and facilities. Proposals to demolish the existing frontage building on the corner of High Street and Gidding Road would only be supported where the public benefit to the community from new facilities outweighs the heritage contribution that the traditional building makes to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

**6.3.18.1 Policy Justification.** For its size, Sawtry possesses a somewhat limited number of shops, which are mainly strung along busy thoroughfares such as Green End Road, High Street and the Glatton Road. The ensuing levels of roadside parking and traffic congestion create serious risks of accidents. The development of a supermarket and a shopping area away from through routes would cater for the steadily increasing population and would promote road safety.

**6.3.18.2** The proprietor of the Land Rover business adjacent to the Green has indicated a willingness to relocate to an industrial site, if a suitable unit became available by 2036. Such an opportunity would be most welcome as offering the possibility of restoring Sawtry's historical centre and providing retail and community facilities. Local Plan policy 2 aims to protect the character of existing settlements, while conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Paragraph 190 of the NPPF encourages the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment and the desirability of new developments making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

**6.3.19 Educational and Nursery Places.** The steady and continuing influx of families has created a demand for additional school and nursery provision which will continue for years to come. The Infants School appears to be at full capacity; the Junior Academy currently has some available spaces; the Village Academy, reportedly, will be able to increase its annual intake of pupils for some years to come. New development can impact on the provision of local infrastructure including education facilities; in appropriate circumstances developer contributions may be required towards education facilities. The Huntingdonshire Developer Contributions SPD (2011) (with updated costs annually or successor documents) explains the relationship between developer contributions and the Community Infrastructure Levy and provides guidance on the types of contribution that will be sought and the basis for charges.





6.3.20 A development of 340 homes has been approved recently to the north along the Glatton Road<sup>38</sup>. Following the anticipated population growth, a further need has been identified for a single form entry mixed primary school in the Glatton Road scheme approved. The planning application considered this need and 2.3 hectares of land was secured in the Planning Obligation for the provision of a primary school. It was initially suggested to have a proposed entry date of September 2023 but is now more likely to be 2024, 2025 or even later. This is dependent upon the delivery of the housing development and associated infrastructure. As the education provision was one of the key considerations that resulted in the planning permission being granted, it is considered imperative that the delivery of this new primary school takes place.

## Policy SNP7 - Education and nursery provision

**Great weight should be attached to the need for an expansion of school places in order to meet the demands of a growing population. Proposals for the enlargement of education and nursery provision will be supported in principle subject to other policies in the development plan.**

**Development proposals that would result in the loss of education and nursery facilities will not be supported unless it can be shown that they are poorly used, not viable in terms of community demand/needs, or unless adequate replacement provision is made elsewhere nearby within or close to the community served.**

6.3.20.1 **Policy Justification.** NPPF paragraph 95 urges local planning authorities to ensure sufficient school places become available. Cambridgeshire County Council plans are in hand for the provision of additional primary school places in anticipation of increased demand by the mid-2020s. Local Plan policy 22 includes the provision of schools within its scope.

### 6.4. Highways and Traffic

6.4.1 **Sustainable Transport Methods (Active Travel).** Sawtry and its environs are blessed with a network of footways often linking attractive green spaces. The village and wider Parish are also fortunate to have a number of Rights of Way, including public footpaths, bridleways and a byway. The community consultation revealed a desire to extend footpaths, develop cycle routes, and provide areas furnished with benches for social interaction.

6.4.2 The Government through Active Travel England is looking to make walking, wheeling and cycling the preferred choice for everyone to get around in England. Active travel is the term often used to encompass elements such as walking to school, cycling to work, or other everyday journeys you make to get from place to place; rather than just walking or cycling solely for leisure or fitness. In addition, active travel can offer a convenient, accessible and affordable way to move more for shorter journeys. National policy in the NPPF does not refer to active travel but instead refers to sustainable transport, but includes within paragraph 104 c) that policies should look for opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued. Active travel and sustainable travel modes not only positively contribute to addressing climate change but also can assist in maintaining a healthy community.

6.4.3 The Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 contains Policy LP 16 which indicates that new development will be expected to contribute to an enhanced transport network that supports an increasing proportion of journeys being undertaken by sustainable travel modes. The main location for growth in Sawtry to the north and east are somewhat distant from many of the services and facilities in

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<sup>38</sup> Granted Outline Planning Permission under 20/01407/OUT, with Reserved Matters Consent under 22/01080/REM still under consideration

the village so new opportunities for walking and cycling are required to promote active travel or sustainable travel modes of transport.

6.4.4 The Neighbourhood Plan can support these ambitions and promote sustainable transport modes such as public transport, alongside the promotion of active travel such as walking and cycling. It seeks to move away from the use of private car for short journeys to help tackle climate change, pollution and congestion. Whilst current provision for pedestrians is reasonably extensive, the provision for cyclists is not significant. An important driver for promoting cycling is the provision of secure cycle parking and storage at the destination. Often the key to encouraging people to use cycles is the knowledge that they can be left in a safe location.



6.4.5 There are a number of footpaths that pass through the village open spaces where lighting and the orientation of properties limits their use in the dark. A number of the footways, in the centre of the village are narrow, for example High Street, and this can deter use by particular groups such as wheelchair users or parents with children. Narrow streets and on-street parking also make cycling difficult and increase the feeling of danger, particularly for young people travelling to school. Making more effective use of off-street networks of links for walking and cycling across the village can help to improve accessibility without over-engineering the road network.

6.4.6 The Parish Council will look to work specifically with Cambridgeshire County Council as the Highways Authority to help facilitate these matters. The Active Travel [Strategy](#) for Cambridgeshire<sup>39</sup>, is currently in draft form following consultation. It provides a comprehensive set of policies that will enable quality provision of active travel infrastructure and initiatives in Cambridgeshire to contribute to the County Council's target to achieve net zero carbon by 2045. By enabling and encouraging more people to travel by active travel modes, the number of journeys made by car can be reduced. The Cambridgeshire's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) has been developed and will sit under Cambridgeshire's Active Travel Strategy. The LCWIP process identifies the top priority active travel routes in each district for new or improved infrastructure for walking and/or cycling. Whilst it is noted that Sawtry is not specifically referenced in some of these documents, the Neighbourhood Plan is an opportunity for the Parish Council to work with the County Council to gain support on potential actions that could then be incorporated into the County Transport Investment Plan.

6.4.7 Sawtry benefits from an extensive public rights of way network which includes routes within the village itself and across the wider parish. The A1(M) to the east of the village does bisect some of the rights of way connections to/from the village.

6.4.8 Some parts of the village still have rural lanes which have no dedicated footways - Tinkers Lane, Church Street and Tort Hill being particular examples. This is a particularly distinctive characteristic of these informal lanes and the introduction of engineered footways would harm this character. Low trafficked areas can accommodate shared surface roads without compromising pedestrian safety.

## Policy SNP8 - Footpaths and cycle ways

**Sawtry Parish Council will work with Cambridgeshire County Council as the Highway Authority to promote active travel opportunities across the Parish of Sawtry. Proposals to develop or improve appropriate sustainable transport infrastructure will be supported. Proposals that include extending footways, paths and cycle ways linked by communal areas to encourage active travel and social interaction both within existing and proposed development will be particularly supported.**

<sup>39</sup><https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/transport-plans-and-policies/cambridgeshires-active-travel-strategy>

**Proposals that would harm the particularly distinctive characteristic of the rural informal lanes (including Tinkers Lane, Church Street and Tort Hill which operate as shared surface roads) such as the introduction of engineered footways would not be supported.**

**6.4.8.1 Policy Justification.** Paragraphs 92 and 104 of the NPPF promote healthy and safe communities and sustainable methods of transport by encouraging the development of footpaths and cycle ways. Existing routes within Sawtry and in the surrounding countryside can be enhanced with signage and, in suitable green spaces, with benches for rest areas and social interaction. Such requests were made in numerous questionnaire responses. Local Plan policy 16 supports the use of sustainable travel modes, such that development proposals should seek to utilise, and where possible, provide safe, coherent and easy to use footpaths and cycle routes.

**6.4.9 Parking Requirements.** On-street car parking can lead to localised traffic congestion along the Green End Road, especially at school arrival and departure times. Across the village, particularly in the older parts, there are several properties with no off-street car parking opportunities. The move to a low carbon economy and the shift towards electric vehicles emphasise the need for off-street parking to allow vehicles to be charged without cables trailing across footways which would be a trip hazard. Failure to identify and set aside areas to resolve this problem may call for the introduction of a one-way traffic pattern within Sawtry which could inconvenience many local residents.

6.4.10 In the wider village centre, excluding the school sites, there are three locations used for off-street car parking at: the Village Hall; Greenways (shopping parade); and Greystones (public house). The last of these is a private car park free for patrons of Greystones, but chargeable for occasional users; the other two areas provide public car parking (non-chargeable). Greenways provides 17 parking spaces and the Village Hall has approximately 60 defined parking spaces. In the wider village hall space, there are also some further 20 spaces at the Library, Youth and Community Centre and CARESCO's 'Cave'. The Village Hall car park also serves CARESCO and the Leisure Centre.

6.4.11 Whilst there may be modest room for a small expansion of the Greenways parking, this is an important location for short-term parking to facilitate visits to the shops. As such it is intended to operate as a short-stay location with high levels of turnover and doesn't ideally suit the longer periods of occupation required by residents wishing to charge vehicles (although this could be a possibility overnight). The Village Hall car park caters for longer stays when people visit events or use services and facilities; it can also offer the opportunity for the provision of electric vehicle charging points in the future, which the Neighbourhood Plan policies will look to support. This car park is part of a multi-activity community hub, and parking already effectively occupies the area available, and so additional car parking capacity here would not be likely. Moreover, retaining the flexibility to develop the community hub is considered to be imperative as the village continues to grow.



6.4.12 The Neighbourhood Plan is looking for space to provide additional off-street car parking together with the dedicated opportunity for electric vehicle charging provision. Sawtry Parish Council have undertaken an overview across the village for sites which may offer an opportunity for additional off-street car parking with electric vehicle charging provision. They also want to consider supporting electric vehicle charging provision within the existing off-street car parking provision within the village at the Village Hall and potentially Greenways. Searching additional parking capacity would be for a multi-use space allowing both residents to charge vehicles and to provide some additional off-street car parking close to village centre services and facilities. Work has progressed sufficiently on the feasibility

study to specifically look to allocate a site in the Neighbourhood Plan for a mix of activities including additional car parking provision together with a community building, land at Belgrave Square has been identified to be suitable for this joint purpose.

6.4.13 The Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 contains Policy LP 16 on Sustainable Travel and Policy LP 17 on Parking Provision and Vehicle Movement. This latter policy indicates that proposals must incorporate adequate parking for vehicles and cycles. Advice on parking arrangements is contained in the Huntingdonshire Design Guide [SPD](#) (2017)<sup>40</sup>.

## Policy SNP9 - Off-street parking and electric vehicle charging

Land at Belgrave Square shown on the Map 10 in Section 9 is identified for public off-street parking, for equipping with electric vehicle charging points (alongside community use including a community building under Policy SNP5). Proposals to use this land for any alternative use will not be permitted.

Proposals for any off-street parking provision should include measures to manage surface water run-off through appropriate measures including sustainable drainage.

Proposals to install electric vehicle charging points, where they need planning permission, in off-street public and privately owned car parks across Sawtry will be supported. Proposals to install secure cycle parking and storage across Sawtry will be supported.

Proposals to develop on-street electric vehicle charging infrastructure, including through the use of existing street furniture across Sawtry, will be supported subject to:

- they should not adversely affect the historic environment or highway or pedestrian safety;
- they are in compliance with other relevant legislation, for example section 278 of the Highways Act 1980; and
- they do not detrimentally impact areas of significance as referenced in the HDC Landscape and Townscape SPD (March 2022).

6.4.13.1 **Policy Justification.** Growing traffic congestion and roadside parking are not sustainable and require remedial measures. Furthermore, the demand for electric vehicle charging points is predicted to increase rapidly in the years ahead. To prevent hazards to pedestrians, charging points and their associated cables need to be sited away from public footpaths whenever possible. NPPF Section 9 refers to parking design requirements as part of sustainable transport. These include convenience, safety, security, compliance with national design codes, and the provision of charging points for plug-in and ultra-low emission vehicles. Local Plan Policies 16 Sustainable Travel, and 17 Parking Provision and Vehicle Movement, include conditions applicable to the development of parking areas. The Parish Council own the land at Belgrave Square and the proximity to the retail core of the village makes it accessible for use for additional off-street public car parking, alongside a new community building; together with the opportunity for community electric vehicle charging points.

6.4.14 **Safer Communities.** Many consultation responses expressed concerns over anti-social behaviour, teenage drinking and drug use, vandalism, burglary, and the possibility of criminals entering the village via



<sup>40</sup><http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/2573/huntingdonshire-design-guide-2017.pdf>

the A1M. Suggested remedies included greater police presence and the installation of CCTV. Related issues recommended more pedestrian crossings, improved street lighting, regular litter collection and additional bins for collecting dog waste. There are footpaths that pass through the village open spaces where lighting and the orientation of properties limits their use in the dark.

6.4.15 The Parish Council consider that a variety of measures will be needed to enhance the personal safety of individuals. In new development this will include designing layouts that promote opportunities for natural surveillance and ensuring that pedestrian linkages are well lit and avoid the potential for anti-social behaviour. The aim should be to ensure that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or social cohesion.

6.4.16 The NPPF in paragraph 92 b) looks for planning policies and decisions aiming to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion – for example through the use of attractive, well-designed, clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas.

6.4.17 It is possible through permitted development rights to undertake some elements of public infrastructure such as street lighting and CCTV; although planning permission is required in some circumstances. Planning has a role in ensuring that new development contributes to social cohesion and safe and healthy environments.

## SNP10 - Safer communities

**Development proposals will be supported which aim to achieve safe places and which avoid the fear of crime and disorder. Development should facilitate social interaction and community cohesion alongside a healthy and safe environment which enhances the personal safety of individuals.**

**The Parish Council will support appropriate proposals which include:**

- a layout of development which creates safe, convenient and overlooked attractive streets and spaces;
- high quality open space which is integral to the overall layout of the development;
- carefully planned landscaping; and
- other appropriate measures to improve public safety.

**6.4.17.1 Policy Justification.** Fears and concerns over vandalism, anti-social behaviour, litter and dog fouling have led to calls for measures which protect the individual and preserve the appearance of the village scene. As part of promoting healthy and safe communities, NPPF paragraph 92(b) aims to avoid crime, disorder and the fear of crime by the provision of safe places. The installation of adequate street lighting and closed-circuit television systems are practical measures which should achieve a degree of personal safety.

## 6.5 Business and employment.

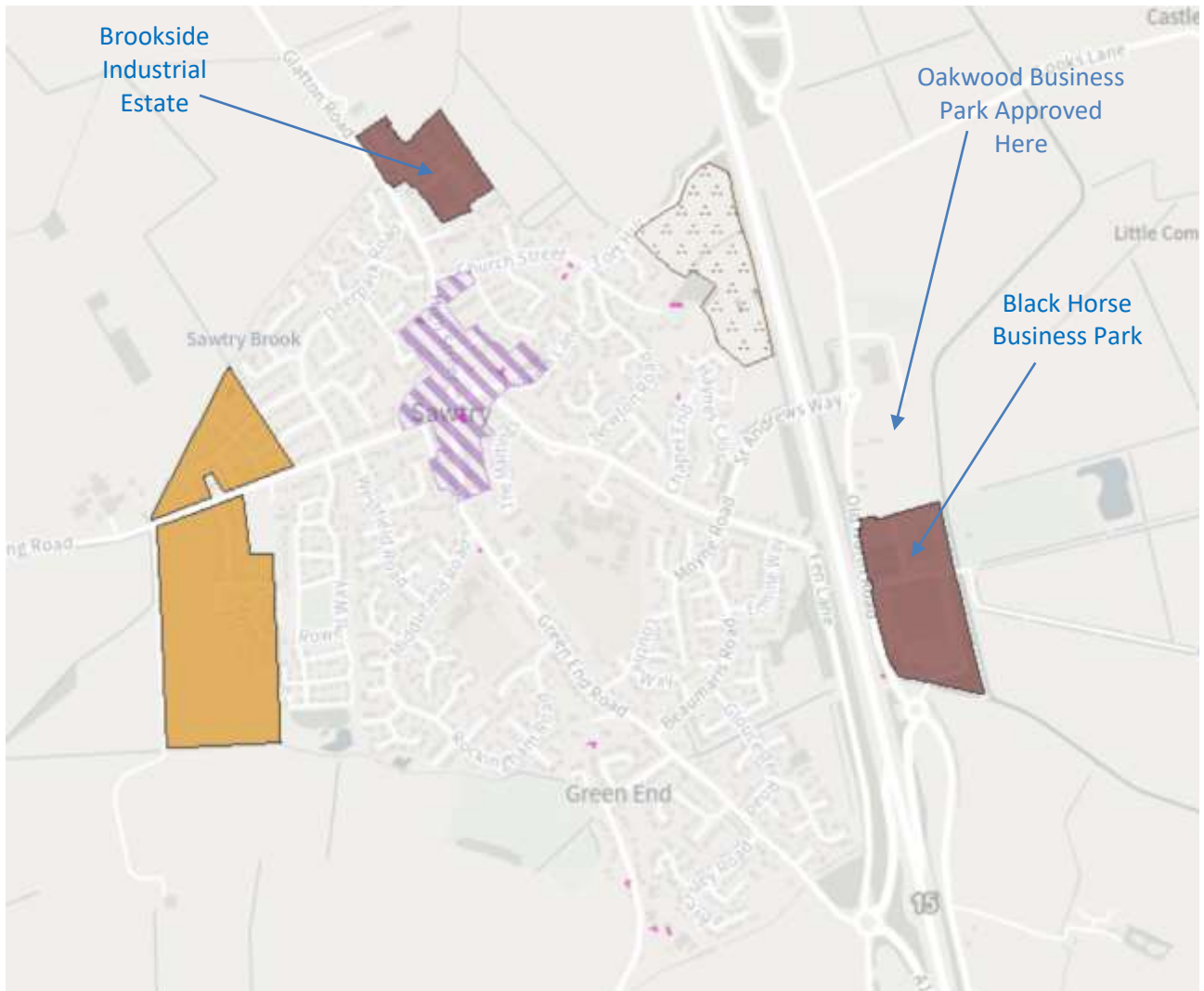
6.5.1 The creation of new business ventures should be encouraged to help develop the local economy and provide apprenticeship and training opportunities for young adults. The Huntingdonshire Local Plan through Policy LP 18 identifies the Black Horse Business Park and Brookside Industrial Estate as Established Employment Areas; these are shown on the extract from the Local Plan Policies Map below.

6.5.2 Policy LP 18 of the Local Plan identifies that proposals for 'B' class which are B2 (General Industrial), B8 (Storage & Distribution) uses will be supported within Established Employment Areas and on land immediately adjoining them where it can be successfully integrated with the existing site. The



use classes have been amended subsequently since the Local Plan was developed with the former B1 use class having been subsumed into the wider use class E Commercial, Business and Service, in particular as E g i) office ii) the research and development of products or processes or iii) any industrial process, (which can be carried out in any residential area without causing detriment to the amenity of the area). As such reference to the 'B' classes in the Local Plan should now include use class E g) as well.

6.5.3 Policy LP 19 Rural Economy of the Local Plan supports farm diversification, the expansion of existing businesses and proposals for new development in the countryside in specific circumstances. It supports proposals in the countryside where it is within a defined Established Employment Area; or b. immediately adjoins and is capable of being integrated with an Established Employment Area; or involves the reuse of land in use or last used for business uses (class 'B'); or involves the reuse or replacement of existing buildings as set out in Local Plan Policy LP 33 Rural Buildings.



Extract from the Huntingdonshire Local Plan Policies Map © Huntingdonshire District Council

6.5.4 Under Local Plan Policy LP 19 various planning permissions were granted for development to the north of Black Horse Business Park now known as Oakwood Business Park which sits between St Andrew's cemetery to the north and Sawtry Motors to the south. There is an area of undeveloped land between Sawtry Motors and the Black Horse Business Park. Although most business activity in Sawtry is focussed to the north at Brookside and to the east along the A1M corridor, there are some businesses located within the residential areas of the village. Ideally, businesses will relocate out of residential parts of Sawtry to the east side of the A1M thus limiting the impact of HGVs on the streets within the village. The Parish Council's preferred locations for new enterprises are the Black Horse Business Park and the new Oakwood Business Estate originally intended for occupation by Spirotec and nearing completion by Barnack Estates. The Parish Council would prefer not to see the enlargement of the Brookside Industrial Estate which although is a defined Established Employment Area is not ideally located. This can only be accessed by traffic, particularly delivery vehicles and HGVs going through Sawtry or Glatton, which is not ideal and can lead to air quality and road safety concerns within the villages.



6.5.5 Policy LP 8 of the Local Plan supports development proposals within the Built-up Area or on land well-related to the Built-up Area of a Key Service Centre. This would include proposals for business and employment.

6.5.6 A balanced community requires access to housing, employment and local services and facilities. Continued improvements to facilitate better pedestrian and cycle linkages to Brookside Industrial Estate, Black Horse Business Park and Oakwood Business Park would improve accessibility.

## Policy SNP11 - Business and employment

**Development proposals related to the expansion of existing businesses and new employment facilities which will be supported in principle where they are within the Built-up Area or on land well-related to the Built-up Area of Sawtry; or are within a defined Established Employment Area or immediately adjoin and are capable of being integrated with an Established Employment Area; or are otherwise supported other Development Plan policies.**

**The Neighbourhood Plan looks to encourage appropriate proposals that comply with development plan policies connected with the Established Employment Area at Black Horse Business Park and the permitted Oakwood Business Park. Proposals for high quality and professional occupation employment, such as research and development, that would diversify the existing local employment provision will be particularly supported.**

**Proposals for new businesses including research and development or industrial units that would provide commitments to local employment, training and apprenticeship schemes will be particularly supported subject to compliance with other development plan policies.**

**Proposals for business and employment will need to demonstrate how they can contribute to continued improvements to facilitate better pedestrian and cycle linkages to improve accessibility and to promote active travel. Proposals must provide for the provision of on-site secure cycle parking and storage.**

**Proposals at or relating to Brookside Industrial Estate will need to satisfactorily demonstrate that traffic movements, particularly HGV movements that would need to go through Sawtry, would not lead to**



unacceptable impacts on the historic environment; living conditions (including relating to noise and disturbance); air quality; and pedestrian safety within the Parish.

**6.5.6.1 Policy Justification.** The NPPF Section 6 seeks to satisfy sustainable economic objectives by building a strong competitive economy. One approach would be to identify suitable sites for investment. Under Local Plan Policies 18 and 19 a proposal for business development will be supported on land within an Established Employment Area or adjoining an Established Employment Area. Sawtry has a significantly lower proportion of professional occupations (19.0%) in the 2021 Census to Cambridgeshire (26.6%) and a lower proportion than for England (20.3%). Consequently, the provision of professional occupations and high-quality employment such as research and development would be particularly supported.



## 7. Cross Reference

7.1 The section below cross-references the objectives and policies with the policies of the Local Plan and the NPPF framework.

Serial	Objective	Neighbourhood Plan Policy	Local Plan Policy	NPPF paragraph
5.2.1	To conserve and enhance the natural environment of Sawtry including through designating new Local Green Spaces and through encouraging woodland planting.	<b>Policy SNP1 – The natural environment and protecting green spaces</b>	Local Plan policies LP30, LP31 and LP32 aim to avoid adverse impacts resulting in loss of biodiversity and geodiversity; in paragraph 8.24 the planting of new trees is encouraged.	Paragraph 102 of the NPPF specifies the conditions for the designation of Local Green Spaces which are then protected from development. NPPF paragraphs 174 and 179 supports measures to protect and enhance the natural environment, biodiversity and geodiversity.
5.2.2	To preserve and enhance the historical core of the village and the significance of the Sawtry Conservation Area and to create distinctive, high quality and well-designed places and buildings.	<b>Policy SNP6 - Retail and shopping provision and village centre opportunities; and Policy SNP1 – The natural environment and protecting green spaces; and Policy SNP9 - Off-street parking and electric vehicle charging</b>	Local Plan policy LP2 aims to protect the character of existing settlements, while conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Policies LP11 Design Context, LP12 Design Implementation and LP13 Placemaking are a suite of policies that promotes high quality design and well-designed places.	Paragraph 190 of the NPPF encourages the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment and the desirability of new developments making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. Section 12 of the NPPF sets out a framework for achieving well-designed places.
5.2.3	To support climate change adaptation and mitigation in the village including in new development.	<b>Policy SNP2 - Climate change mitigation; and Policy SNP8 - Footpaths and cycle ways; and Policy SNP9 Off-street parking and electric vehicle charging</b>	SNP2 is compliant with Local Plan policies LP16 (Sustainable Travel) and LP35 (Renewable and Low Carbon Energy).	Paragraph 152 of the NPPF calls for progression towards a low carbon economy by the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, which is achievable, for example, through the use of renewable energy for transport (NPPF Section 9) and home heating.

5.2.4	To protect and preserve important community assets including local services and facilities by encouraging the retention and growth of community facilities including through the identification of allocations for additional recreational and leisure facilities.	<b>Policy SNP3 - Recreation and leisure; and Policy SNP4 - Medical and health; and Policy SNP5 - Community facilities; and Policy SNP7 - Education and nursery provision</b>	Local Plan policy LP22 enables the development of community facilities such as sports venues; policy LP23 permits sport or leisure allocations in appropriate areas of the countryside.	NPPF paragraphs 92 and 104 promote healthy and safe communities, including the provision of sports facilities and routes which encourage walking and cycling.
5.2.5	To facilitate the growth of community health infrastructure including health services covering: physical, mental and dental.	<b>Policy SNP4 - Medical and health; and Policy SNP5 - Community facilities</b>	Local Plan policy LP22 describes the conditions under which the development of health centres will be supported.	NPPF paragraph 92(c) enables and supports the development of identified local health facilities.
5.2.6	To facilitate the need for sufficient educational and nursery provision for a growing community.	<b>Policy SNP7 - Education and nursery provision; and Policy SNP5 Community facilities</b>	Local Plan policy LP22 includes the provision of schools within its scope.	NPPF paragraph 95 urges local planning authorities to ensure sufficient school places become available.
5.2.7	To provide the opportunity for the centre of the village to provide potential accommodation for further retail and charitable activities	<b>Policy SNP6 - Retail and shopping provision and village centre opportunities</b>	Local Plan policy LP22 is also applicable to community facilities such as shops and libraries.	NPPF paragraphs 92 and 93 aim to promote social interaction and to provide social, recreational and cultural facilities for all sections of the community.
5.2.8	To encourage increased use of sustainable transport methods including through the development of active travel including safe cycling and walking routes.	<b>Policy SNP8 - Footpaths and cycle ways</b>	Local Plan policy LP16 supports the use of sustainable travel modes, such that development proposals should seek to utilise, and where possible, provide safe, coherent and easy to use footpaths and cycle routes.	Paragraphs 92 and 104 of the NPPF promote healthy and safe communities and sustainable methods of transport by encouraging the development of footpaths and cycle ways.

5.2.9	To provide off-street parking areas and opportunities for electric vehicle charging as part of an approach to mitigate traffic problems within the village.	<b>Policy SNP9 - Off-street parking and electric vehicle charging and Policy SNP8 - Footpaths and cycle ways</b>	Local Plan policies LP16, titled Sustainable Travel and LP17, titled Parking Provision and Vehicle Movement, include conditions applicable to the development of parking areas.	NPPF Section 9 refers to parking design requirements as part of sustainable transport.
5.2.10	To implement measures which enhance the personal safety of individuals.	<b>Policy SNP10 – Safer communities</b>	Local Plan policy LP4 looks for planning obligations to address funding for community safety where necessary. Policy LP12 addresses public safety as part of movement.	NPPF paragraph 92(b) aims to avoid crime, disorder and the fear of crime by the provision of safe places.
5.2.11	To support the growth and expansion of business and employment opportunities.	<b>SNP11 Business and employment</b>	Under Local Plan Policies LP18 and LP19 a proposal for business development (class 'B') will be supported on land within an Established Employment Area and in other circumstances. The Local Plan designated the Black Horse Business Park and the Brookside Industrial Park as Established Employment Areas.	NPPF Section 6 seeks to satisfy sustainable economic objectives by building a strong competitive economy.



## 8. Non-planning Objectives

8.1 This section will record issues raised locally which are not admissible as planning policies but which are relevant to wishes expressed during the community consultation.

	<b>Subject Area</b>	<b>Problem</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Agent</b>
1	Roads	Poor state of road surfaces; potholes	Fill cracks and potholes; resurfacing as necessary	Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) Highways
2	Pavements	Cracked and uneven surfaces: tripping and falling hazards	Repairs and re-levelling where needed	CCC Highways
3	Road safety	Hazardous junctions and roundabouts, such as St Andrews Way, junction of Tinkers Lane and Fen Lane and sections of Great North Road	New crossing points and speed limits; parking restrictions with double yellow lines	Sawtry Parish Council (SPC), Cambs Police and CCC Local Highways Initiatives
4	Speeding	Several main routes through Sawtry such as High Street, Fen Lane and Green End Road suffer from inconsiderate driving	Traffic surveys, speed monitors, 'sleeping policemen' and other control measures	SPC followed up by CCC action
5	Infrastructure and flood risks	New estates and continued covering of grass surfaces have led to concerns over possible flooding	Proper survey by the relevant agencies and companies to quantify risks and identify remedies	Environment Agency, Anglian Water, CCC, HDC, Middle Level Commissioners and Sawtry IDB
6	Litter	Excessive litter despite the Litter Pickers efforts	More bins, including dog bins; more publicity and education	SPC and volunteers
7	Bus schedules	No Sunday services which are needed for travel to employment	Schedules to be reviewed, the contribution of the demand responsive transport pilot known as TING operated by Vectare be reviewed	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, SPC and bus operators
8	Electric vehicles	Lack of charging points off-road	Planning actions	SPC to lead research
9	Amenities in woodland and green spaces	Residents wish for benches and picnic areas	Projects for local enhancement of existing spaces	Volunteer initiatives
10	Drug abuse and anti-social behaviour	Individuals gather in various popular locations for their activities	Reduction of anti-social and criminal behaviour by monitoring and enforcement	Cambridgeshire Police
11	Youth provision	Lack of sporting and social groups for organised activities	Greater emphasis on recruiting volunteer youth leaders	Residents
12	Disability awareness	Insufficient facilities for mentally and physically disabled	Extra provision, for example dedicated workshop facilities	SPC, CCC and CARESCO



- 8.2 In relation to the non-planning objective No.5, Anglian Water have identified that their: *“draft Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan<sup>41</sup> states that we will have a medium term mixed strategy to address capacity in our water recycling catchment for Sawtry, with the main solution of SuDS. Over the longer term to 2050 the strategy is for 25% surface water removal from our network. This demonstrates that we have a strong focus on removing surface water from the sewerage system through a range of mixed SuDS and traditional attenuation strategies and this will help to provide capacity in our water recycling network in the future.”*

## 9. Maps

### 9.1 The Designated Neighbourhood Area (Map 1)

9.1.1 Sawtry Parish Council, as a qualifying body, applied for the designation of Sawtry Parish as a neighbourhood area and this was approved by Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) on 23 October 2019. This approval was in accordance with regulations 5 and 5A of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 as amended. The designated area applicable to the Plan is illustrated below on Map 1. A slightly clearer base map to that on the designated neighbourhood area is shown on Map 11.

### 9.2 Sawtry Conservation Area (Map 2)

9.2.1 A conservation area is 'an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. The areas may vary in character and size from a small group of buildings to a major part of a town, but their status means that they are worthy of protection.

9.2.2 Extra controls exist within and alongside a conservation area over things such as:

- proposals to demolish buildings - most buildings in a conservation area are protected, whether they are old or not,
- alterations to residential properties that would normally be allowed under 'permitted development',
- the protection of trees.

9.2.3 These controls ensure that building design quality is strengthened, so that the area can be preserved and its character and appearance improved.

9.2.4 The Sawtry conservation area is one of 61 within Huntingdonshire and is shown below on Map 2.

### 9.3 Flood Risk (Maps 3 & 4)

9.3.1 The Environment Agency offers two types of flood risk mapping online.

- **Surface Water Flood Risk Map:** at <https://check-long-term-flood-risk.service.gov.uk>, this is a flood risk map that illustrates the level of risk of surface water flooding. The data can then also be explored to look at the potential depth of surface water flooding and the velocity and direction of flow of surface water flooding. Many parts of Sawtry are at risk of surface water flooding.
- **Flood Risk Map for Planning:** available from <https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk>, this interactive map allows the user to assess flood risk from rivers in a selected area and to obtain further details. Only limited parts of Sawtry are subject to this fluvial flood risk, the area to the east of the A1 is where flood risk is concentrated.

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<sup>41</sup><https://www.anglianwater.co.uk/about-us/our-strategies-and-plans/drainage-wastewater-management-plan/draft-plan/level-3-summary/>

9.3.2 The surface water flood risk map is shown at Map 3 and the flood risk map for planning which shows river flooding is at Map 4.

#### 9.4 Local Green Spaces (Map 5)

9.4.1 The proposed 17 Local Green Spaces are shown on Map 5. More detailed maps of each of the 17 proposed Local Green Spaces are shown in Appendix 1.

#### 9.5 Proposed Allocations (Maps 6, 7, 8, 9 & 10)

9.5.1 The Neighbourhood Planning Group have identified a number of proposed site allocations. Map 6 illustrates an overview of the site allocations. Maps 7, 8, 9 & 10 then illustrate the four individual site allocations. The four allocations are:

- **Proposed Greenfields Sports Area Extension (Map 7) (Policy SNP3)** - The existing sports fields to the east of the A1M are fully utilised and increasing in popularity. The growth, both in Sawtry's population and the number of sports teams, clearly indicate a requirement for an extension to the playing area. Of alternatives considered, the most suitable site is to the north of the current Greenfields sports field. The Parish Council have contacted the agent for the owner, Conington Estates, and it is hoped to progress matters in due course.
- **St Andrew's Cemetery Extension (Map 8) (Policy SNP5)** -The cemetery at All Saints' is now closed, and the adjacent civil cemetery is fully occupied; many burials now occur at St Andrew's cemetery. With the rapidly growing population of Sawtry, and in anticipation of future needs, it is proposed to double the available area of St Andrew's cemetery.
- **Village Centre Opportunity Site (RJ Landrovers) (Map 9) (Policy SNP6)** -This business site is located at the historical centre of village life, and presents an opportunity to restore some of Sawtry's original character which has been lost over the years. Discussions with the current owner have shown his willingness to vacate the site in the fullness of time, subject to continuing business operation and the employment of his staff.
- **Belgrave Square Proposed Allocation for Off-Street Car Parking, Electric Vehicle Charging Points and a Community Building (Map 10) (Policy SNP5 and Policy SNP9)** - This area is owned by Sawtry Parish Council (Land Registry Title CB 159461). For some years, the car park had been rented to the Working Men's Club for a peppercorn rent under a lease which expired in 2018. However, other groups and private individuals have also made use of the park rent-free, somewhat unfair to the Club. The situation was investigated by a Parish Council working party which recommended that the area should be set aside for the benefit of the entire village. Aside of car parking, and electric vehicle charging points, a portion of the area can be developed as a community building in the years ahead. Such a project would be in accord with the findings of the Neighbourhood Plan consultation period.

9.5.2 The overview map of the proposed allocations is shown below, followed by the four individual maps.

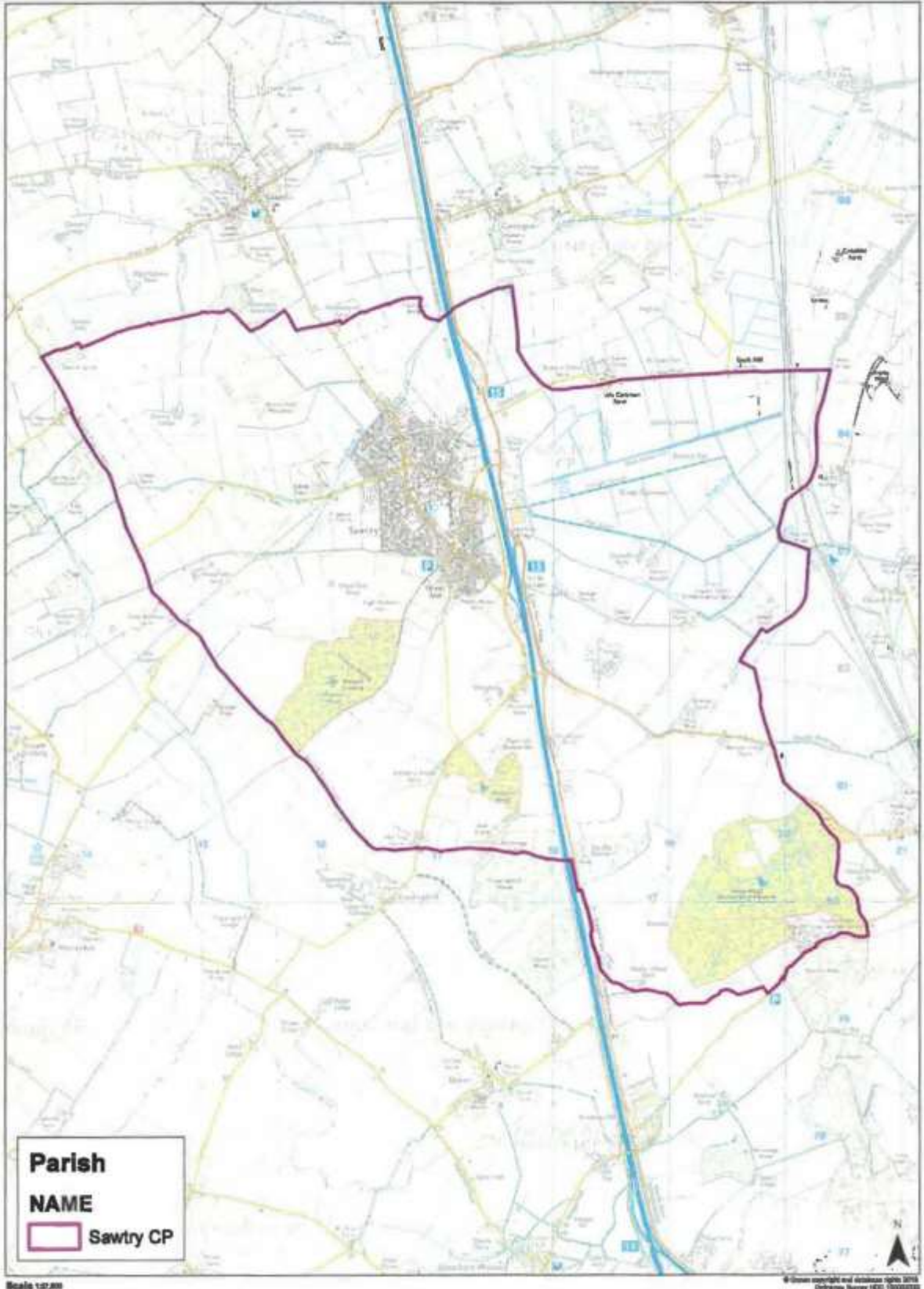
#### 9.6 Sawtry Parish (Map 11)

9.6.1 The relationship between Sawtry Parish and the surrounding parishes is shown on Map 11. It also provides a slightly clearer base map to that on the designated neighbourhood area Map 1.

#### 9.7 Community Facilities (Maps 12 and 13)

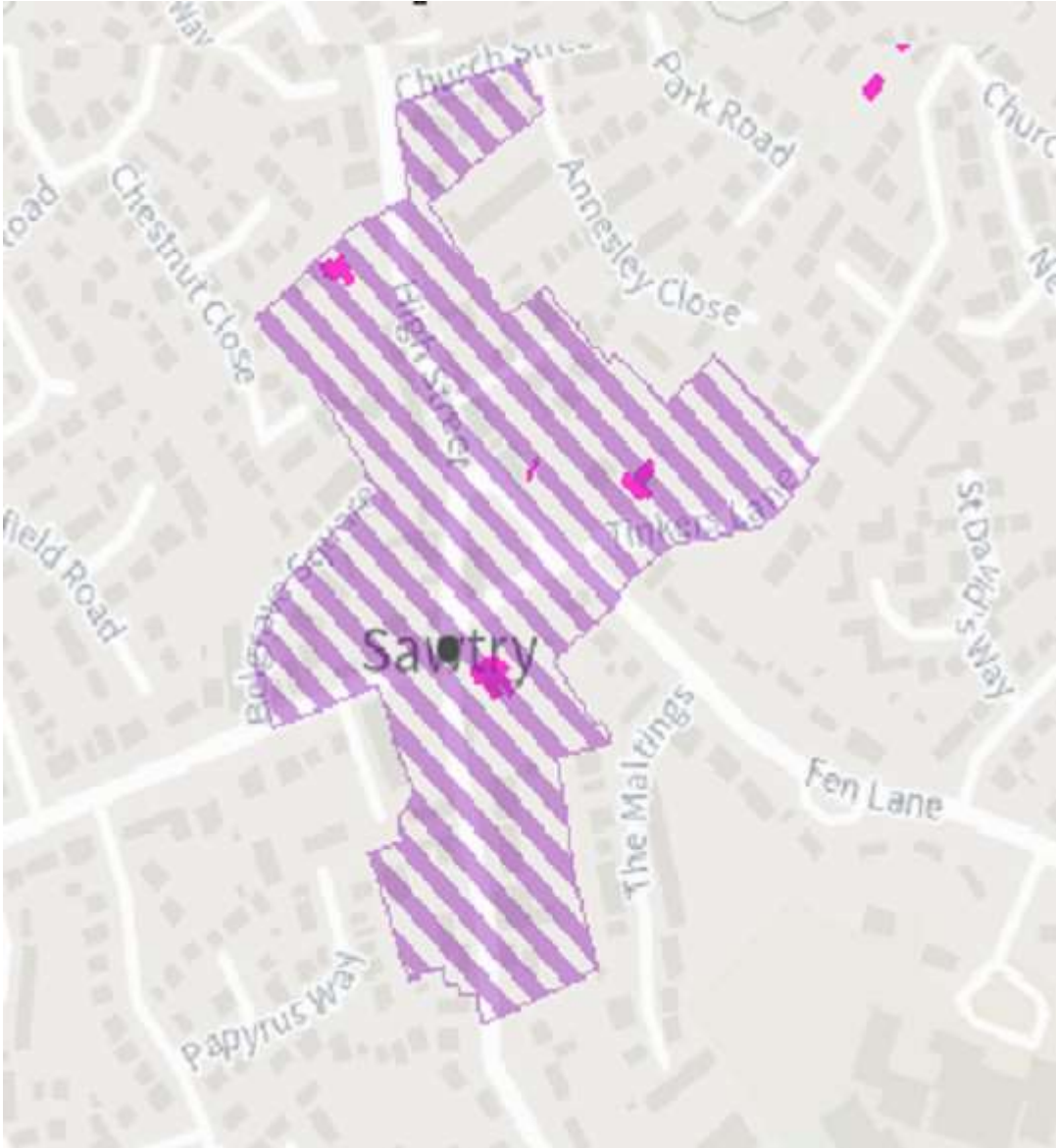
9.7.1 The general locations of the community facilities protected by Policy SNP5 are shown on Maps 12 and 13.

# Map 1 - Sawtry Designated Neighbourhood Area



© Huntingdonshire District Council

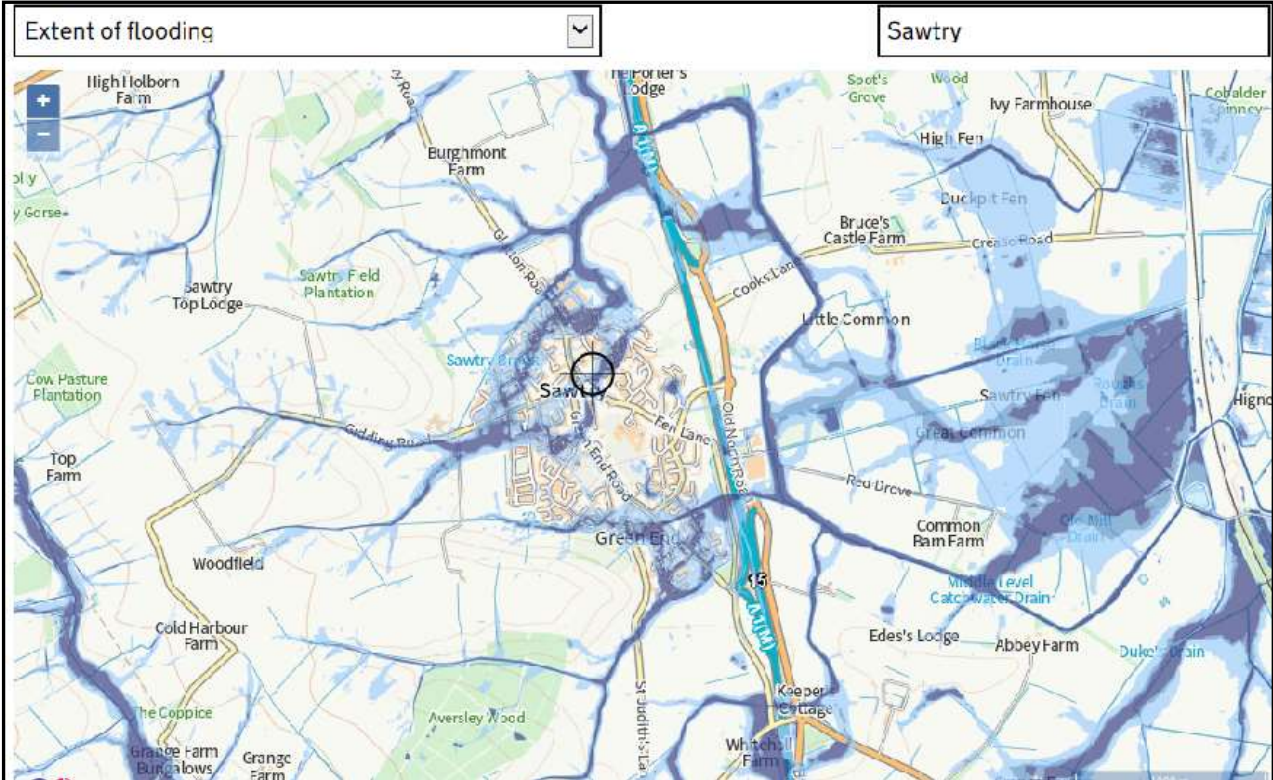
Map 2 - Sawtry Conservation Area



© Huntingdonshire District Council



### Map 3 - Surface Water Flood Risk Map



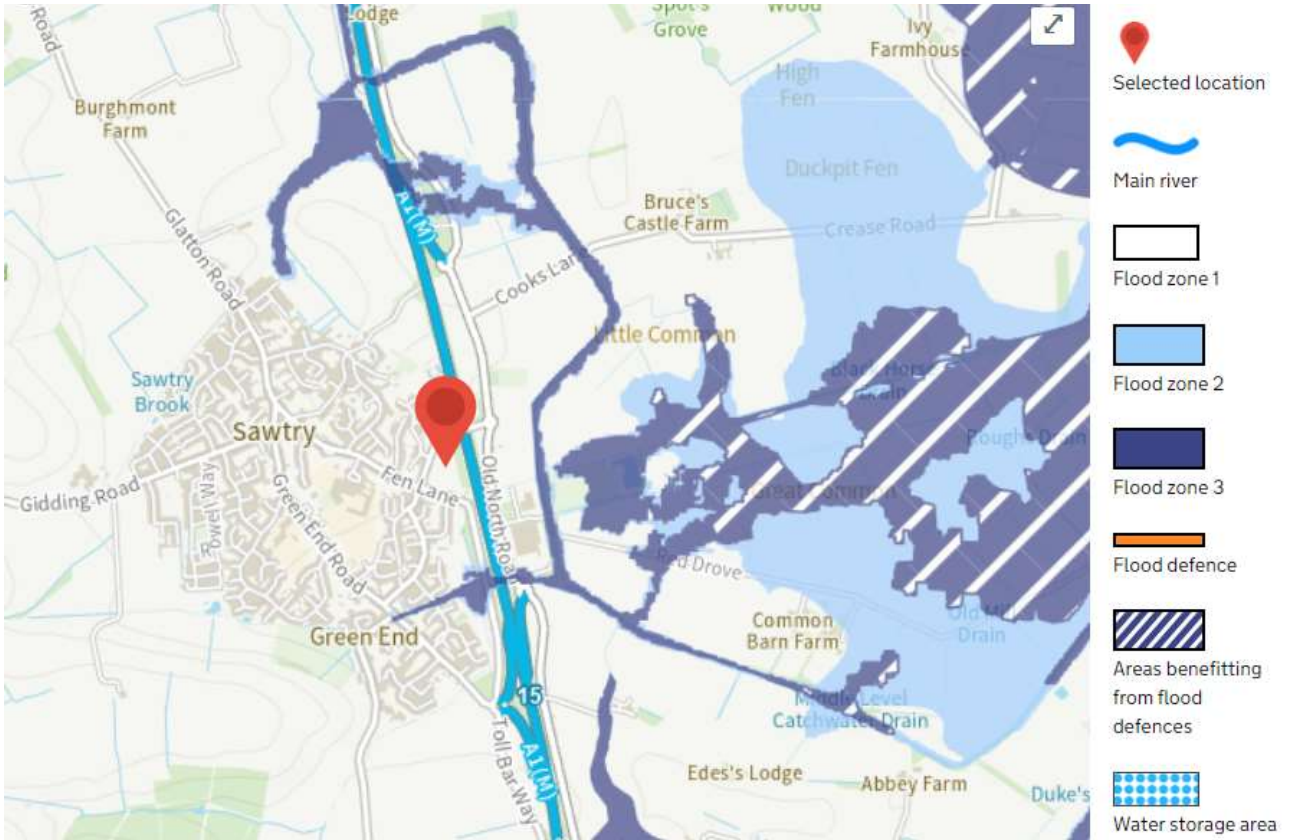
Extent of flooding from surface water

- High
- Medium
- Low
- Very low
- ⊕ Location you selected

© Environment Agency

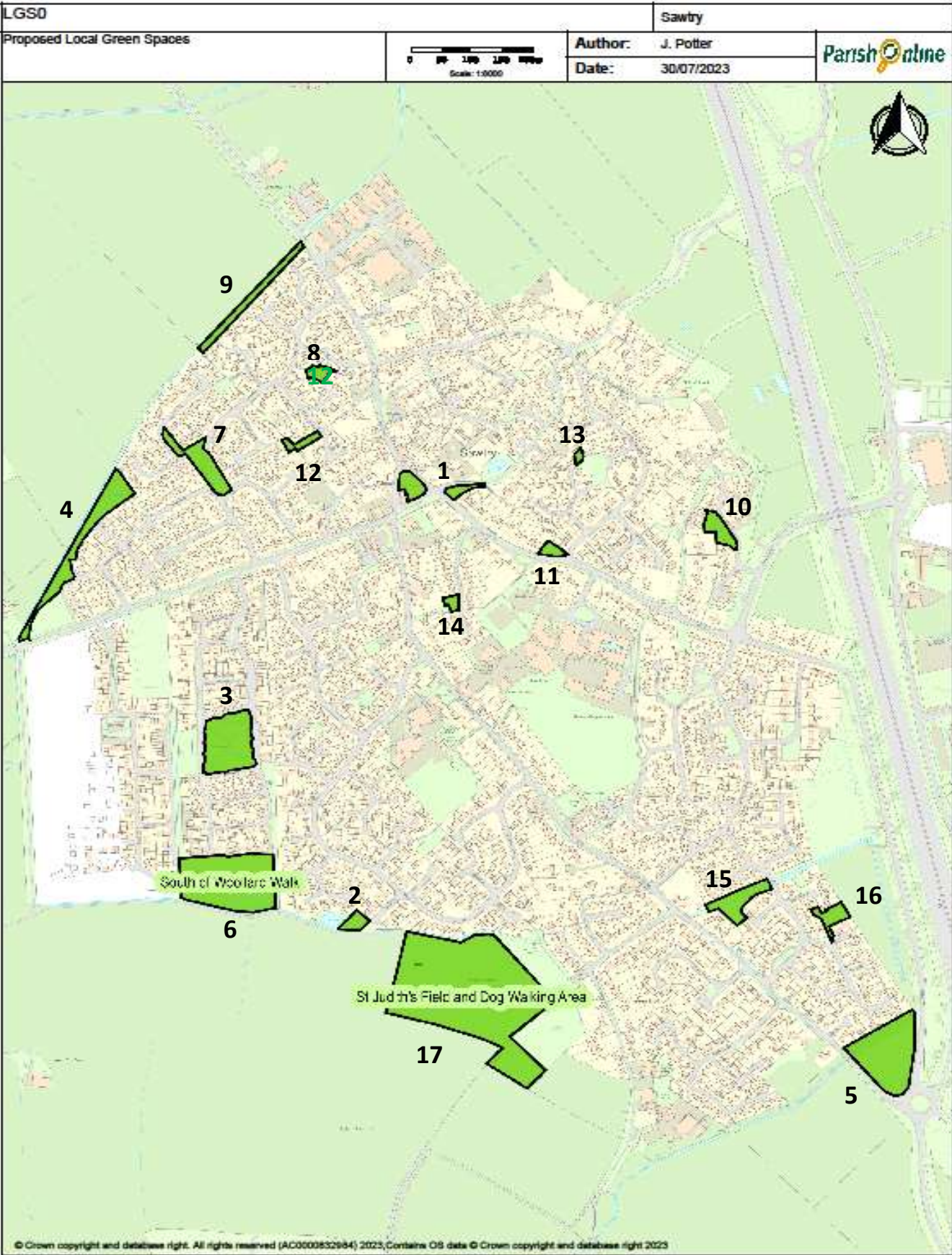


### Map 4 - Flood Risk Map for Planning (River Flooding)



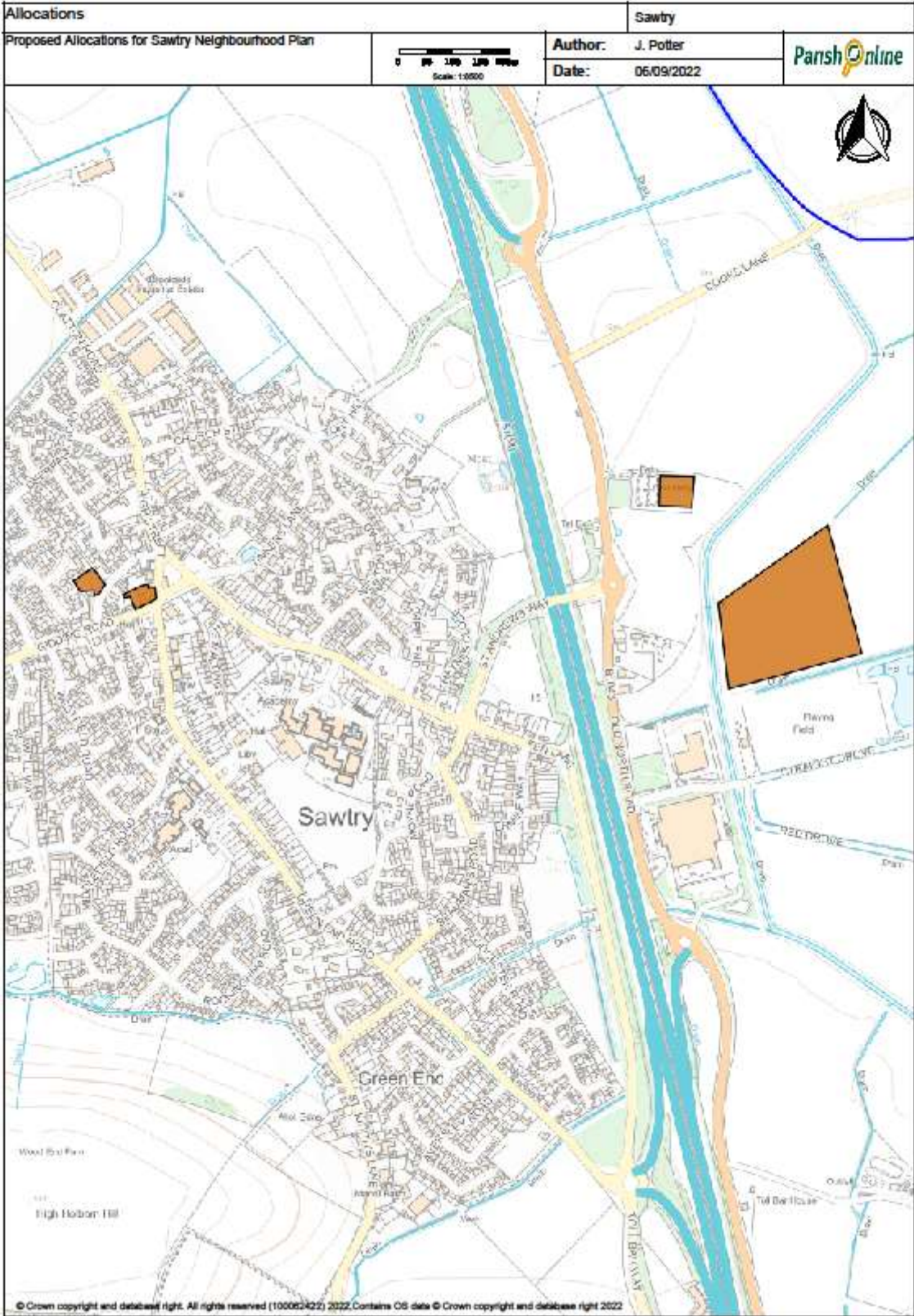
© Environment Agency

# Map 5 – Local Green Spaces

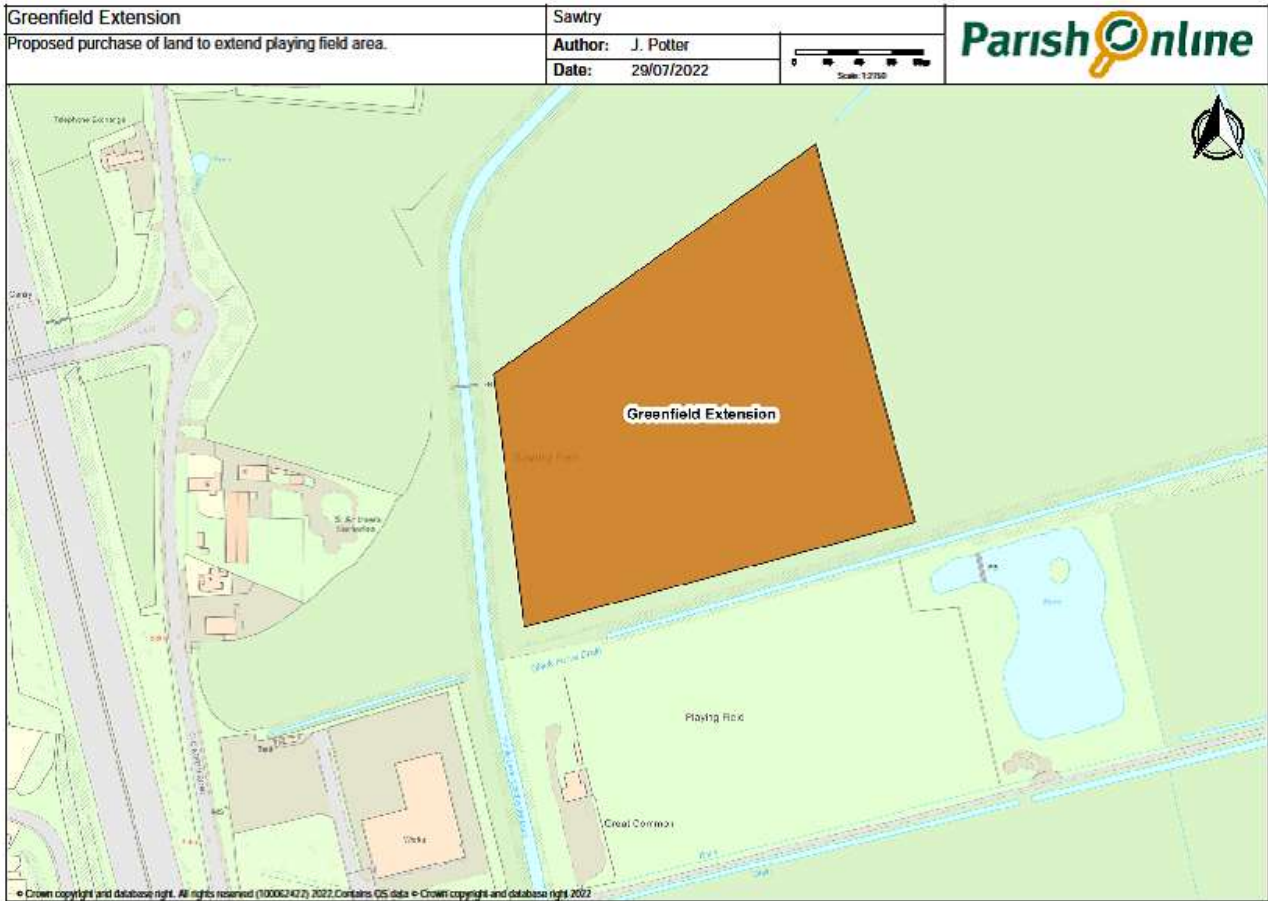




# Map 6 – Overview of Proposed Allocations

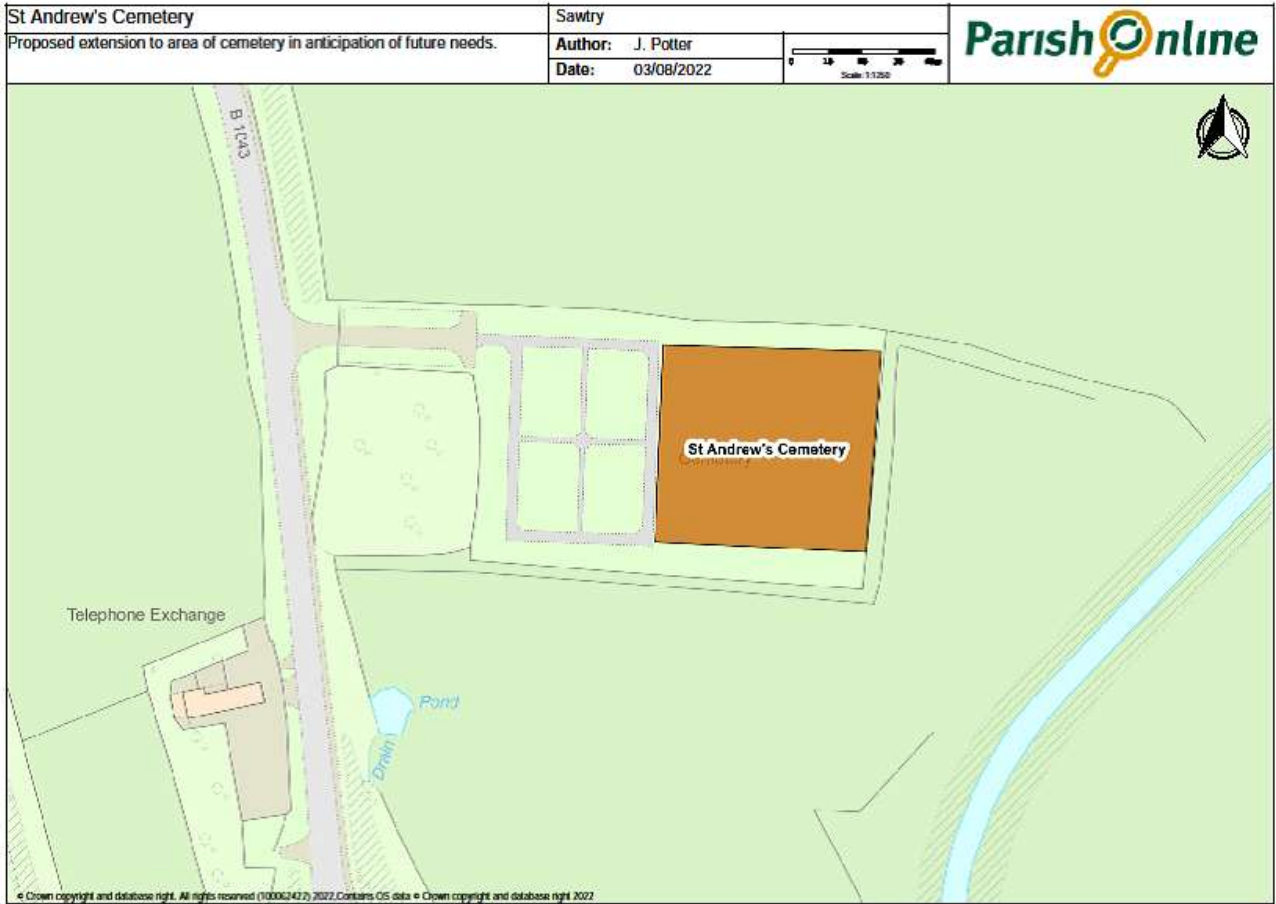


# Map 7 – Proposed Allocation for Sport and Recreation (Greenfields Extension)

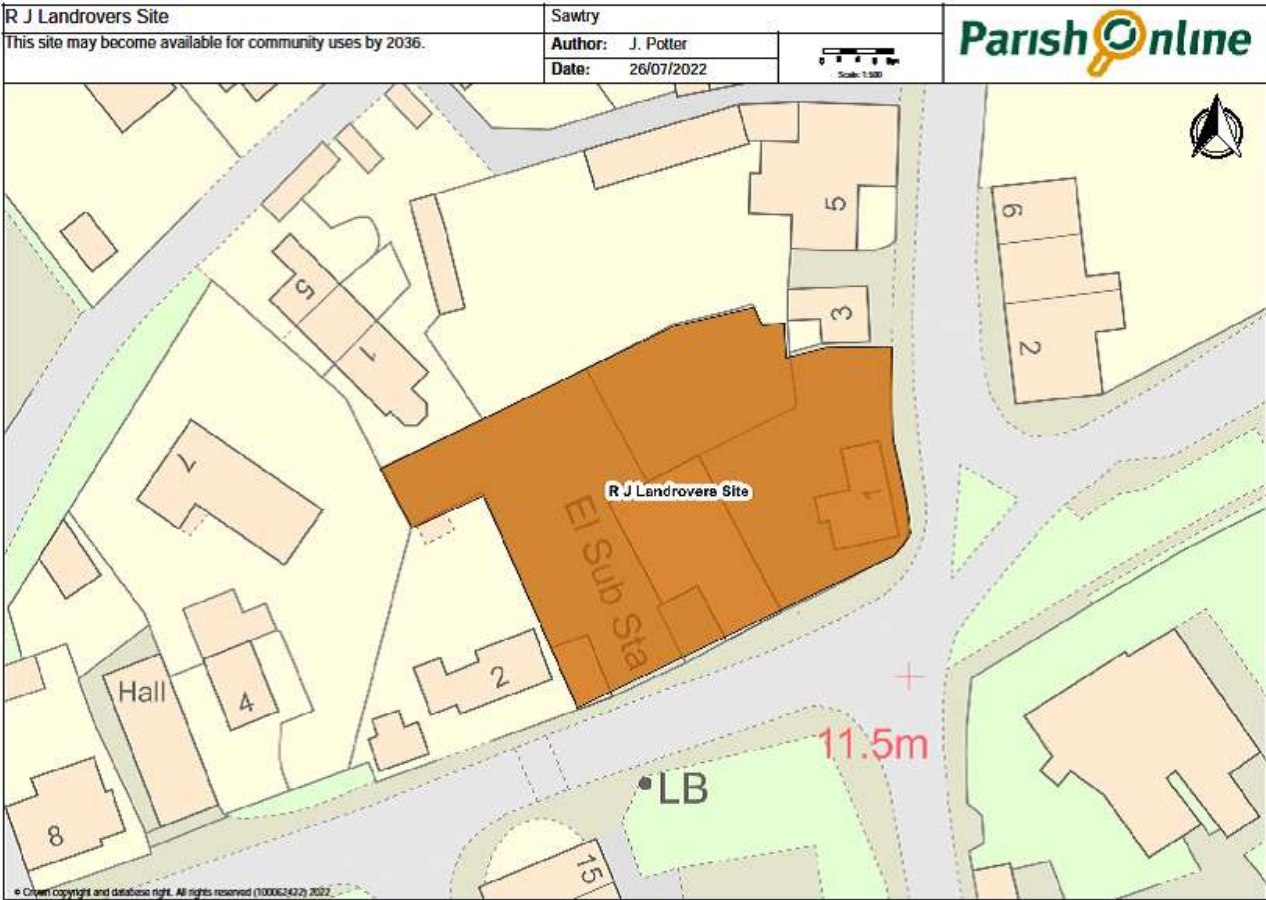




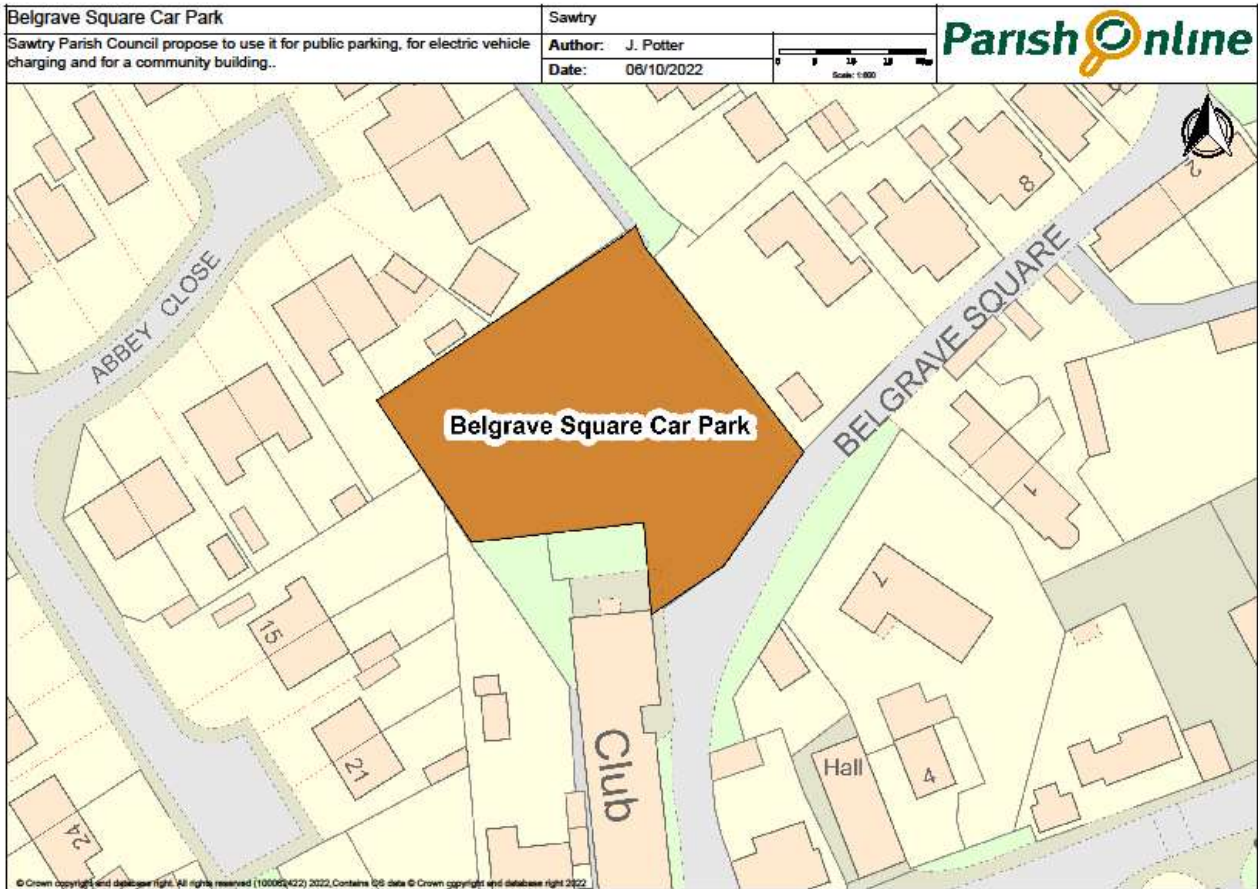
# Map 8 – Proposed Allocation for Cemetery (St Andrews Extension)



### Map 9 – Proposed Allocation for Village Centre Opportunity Site (RJ Landrovers)

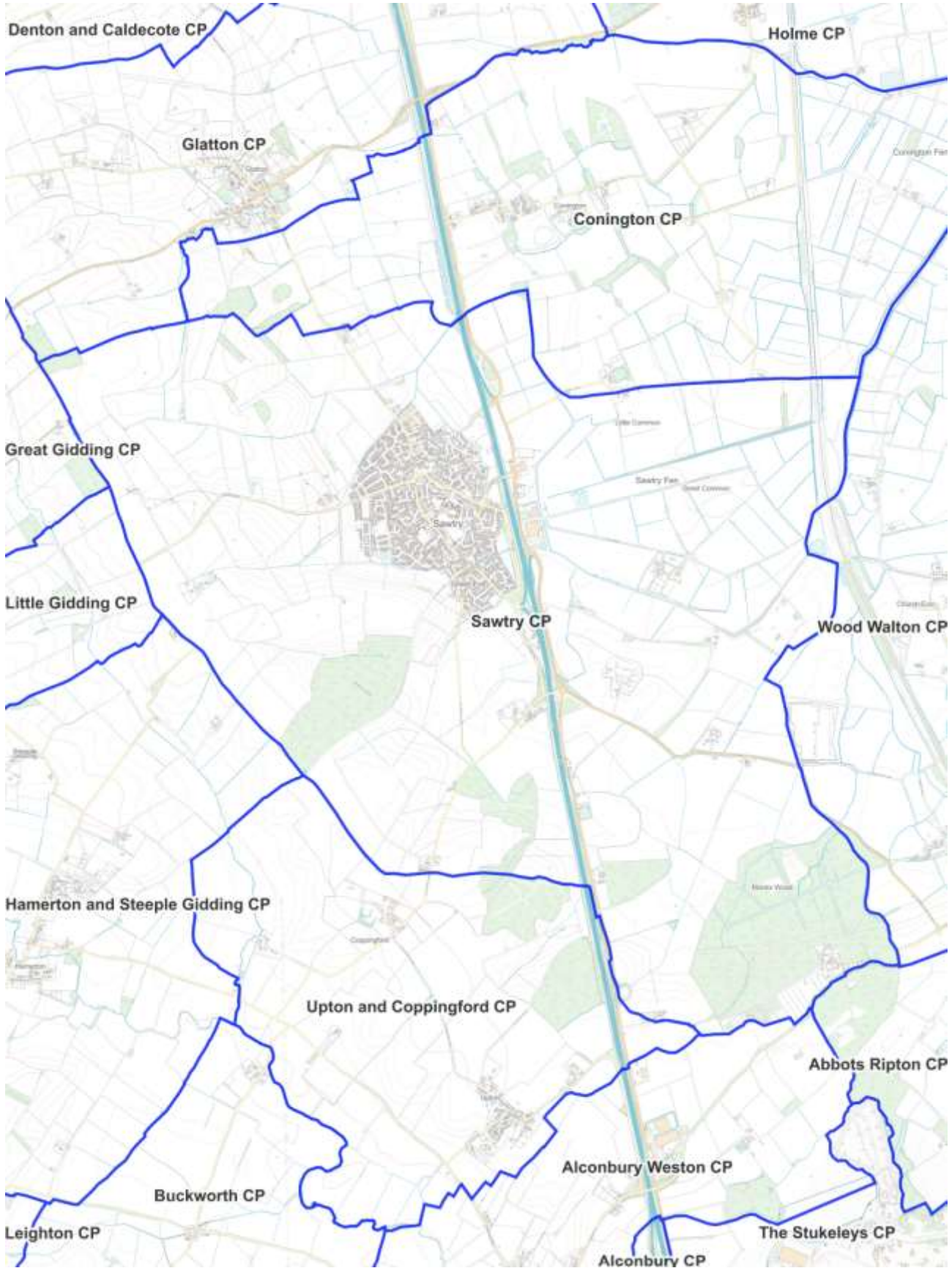


# Map 10 – Proposed Allocation for Off-Street Car Parking, Electric Vehicle Charging Points and a Community Building (Belgrave Square)





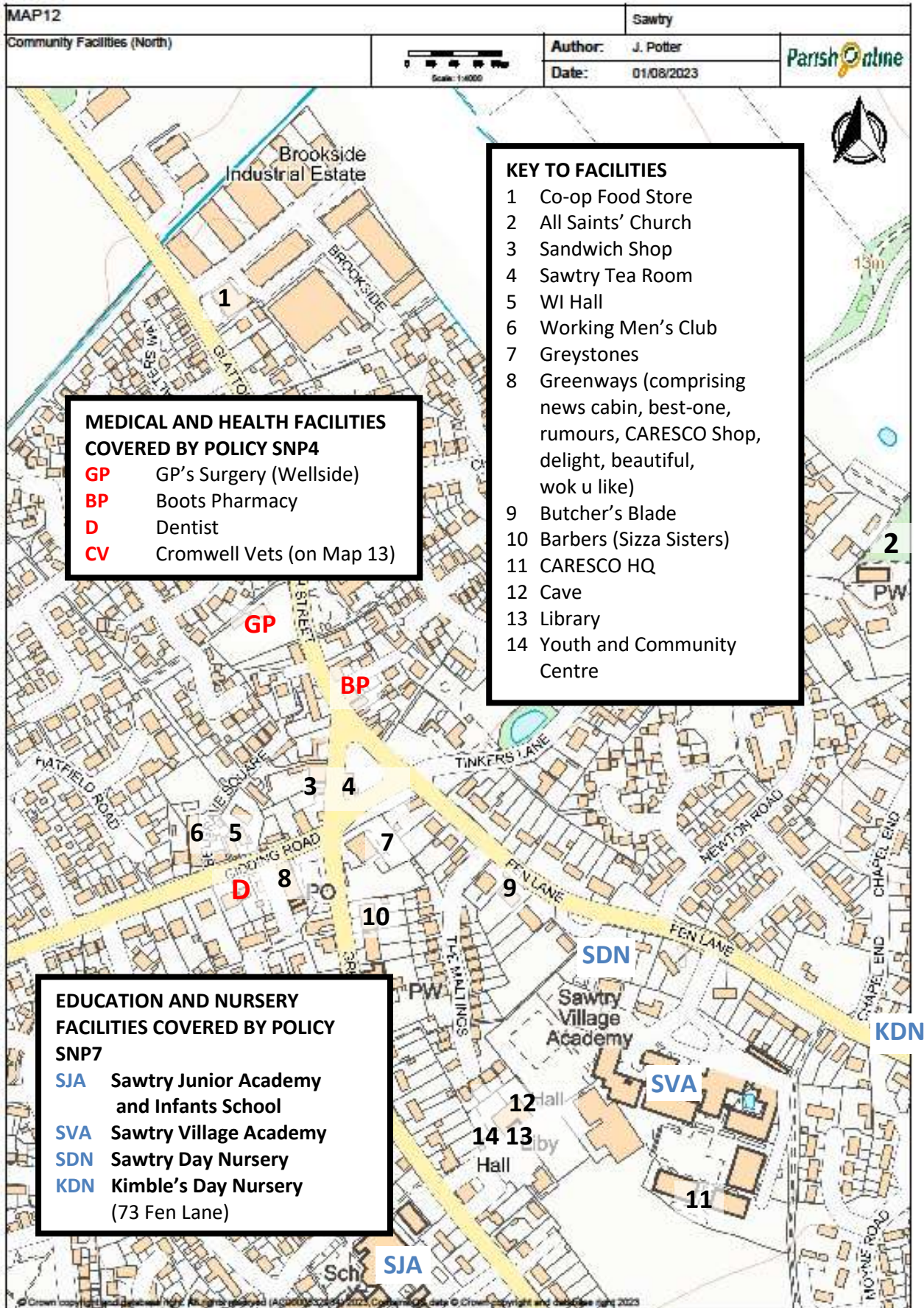
## Map 11 – Sawtry Parish



Sawtry Parish Area (Designated Neighbourhood Plan Area) and Neighbouring Parish Areas

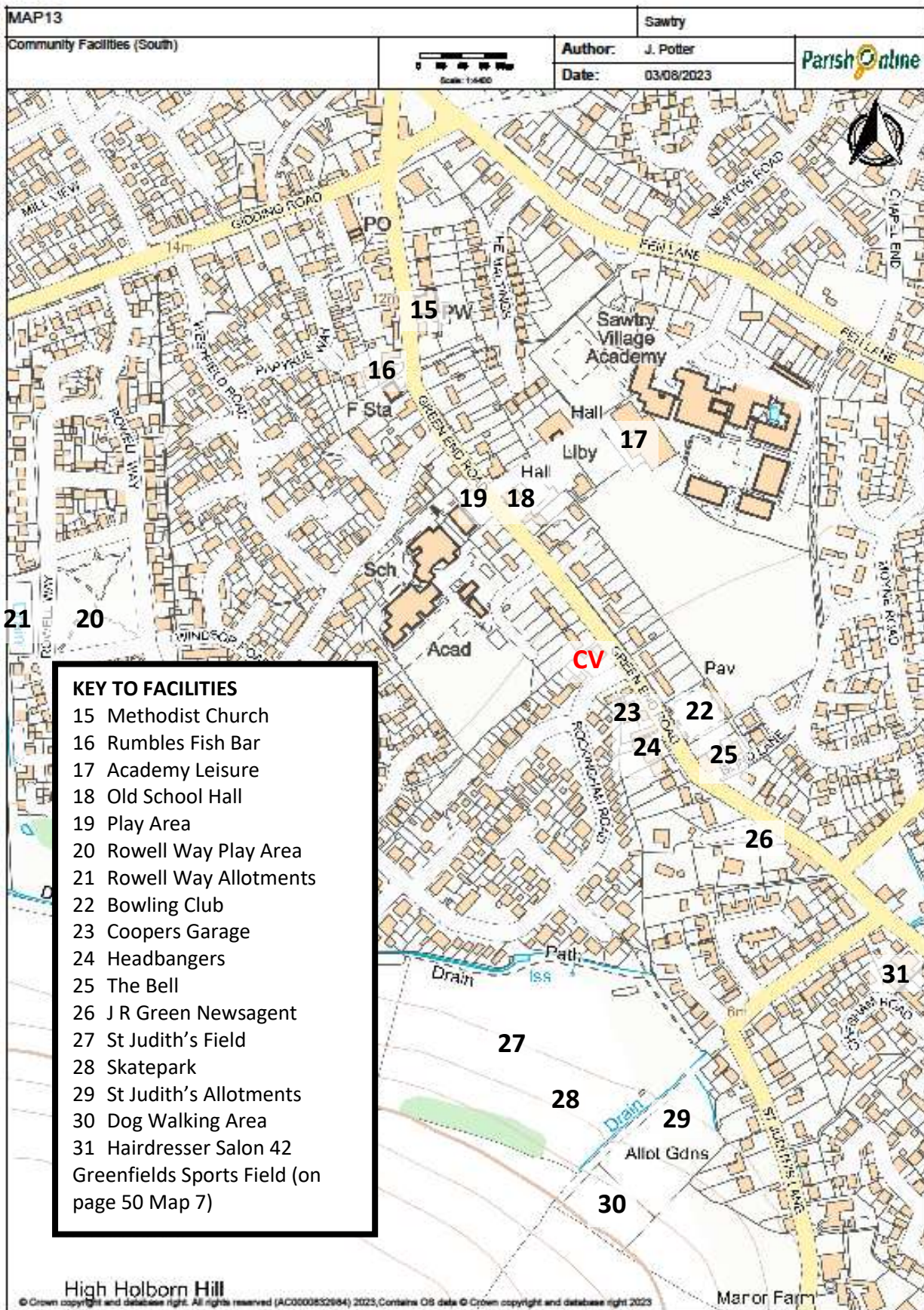


Map 12 – Protected Community Facilities (North)





Map 13 – Protected Community Facilities (South)



## 10. Statistical Tables

(Please note that only limited data from the Census 2021 has yet been released at the Parish level, where this is available it has been included)

### 10.1 SAWTRY ETHNICITY (Census 2021)

Group	Sawtry	Cambridgeshire	England
White	95.6	88.6	81.0
Asian/Asian British	1.2	5.8	9.6
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	1.0	1.4	4.2
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	1.8	2.9	3.0
Other Ethnic Group	0.5	1.3	2.2
Figures are shown as percentages			
Data excludes households that did not answer the question about ethnicity			

### 10.2 SAWTRY AGE DISTRIBUTION (Census 2021)

Age Band (years)	Sawtry	Cambridgeshire	England
0 to 14	16.9	16.5	17.3
15 to 19	5.5	5.7	5.7
20 to 64	57.8	59.2	58.6
65 to 74	10.7	9.9	9.9
75 to 84	6.6	6.3	6.1
85 +	2.5	2.4	2.4
Figures are shown as percentages			

### 10.3 SAWTRY ECONOMIC ACTIVITY BY OCCUPATION (Census 2021)

Occupation	Sawtry	Cambridgeshire	England
Managers, directors and senior officials	13.9	13.4	12.9
Professional occupations	19.0	26.6	20.3
Associate professional and technical occupations	15.8	13.2	13.3
Administrative and secretarial occupations	11.3	8.6	9.3
Skilled trades occupations	11.3	9.2	10.2
Caring, leisure and other service occupations	8.5	8.1	9.3
Sales and customer service occupations	5.9	5.8	7.5
Process plant and machine operatives	6.1	6.3	6.9
Elementary occupations	8.2	8.7	10.5
Figures are shown as percentages			

**10.4 SAWTRY ECONOMIC ACTIVITY BY TYPE** (Source ONS)

Type of Activity	Sawtry	Cambridgeshire	England
Full-time employee	47.2	42.6	38.6
Part-time employee	14.8	13.4	13.7
Full-time student	2.6	3.2	3.4
Self-employed	8.9	9.8	9.8
Unemployed	2.8	3.0	4.4
Retired	14.4	12.7	13.7
Other/not declared	9.3	15.3	16.4
Figures are shown as percentages			

*In the 2021 Census Economic Activity by Type is not yet fully available but Economic Activity Status is released; this shows:*

*Economically Active In Employment – Sawtry 63.4% (Cambridgeshire 60.0%; England 57.4%)*

*Economically Active Unemployed – Sawtry 2.6% (Cambridgeshire 2.4%; England 3.5%)*

*Economically Inactive – Sawtry 33.9% (Cambridgeshire 37.5%; England 39.1%)*

**10.5 SAWTRY DWELLING COUNTS 2011** (Source ONS)

Type of Dwelling	Sawtry	Cambridgeshire	England
Bungalows	17	13	9
Flats/maisonettes	4	15	24
Terraced houses	10	21	26
Semi-detached houses	27	23	24
Detached houses	42	25	16
Figures are shown as percentages			

*In the 2021 Census the full breakdown of Accommodation Type is not available, but headline Accommodation Type is released; this shows:*

*Whole House or Bungalow – Sawtry 95.8% (Cambridgeshire 85.3%; England 77.4%)*

*Flat, Maisonette or Apartment – Sawtry 4.1% (Cambridgeshire 13.9%; England 22.2%)*

*Caravan or Mobile Home – Sawtry 0.1% (Cambridgeshire 0.8%; England 0.4%)*

**10.6 DWELLING OWNERSHIP AND TENANCY** (Census 2021)

Ownership and Tenancy	Sawtry	Cambridgeshire	England
Owned: Owned outright	36.0	34.2	32.5
Owned: Owned with a mortgage or loan or shared ownership	39.6	31.1	29.8
Social rented	10.7	15.2	17.1
Private rented or lives rent free	13.7	19.5	20.6
Figures are shown as percentages			



**10.7 SAWTRY CAR OWNERSHIP** (Source Census 2021)

Number of Cars	Sawtry	Cambridgeshire	England
No cars owned in household	11.2	16.9	23.5
One car	35.7	41.6	41.3
Two cars	38.7	30.4	26.1
Three or more cars	14.4	11.2	9.1
Figures are shown as percentages			

**10.8 SAWTRY RELIGIOUS BELIEFS** (2021 Census voluntary question)

Number of Cars	Sawtry	Cambridgeshire	England
No religion	44.9	43.2	36.7
Christian	47.3	45.1	46.3
Buddhist	0.3	0.5	0.5
Hindu	0.2	1.1	1.8
Jewish	0.1	0.3	0.5
Muslim	0.4	2.1	6.7
Sikh	0.2	0.2	0.9
Other religion	0.6	0.6	0.6
Not answered	6.1	7.0	6.0
Figures are shown as percentages			





## 11. Implementation and Delivery

- 11.1 The implementation and delivery section sets out what actions are required to turn this Neighbourhood Plan into reality on the ground.
- 11.2 The Parish Council needs the help of public and private partners to create a sustainable community and deliver the policies set out in this Neighbourhood Plan. The Parish Council will work with a number of partners to implement the Plan. Reference to infrastructure providers below includes a wide range of organisations such as utility companies and water management bodies (including the Lead Local Flood Authority, Anglian Water, the Middle Level Commissioners, and Sawtry Internal Drainage Board).
- 11.3 New development creates a need to provide new infrastructure, facilities and services to successfully incorporate new development into the surrounding area to benefit existing, new and future residents. As provided for within national planning policy, appropriate financial contributions will be obtained from developers to combine with public funding to deliver the necessary facilities in infrastructure. The determination of planning applications also allows matters to be secured through planning conditions. The table below sets out the relevant implementation partners for the Neighbourhood Plan policies.
- 11.4 The Neighbourhood Plan provides a positive framework to ensure that development in Sawtry will bring positive benefits to the Parish.

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Delivery Partners</b>	<b>Implementation Method</b>
Policy SNP1 – The natural environment and protecting green spaces	PC, HDC, CCC, PD, LS, IP, CG & LR	Determination of Planning Applications & Planning Obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy or Community Initiatives
Policy SNP2 - Climate change mitigation	PC, HDC, CCC, PD, CG,IP, LR & B	Pre-Application Consultation and Determination of Planning Applications
Policy SNP3 - Recreation and leisure	PC, HDC, CCC, LR, CG & LS	Determination of Planning Applications & Planning Obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy, Other Funding Bids or Community Initiatives
Policy SNP4 - Medical and health	PC, HDC, CCC, HP, LR & CG	Determination of Planning Applications & Planning Obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy, Local Health Funding or Community Initiatives
Policy SNP5 - Community facilities	PC, HDC, CCC, PD, HP, IP, LR, LS & CG	Determination of Planning Applications & Planning Obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy, Other Funding Bids or Community Initiatives
Policy SNP6 - Retail and shopping provision and village centre opportunities	PD, PC, HDC, PD, LR, B & CG	Determination of Planning Applications & Planning Obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy or Community Initiatives
Policy SNP7 - Education and nursery provision	LS, CCC, HDC, PC, PD, IP & LR	Determination of Planning Applications & Planning

		Obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy or Local Education Funding
Policy SNP8 -Footpaths and cycle ways	PC, CCC, HDC, PD, LR & CG	Determination of Planning Applications & Planning Obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy, Local Highway Improvement Bids or Community Initiatives
Policy SNP9 - Off-street parking and electric vehicle charging	PC, LR, CG, HDC & CCC	Determination of Planning Applications & Planning Obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy, Local Authority or Government Funding Opportunities or Community Initiatives
Policy SNP10 – Safer communities	PC, CP, HDC, CCC, PD, IP, LR & CG	Determination of Planning Applications & Planning Obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy, Local Authority or Government Funding Opportunities or Community Initiatives
Policy SNP11 - Business and employment	B, PD, PC, HDC, CCC & IP	Determination of Planning Applications & Planning Obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy

Key

- Sawtry Parish Council (PC)
- Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC)
- Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC)
- Health Providers (HP)
- Private Developers (PD)
- Local Schools (LS)
- Infrastructure Providers (IP)
- Cambridgeshire Police (CP)
- Community Groups (CG)
- Local Residents (LR)
- Local Businesses (B)



11.5 The Parish Council is committed to Localism and bringing greater locally informed influence over planning decisions and it will be the key organisation in the implementation, monitoring and review of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Council will build upon its excellent track record in engaging in planning decisions (reactively through being consulted and proactively through promoting the policies and proposals of this Plan), and by delivering projects and infrastructure for the local community. However, the Council recognises the need to involve a range of other organisations if the potential of this plan is to be realised.

11.6 In England, communities that draw up a Neighbourhood Plan and secure the consent of local people in a referendum, which is then legally ‘made’, benefit from 25% of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) revenues arising from development that takes place in their area. However, this only applies to development permitted after the making of the NP and is not applied retrospectively. Up until that time the provision of eligibility for 15% of the CIL generated in the area applies, subject to a cap per annum as specified in CIL Regulations.

11.7 Contributions through CIL will be obtained from any housing development taking place in the Parish. The money raised through CIL is used to fund district-wide and local infrastructure projects that benefit local communities as set out in Section 216 (2) of the Planning Act 2008. under Regulation 59 (1) and (3) of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended), CIL must be applied by the Charging Authority to fund the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure to support the development of its area; or support the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure outside its area where to do so would support the development of its area.



11.8 The element of CIL which is the district portion will be spent by Huntingdonshire District Council on district-wide infrastructure in line with the priorities that HDC has set<sup>42</sup>. The neighbourhood proportion of the CIL monies goes to the Parish Council and will be spent on local infrastructure as required by law. The main priorities for the Parish element of CIL contributions will go towards the delivery of the Greenfields extension for which planning application 20/01407/OUT (a Glatton Road development) allocates funding (£216,977) and the extension to St Andrew's Cemetery. At the end of the 2021/22 financial year, Sawtry Parish Council held £231,795.88 in CIL receipts retained to spend on local infrastructure.

11.9 In addition, the Parish Council will seek to influence annual and other budget decisions by Huntingdonshire District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council on housing, open space and recreation, economic development, community facilities and transport, through respective plans and strategies. The Parish Council will also work with the appropriate agencies and organisations to develop funding bids aimed at achieving Neighbourhood Plan policies and objectives. This might include the Lottery, UK Government programmes and any partnership programmes.

## 12. Monitoring and Review

12.1 Continual plan review is a fundamental element of the planning system. It is important to check that the plan is being implemented correctly, ensure that outcomes match objectives and to change the plan if they are not. This Neighbourhood Plan will be carefully monitored by the Parish Council and reviewed if it becomes apparent that the vision, goals and objectives of the Plan are not being met.

12.2 Monitoring is a shared responsibility of the Parish Council as the qualifying body; Huntingdonshire District Council as the Local Planning Authority; and users of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Parish Council will consider the effectiveness of the policies and proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan each time it makes representations on a planning application; alongside seeking views on the Neighbourhood Plan at each Annual Parish Meeting. The Parish Council will request Huntingdonshire District Council to raise with it any issues arising out of the development management process in determining individual planning applications. Users of the Neighbourhood Plan are encouraged to make comments on monitoring of the Neighbourhood Plan to the Parish Council at any point.



<sup>42</sup><https://huntingdonshire.gov.uk/planning/community-infrastructure-levy-cil/cil-funding/infrastructure-delivery/>

- 12.3 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared to guide development up to 2036. It is unlikely that the Neighbourhood Plan will remain current and entirely relevant for the entire plan period and may, in whole or in part, require some amendments before 2036.
- 12.4 There are a number of circumstances under which a partial review of the plan may be necessary, in accordance with best practice, Sawtry Parish Council and its partners will consider undertaking a partial review of the Neighbourhood Plan no later than 5 years following its finalisation. As currently committed development progresses this may necessitate a need to review the Neighbourhood Plan as will any future review of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan.

## 13. Glossary of Terms

- 13.1 The majority of the glossary is copied from the NPPF to ensure consistency<sup>43</sup>. The terms set out below are either included within the Neighbourhood Plan or are within parts of the NPPF or the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 that is referred to in the Neighbourhood Plan.

**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 categories: affordable housing for rent; starter homes; discounted market sales housing; and other affordable routes to home ownership including 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). *[Note: a more detailed definition is included in the NPPF<sup>44</sup>]*

**Allocation (of Land)** \*: Allocating land is the identification of a piece of land for a specific future use. Allocation in a neighbourhood plan does not automatically mean that the housing, shop or community building desired for development will materialise.

**Amenity** \*: A positive element or elements that contribute to the overall character or enjoyment of an area. For example, open land, trees, historic buildings and the inter-relationship between them, or less tangible factors such as tranquillity.

**Ancient Woodland**: An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD. It includes ancient semi-natural woodland and plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS).

**Basic Conditions Statement**: This describes how a neighbourhood plan meets the Basic Conditions as set out in [paragraph 8\(2\) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990](#)<sup>45</sup> as applied to neighbourhood plans by Section 38A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

**Community Consultation** \*: The process of engaging with a community to identify the proposals for inclusion the neighbourhood plan.

**Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)** \*: A levy allowing local authorities to raise funds from owners or developers of land undertaking new building projects in their area.

**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.

**Conservation Area** \*: An area of special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which are preserved and enhanced by local planning policies and guidance.

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<sup>43</sup> Those items in the glossary which do not match the NPPF or are not defined in the NPPF glossary are marked with an Asterix \*

<sup>44</sup> See Annex 2 on page 64 of the NPPF

<sup>45</sup><https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/8/schedule/4B>



**Designated Area \***: The area described by a parish or town council in an application to the local planning authority under Regulation 5 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (as amended). In this case the designated area is the entire Parish of Sawtry.

**Development plan**: Is defined in Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and includes adopted local plans, neighbourhood plans that have been made and published spatial development strategies, together with any regional strategy policies that remain in force. Neighbourhood plans that have been approved at referendum are also part of the development plan, unless the local planning authority decides that the neighbourhood plan should not be made.

**Economic development \***: Development, including those within the B Use Classes, public and community uses and main town centre uses (but excluding housing development).

**Green infrastructure**: A network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity.

**Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) \***: Is a requirement to ensure that there are no likely significant effects on internationally important sites and nature conservation caused through the implementation of a Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan.

**Heritage asset**: 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. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

**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.

**Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 \***: The plan, adopted in May 2019, is for the future development of the local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community. In law this is described as the development plan documents adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

**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.

**Key Service Centres \***: The seven areas, including Sawtry, designated in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to reflect both the concentration of services and facilities in these locations and their role in providing services to residents of other nearby communities.

**Living Conditions \***: The circumstances affecting the way in which people live, especially with regard to their well-being. Relevant factors include: internal space; access to external space; outlook; privacy; daylight; sunlight; overbearing impact; impact from pollution including noise.

**Local Green Spaces \***: Under the NPPF paragraph 101, these are green areas of particular local importance which meet a set of criteria and are designated to protect them from development.

**Local planning authority**: The public authority whose duty it is to carry out specific planning functions for a particular area. All references to local planning authority include the district council, London borough council, county council, Broads Authority, National Park Authority, the Mayor of London and a development corporation, to the extent appropriate to their responsibilities. *[The local planning authority for this area is Huntingdonshire District Council]*

**Local Plan:** A plan for the future development of a local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community. In law this is described as the development plan documents adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. A local plan can consist of either strategic or non-strategic policies, or a combination of the two.

**Neighbourhood plans:** A plan prepared by a parish council or neighbourhood forum for a designated neighbourhood area. In law this is described as a neighbourhood development plan in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

**NPPF \*:** National Planning Policy Framework, this forms the overall planning policy produced by the Government to inform the making of Development Plans including Neighbourhood Plans and decision making on planning applications.

**Open space:** All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.

**Policies Map \*:** A document which illustrates on a base map all the policies and proposals contained in this Neighbourhood Plan or another document which forms part of the Development Plan.

**Planning condition:** A condition imposed on a grant of planning permission (in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) or a condition included in a Local Development Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.

**Planning obligation:** A legally enforceable obligation entered into under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to mitigate the impacts of a development proposal.

**Planning Practice Guidance \*:** this forms the overall national planning practice guidance and advice produced by the Government to inform the making of Development Plans including Neighbourhood Plans and decision making on planning applications.

**Referendum:** A vote by the eligible population of an electoral area to decide on a matter of public policy. Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders are made by a referendum of the eligible voters within a neighbourhood area.

**Ramsar sites:** Wetlands of international importance, designated under the 1971 Ramsar Convention.

**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. A proportion of market homes may be allowed on the site at the local planning authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding. *[Also see Policy LP 28 of the Local Plan]*

**Scheduled Monument \*:** Those monuments that are given legal protection by being scheduled by Historic England.

**Self-build and custom-build housing:** Housing built by an individual, a group of individuals, or persons working with or for them, to be occupied by that individual. Such housing can be either market or affordable housing. A legal definition, for the purpose of applying the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended), is contained in Section 1(A1) and (A2) of that Act.

**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.

**Settlement Boundary \*:** The boundary drawn around various towns and villages to limit new development and define the 'built-up area' of the settlement. Outside of the settlement boundary is considered to be the countryside.

**Significance (for heritage policy):** The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site's Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance.

**Special Areas of Conservation (SAC):** Areas defined by regulation 3 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 which have been given special protection as important conservation sites.

**Special Protection Areas (SPA):** Areas classified under regulation 15 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 which have been identified as being of international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds.

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

**Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA):** 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.

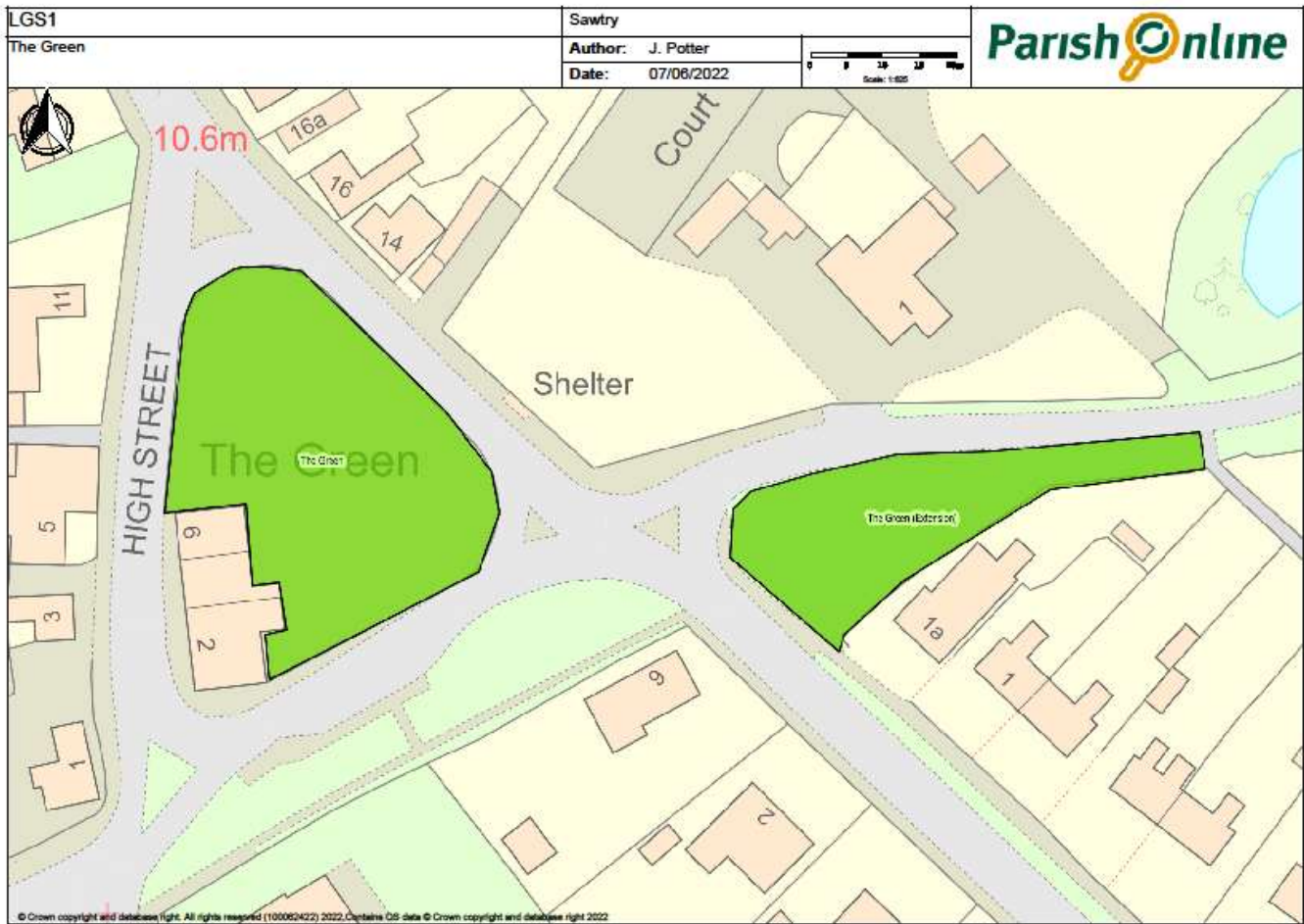
**Supplementary planning documents:** Documents which add further detail to the policies in the Local Plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design. Supplementary planning documents are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan.

**Sustainable transport modes:** Any efficient, safe and accessible means of transport with overall low impact on the environment, including walking and cycling, low and ultra-low emission vehicles, car sharing and public transport.

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

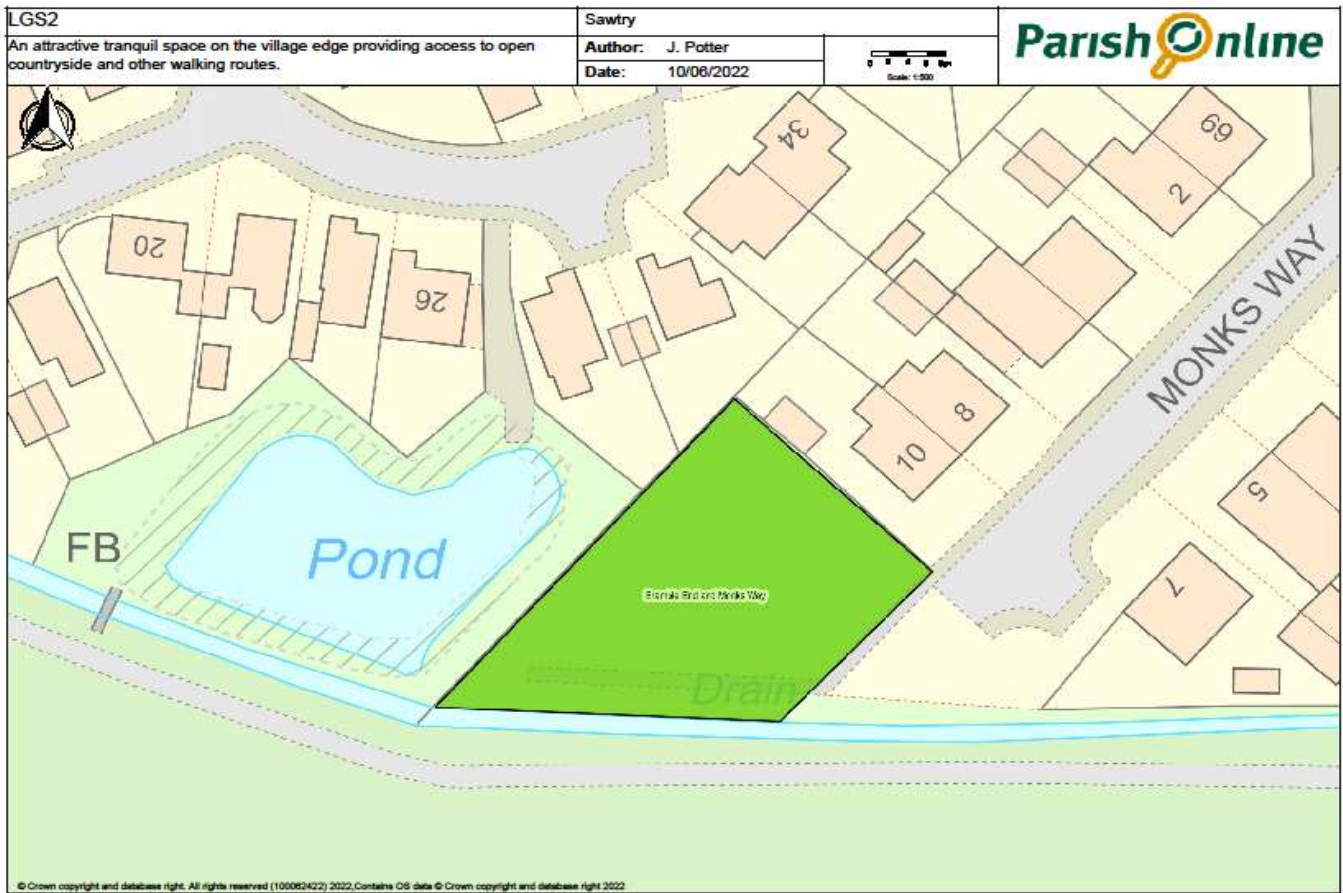


### Appendix 1 - Local Green Spaces Detailed Maps and Schedule



Site	Demonstrably Special Significance				
	Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Tranquillity	Wildlife Richness
LGS1 The Green and adjacent small area - the original village heart which is a key open space contributing to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area; popular for recreation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

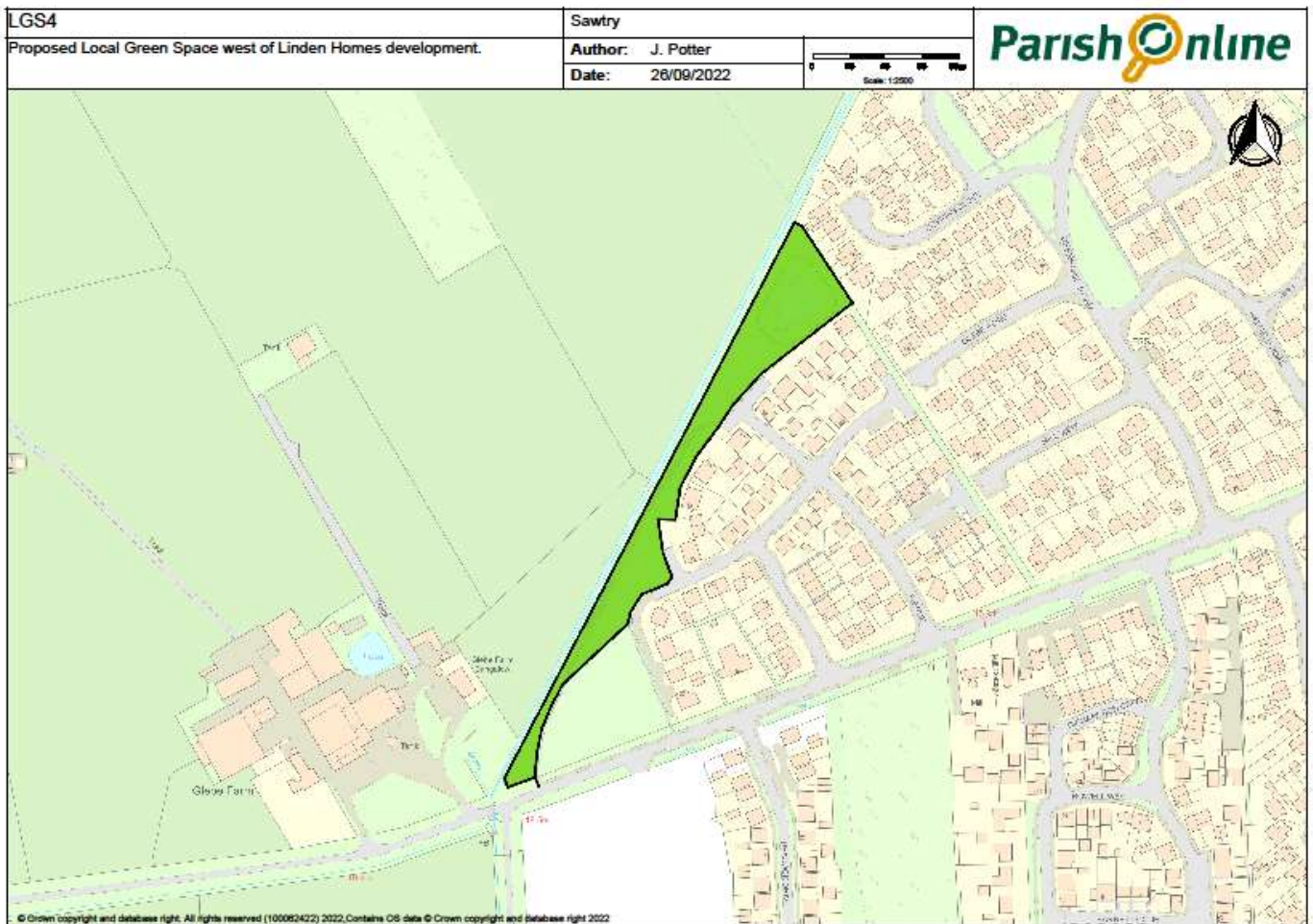




Site	Demonstrably Special Significance				
	Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Tranquillity	Wildlife Richness
LGS2 Land off Bramble End and Monks Way - An attractive tranquil space on the village edge containing numerous trees, providing access to open countryside and other walking routes			✓	✓	✓



Site	Demonstrably Special Significance				
	Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Tranquillity	Wildlife Richness
<p>LGS3 Land (Playing field) at Rowell Way - A large open space generously equipped for children's activities. It has been well-designed as multi-functional green space and provides a 'village green' style of area within this new housing area</p>			✓		✓



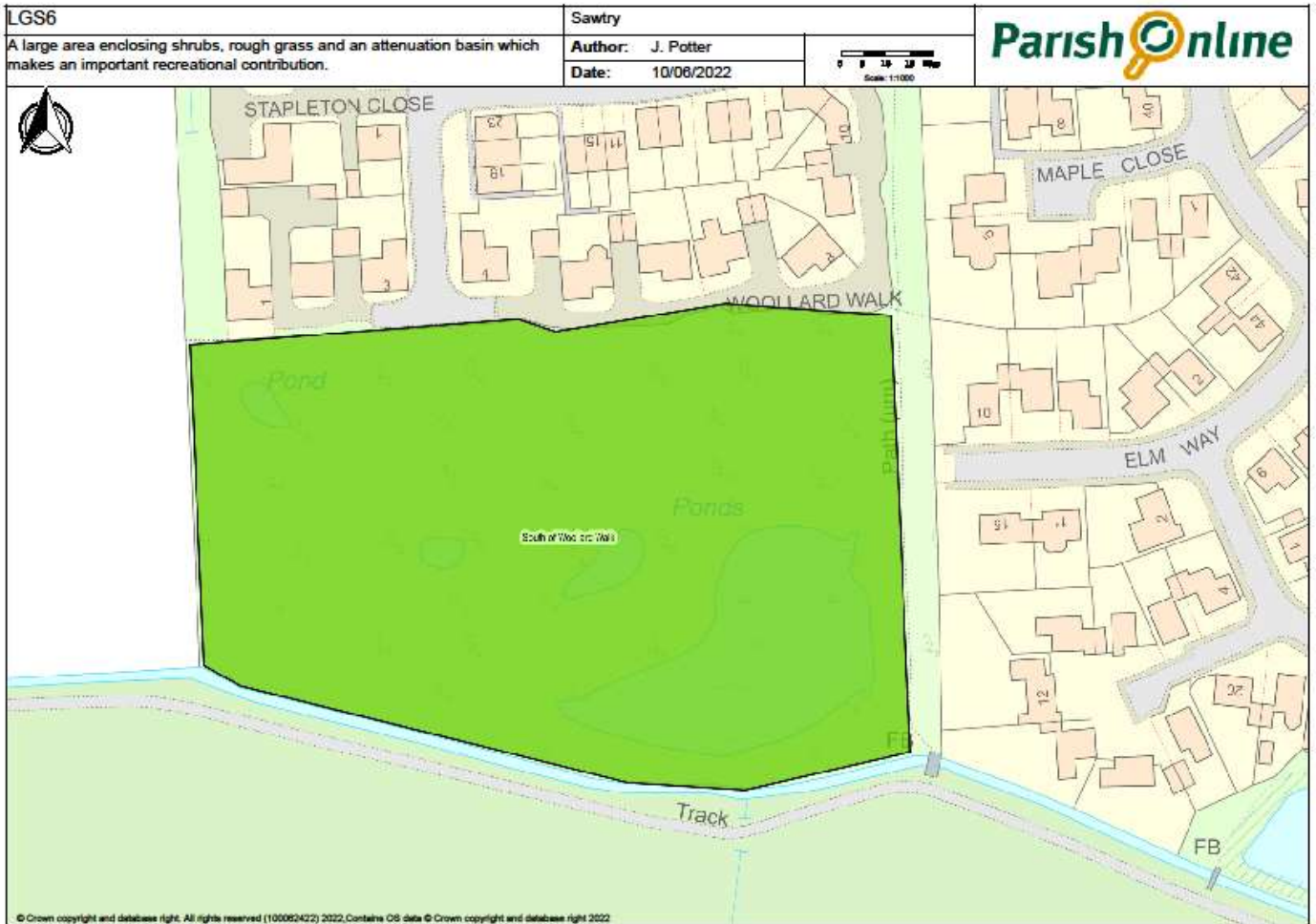
Site	Demonstrably Special Significance				
	Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Tranquillity	Wildlife Richness
LGS4 Land North of Gidding Road along Sawtry Brook—this is the remaining space set aside for public enjoyment; it includes an attractive route for walking and contains trees and hedgerows. It provides an attractive setting and green edge to this modern housing area			✓	✓	✓





Site	Demonstrably Special Significance				
	Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Tranquillity	Wildlife Richness
LGS5 Land including wooded area North of roundabout at Green End Road and Bill Hall Way - This area of woodland which contains numerous informal footpaths is the only feasible LGS in the southernmost portion of Sawtry; it is an attractive area for woodland walks and for wildlife	✓		✓	✓	✓





Site	Demonstrably Special Significance				
	Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Tranquillity	Wildlife Richness
<p>LGS6 Land South of Woollard Walk and West of Elm Way – This is a large area enclosing shrubs, rough grass and an attenuation basin which makes an important biodiversity contribution. It abuts an important route for recreation</p>				✓	✓



Site	Demonstrably Special Significance				
	Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Tranquillity	Wildlife Richness
LGS7 Land at Deerpark Road, Coppins Close and Shawley Road – These areas collectively provide a green heart akin to a ‘village green’ style area in the heart of this large area. The green heart contributes positively to the streetscene character and the areas provide informal recreational opportunities	✓		✓		



Site	Demonstrably Special Significance				
	Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Tranquillity	Wildlife Richness
LGS8 Land between Farm Close and Westerman Close - A tranquil area, with an ancient oak tree and on popular walking routes	✓		✓		✓



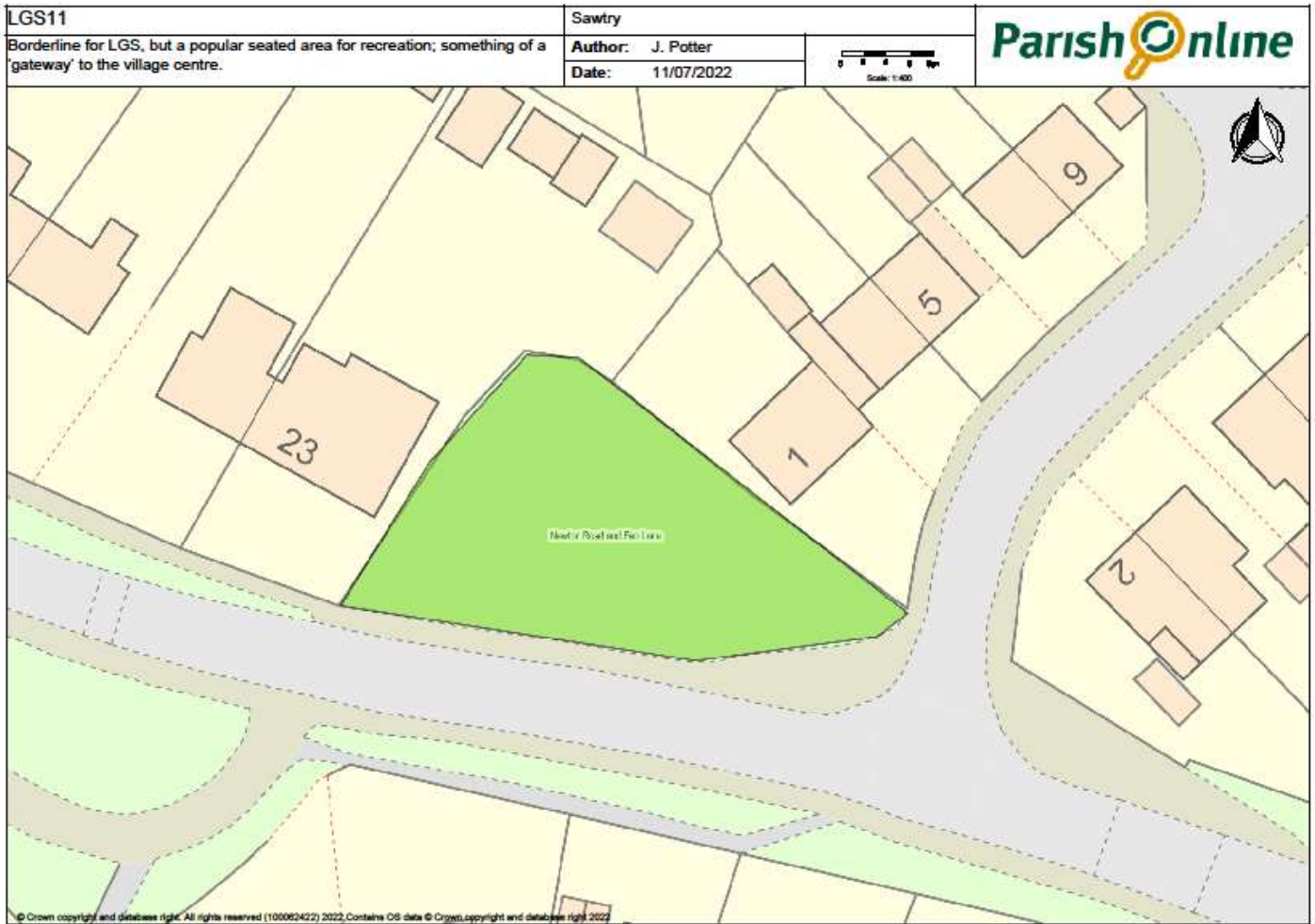


Site	Demonstrably Special Significance				
	Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Tranquillity	Wildlife Richness
LGS9 Land West of Glatton Road along Sawtry Brook – This is an area of growing importance for protection in view of the large estate planned to the north. It is used as a popular dog walking route; the hedging and drain are habitat for wildlife	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓





Site	Demonstrably Special Significance				
	Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Tranquillity	Wildlife Richness
LGS10 Land at Haynes Close – This is a well-planned communal area in this modern development which supports wildlife and provides an important visual green heart to the area	✓			✓	✓

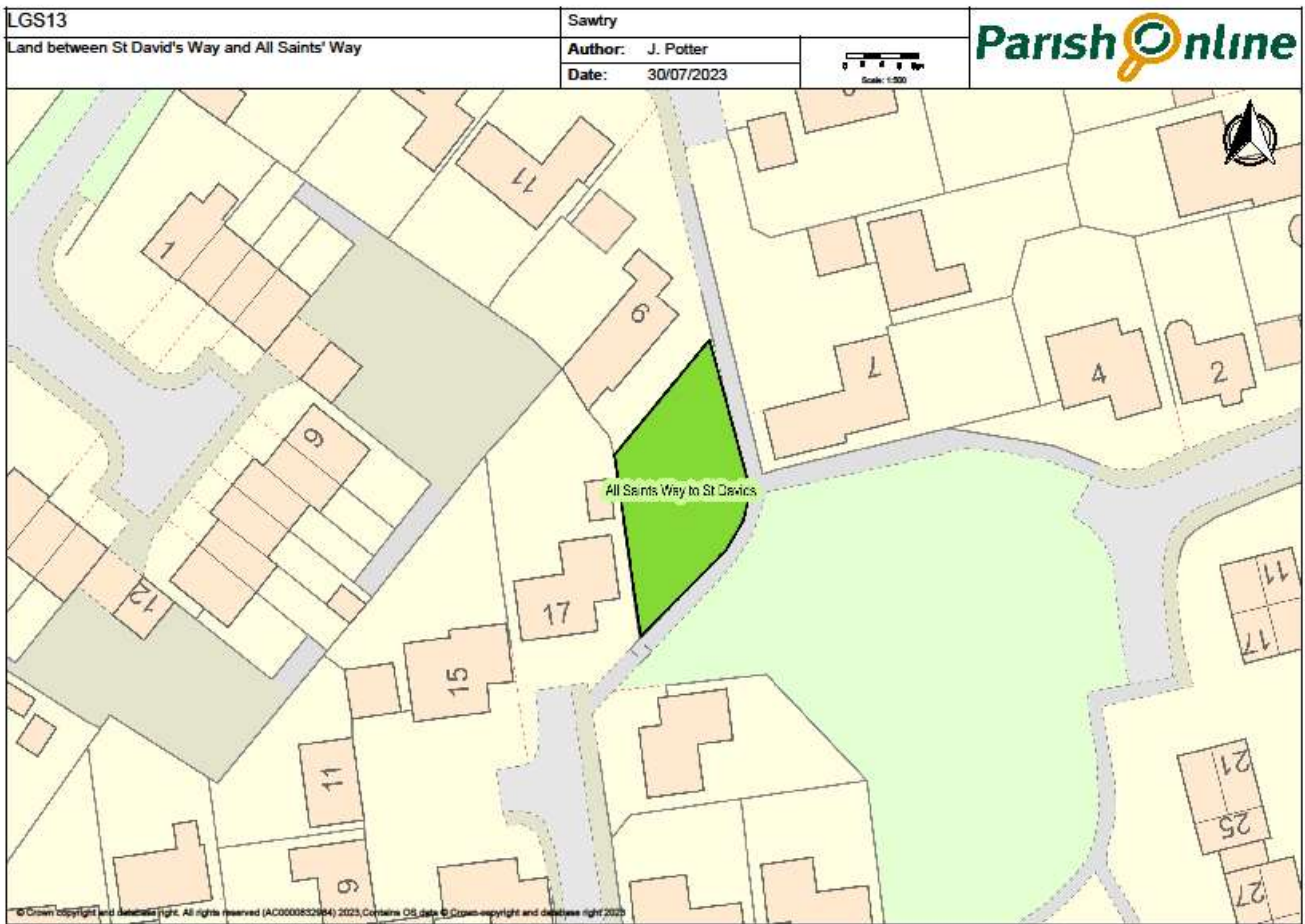


Site	Demonstrably Special Significance				
	Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Tranquillity	Wildlife Richness
<p>LGS11 Land on the corner of Fen Lane and Newton Road – This is a popular seated area for recreation; it operates as something of a 'gateway' to the village centre</p>	✓		✓	✓	



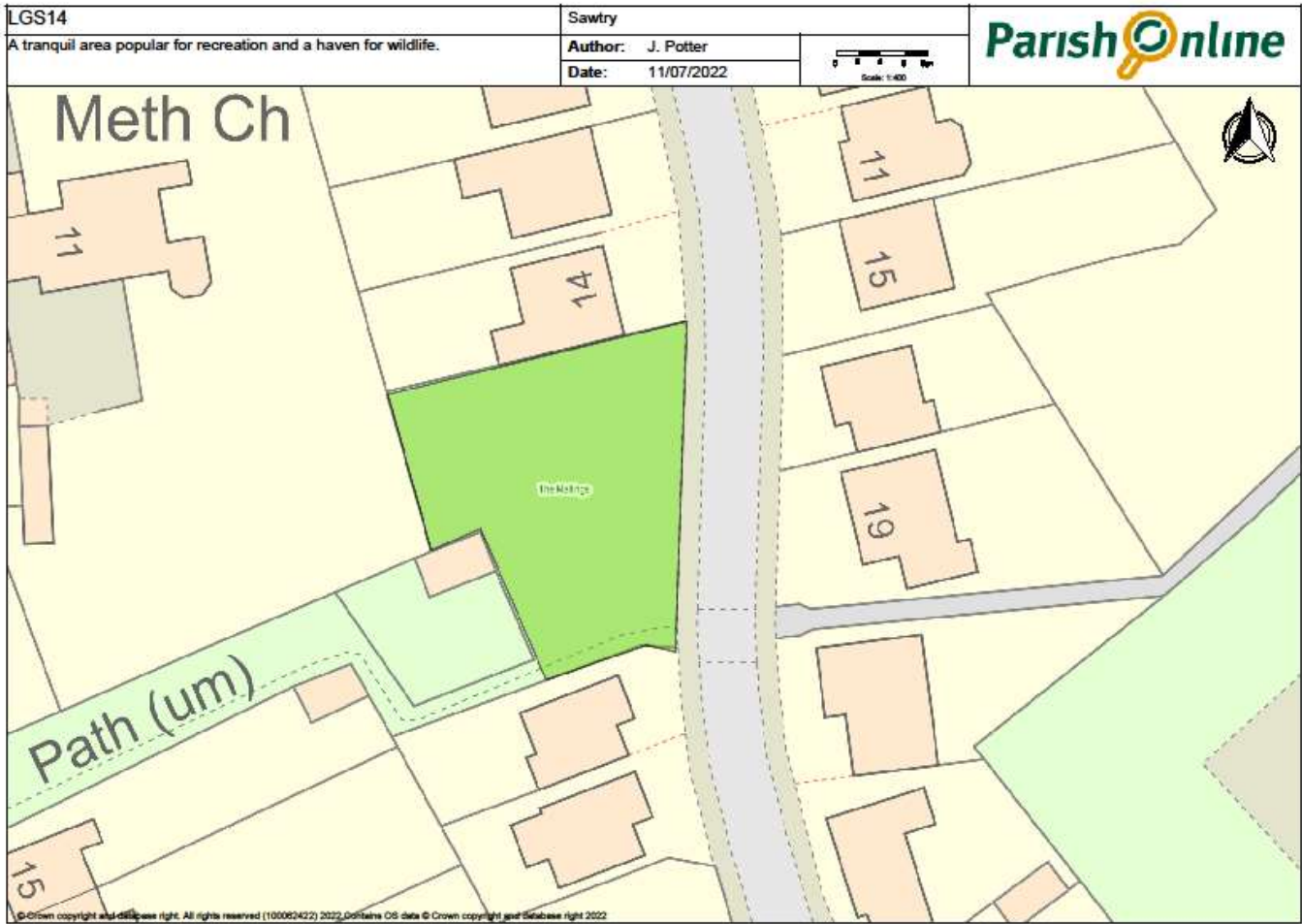
Site	Demonstrably Special Significance				
	Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Tranquillity	Wildlife Richness
<p>LGS12 Land West of Chestnut Close including Jubilee Walk – This is part of the overall network of walkways around the village, it includes numerous attractive chestnut trees; it is somewhat of a village feature. The trees provide important habitat for birds</p>	✓		✓	✓	✓





Site	Demonstrably Special Significance				
	Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Tranquillity	Wildlife Richness
<p>LGS13 Land between St David's Way and All Saints Way - An open area which contributes to this communal area and provides the only grassed space to the homes bounded by Newton Road, Tinkers Lane and Fen Lane. The LGS covers the western part but excludes land to the east whose ownership was recorded as pending at the time of making the Neighbourhood Plan. A future review of the Neighbourhood Plan will consider whether the LGS should be extended when the land ownership has been resolved.</p>	✓		✓	✓	





Site	Demonstrably Special Significance				
	Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Tranquillity	Wildlife Richness
LGS14 Land at The Maltings – An area used by residents for dog walking; it provides wildlife habitat and contains a children’s play area			✓	✓	✓



Site	Demonstrably Special Significance				
	Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Tranquillity	Wildlife Richness
<p>LGS15 Land West of Gloucester Road – This area includes numerous attractive mature trees; it is somewhat of a village feature incorporating the brook. The trees and brook provide important habitat for wildlife</p>	✓		✓	✓	✓



Site	Demonstrably Special Significance				
	Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Tranquillity	Wildlife Richness
LGS16 Land between Saxon Close and Wheat sheaves – although this is somewhat of a ‘backland’ green space it is a very attractive wooded area with undulating terrain, it also provides good biodiversity habitat. Although not a formal route, local residents use this space as a shortcut to get to the larger green area to the east	✓			✓	✓





Site	Demonstrably Special Significance				
	Beauty	Historic Significance	Recreational Value	Tranquillity	Wildlife Richness
LGS17 St Judith's Field and Dog Walking Area - A large open space with the feel of parkland and equipped with play equipment and the skatepark; very popular for walking, exercise and recreation. The majority has been designated as LGS, leaving a lower section excluded to allow for possible future development for built sports facilities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓



## Appendix 2 – The Neighbourhood Planning Project

- 1 In 2017, Sawtry Parish Council explored the possibility of developing a Neighbourhood Development Plan, but the scheme did not progress. However, in the autumn of 2019, the Parish Council appointed a lead councillor who formed a small team of volunteers, the Neighbourhood Planning Group (NPG), essentially comprising professional individuals. Sawtry Parish Council, as a qualifying body, applied for the designation of Sawtry Parish as a neighbourhood area and this was approved by Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) on 23 October 2019. This approval was in accordance with regulations 5 and 5A of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The designated area applicable to the Plan is illustrated in Section 10.1.
- 2 The NPG was recognised as a group subservient to the Planning Committee of the Parish Council. Initially, a team member, who was a professional project manager, contributed to the work which followed a conventional project management approach. A Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis was performed, stakeholders were identified, and a communication strategy was developed. NPG meetings were organised and their proceedings were minuted in accordance with common office practice. Simple research revealed that considerable help would be available to the NPG from the Huntingdonshire District Council Planning Team and online from various sources such as Locality. From the outset, it was clear that consultancy support would be needed throughout the project and that funding would be sought from Sawtry Parish Council and Locality.
- 3 The NPG contacted Cambridgeshire ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England), which had originally offered a project initiation meeting in 2017, for consultancy support. However, for staffing reasons the meeting was delayed, re-scheduled for early 2020, and in consequence the NPG decided to commence planning the extensive stage of community consultation. With the assistance of the HDC Planning staff, a detailed paper questionnaire ('the Initial Survey') was prepared. The intention was to hold public meetings and face-to-face interviews with residents, businesses and community groups in order to elicit their views and opinions on the future development of Sawtry in the period to 2036. Before this plan could be implemented, Covid-19 infections and the subsequent lockdown restrictions imposed a complete block on any form of personal contact. An alternative approach to the community consultation then became essential and which began by seeking a suitable team of professional consultants.
- 4 As a first step, Cambridgeshire ACRE were considered suitable in view of their experience and sound reputation in neighbourhood planning. Unfortunately, a key member of staff announced his intention to leave ACRE at short notice. The NPG became concerned at this abrupt change and considered that two more consultancy teams should be identified. Three contenders were then considered: ACRE, a highly competent nationwide group, and a small Norfolk team. In the selection process, ACRE was considered a risk in view of possible staffing turbulence in the early stages of the project; the nationwide team indicated potential costs well in excess of the NPG's budget. Both were eliminated and the Norfolk team were chosen; their marketing material showed them to be an attractive partner and they appeared to possess a reasonable track record in neighbourhood planning. Regrettably, soon after their appointment, it became clear that a working relationship would be difficult to establish and that their level of support would fall short of their written undertakings.
- 5 By late summer of 2020, the NPG lacked consultancy support and was also forced to rely on 'Zoom' software for the conduct of its routine progress meetings. As a way forward from the impasse, the Chairman of Sawtry Parish Council recommended seeking advice from the Godmanchester Town Council



which had recently completed the examination and referendum of its neighbourhood plan. In a subsequent Zoom meeting with two members of the Godmanchester team, the NPG were advised to begin the community consultation process with a simple questionnaire which could identify perceived problems and aspirations in the community and which could progress into a 'vision' for Sawtry's future, into shared objectives, and, ultimately, into policies for the neighbourhood plan. The NPG took this advice on board and began working on a revised plan for the months ahead.

- 6 As the NPG began preparation for the lengthy stage of Community Consultation, a search for professional consultancy support was also initiated. A nearby village recommended their consultant, Mr Anthony Northcote at NEIGHBOURHOOD-PLAN.CO.UK. The NPG followed up this lead with further research and contact was made in April 2021 with Mr Northcote who agreed to provide support to the NPG. Soon after, Sawtry Parish Council entered a contractual agreement with his company, and he provided strong support throughout all stages of the project.