Welton Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2029

Made Version (January 2019)

Welton Parish Council
Foreword

Welton Parish Council decided to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan in order to shape and influence future development, enhance the sustainability of the village and safeguard its heritage. The Localism Act 2011 gave communities the right to do this.

Subsequently the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has carried out extensive consultations with those who live, work or have a business interest in the area. In addition statutory bodies have also been consulted.

Feedback has enabled the Steering Group to confirm the Vision for Welton as detailed below:

In 2029 Welton will be a distinct, sustainable and vibrant rural village completely surrounded by attractive open countryside. It will contain a strong and balanced community that looks after its historical and natural environment. Whilst physically separate from Daventry, there will be good links to the employment opportunities, services and facilities that the town and surrounding area offer.

The Vision is linked to a number of objectives and policies in the plan which it is felt reflect priorities up to 2029.

I should like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have contributed to the preparation of this plan. In particular I am extremely grateful to the Steering Group who prepared this plan on behalf of the Parish Council, to Robert Keith (MRTPI) our consultant throughout, and to Joanne Christopher, Senior Policy Office (Planning) at Daventry District Council.

Geoff Smith
Chair, Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
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### Note

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1. Introduction

What is a Neighbourhood Development Plan?

1.1 Communities now have powers to shape development through neighbourhood planning, which is a right introduced through the Localism Act 2011.

1.2 A neighbourhood development plan can set out a vision for an area and planning policies for the use and development of land. It will form part of the statutory planning framework for the area, and the policies and proposals contained within the neighbourhood plan will be used in the determination of planning applications.

1.3 The neighbourhood plan will therefore form part of the development plan for the area and will be used by the local planning authority and other stakeholders in decision-making.

Welton Parish

1.4 The parish is located immediately to the north of Daventry in the county of Northamptonshire.

1.5 The A5 Watling Street forms the parish boundary to the east. Immediately beyond lie the West Coast Main Railway Line and the M1 Motorway, with the Watford Gap Services abutting the parish boundary. The Grand Union Canal runs along the southern boundary of the parish, while the Leicester Arm passes directly through the eastern side of the parish. The western boundary generally follows fields either side of the A361 road from Daventry to Kilsby, while the northern boundary runs approximately along the route between Ashby St Ledgers and the Watford crossroads.

1.6 The parish comprises the small village of Welton situated in the centre. The northern part of the village is located on a ridge and the remainder on the south east facing slope of Crockwell Hill, one of the many hills which characterise the Northamptonshire Uplands. Surrounding the village is open countryside that is largely in agricultural use, interspersed with mature hedgerows and spinneys.

1.7 The village is predominantly residential. At the time of the 2011 Census the parish had a population of 608 people living in 258 households and the number of dwellings was 264.

1.8 There is little local employment. People commute to nearby Daventry or places such as Rugby, Northampton, Coventry and Banbury and further afield. The train station at Long Buckby is located about 4 miles to the east and provides services to Coventry, Birmingham and London, while Rugby station provides fast connections using the West Coast Main Line.
1.9 Local services and facilities include St Martin’s Church, the Village Hall, The White Horse Public House and Welton Church of England Academy (Welton CE Academy), all of which are located in the centre of the village.

**Governance**

1.10 Welton parish is in the administrative area of Daventry District Council (the District Council), the local planning authority. After the boundary changes caused by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England’s review adopted in 2012, Welton became part of the new ward of Braunston and Welton, with Braunston being the larger parish in terms of population and area. Services such as highways are provided by Northamptonshire County Council, which also deals with minerals and waste planning matters.

**Background to the Neighbourhood Plan**

1.11 As the appropriate ‘Qualifying Body’, Welton Parish Council formally applied to Daventry District Council to designate a Neighbourhood Area on 14 January 2016. The proposed boundary of the Neighbourhood Area followed the Parish boundary with the exception of land at Micklewell Park, which had recently received planning permission for 450 dwellings. Whilst the site is predominantly in Welton Parish, it is intended to help to meet the overall housing requirement for Daventry Town.

1.12 In accordance with Neighbourhood Planning Regulations, the application was publicised on the District Council’s website for the required six-week period and invited representations. The District Council formally approved the Welton Neighbourhood Area on 14 April 2016. The adopted boundary of the designated Welton Neighbourhood Area is indicated on the Map 1. The Neighbourhood Area covers 773 hectares.

**Steering Group**

1.13 A Steering Group, operating as a sub group of the Parish Council, was formed to undertake public consultation and writing of the Plan. The Group comprises parish councillors and volunteers from the local community.

**The Plan Period**

1.14 The Welton Neighbourhood Plan will cover the period 2018 to 2029.

1.15 The end date corresponds with the plan period for the adopted West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy. It is also consistent with the plan period for the emerging Settlements and Countryside Local Plan and, therefore, allows consideration of the same evidence base as those plans.
In accordance with the statutory requirements the Parish Council formally submitted the Draft Plan to Daventry District Council in March 2018.

The District Council publicised the submitted Draft Plan for a seven-week period from 26th March to 14th May 2018 and invited comments. An independent examiner was subsequently appointed to consider any representations and check that the Draft Plan met certain basic conditions, including conformity with national and local planning policies. In the concluding comments of the Examiner’s report he recommended to Daventry District Council that ‘...the Welton Neighbourhood Plan, as modified by my recommendations, should now proceed to referendum.’ The modified Plan was approved for referendum by Daventry District Council on 6th December 2018.

A majority of people who voted in the referendum held on 24th January 2019 supported the Plan. It was subsequently ‘made’ by the District Council and now forms part of the Development Plan for the area. It will be a major consideration when determining planning applications.
2. National and Local Planning Context

The Basic Conditions

2.1 There is a statutory requirement that a neighbourhood development plan must meet certain basic conditions which are:
   - it has regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
   - it contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
   - it is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area;
   - it does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with EU obligations; and
   - the prescribed conditions are met in relation to the neighbourhood plan and prescribed matters have been complied with. (For example the ‘making’ of the neighbourhood plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2012.)

National Planning Policy Framework

2.2 The Welton Neighbourhood Plan has therefore been developed with appropriate regard to national policy, most notably the National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework). The Framework sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and came into effect in March 2012. It provides the basis for local planning authorities to prepare their local plans and for communities producing neighbourhood plans.

2.3 The Framework lists core planning principles that should underpin plan-making and decision-taking.

2.4 It adds that neighbourhood plans should support the strategic development needs of the wider area set out in the adopted Local Plan. They should not promote less development or undermine strategic policies in the Local Plan. It states that neighbourhood plans should plan positively to shape and direct development that is outside the strategic elements of the Local Plan.

Planning Practice Guidance

2.5 The Welton Neighbourhood Plan has also been mindful of the Planning Practice Guidance, which was published on-line by the Government in 2014. The Guidance explains how national policy should be applied.

Development Plan

2.6 The Welton Neighbourhood Plan is also in general conformity with the strategic planning policies for the area as set out in the adopted Development Plan.
2.7 The Development Plan for Daventry District comprises:

- saved policies in the Daventry District Local Plan, which was adopted in 1997; and
- the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy, adopted in 2014.

2.8 The Daventry District Local Plan sets out the Council’s policies and proposals for guiding the development and use of land in the District. Proposals for development are assessed against the saved policies.

2.9 The West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy covers Northampton Borough, South Northamptonshire District, and Daventry District. It sets out the long term vision and objectives for this sub-region up to 2029, and includes strategic policies for steering and shaping development needs.

Other Planning Policies

2.10 The ‘Daventry Masterplan 2040’ was adopted by the District Council in July 2012. It is a conceptual plan for the future development of the town and includes ideas for the use of land up to 7km from the town, an area that includes all of the Welton Neighbourhood Area. Nevertheless, this document does not form part of the Development Plan for the area.

2.11 In July 2016, the District Council adopted the Housing Supplementary Planning Document. The purpose of the document is to support the local authority, developers, housing providers and local communities to deliver a wide range of housing through successful planning applications. The document contains detailed advice and direction on the implementation of the Joint Core Strategy housing policies and relevant saved policies of the Daventry Local Plan. Supplementary Planning Documents are not part of the Development Plan but provide additional guidance on matters covered by the Development Plan, and are a material consideration when determining planning applications.

2.12 Whilst not a basic condition, the preparation of the Welton Neighbourhood Plan has also been mindful of the policies in the made Braunston Neighbourhood Plan, which adjoins the Welton Neighbourhood Area to the west.

Emerging Local Plan

2.13 Daventry District Council is preparing the Settlements and Countryside Local Plan (Part 2). The final adopted plan will supplement the policies and proposals in the Joint Core Strategy and will also cover the period up to 2029.

2.14 This will set out local policies, standards and criteria against which all proposals for development and change of use of land and buildings in Daventry District will be assessed and to inform decisions on planning applications. This will also include
establishing a settlement hierarchy and allocations of land to meet identified development needs established in the Joint Core Strategy.

2.15 It is not envisaged that the emerging Settlements and Countryside Local Plan will be adopted until summer 2019. The Welton Neighbourhood Plan can still come forward prior to the adoption of the emerging Local Plan. The basic condition only requires a neighbourhood plan to be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the adopted Development Plan for the area and, as such, neighbourhood plans are not tested against the emerging Local Plan. Nevertheless, the preparation of the Welton Neighbourhood Plan has had regard to the emerging Settlements and Countryside Local Plan and the evidence base that supports it.

**Sustainable Development**

2.16 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The Framework states that there are 3 dimensions to sustainable development: an economic role; a social role; and an environmental role.

2.17 The Framework sets out the Government’s approach to sustainable development which essentially is about enabling development to cater for the needs of current generations, and ensuring that such development does not diminish the quality of life of future generations. All neighbourhood plans must therefore be aware of the economic, social and environmental consequences of its policies and proposals and achieve a positive outcome for each.

**EU Obligations**

2.18 A number of EU obligations may be relevant to the Welton Neighbourhood Plan. The District Council has therefore ‘screened’ the plan to ascertain whether the policies and proposals give rise to significant environmental effects and trigger the need to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment. The District Council also assessed whether a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is required.

2.19 The District Council published the screening opinion in July 2017. This confirmed that the Welton Neighbourhood Plan does not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment or an Appropriate Assessment under the EU Habitats Regulations.

**Basic Conditions Statement**

2.20 Details about how the draft Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions are set out in a separate document. The basic conditions statement can be viewed here:

[Basic Conditions Statement]
3. Profile of the Neighbourhood Area

History

3.1 Roman artefacts found in the parish indicate that it has been inhabited for at least 2,000 years. The village was recorded in the Domesday Survey. Its prominent position on a hillside with an abundance of streams, wells and good quality farmland helped it to prosper over the centuries.

3.2 St Martin’s Church was built in the 13th century. Today it is a Grade II* listed building and contains many features of architectural and historical significance. The White Horse Public House dates back to the 17th century and retains a thatched roof. The end of the building once adjoined the former village school.

3.3 Since the late 18th century, the village has benefitted from its proximity to the Grand Union Canal. The Welton-Braunston Tunnel was opened in 1793 and carries the canal under high ground. The tunnel is 2,049 yards in length making it one of the longest on the canal system. Norton Junction marks the beginning of the associated Leicester Arm, which forms the largest section of canal within the parish. There are two purpose built marinas along its length, namely Welton Hythe and Welton Haven.

3.4 In addition to the parish church, Welton had a Baptist Chapel and a Wesleyan Chapel (the latter built in 1858). The Wesleyan Chapel is now a residential property. A number of listed structures are located within the parish. These are indicated in Section 11, Appendix 5.

3.5 The village continued to thrive as a consequence of its proximity to Daventry, a market town, and the A5 trunk road. There was also a railway halt with goods facilities at nearby Watford; this was called Welton Station but it closed for passenger services in the 1950s and for goods in the 1960s.

Population

3.6 Records show Welton had a population of 495 in 1801. By 1841 this had risen to 635.

3.7 The 2011 Census stated that the parish had a population of 608. Of this number, 107 (18%) were aged 0-17 and 211 (35%) were aged 60 or over. 132 (21%) were aged 65 or over which is significantly higher than the national average of 16.3%.

Housing

3.8 Over the last twenty-five years residential development has taken place at Elms Dyke, the Clarkes Way extension and Halford Way. This has been supplemented by the
development of individual properties including those along Ashby Road, Station Road, Churchill Road and in Old Manor Court.

3.9 This recent development has primarily focused on larger residential properties. There has therefore been a move away from the range of property sizes available in the mid 20th century to predominantly larger family sized homes.

3.10 According to the 2011 Census the parish contains 264 dwellings. Of this total 36% were in Council Tax bands A-C, compared with an average of 58% for Daventry District as a whole. Conversely 64% of properties in Welton were in Council Tax Bands D-H compared with an average of 42% for Daventry District as a whole. The breakdown of tax bands is indicated in Diagram 1.

Diagram 1 – District, Ward and Parish % Housing Stock by Tax Band
(2011)

3.11 The 2011 Census also recorded that there were 258 households. Of this total 162 households lived in detached dwellings, 85 in semi-detached dwellings, 9 in terraced, and 2 in other types of property. Of the 258 households:
- 122 lived in properties that were owned outright;
- 98 owned a property with a mortgage; and
- 38 were in rented properties.

3.12 In terms of household size the 2011 Census found that there were:
- 47 single person households;
- 132 two person households;
- 33 three person households; and
- 46 households containing four or more persons.
Housing Need

3.13 In December 2016, the District Council published a Housing Needs Survey for Welton, which followed on from a similar survey undertaken in August 2013. The introduction to the survey highlighted the significant shortfall in the provision of housing compared with the level of need, stating that all over the country local people are not able to find a home within their own communities, suitable for their needs and that they can afford. One of the contributing factors was identified as being the increases in rural house prices and local opposition to new homes which echoed comments made in the introduction to the 2013 survey.

3.14 For the survey 262 letters were sent to households within Welton Parish inviting them to complete a Housing Survey. There were 50 completed equating to a 19% response rate. The majority of respondents thought the mix of properties was ‘about right’ across all property types except for bungalows and sheltered housing where opinion was split between ‘about right’ and ‘need a few more’. This resonates with the responses to the 2016 Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire, circulated to all households, where the majority thought the housing mix was about right. Significantly, however, from those who felt that some change was needed to the mix, there was unanimous support for additional lower cost and smaller housing, particularly to enable local people to remain in the village.

3.15 The 2016 survey report detailed the properties sold within the Welton Parish between October 2015 and October 2016. There were 16 properties sold altogether, ranging from £256,000 for a 3 bedroomed house to £690,000 for a 5 bedroomed detached house (Land Registry Data). In the previous Housing Needs Survey the range of 30 properties sold between January 2011 and November 2013 was from £145,000 for a semi detached house to £530,000 for a detached house.

3.16 The survey report also estimated that a household would need to earn at least £53,404 per year (an increase from £49,500 per year in the 2013 Housing Needs Survey) to be able to buy a property in Welton. From the 6 respondents to the relevant question in the 2016 survey concerning household income, only 1 could have possibly afforded to buy a property in the village.

3.17 Only 7 households indicated that they were in housing need and wished to be considered for housing that might be developed. This is an increase on the 2 households out of 90 respondents who indicated in the 2013 survey that they were in housing need. The need is broken down as follows:
- Rented Units - 1 x 2 bed bungalow, flat, extra care flat adapted to meet needs;
- Market Units - 1 x 2 bed flat, bungalow, extra care;
  - 2 x 2 bed bungalow;
  - 1 x 2 bed flat;
  - 1 x 2 bed house;
  - 1 x 3 bed house or bungalow.
Economy

3.18 The parish is now almost wholly residential and there is little economic development.

3.19 There are a few local employment opportunities, such as several working farms and narrowboat related activities at the two marinas. There is a small cider making business and a small poultry business within the parish. Both The White Horse Public House and Welton CE Academy offer further employment opportunities.

3.20 In addition, the 2011 Census showed that 34 people worked mainly from home.

3.21 The vast majority of residents commute outside the parish to work. Daventry is clearly close but Rugby, Northampton, Coventry, Leamington Spa, Banbury, Milton Keynes and even London are all within commuting distance.

3.22 The 2011 Census indicated that the following methods of travel to work were used:
- 242 made use of a car;
- 14 travelled by foot;
- 10 caught the train;
- 4 used the bus;
- 3 used a motorcycle;
- 1 went by bike.

3.23 The census recorded that 298 people were in some form of employment at that time.

Transport

3.24 Welton is relatively well connected to the national road network. The M1 Motorway and A5 Watling Street can be accessed just a few miles away. Similarly, the A45 provides a good link to Coventry and Northampton.

3.25 The train station at Long Buckby is about 4 miles to the east of the village of Welton. This spur off the West Coast Main Line provides direct services to Rugby, Coventry and Birmingham to the northwest and to Northampton, Milton Keynes and London to the southeast. Faster and more frequent services can be readily boarded at Rugby station, directly on the West Coast Main Line.

3.26 Despite this wider connectivity, the village itself is not situated on a major road. Nonetheless, vehicle speed and volume of traffic, especially at peak times, are of serious concern to residents, who would like to see traffic calming measures introduced in and around the village. The significant focus on warehousing in the area and particularly in Daventry and DIRFT is resulting in significant HGV traffic on the A361. The growth in housing to the north of Daventry is likely to result in an increase in the amount of traffic on Welton Lane / Daventry Road. Cars and heavy goods vehicles use the village roads as
a shortcut and residents would welcome measures to introduce weight restrictions.

3.27 There is no regular bus in the village although there is the demand-led ‘County Connect’ service. There is evidence from the 2016 Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire distributed by the Steering Group to all households, that this service is not seen as sufficient. There is a school bus service to Daventry although many young people from the village attend schools outside the town.

3.28 There is a network of public rights of way across the parish allowing access to the countryside for informal recreation and physical exercise. Footpaths radiate out from the village and provide interesting and highly valued walks across fields, through copses and along canals.

Utilities

3.29 Welton has no connection to the natural gas main but is connected to the national electricity grid. Anglia Water is responsible for water supply and sewerage disposal. Internet speeds within the village vary from household to household.

Social and Community Facilities

3.30 Local facilities include:
• the Village Hall;
• The White Horse Public House;
• St. Martin’s Church;
• Welton CE Academy.

3.31 The Village Hall was opened in 1967 and plays an integral part in the local community, hosting a variety of events and activities. Data for 2016 indicates that there were over 380 events held in the Village Hall involving approximately 6000 people. This facility is located in the centre of the community, making access easy for all. The Village Hall is a registered charity and operates under the guidance and support of a group of Trustees and a management committee.

3.32 The White Horse Public House has origins back to the 17th century and hosts a range of activities and events.

3.33 St Martin’s Church, which is part of the Diocese of Peterborough, forms a focal point in the village.

3.34 Welton CE Academy is located in the heart of the village. It caters for 140 children aged between 4 and 11 years of age. The school’s catchment area consists of the villages of Welton and Ashby St Ledgers, but a majority of pupils come from Daventry and other surrounding villages. The school is very popular and has been oversubscribed for
several years. The school site is heavily developed and the school uses the village Playing Field for sporting activities.

3.35 There are no shops or medical facilities located within the village. Most residents access these services in Daventry.

3.36 There is however a strong sense of community. Many residents participate in organised activities in the village, attend social events, or are members of the various clubs and societies. Indeed, so popular are these village-based activities that they attract support from further afield, as was evidenced during the consultations prior to the writing of this Plan.

3.37 Welton News and Views, funded by the Parish Council, is a village magazine, edited by a volunteer and published every two months. It provides a means of communication about village activities, events and matters of importance and interest. It is distributed by volunteers to all households within the community, and is free of charge.

3.38 The Welton Town Lands Trust is a registered charity that was formed over 400 years ago by a group of local farmers. Rents from land owned by the charity are distributed in the parish for charitable purposes. Each year the Trust awards grants to various deserving causes or individuals within the parish.

Public Open Space

3.39 The Playing Field is bounded by High Street, Ashby Road and Round Close and adjoins the school. It is the main area of public open space within the village. It provides a safe venue for children and families to engage in leisure activities and is used for events such as the village fete. It also provides a recreation space for the adjacent school.

3.40 A small area of woodland and walkways called St Martin's Spinney is located next to the Churchyard and behind the Village Hall. This informal green space is maintained by the Parish Council and provides a tranquil area for the local community, as well as an important haven for wildlife.

3.41 There are several other open spaces distributed around the village.
4. Character Assessment

Historical Development of the Village

4.1 The centre of Welton is located in the High Street between the junctions with Well Lane and Welton Park. In the immediate vicinity are: St Martin’s Church, the Village Hall, The White Horse Public House and Welton CE Academy. The settlement developed from this historic core in a southerly direction along Churchill Road and Kiln Lane and northerly along Ashby Road and Station Road. In this area, there are many older buildings interspersed with more modern houses built on infill plots or where older cottages have been replaced.

4.2 Many of the older houses front directly onto the street whereas more modern properties are often set back.

Building Materials

4.3 The main building materials in Welton are Northamptonshire stone, mainly ironstone, (generally seen in the older buildings) and a mixture of red and polychrome brick.

4.4 Most buildings completed in the last thirty years are of brick, although a small number have some render finish.

Settlement Form and Characteristics

4.5 The Manual for Design Codes (The Manual) produced by West Northamptonshire Development Corporation (December 2009) provides an analysis of villages in the area with a focus on settlement form and key characteristics.

4.6 Welton is quoted as an example of a linear village. The Manual states that linear villages tend to follow a linear route with the main street that passes through the settlement acting as a focal area. It adds that later development or expansion of such villages usually results in a series of secondary streets branching off the main street. These secondary streets do not necessarily connect with each other. Hence the overall form retains its linear shape.

4.7 The Manual describes the built form of West Northamptonshire villages as exhibiting certain key characteristics. These include:

- an organic layout with a diverse grain;
- towards the centre of the settlement the grain may become more compact while it is loose and dispersed towards the edges;
- the overall sense of space is defined and contained despite the dispersed built form;
• village greens are a typical feature;
• the village centre is often located at a crossroads marked by a village green and surrounded by mixed uses such as a community hall, local pub, shop, post office or café;
• an easy commute to nearby towns has led to a tendency to become dormitory settlements, unable to sustain village facilities particularly the local shop and post office;
• rural churches serve as the key landmark feature, and are usually located on a high point, with the surrounding landscape acting as the setting for the building;
• historic buildings are constructed with local materials such as ironstone and reveal high architectural quality;
• towards the centre buildings are set along the footpath edge with minimal setback;
• massing is fairly homogeneous with buildings generally two storeys, though there is variety in rooflines that creates interest in elevation;
• higher massing is at times created by trees rising above the built form, creating enclosure and providing focus;
• many of the new built additions seem to take on a more suburban character.

4.8 The Manual specifically singles out Welton as being a typical West Northamptonshire village.

Spatial Character

4.9 Although there are older buildings scattered throughout the village, the settlement can be divided into spatial zones that are based on socio-economic changes and, in part, the date of development. These character areas are summarised below and the boundaries indicated on Map 2.

4.10 The full Character Assessment is available in Appendix 6.
Character Area 1 – The Core – High Street, Well Lane, Station Road, the start of Ashby Road.

4.11 The centre of the village extends along the High Street, taking in St Martin’s Church, the Village Hall, St Martin’s Spinney, The White Horse Public House, Welton CE Academy, Well Lane, the Playing Field, Ashby Road from the High Street to its junction with Well Lane, and Station Road.

4.12 This is a coherent area from a social and business perspective. Historically, it contains structures from a 13th century church to early 21st century builds, reflecting Welton’s history, heritage and present life as a community. Any changes in this area would have to preserve and enhance these assets, which are highly valued across the whole of the village’s age profile. Welton CE Academy is part of this central area and, while many pupils come from outside the village, it is also a highly valued asset.

Character Area 2 – Ashby Road (numbers 5 west and 22 west)

4.13 Predominately this area contains properties that were constructed shortly before and after the Second World War as social housing. They comprise terraced and semi-detached properties with generous garden plots. The frontages are mostly set back with wide verges giving a pleasing open and spacious feel. Later additions include a number of bungalows to the western end of the area, which contribute to the development of a more sustainable community.
As a later addition to the linear village layout’s spine which takes the development away from its historical direction, this road stands as a Character Area in its own right. The area is one of the most level parts of the village, running along the top of the ridge. It has good access to all key village resources while being adjacent to open countryside.

**Character Area 3 – Welton Park, Clarkes Way and Halford Way**

In the second half of the 20th Century, socio-economic changes drove a move to replace expensive large (and sometimes derelict) houses with detached houses set in large plots. Within Welton, much of this type of development took place across the village’s spine road and replaced Welton House and Welton Place. Chronologically, the new developments were Welton Park, Clarkes Way and Halford Way.

The former buildings, set in extensive grounds, provided significant space on which were constructed large detached properties. There was no provision for what today is classified as ‘affordable’ housing.
4.17 Since this area encompasses what were former 'manorial' type houses with large grounds, its features include many attractive, mature, specimen trees which were planted in the former gardens. These trees bring added beauty and character to this area which also contains the privately-owned lake which, while not publicly accessible, can be glimpsed between the houses in Clarke’s Way and below the church. The lake constitutes an important ecological feature and is the focal point for an annual migration of toads.

4.18 There are significant remnants of these former houses in the form of boundary walls and foundations, demonstrating the history of the village and the families who lived there.

**Character Area 4 – Kiln Lane and Emery Close**

4.19 This area was the first significant 'side road' branching off the village spine, coincidentally where the upper road (High Street) changes to the lower road (Churchill Road).

4.20 Properties along this road date from the 17th century to the present day and encompass a wide range of styles and sizes. The area includes Emery Close, a development that also provides a range of properties.

4.21 Descending from an attractive green space with a mature horse chestnut tree and a seating area, past Stockwell Green and its spring, Kiln Lane is a single width road in places. Traditional hedging and small fields where animals are grazed border it. This area provides a sense of the village’s rural heritage and residents young and old value its proximity to the countryside.

**Kiln Lane looking northwest**

**Character Area 5 – Churchill Road, The Paddock, Elms Dyke, and areas off Daventry Road**

4.22 This area comprises the lower part of the linear village. It includes the two cul de sacs of The Paddock and Elms Dyke. Small developments that are part of this area are Old
Manor Court and Churchill Court. Similar to Area 1, this area contains a wide range of properties in terms of age, size and design.

4.23 The approach to this area from the south forms an attractive entrance to the village with Old Manor Court and Welton Manor situated either side of the road – these properties have significant history and are yet more examples of 'manorial' buildings within the village. Other large properties lie to the southeast of Daventry Road, and are included within this area.

4.24 As a whole, the range of properties in this area is very diverse. There are maisonettes, bungalows, semi-detached and detached houses of varying size and age, some of which were constructed as social housing.
Contribution of Open Space

4.25 Throughout the village there is a variety of open spaces which are regarded as extremely important in terms of their visual quality and their contribution to the form and character of the village. These include:
• the entrance triangle at the bottom of Churchill Road;
• the green at Emery Close;
• Stockwell Green where Welton Brook rises;
• the triangular green at the top of Kiln Lane;
• the Playing Field bounded by High Street and Ashby Road;
• the triangular island at the junction of High Street, Ashby Road and Station Road;
• the grassed area in front of Round Close;
• the grass verges in Ashby Road and elsewhere in the village;
• St Martin’s Spinney;
• the grassed area outside the Village Hall;
• St Martin’s Churchyard

Surrounding Landscape Character

4.26 Despite the expansion of urban areas and transport infrastructure, the West Northamptonshire landscape is generally regarded as a tranquil rural area known for its productive farmland and attractive villages.

4.27 In 2006, the River Nene Regional Park published a landscape character assessment for Northamptonshire. Most of the current landscape in the parish is described as ‘undulating hills and valleys’ that form part of the Lower Jurassic Landscapes. The key landscape features identified include:
• extensive undulating and productive rural landscape stretching across the west of the county;
• cohesive and recognizable unity of character despite scale and extent;
• variations in underlying geology influence local landform;
• watercourses form part of principal river catchments, including the Nene;
• reservoirs and manmade lakes are conspicuous features in the local landscape;
• navigable canals are an important visual component of the landscape and provide a linear wildlife and recreational asset;
• mixed farming predominates across the landscape although land use and field patterns are strongly influenced by landform;
• numerous small deciduous woodlands, copses and shelterbelts punctuate the rural landscape;
• hedgerow trees, within the hedgerow network, contribute to the perception of a well arboreal landscape and combine with other landscape and landform features to create an intimate, human scale landscape;
• strong historic character underlies this deeply rural landscape;
• numerous villages linked by winding country lanes contribute to the rural character;
• communication routes and urban influences and infrastructure have, where present, eroded local rural landscape character.

Daventry Urban Fringe
4.28 Daventry town is surrounded by a collection of villages that are dispersed in the rural landscape. All significant development of Daventry has, in recent years, been focused on the area to the north and towards Welton. The relatively narrow open gap between Welton and Daventry is consequently a particularly sensitive landscape in that it maintains the separate identity and character of the village.

4.29 Nevertheless, development proposals threaten further this vulnerable landscape. In July 2015 outline planning permission was granted for 450 dwellings at Micklewell Park to meet the needs of Daventry. This site is located on the edge of Daventry but is predominantly within Welton Parish (though outside the boundary of the Neighbourhood Area). The proposal includes provision for a 2-form entry primary school, community hub, public open space, allotments and associated infrastructure. The Monksmoor Park development, abutting the parish on the south side of the Grand Union Canal and east of Welton Lane, also includes a 2-form entry primary school. In addition, the substantial Daventry North East Sustainable Urban Extension has been allocated in the adopted West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy. While outside the parish, this urban extension will be clearly visible in the landscape. These developments are indicated in Map 3.

4.30 The countryside now remaining between Welton and Daventry comprises typical attractive Northamptonshire Uplands landscape. The mainly arable fields are interspersed with significant areas of woodland, mature trees and hedgerows. These areas include Mickle Well Spinney. This landscape forms a clear and attractive differentiation between the modern housing developments on Daventry’s northern fringes and the start of Welton village.

4.31 The nature of the landscape results in the edge of Daventry being visible from parts of the village. The permitted development at Micklewell Park will only exacerbate this issue.

4.32 Over the past generation, the separation between Daventry’s northernmost extent and the village of Welton has shrunk from 2,000 metres¹ to 560 metres². At this rate of expansion, the prospect of coalescence of these communities is a very clear, high and current risk and is of major concern to the residents of Welton.

Note
¹ Measured from the old railway track to Old Manor Court
² Measured from Lang Farm to Old Manor Court

Key Views

4.33 Welton benefits from some remarkable views within the village itself, including historic buildings within their particular settings and green and natural features, such as the wealth of mature trees which enhance the area. The village also enjoys outstanding views across the rural landscape from many points within the parish. Similarly attractive
views into the village are evident from many locations. Together, all these views reinforce and enhance the rural character of the settlement.

**Conclusion**

The character assessment demonstrates that Welton is a small village with a rich history and heritage, located in a beautiful setting, which all serve to enhance its sense of identity as a rural community. Buildings of widely varying age and type are frequently intermingled, reflecting the way the village has grown and adapted to changing times and changing need. Attractive green spaces and an abundance of mature trees complement the village’s steeply sloping setting, adjacent to open fields and areas of woodland, together creating some outstanding views.
Map 3 - Recent Development North of Daventry
5. Community Engagement

Initial Consultation

5.1 A number of techniques were adopted to engage the local community in the early stages of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan. These included:
  • regular updates in the bi-monthly village ‘News and Views’ delivered to every household in the Parish;
  • specifically designed activities;
  • promotions at regular village events; and
  • direct communication with local groups and organisations.

5.2 In June 2016 representatives from groups and organisations operating in the neighbourhood area were invited to give their views at an open meeting in the Village Hall. In July 2016 every household and local business was given the opportunity to complete a questionnaire, the 2016 Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire. Of those responding 99% supported the proposal to draw up a neighbourhood plan.

5.3 Further public meetings were held in November 2016. These were to facilitate further consultation on specific key issues that had emerged.

5.4 In addition Daventry District Council updated their Housing Needs Survey in 2016. This followed on from a previous survey in 2013.

Pre-Submission Consultation

5.5 The statutory pre-submission consultation period took place between 19 June and 14 August 2017. The Draft Plan was widely publicised to all those who lived, worked or had a business interest in the area, who were given an opportunity to comment.

5.6 A copy of the document was also distributed by email to various consultation bodies specified in paragraph 1 of Schedule 1 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

5.7 The group received 71 responses. These comprised:
  • 58 responses from local residents;
  • 8 responses from various organisations; and
  • 5 from developers or agents.

5.8 All the residents were broadly happy with the overall content of the Neighbourhood Plan and there were no fundamental criticisms or areas of concern. However there were several detailed comments which were assessed and, where appropriate, the Draft Plan was amended accordingly.
5.9 Similarly the various organisations raised no objections but offered a number of comments or additions to the evidence base. Daventry District Council, for example, offered a number of constructive and detailed comments to improve the wording or the accompanying maps.

5.10 The developers and agents wanted the Draft Plan to make specific provision in the Neighbourhood Area for development to meet the needs of Daventry or extend the boundary of the village confines.

**Consultation Statement**

5.11 Further details about all the engagement undertaken is provided in the consultation statement, which is a separate document that accompanies this Plan. As required by the Regulations the consultation statement specifies:

- details of who was consulted on the proposed neighbourhood plan;
- an explanation of how they were consulted; and
- a summary of the main issues and concerns raised throughout the consultation.

5.12 The consultation statement can be viewed here:

Consultation Statement
6. Vision and Objectives

Key Issues

6.1 The key issues that emerged from the community engagement, consultation with various organisations and other evidence gathering were as follows:

- while seeking to maintain Welton as a small village community there was some desire for small scale development of affordable and smaller housing;
- preventing coalescence of the village with neighbouring Daventry;
- protecting and enhancing the character of the village and its setting in the surrounding rural landscape; and
- maintaining and developing infrastructure to ensure a sustainable and viable community.

National Context

6.2 The National Planning Policy Framework refers to core planning principles. The principles most relevant to the neighbourhood plan state that planning should:

- be genuinely plan-led, empowering local people to shape their surroundings, with succinct neighbourhood plans setting out a positive vision for the future of the area;
- always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity;
- take account of the different roles and character of different areas recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it;
- support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and encourage the reuse of existing resources, including conversion of existing buildings, and encourage the use of renewable resources;
- contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution;
- conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations;
- deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs.

Local Context

6.3 The West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy includes a vision, part of which states:

‘Our rural areas will support a network of vibrant rural communities. Villages will retain their local distinctiveness and character, providing affordable homes for local people set within a beautiful landscape. The countryside will support a diverse rural economy including leisure and tourism through its waterways, country houses, parks and woodlands’. (extract from WNJCS)
Vision for Welton

6.4 It is against this wider national and local context, and the views expressed by the local community, that the following vision for Welton has been formulated.

6.5 The vision is:

In 2029 Welton will be a distinct, sustainable and vibrant rural village completely surrounded by attractive open countryside. It will contain a strong and balanced community that looks after its historical and natural environment. Whilst physically separate from Daventry, there will be good links to the employment opportunities, services and facilities that the town and surrounding area offer.

Objectives

6.6 To deliver the vision the Plan has the following objectives:

1. To support appropriate and affordable small scale residential development in the village.
2. To protect the separate identity and setting of the village by preventing coalescence with Daventry
3. To protect and enhance the character of the village and the surrounding rural landscape
4. To maintain and develop the infrastructure to ensure a sustainable and viable community.

6.7 These objectives are delivered through the policies and proposals in the following section.
7. Planning Policies

Objective 1 - To support appropriate and affordable small scale residential development in the village

Policy Context

7.1 The preparation of the Welton Neighbourhood Plan has had regard to housing matters in the:
   - Saved Policies in the Daventry District Local Plan (1997); and
   - West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (2014).

7.2 Saved Policy HS22 in the Daventry Local Plan 1997 categorises Welton as a restricted infill village. The policy states that:

   Planning permission will normally be granted for residential development provided that:
   a) It is on a small scale, and
   b) Is within the existing confines of the village, and
   c) Does not affect open land which is of particular significance to the form and character of the Village, or
   d) It comprises the renovation or conversion of existing buildings for residential purposes provided that the proposal is in keeping with the character and quality of the village environment.

7.3 Policy R1 in the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy deals with residential development in the rural areas and states that:

   Residential development in rural areas will be required to:
   A) Provide for an appropriate mix of dwelling types and sizes, including affordable housing to meet the needs of all sectors of the community, including the elderly and vulnerable; and
   B) Not affect open land which is of particular significance to the form and character of the village; and
   C) Preserve and enhance historic buildings and areas of historic or environmental importance including those identified in conservation area appraisals and village design statements; and
   D) Protect the amenity of existing residents; and
   E) Be of an appropriate scale to the existing settlement; and
   F) Promote sustainable development that equally addresses economic, social and environmental issues; and
   G) Be within the existing confines of the village.
Policy R1 also stipulates that 2360 dwellings are required in the rural areas of Daventry District over the plan period. However, monitoring information produced by the District Council indicates that the rural housing requirement has already been exceeded by 605 dwellings (as at April 2017). The District Council thereby points out that the final part of Policy R1 is now engaged when dealing with applications for residential development in the rural areas. This states that:

Once the housing requirement for the rural areas has been met through planning permissions or future allocations, further housing development will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that it:

i) Would result in environmental improvements on a site including for example the re-use of previously developed land and best practice in design; or

ii) Is required to support the retention of or improvement to essential local services that may be under threat (in particular the local primary school or primary health services); and

iii) Has been informed by an effective community involvement exercise prior to the submission of a planning application; or

iv) Is a rural exceptions site that meets the criteria set out in Policy H3; or

v) Has been agreed through an adopted neighbourhood plan.

Furthermore, in April 2018 the District Council published its annual report on Housing Land Availability. This report identified a 6.6 year supply.

Emerging Local Plan

The Neighbourhood Plan must also be mindful of the Settlements and Countryside Local Plan. While it is not a basic condition for the Neighbourhood Plan to be in general conformity with an emerging local plan, it is good practice to have regard to any up to date evidence base that supports the preparation of the Plan.

Policy R1 in the Joint Core Strategy proposes a rural settlement hierarchy that will inform the provision of new homes, jobs and services needed in rural areas. This measure is to ensure that new development is focussed in sustainable settlements and protects the overall rural character of the area.

The Joint Core Strategy identifies the rural hierarchy as comprising:

- Primary Service Villages – These have the highest level of services and facilities within the rural area to meet the day to day needs of residents including those from surrounding settlements. These settlements are the most appropriate for accommodating local housing and employment needs and would be the focus for service provision in the rural areas

- Secondary Service Villages - These settlements have a more limited range of services, but still provide scope to meet some local needs for housing, employment and service provision
• Other Villages - These villages have an even more limited range of services and are more reliant on the services of larger centres for day-to-day needs. The scope for development within these villages is likely to be limited to windfall infill development, although some housing to provide for local needs may be suitable
• Small villages/hamlets - are very small and with few or no services and facilities.

7.9 The Joint Core Strategy does not categorize individual villages. This task has been undertaken as part of the preparation of the emerging Settlements and Countryside Local Plan.

7.10 In the emerging Settlements and Countryside Local Plan, within the ‘final hierarchy’ (Chapter 5), Welton has been included in the ‘Other Villages’ category. This document will then set policies against the different settlement hierarchy classifications to assist with determining planning applications in each settlement.

7.11 Until such time that the emerging Local Plan is adopted, Welton’s designation will remain as a restricted infill village.

Constraints to development

7.12 As part of the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, consideration was given to potential options for future residential development outside the existing village confines and its possible impact on the local environment. This course of action was not considered appropriate for the reasons set out below.

7.13 Welton is a linear settlement that enjoys a prominent location on the side of a hill with outstanding views over the surrounding open countryside. As described earlier, much of the surrounding open countryside is regarded as high quality. The village is very prominent in this attractive rural landscape. Any peripheral development would be clearly visible from some distance around.

7.14 Following the grant of planning permission for residential development at Micklewell Park, further development on slopes to the south could result in coalescence with Daventry. This area is therefore extremely sensitive to any development because of its role in retaining the separate identity and character of the village.

7.15 Nonetheless, it is acknowledged that there may be opportunities for limited infilling within the existing settlement confines that could provide some organic growth over the plan period. Any such development needs to be both in keeping with its surroundings as defined in the Character Area Assessments and also not harm any historical buildings or features.
Views of the local community

7.16 The initial motivation for preparing a neighbourhood plan related to the need to preserve the village as an attractive Northamptonshire rural settlement with important historical and environmental features. However it also had to be a sustainable village with a vibrant and mixed community. The majority of residents feel there is no need for any significant expansion in terms of housing in the parish. Those who wish to see some change to the mix of housing identify the need for opportunities for young people to remain or come into the village and for older people to be able to downsize their housing. The District Council’s Housing Needs Survey conducted in 2016 supplemented the results from the Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire conducted in the same year.

Approach adopted

7.17 The preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan has been mindful of the following key factors:

a) the current status of Welton as a ‘Restricted Infill Village’ in the Daventry Local Plan;
b) the rural housing requirement across the District specified in the adopted Joint Core Strategy has already been exceeded and the District Council has pointed out that the final part of Policy R1 of the Joint Core Strategy is now engaged when dealing with applications for residential development in the rural areas;
c) the District Council identified a 6.6 year residential land supply in April 2018;
d) provision for affordable homes has been made at Micklewell Park to meet the needs of Daventry, but could potentially also meet any need emanating from Welton;
e) there is a limited range of services and facilities available in the village;
f) the attractiveness and quality of the surrounding landscape;
g) the area’s sensitivity to development as a consequence of its topography and visual prominence as a linear settlement on a hill side;
h) the need to avoid coalescence with Daventry;
i) the views of the local community who expressed concerns about the implications of further residential development beyond the existing settlement confines.

7.18 The Welton Neighbourhood Plan does not therefore allocate additional sites for residential development. The reasoning for not making residential allocations is primarily focussed on the fact that the rural housing requirement in the District has been exceeded and there is minimal local need arising from the Housing Needs Survey.

7.19 It was also concluded that residential development outside the Welton village confines would not, in general terms, constitute sustainable development and would therefore not be supported (unless a justified rural exception site).

7.20 However infill development within the village confines will be acceptable provided that it meets certain criteria. This approach supplements the approach adopted in saved Policy HS22 in the Daventry Local Plan and Policy R1 in the Joint Core Strategy. Additionally, it
brings in further local detail from the character area assessment. It includes being of a design, scale and materials appropriate to the setting and the character of the village.

7.21 When defining the boundary of the village confines, the following criteria were applied:

The following will be classified as inside the built up part of the village:
A. Buildings and confines that are contained and visually separate from the open countryside that are clearly part of a network of buildings that form the settlement.
B. Areas of land with planning permission for built development.

The following will be regarded as being outside the built-up part of the village:
C. Gardens which are visually open and relate to the open countryside
D. Individual, groups of dwellings and agricultural buildings that are detached or peripheral to the settlement
E. Areas of employment or leisure use, including public open space, that is detached or peripheral to the settlement
F. Land that would otherwise be outside the built up part of the village, even if it is between the edge of the settlement and a major road.

7.22 Consequently, the following policy on residential development will apply within the Neighbourhood Area:

**Policy 1 – Residential Development within Welton**

Proposals for residential development will be supported providing that all the following criteria are met:

a) it is within the village confines;
b) it is on a small scale;
c) it is in accordance with Policy R1 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy;
d) it includes homes that potentially address the needs of elderly residents seeking to downsize or those seeking lower cost affordable housing;
e) it is in keeping with its Character Area with regards to scale, layout and materials to retain local distinctiveness and create a sense of place. Where new development would be visible from an adjacent Character Area it should be sensitive to the principal characteristics of that area. Innovative or outstanding design will be supported if it raises the overall quality of the Character Area;
f) it does not affect open land which is of particular significance to the form and character of the settlement; and
g) there is adequate off road parking provision.

The boundary of the village confines is shown on Proposals Map 1.

7.23 These Character Areas are summarised in Section 4 with the boundaries shown on Map 2.

7.24 The full Character Assessment is available in Appendix 6.
Affordable Housing

7.25 The definition of affordable housing is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

7.26 In rural areas affordable housing can be delivered in three ways:
   • as part of a market housing scheme, secured by planning obligations;
   • on exception sites; or
   • where Registered Providers (RPs) own or secure sites.

7.27 The Government has recently published a revised NPPF (July 2018) that includes Starter Homes under the definition of affordable housing but at present the legislation changes required to introduce it have not been made.

7.28 Following adoption of the Joint Core Strategy, Policies H2 and H3 replaced the previous saved policies in the Daventry Local Plan that related to affordable housing. Policy H2 states that the full proportion of affordable housing will be expected to be delivered on each site unless a viability assessment clearly demonstrates that it cannot be delivered. Sites within Daventry District will therefore be required to provide affordable housing on developments of 5 units or more at a provision of 40% in the rural areas. This requirement is subject to the assessment of viability on a site-by-site basis where a proposal submitted is not policy compliant.

7.29 Policy H3 deals with rural exception sites. The Joint Core Strategy states that affordability is a key issue in the rural areas of West Northamptonshire where average house prices are significantly higher than in the urban areas. For this reason Policy H3 seeks to support the provision of affordable housing through rural exception sites and also through mixed tenure schemes where an element of market housing is necessary to deliver the identified need for affordable housing. It is expected that rural exception sites will be small in scale and will normally be developed solely for affordable housing. In those cases where an element of market housing is required, the scale should be the minimum required to secure the delivery of the affordable housing in accordance with the Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

7.30 Policy H3 states that:

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In all cases the following criteria must be met:
   a) The site is within or immediately adjoins the main built-up area of a rural settlement;
   b) The form and scale of development should be clearly justified by evidence of need through a local housing needs survey; and
   c) Arrangements for the management and occupation of affordable housing must ensure that it will be available and affordable in perpetuity for people in local housing need.
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7.31 Within this strategic and local context the following approach to affordable housing will be adopted:
Policy 2 – Rural Exception Sites

Proposals for affordable housing on a rural exception site will be supported providing they are:

a) in accordance with Policy H3 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy;
b) justified by evidence of need through the most up-to-date local housing needs survey for Welton;
c) prioritised for those with a local connection as prescribed in Daventry District Council’s Housing Supplementary Planning Document; and
d) any market housing is demonstrated to be the minimum required to deliver a viable affordable housing development and also meets locally identified housing needs.

Sustainable Development

7.32 The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) highlights the importance of achieving sustainable development. It points out that the United Nations General Assembly defined sustainable development as ‘meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’.

7.33 The Framework states that ‘the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development’. It adds that ‘pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people’s quality of life, including (but not limited to):

- Making it easier for jobs to be created in cities, towns and villages;
- Moving from a net loss of bio-diversity to achieving net gains for nature;
- Replacing poor design with better design;
- Improving the conditions in which people live, work, travel and take leisure; and
- Widening the choice of high quality homes.’

7.34 Policy S10 in the Joint Core Strategy outlines the principles for sustainable development. It states that:

Development will:

a. Achieve the highest standards of sustainable design incorporating safety and security considerations and a strong sense of place;
b. Be designed to improve environmental performance, energy efficiency and adapt to changes of use and a changing climate over its lifetime;
c. Make use of sustainably sourced materials;
d. Minimise resource demand and the generation of waste and maximise opportunities for reuse and recycling;
e. Be located where services and facilities can be easily accessed by walking, cycling or public transport;
f. Maximise use of solar gain, passive heating and cooling, natural light and ventilation using site layout and building design;
g. Maximise the generation of its energy needs from decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources;
h. Maximise water efficiency and promote sustainable drainage;
i. Protect, conserve and enhance the natural and built environment and heritage assets and their settings;
j. Promote the creation of green infrastructure networks, enhance biodiversity and reduce fragmentation of habitats; and
k. Minimise pollution from noise, air and run off.

7.35 The Framework says that 'plans and decisions need to take local circumstances into account, so that they respond to the different opportunities for achieving sustainable development in different areas'. So while sustainable development within Welton is supported, it is important that attention also be paid to the characteristics of the area in order to maintain its local distinctiveness.

7.36 In the 2016 Welton Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire, residents were asked about their views on moving towards a ‘carbon neutral’ environment. Not only was there general support for ensuring that new buildings and extensions matched the best targets but also the community expressed significant interest in how retrofit solutions could assist in such an aim.

7.37 Ideas and policies in the area of sustainable development are developing at a pace. Technological progress should not be constrained by any adopted policy but policy should rather create a fertile environment in which solutions are able to flourish.

Policy 3 – Sustainable Development

Proposals for development that incorporate features that address the challenges of climate change will be supported providing they are in-keeping with the Character Area with regards to scale, layout and materials. These features will include sustainable drainage and porous/permeable surfacing for drives. Energy efficiency in capture and usage should also be promoted.

Objective 2 - To protect the separate identity and setting of the village by preventing coalescence with Daventry

7.38 Saved Policy HS22 in the Daventry Local Plan (1997) stipulates that development should not affect open land, a factor which is of particular significance to the form and character of the village.
7.39 The village of Welton lies broadly in the centre of the parish, surrounded by open countryside. There are no other settlements within the parish.

7.40 While there is extensive countryside to the north, east and west of the village, there is a relatively narrow gap between the settlement and Daventry. The village of Welton is 3.6 miles from the centre of Daventry. It is 560 metres from the nearest house in Welton to the edge of the built-up area of the town.

7.41 This gap will be further eroded when the approved development at Micklewell Park is constructed. The gap will then be just over 400m.

7.42 Members of the local community overwhelmingly (99% of respondents to the 2016 Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire) expressed the view that the identity of Welton as a village separate from the neighbouring town should be maintained. Many in the community perceive a threat that, following the northern expansion of Daventry in recent years, further growth of the town could continue and perhaps reach the village of Welton. Industrial and residential buildings in Daventry are clearly visible from the village and will be even more so with the development of the Micklewell Park site. Residents fear that further development will erode the gap between the settlements and eventually result in coalescence.

7.43 Although the Joint Core Strategy outlines the District Council’s aspirations to grow the town to reach a population of 40,000, paragraph 13.18 states that:

‘The strategy for Daventry is to provide for further housing growth by the allocation of a Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE) at Daventry North East to comprise a mixed use development including 4,000 dwellings with a minimum of 2,600 of these to be brought forward within the JCS period. This together with existing housing commitments for Daventry (including the remaining housing development at Middlemore), the Monksmoor development and housing development within the existing urban area will achieve a level of housing growth for Daventry consistent with Daventry District Council’s vision. New employment development will be focused on the central area and redevelopment and renewal of the existing employment areas with local employment opportunities being provided at Monksmoor and Daventry North East SUE.’

7.44 It was therefore assumed that further growth of Daventry over the Plan period would not result in a narrowing of the gap between the town and Welton. However Policy HO2 in the emerging Local Plan has allocated a site for 180 dwellings as an extension to the Micklewell Park development. It adds that structural green space and wildlife corridors should protect and enhance the Grand Union Canal Conservation Area and include appropriate landscape buffers to mitigate the impact on the setting of Welton village. In addition Policy ENV3 in the emerging Local Plan protects areas of ‘Green Wedge’ in order to protect the identity, character and setting of settlements within the areas that fringe Daventry. It states that an area of Green Wedge to the north and east of the proposed
development site at Micklewell Park will protect the setting of Welton village and avoid settlement coalescence.

7.45 The current green buffer between the village and the town must be protected from further development that would narrow this important open gap.

7.46 Coalescence between settlements is a recognised planning issue. A key facet of the National Planning Policy Framework is to reinforce local distinctiveness and the separate identities of settlements. The following policy seeks to ensure that any development does not narrow the gap, detract from the separate identities of these two areas or have a harmful impact on their landscape setting. This matter is clearly of importance to the local community. Proposals for development will not be permitted if they do not preserve the separate identity and integrity of the settlement and its setting in the rural landscape. The wording of Policy 4 is consistent with Policy G in the made Braunston Neighbourhood Plan, which adjoins the Welton Neighbourhood Area to the west.

Policy 4 – Preventing Coalescence

Development proposals should respect the individual and distinct identities of Welton village and Daventry and the open gap between them. Development will not be permitted if individually or cumulatively, it would result in the loss of the visual and physical separation of these settlements, which would harm their setting and identity or lead to their coalescence.

Objective 3 - To protect and enhance the character of the village and the surrounding rural landscape

Historic Environment

7.47 Although Welton has undergone some extensive development in recent decades, it still retains many historic buildings and features. The historic environment is something that the local community values very highly.

7.48 The core planning principles in the National Planning Policy Framework highlight the need to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life for current and future generations.

7.49 The Joint Core Strategy points out that the historic environment is one of the area's most valued assets. The environment includes buildings and structures, parks and gardens, and archaeological remains that are an important aspect of the area's past. It also adds that there are assets which are at risk from the impact of major change through development or the cumulative loss of smaller features and structures which make the area distinctive.
Policy BN5 states that development in areas of historic or heritage significance will be required to sustain and enhance the heritage and landscape features that contribute to the character of the area. Proposals should also demonstrate an appreciation and understanding of the impact of development on surrounding heritage assets and their settings.

7.50 Welton Parish has a rich and diverse history that contributes to its distinct identity. Within or adjacent to the village confines are several listed structures: at the centre of the village St Martin’s Church is listed, as are several dwellings detailed in Character Area 1; further properties in Character Areas 4 and 5 are listed; structures associated with the nearby canal are also listed as are two farming related structures. Additionally, much is known about the history of several other buildings in the village, some of which have had their use changed while others have been replaced by more recent buildings.

7.51 Buildings within the village are complemented by some important examples of Northamptonshire stone and brick walls, alongside green spaces, hedgerows and trees. The work of the Welton History Group demonstrates the commitment of the community to valuing and preserving its heritage for generations to come. (See resource on Parish Council website)

7.52 The parish contains sections of the Grand Union Canal and its associated Leicester Arm. Both of these man-made structures are designated Conservation Areas and should be protected as such. The Canal Conservation Area is indicated in Section 11, Appendix 4.

### Policy 5 – Heritage Assets

A proposal for development will be supported provided that:

a) it preserves or enhances designated heritage assets and their setting including listed buildings, the Canal Conservation Area, scheduled monuments and other designated heritage assets above and below ground;

b) any development that directly or indirectly affects a non-designated heritage asset will need to balance the scale of the harm or loss arising from the development, against the significance of the asset;

c) its impact and contribution to local distinctiveness, character and sense of place is acceptable; and

d) it has regard to the Character Assessment.

Proposals that sensitively promote and interpret heritage assets will be supported.

### Open spaces

7.53 The National Planning Policy Framework also introduces the concept of Local Green Spaces. Through neighbourhood plans, local communities are invited to identify for
special protection green areas of particular importance to them. By designating land as Local Green Space, new development is ruled out other than in very special circumstances. The Framework adds that Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a neighbourhood plan is prepared or reviewed, and should be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period. The Framework points out that the designation will not be appropriate for most open spaces. Any such designated Local Green Spaces:

- must be reasonably close to the community it serves;
- must be demonstrably special to the local community in terms of, for example, its beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity or richness of its wildlife;
- should be local in character and not be an extensive tract of land.

The following sites in the village satisfy these criteria:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>How it meets the NPPF criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| a) The Playing Field              | The Playing Field that adjoins the school is the main area of open space within the village. It provides a safe venue for children to engage in formal and informal recreation and is the location for various community events. | • The Playing Field is located at the heart of the village and is therefore close to the community it serves  
  • It is demonstrably special to the local community for the recreational, social and cultural provision it makes  
  • The Parish Council provides a Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play  
  • It serves as a playing field for Welton CE Academy (which in return contributes to its upkeep) and enables the school to deliver the whole of Key Stage 2 curriculum  
  • It is not an extensive tract of land  
  • In responses to the 2016 Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire, it was highly and widely rated |
| b) St Martin’s Spinney           | St Martin’s Spinney is owned, maintained and controlled by Welton Parish    | • It is adjacent to the Church and Village Hall, therefore it is close to the centre of the community it serves |
The areas above are therefore designated as Local Green Space and protected accordingly.

### Policy 6 - Local Green Space

The following areas are designated as Local Green Space:

- a) The Playing Field
- b) St. Martin’s Spinney

Proposals for development that are incompatible with the importance of a Local Green Space as an attractive, publicly accessible area will not be allowed unless there are very special circumstances where the benefits of development clearly outweigh its loss or any harm caused by such development.

The boundaries of the Local Green Spaces are shown on Proposals Map 2.

### Trees and Hedgerows

7.56 Trees and hedgerows are an integral part of the natural environment. They provide visual amenity, create habitats for wildlife, and improve air quality.

7.57 Saved Policy GN1 of the Daventry District Local Plan (1997) looks to safeguard the natural resources of the district. Saved Policy EN25 seeks the protection and incorporation of existing trees, hedges and other features within a development site together with proposals for new planting that respects the unique distinctiveness of the development site.

7.58 The Hedgerows Regulations 1997 protect most countryside hedgerows from being removed (including being uprooted or otherwise destroyed). If anyone wants to remove a hedgerow (or part of a hedgerow) they must apply in writing in advance to Daventry District Council. The District Council can issue a hedgerow retention notice if the hedgerow is considered ‘important’ and therefore must be kept, or it can give permission to remove the hedgerow. An important hedgerow must be at least 30 years old and meet certain criteria e.g. it marks a pre-1850 parish boundary, incorporates a Scheduled...
Monument or an archaeological feature, is an integral part of a field system pre-dating the Enclosure Acts, or contains protected species listed in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

7.59 The National Planning Policy Framework states that planning permission should be refused for development that would result in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, including ancient woodland and the loss of aged or veteran trees unless the need for development in that location clearly outweighs the loss. This stance is emphasised in Policy BN3 of the Joint Core Strategy (2014).

7.60 Approaching Welton from any direction, regardless of the season, it is clear that the village is set on a slope and amongst a variety of mature trees, including some rare species. Trees also create small coppices and plantations adjacent to the village enclave. The protection of these trees is vital to the appearance of the village, and there are a number of Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) in force. These TPOs safeguard the trees. However a further consequence of their designation is that they help protect the setting of the village and its character.

7.61 Within the Parish, the following woods are subject to ‘area’ tree preservation orders:
• St Martin’s Spinney
• The Wilderness
• Mickle Well Spinney
• Welton Manor Coppice
• Bridge Spinney

These woods are shown in Section 11, Appendix 3.

7.62 The following policy aims to prevent where possible, development that would result in loss of or damage to significant trees, hedgerows and woodlands. Such features are a vital element in the character of the village and its surrounding countryside. Unless trees are subject to Tree Preservation Orders or are in Conservation Areas their removal and pruning are not subject to planning control. Even where trees are subject to planning control it is unusual for policies to preclude their removal and it is more normal to require the provision of replacement trees; such features should be retained wherever possible because of their contribution to the historic and natural environment.

7.63 Wider area protection exists to preserve trees in individual and remote settings. Included within these protections are blocks shown in Section 11, Appendix 3.
**Policy 7 – Trees and hedgerows**

When considering development proposals mature trees, woodlands and important hedgerows should be protected wherever possible. Development that will result in the loss or damage to protected trees and woodlands will not be permitted unless a satisfactory scheme for the replacement of lost trees or mitigation of damage to the landscape is agreed.

**Important views**

7.64 In 2006, the River Nene Regional Park published a Landscape Character Assessment for Northamptonshire. Most of the current landscape in the parish is described therein as ‘undulating hills and valleys’ that form part of the West Northamptonshire Uplands.

7.65 Welton is a linear settlement sited on a ridge. This means that it is highly visible in the landscape from many approaches. There are interesting views within the village and also outstanding views across the surrounding open countryside. The Welton Character Area Assessment demonstrates how views form an important component in terms of the distinctiveness of the village and are assets which the community values. The following views are especially valued by the community:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of View</th>
<th>Description of view</th>
<th>Reason for importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Looking out from the village</td>
<td>(1) From below the church by the boundary wall of the former Welton Place, looking south across the green and Stockwell Green, The Old House, and beyond to open countryside, with Borough Hill in the distance</td>
<td>Standing in the original side gateway from the former Welton Place connects one immediately to the village’s past. Looking across to The Old House (listed) provides a beautiful example of a Northamptonshire stone dwelling with its own history. The horse chestnut on the green is one of the village’s many stunning trees and, beneath, it provides both a seating area with commanding views and also a long-lasting source from which children over the ages have collected ‘conkers’. The spring at Stockwell Green is evidence of the water sources that helped give the village its name.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looking out from the village</td>
<td>(2) Looking north east along Station Road</td>
<td>Demonstrates Welton’s upland position above the Watford Gap and shows the proximity of open countryside to the village centre. This view is taken from the mound in the Playing Field, at the very heart of the village and its activities. Reflecting our heritage, it takes in cottages on either side as the vista expands over open countryside.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looking out from the village</td>
<td>(3) Looking south east from St Martin’s Spinney</td>
<td>In the foreground this view takes in a paddock in which sheep frequently graze under mature trees, some of which are extremely rare species, and together they provide glorious autumn colours. A public footpath crosses a contrasting large and open arable field, bounded by an ancient hedgerow with extensive rabbit burrows. In the valley beyond, cattle and sheep are grazed throughout the year and in the distance the line of trees indicates the route of the Grand Union Canal.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Looking out from the village</td>
<td>(4) Looking south west from near the Churchyard Extension (cemetery)</td>
<td>This expansive view incorporates upland rolling arable land, hedgerows, mature trees and a distinct area of woodland which provides important habitats. This is an important area of separation from neighbouring settlements and contributes significantly to the identity and setting of the village. This would be compromised by any, even sensitive, development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looking out from the village</td>
<td>(5) Looking north from the public footpath (FH9) running from Ashby Road towards Ashby St Ledgers and the Jurassic Way</td>
<td>A valued route between neighbouring villages across undulating farmland. This forms part of a network of public footpaths providing local connectivity, enhancing leisure activities which contribute to well-being. This vista provides commanding views of the landscape through changing seasons, field patterns, and panoramic cloudscapes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looking into the village</td>
<td>(6) From the brow of Welton Lane looking north towards Welton</td>
<td>Beyond the edge of Daventry’s northern development and the Grand Union Canal, this approach to the village takes in the rolling fields and woodland areas between the end of the town’s housing and the start of the village. This vital landscape gap emphasises the separate identity of Welton. It embodies much of what it means to live in a defined and beautiful rural setting, enhancing a valuable sense of place and belonging.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Looking into the village

(7) Looking west from Crockwell Hill, towards Kiln Lane, St Martin's Spinney, St Martin's Church and the Ridgeway

Standing at the summit of Crockwell Hill, where ridge and furrow fall away into the valley, the view west back towards the village takes in young native oaks planted in the hedgerows bordering the road, rolling arable land backed by woodland around St Martin's Spinney, the church tower and, in winter, some of the buildings at the village's centre. It emphasises the village's position amidst countryside and its location on the steep slopes towards the top of the ridge.

7.66 A photograph of each view is shown below.

![View 1 – Below the church looking south beyond The Old House](image1)

![View 2 – Looking north-east along Station Road from the Playing Field](image2)
View 3 – Looking south-east from St Martin’s Spinney recreation area

View 4 – South-west from near the Churchyard Extension (cemetery)

View 5 – Looking north from the start of the footpath to Ashby St Ledgers
7.67 The following policy aims to protect important views from development that would have a harmful impact on them.

**Policy 8 – Important Views**

Any development proposals must ensure that the openness and key features of these important views can continue to be enjoyed including distant buildings, areas of landscape and the juxtaposition of the village edge, arboreal setting and the surrounding open countryside. Development proposals that have any harmful impact on such views will be resisted.

The location and direction of each important view is indicated on Proposals Map 3.
Open Countryside

7.68 Saved Policy EN1 of the Daventry District Local Plan stipulates that development will be resisted if it adversely affects the character of the local landscape. Saved Policy HS24 in the same plan also states that planning permission will not be granted for residential development in the open countryside other than the re-use or conversion of existing buildings, essential for the purposes of agriculture or forestry, or the replacement of an existing dwelling.

7.69 The Core planning principles listed in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 17) recognise the intrinsic value and beauty of the countryside. The Framework is also designed to conserve local heritage assets. Section 11 highlights the need to protect valued landscapes and endorses the need to protect areas of tranquillity.

7.70 Policy R1 of The West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy says that development outside existing confines will be permitted where it involves the re-use of buildings or, in exceptional circumstances, where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities or would contribute towards and improve the local economy. The Strategy also emphasises that new development in the rural areas will be limited, with the emphasis being on respecting the quality of tranquillity.

7.71 The following policy builds on the wider planning context of the National Planning Policy Framework, the Daventry District Local Plan and the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and applies that context at the neighbourhood plan level to protect both the open countryside surrounding the village and the quality of the landscape.

Policy 9 – Open Countryside

Outside the village confines development will only be supported where it meets the requirements of saved Policy EN1 of the Daventry District Local Plan and Policies R1 and R2 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (or whatever equivalent local plan policies that replace them) and where it does not cause demonstrable harm to:

a) landscape quality;

b) sites of ecological value;

c) heritage assets including Scheduled Monuments, other sites of archaeological interest such as ridge and furrow; or

d) the intrinsic character, beauty and tranquillity of the countryside.

Proposals for development should have regard to the descriptions and guidelines contained in the Northamptonshire Environment Character Strategy and Green Infrastructure Strategy as developed by the River Nene Regional Park.
Canals

7.72 Historically, the village has benefitted from its proximity to the Grand Union Canal. The Welton-Braunston Tunnel was opened in 1793 and carries the canal under high ground. The tunnel is 2,049 yards in length making it one of the longest on the canal system. Norton Junction marks the beginning of the associated Leicester Arm, which forms the largest section of canal within the parish.

7.73 The canal and its immediate environs have been designated as a Conservation Area. The boundary is shown on the map in Section 11, Appendix 4.

7.74 The West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy highlights how the canal network provides a historic, cultural, recreational and wildlife asset. It adds that the local economy of villages within the rural areas can benefit from rural tourism associated with countryside recreation, including the network of canals and historic visitor sites. They also contribute to the green infrastructure network.

7.75 The Canal and River Trust (CRT) state that the planning system has a vital role to play in:
- protecting the network of canals from inappropriate development;
- protecting and enhancing the natural and historic waterway environment;
- unlocking the inland waterway network's economic, social and environmental value; and
- improving the health and performance of the network, their corridors and adjoining communities.

7.76 The CRT's ‘Planning for Prosperity, People and Places’ states that planning policies within neighbourhood plans should acknowledge and support the different economic, social and environment roles of canals. This requirement is certainly the case in Welton as the canal clearly has an important role in supporting the local economy. There are two purpose-built marinas within the plan area along the length of the canal, namely Welton Hythe and Welton Haven, and canal users also access village facilities.

7.77 The canals are therefore an important part of the historic and cultural background to the village, and play a significant role in the quality of the environment and landscape. They provide important habitats for wildlife and a valuable leisure facility that benefits the area’s tourist trade and supports the rural economy. Additionally, the canal network provides some accumulation capacity to mitigate flood events in the area. All sections of canals within the parish include well-maintained towpaths, through the work of the Canals and Rivers Trust. These towpaths provide a valuable option for walking, running and cycling away from main roads and thus benefit the health of the community and other users. More than 85% of the respondents to the relevant question in Welton’s 2016 Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire indicated that they used the local parts of the canal system for leisure and exercise.
**Policy 10 – Canals and their setting**

The canals and their setting need to be protected from inappropriate development owing to their economic, social and environmental contribution to the area. A proposal for development will be supported providing that it:

a) respects the unique character of the canal through innovative and sensitive design;
b) uses appropriate designs and materials for works and repairs to historical canal structures;
c) provides external spaces which allow visual and physical access that encourage links to Welton village;
d) protects and manages the function of the canal as a wildlife corridor by resisting proposals which destroy or adversely affect areas of ecological interest;
e) protects existing hedgerows and trees and introduce soft landscape works to retain the canal as a green waterway;
f) encourages a positive relationship between the canal and surrounding land by providing high quality and appropriate boundary treatment; and
g) provides, and if necessary upgrades, pedestrian access to maintain the role of the canal as a green pedestrian link.

**Objective 4 - To maintain and develop the infrastructure to ensure a sustainable and viable community**

**Services and facilities**

* 7.78 Local facilities in the village include:
  a) The Village Hall: this facility is recognised and valued as an important social asset in the responses gathered in the 2016 Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire.
  b) The White Horse: this public house is also a valued and significantly used asset.
  c) St Martin’s Church: the church serves a broad congregation and, as well its religious purposes, is occasionally used for more secular activities. Comments were made in the responses to the 2016 Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire that its facilities could be available for wider use.
  d) Welton CE Academy: the school has been classed as ‘Outstanding’ by Ofsted and pupil places are in high demand from within and beyond the village. For Welton residents whose children attend the school, this is a highly valued resource. It has also been a factor in attracting new residents to the village.
  e) The Playing Field: responses to the 2016 Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire in particular from under 21s, indicated that this is the most highly valued village resource, with several comments suggesting further potential improvements. The Playing Field also provides a venue for community activities such as the Village Fete and is therefore important to the community as a whole.
7.79 There are no shops or medical facilities within the village, with the nearest dental and medical facilities and a convenience store being located at Ashby Fields. Access to these facilities is not possible by scheduled public transport.

7.80 Paragraph 28 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that neighbourhood plans should promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting spaces, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship. Paragraph 69 of the same document adds that planning should facilitate social interaction and create healthy, inclusive communities. It says that access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities.

7.81 Policy RC2 in the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy says that the loss of existing community facilities, including areas of open space, will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that a replacement facility of equal or better quality can be provided. Similarly, it requires that the proposal brings about community benefits that outweigh the loss of the facility or that the open space is little used.

7.82 There is a strong sense of community within Welton which is regarded as being important to the health and well-being of the whole community. In responses to the 2016 Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire, several residents, both adults and young people, commented on the value of knowing many people in the community, and of it being a safe and friendly environment. Many residents participate in organised activities in the village, attend social events, or are members of the various clubs and societies. The village operates an active and well supported Neighbourhood Watch Scheme. Existing facilities should therefore be protected, supported or enhanced.

### Policy 11 – Local Services and Community Facilities

The retention and development of the following community facilities will be supported providing it does not have significant harmful impacts on the amenities of residents or on other neighbouring uses:

- The Village Hall
- The White Horse
- St Martin’s Church
- Welton CE Academy

The loss of any of the above facilities will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that:

a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown it to be surplus to requirements or no longer viable;

b) the loss would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality, and in a suitable location to meet the need; or

c) the development will bring about a community benefit, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.
Telecommunications

7.83 The National Planning Policy Framework points out that an advanced, high quality communications infrastructure is essential for sustainable economic growth. It adds that the development of high speed broadband technology and other communications networks plays a vital role in enhancing the provision of local community facilities and services.

7.84 Policy C1 in the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy states that new development should enable access to superfast broadband with speeds of at least 30 megabytes per second. It adds that information communication networks, such as superfast broadband, will be supported across the whole of West Northamptonshire to reduce the need to travel.

7.85 Superfast broadband access enables people to work from home. It is therefore important that home businesses are not hindered by slower than average broadband speeds. Superfast broadband also enables people in the village, especially the elderly and/or disabled, to access services and facilities that would not otherwise be readily available to them.

7.86 Superfast broadband provision within the village currently varies from household to household and a good service needs to be made available to all.

| Policy 12 – Communications Infrastructure |
| Proposals for development that improve electronic communications such as faster broadband and the mobile phone network will be supported provided that any adverse impact can be satisfactorily mitigated. |

Business Development

7.87 The National Planning Policy Framework supports economic growth in rural areas to create jobs and prosperity. It encourages sustainable growth and expansion in well-designed new buildings that are in keeping with the locality.

7.88 Saved Policy EM11 in the Daventry District Local Plan states that:

| In the restricted infill villages planning permission for new business and industrial development will normally be granted provided the scale and character of the proposal reflects the residential nature of the surroundings. |
7.89 The Daventry District Local Plan adds that while the District Council appreciates that suitable modern businesses can be successfully integrated into the smaller villages and welcomes the employment opportunities which they represent, it is concerned to ensure that the scale of the operation and the size and type of the buildings do not detract from the character of the settlement or the amenities of the residents. The Local Plan states that in assessing planning applications, particular attention will be paid to the likely volumes of traffic generated by proposals.

7.90 Saved Policy EM12 states that:

In the restricted infill villages planning permission for new business and industrial development will normally be granted provided it is within the existing confines of the village.

7.91 As applied to this policy, the Local Plan adds that the existing confines of the village will be taken to mean that area of the village delineated by the existing main built-up area but excluding those peripheral buildings such as free-standing individual, or groups of dwellings, nearby farm buildings or other structures which are not closely related thereto. Gardens, or former gardens, within the curtilage of dwelling houses will not necessarily be assumed to fall within the existing confines of the village.

7.92 Policy S1 in the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy states that new development in rural areas will be limited, with the emphasis being on strengthening rural enterprise and linkages between settlements and their hinterlands. Policy R1 adds that development outside the existing confines will be permitted in exceptional circumstances if it enhances or maintains the vitality of rural communities or would contribute towards and improve the local economy. Policy R2 says that proposals that sustain and enhance the rural economy by creating or safeguarding jobs and businesses will be supported where they are of an appropriate scale for their location, respect the environmental quality and character of the rural area and protect the best and most versatile agricultural land.

7.93 It is recognised that the Welton Neighbourhood Area currently has no significant businesses that meet local needs and provide employment. The two marinas provide limited employment opportunities, as do the public house and the school. Members of the local community therefore largely commute to work. Daventry is in close proximity and there are larger towns such as Northampton, Coventry, Rugby, Milton Keynes, and Banbury within commuting distance.

7.94 Future business growth in the area will be supported, providing it is small scale and in-keeping with the rural character of the village and its surrounding countryside.

Policy 13 – Business Development

Business and economic development will be supported throughout the Parish provided that:
<p>| | |</p>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a)</td>
<td>proposals respect the character and appearance of the area with particular regard to scale, layout and materials to retain and respect and enhance the character of the countryside, local distinctiveness and help to create a sense of place;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b)</td>
<td>their impact in terms of traffic, noise, air pollution, light pollution, ecology and landscape is adequately mitigated through the use of appropriate measures.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. Community Aspirations

8.1 Throughout the period of preparation of the Welton Neighbourhood Plan, some issues have been raised by members of the community that do not specifically relate to land use or development matters. Such issues cannot be considered within this Neighbourhood Plan. Nonetheless, the community and organisations within the community, including the Parish Council, may wish to consider whether and how they may be able to respond to these issues.

Transport and traffic

8.2 The West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy highlights the importance of improving accessibility in rural areas. Paragraph 16.22 of the Strategy points out that transport is essential for most rural residents to gain access to the services and facilities that they need but paragraph 16.23 acknowledges that some of the highest traffic growth in recent years has been on routes in rural areas. The increased congestion on some routes can have a detrimental impact on villages where traffic uses unsuitable routes. The Strategy adds that traditional traffic management, such as signing and bollards, may detract from the overall character of the village and therefore different approaches for restricting traffic will be required.

8.3 Policy R3 in the Joint Core Strategy states that:

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**Improved accessibility and sustainable transport within rural areas and the avoidance of congestion and ‘rat running’ will be secured by:**

- Supporting improved public transport connections between villages and hamlets and their nearest services;
- Supporting improvements to the cycling network between villages and their nearest service centre; and
- Reviewing walking connections within villages to identify specific improvements required ensuring the safety of pedestrians.

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8.4 Actions that would make Welton a more attractive and accessible place for pedestrians and cyclists were also favoured in the community engagement for the Neighbourhood Plan. Residents were keen to see measures to promote safe roads and footpaths and to discourage through traffic. The use of Station Road and Ashby Road as a cut-through for large, articulated and heavy vehicles is widely opposed and such use degrades the road structure.

8.5 The 2016 Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire responses established a strong desire for weight restrictions to be both imposed and enforced on Welton Lane, Daventry Road, Station Road and Ashby Road. Such restrictions would prevent heavy goods vehicles from
accessing Kiln Lane, Churchill Road, High Street and Well Lane, except for deliveries. This restriction would improve the safety of village roads for pedestrians, cyclists and particularly for students at Welton CE Academy.

8.6 The Welton Neighbourhood Plan seeks to create a safe and attractive transport system that takes account of the mainly residential character of the village. This approach includes measures to improve car parking and the need to maintain the requisite access for public transport and emergency vehicles.

8.7 The Plan also seeks to encourage sustainable means of transport for all users, including those who travel into and those who travel out of the village for educational purposes.

**Community Aspiration 1 – Traffic Management**

Where appropriate, traffic management measures will be supported that will improve highway safety provided that the measures be of a design that is in keeping with the Character Area with regards to scale, layout and materials.

**Links with Daventry**

8.8 Although there are significant concerns amongst the local community about future coalescence with Daventry and the consequent loss of identity and character, there is nevertheless some recognised benefit to residents in being located in such close proximity to the town. In addition to accessing the variety of services and facilities available in Daventry, many Welton residents travel to Daventry for work. Without a scheduled bus service running at convenient times, these journeys are mainly undertaken by car.

8.9 Policy C1 (Changing behaviour and achieving modal shift) of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy states that:

*Priority will be given to proposed transport schemes that will contribute to behavioural change by:*

1. *Providing access by walking, cycling and public transport to key facilities and services;*
2. *Promoting the use of walking, cycling and public transport over and above private car trips.*

The recently completed combined pedestrian and cycleway from the village to the canal is a good example of such planning.
8.10 There is currently no scheduled bus service between Welton and any larger settlement. According to the 2016 Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire, many people in the community view the County Connect demand-led bus service quite negatively.

8.11 The 2016 Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire highlighted the number of people who need to travel to Daventry for reasons which could be accommodated through the provision of a scheduled bus service during peak times. This service would both reduce the need for private transport and help to reduce carbon and particulate emissions.

**Community Aspiration 2 – Traffic Links to Daventry**

The restoration of a scheduled bus service between Welton and Daventry will be supported.

**Other Aspirations**

**Community Aspiration 3 – Leisure and Recreation**

Review and consult on the range of leisure and recreational activities for all age groups: to include footpaths throughout the parish, usage of the Playing Field and St Martin’s Spinney, activities within the Village Hall.

**Community Aspiration 4 – Village / Community Shop**

Encourage discussion on potential provision of village or community shop or similar resource.

**Community Aspiration 5 – Community Resources / Facilities**

Review and consult on community resources and facilities.

8.12 It should be noted that the above matters do not form part of the statutory Neighbourhood Development Plan.
9. Monitoring and Review

9.1 The Parish Council will monitor and, if appropriate, undertake a review of the Welton Neighbourhood Plan.

9.2 An annual monitoring report will be prepared and considered by the Parish Council. The report will cover:

- the effectiveness of the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan when assessing and determining planning applications;
- any changes in national planning policy that could supersede the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan;
- the latest statistical information such as meeting the rural housing requirement across Daventry District or the need for additional affordable homes within the village;
- the implications of the emerging local plans being prepared by Daventry District Council, in particular the Daventry Settlements and Countryside Local Plan;
- any changing circumstances within the village.

9.3 The views of Daventry District Council, as the local planning authority, will be sought on these matters.

9.4 The annual monitoring report might conclude that a partial or comprehensive review of the Neighbourhood Plan is necessary and accordingly trigger that process. In any event, the community will need to return to the Plan and its replacement as it approaches the end of the plan period in 2029.
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Listed structures within the Plan Area

Appendix 5 identifies the locations of all listed structures within the parish.

These are:

- St Martin’s Church, High Street
- Cistern between south aisle and south porch, St. Martin’s Church
- Pair of headstones, St Martin’s Church churchyard
- Gateway in wall opposite St Martin’s Church churchyard, High Street
- Home Farm, Well Lane
- Oakmore House, Ashby Road
- Stonepit Farm, Ashby Road
- The Manor House, Welton Lane/Daventry Road.
- The Old House, Kiln Lane
- Welton Manor, Welton Lane/Daventry Road
- Crockwell Farm Cottage
- Welton Lodge Farmhouse
- No 2 Bridge on the Leicester Arm of the Grand Union Canal
- No 3 Bridge on the Leicester Arm of the Grand Union Canal
- Milepost near Bridge 5 on the Leicester Arm of the Grand Union Canal.
Appendix 6

Welton Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2029

Character Assessment

Welton Parish Council
Character Assessment

Introduction

1. As part of the preparation of the Welton Neighbourhood Development Plan the Steering Group undertook a character assessment as part of the required evidence base.

2. The village of Welton and its surrounding countryside benefit from a distinctive rural character that is highly valued by local residents. The aim of the assessment is to articulate this character and positively influence any proposals coming forward. This will ensure that any future development protects and enhances the very features that make the area so special to the local community.

Welton Parish

3. The parish is located immediately to the north of Daventry in the county of Northamptonshire.

4. The A5 Watling Street forms the parish boundary to the east. Immediately beyond lie the West Coast Main Railway Line and the M1 Motorway, with the Watford Gap Services abutting the parish boundary. The Grand Union Canal runs along the southern boundary of the parish, while the Leicester Arm passes directly through the eastern side of the parish. The western boundary generally follows fields either side of the A361 road from Daventry to Kilsby, while the northern boundary runs approximately along the route between Ashby St Ledgers and the Watford crossroads.

5. The small village of Welton is situated in the centre of the parish. The northern part of the village is located on a ridge and the remainder on the south east facing slope of Crockwell Hill, one of the many hills which characterise the Northamptonshire Uplands. Surrounding the village is open countryside that is largely in agricultural use, interspersed with mature hedgerows and spinneys.

6. The village is predominantly residential. At the time of the 2011 Census the parish had a population of 608 people living in 258 households and the number of dwellings was 264.

History

7. Roman artefacts found in the parish indicate that it has been inhabited for at least 2,000 years. The village was recorded in the Domesday Survey. Its prominent position on a hillside with an abundance of streams, wells and good quality farmland helped it to prosper over the centuries.
8. St Martin’s Church was built in the 13th century. Today it is a Grade II* listed building and contains many features of architectural and historical significance. The White Horse Public House dates back to the 17th century and retains a thatched roof. The end of the building once adjoined the former village school.

9. Since the late 18th century, the village has benefitted from its proximity to the Grand Union Canal. The Welton-Braunston Tunnel was opened in 1793 and carries the canal under high ground. The tunnel is 2,049 yards in length making it one of the longest on the canal system. Norton Junction marks the beginning of the associated Leicester Arm, which forms the largest section of canal within the parish. There are two purpose built marinas along its length, namely Welton Hythe and Welton Haven.

10. In addition to the parish church, Welton had a Baptist Chapel and a Wesleyan Chapel (the latter built in 1858). The Wesleyan Chapel is now a residential property. A number of listed structures are located within the parish. These are indicated in Section 11, Appendix 5.

11. The village continued to thrive as a consequence of its proximity to Daventry, a market town, and the A5 trunk road. There was also a railway halt with goods facilities at nearby Watford; this was called Welton Station but it closed for passenger services in the 1950s and for goods in the 1960s.

Historical Development of the Village

12. The centre of Welton is located in the High Street between the junctions with Well Lane and Welton Park. In the immediate vicinity are: St Martin’s Church, the Village Hall, The White Horse Public House and Welton CE Academy. The settlement developed from this historic core in a southerly direction along Churchill Road and Kiln Lane and northerly along Ashby Road and Station Road. In this area, there are many older buildings interspersed with more modern houses built on infill plots or where older cottages have been replaced.

13. Many of the older houses front directly onto the street whereas more modern properties are often set back.

Building Materials

14. The main building materials in Welton are Northamptonshire stone, mainly ironstone, (generally seen in the older buildings) and a mixture of red and polychrome brick.

15. Most buildings completed in the last thirty years are of brick, although a small number have some render finish.
Settlement Form and Characteristics


17. Welton is quoted as an example of a linear village. The Manual states that linear villages tend to follow a linear route with the main street that passes through the settlement acting as a focal area. It adds that later development or expansion of such villages usually results in a series of secondary streets branching off the main street. These secondary streets do not necessarily connect with each other. Hence the overall form retains its linear shape.

18. The Manual describes the built form of West Northamptonshire villages as exhibiting certain key characteristics. These include:
   • an organic layout with a diverse grain;
   • towards the centre of the settlement the grain may become more compact while it is loose and dispersed towards the edges;
   • the overall sense of space is defined and contained despite the dispersed built form;
   • village greens are a typical feature;
   • the village centre is often located at a crossroads marked by a village green and surrounded by mixed uses such as a community hall, local pub, shop, post office or café;
   • an easy commute to nearby towns has led to a tendency to become dormitory settlements, unable to sustain village facilities particularly the local shop and post office;
   • rural churches serve as the key landmark feature, and are usually located on a high point, with the surrounding landscape acting as the setting for the building;
   • historic buildings are constructed with local materials such as ironstone and reveal high architectural quality;
   • towards the centre buildings are set along the footpath edge with minimal setback;
   • massing is fairly homogeneous with buildings generally two storeys, though there is variety in rooflines that creates interest in elevation;
   • higher massing is at times created by trees rising above the built form, creating enclosure and providing focus;
   • many of the new built additions seem to take on a more suburban character.

19. The Manual specifically singles out Welton as being a typical West Northamptonshire village.

Spatial Character
20. Considering the village’s development over time and the prevalent styles, it is possible to divide the village into five clearly defined areas.
Character Area 1 – The Core – High Street, Well Lane, Station Road, the start of Ashby Road

Introduction

21. The centre of the village extends along the High Street, taking in St Martin’s Church, the Village Hall, St Martin’s Spinney, The White Horse Public House, Welton CE Academy, Well Lane, the Playing Field, Ashby Road from the High Street to its junction with Well Lane, and Station Road.
22. This is a coherent area from a social and business perspective. Historically, it contains structures from a 13th century church to early 21st century builds, reflecting Welton’s history, heritage and present life as a community. Any changes in this area would have to preserve and enhance these assets, which are highly valued across the whole of the village’s age profile. Welton CE Academy is part of this central area and, while many pupils come from outside the village, it is also a highly valued asset.

23. This area is located in an elevated setting on a wide ridge with a south facing slope along High Street towards St Martin’s Church. With Area 2 it forms the highest part of the village at just over 150 metres above sea level.

Land uses

24. In addition to the residential provision, the two Local Green Spaces in the Welton Neighbourhood Plan, the Playing Field and St Martin’s Spinney, are in this area. Several
important public buildings are also found adjacent to one another along the High Street, namely St Martin’s Church, the Village Hall, The White Horse Public House and, on the opposite side of the road, Welton CE Academy (primary school).
Layout and buildings

25. High Street is the principal road with the others identified above branching off it. On the eastern side, most houses face either the Playing Field or the school; lower down the High Street, houses on the western side face the public house or the Village Hall. Houses are located on plots of varying sizes and do not form a uniform building line due to their varying ages, design and size, including height. Pre-20th century properties which include one large detached house along with some terraced, semi-detached cottages and one detached cottage vary in distance from the road. Those properties built at different times in the second half of the 20th century are all large detached buildings set back from the road. While the older properties are of brick or stone construction with some being painted or rendered, the newer builds are brick, with the exception of one property which is stone.

26. St Martin’s Church (1245) with its surrounding churchyard is a prominent landmark at the southern end of the area. It is constructed from Northamptonshire ironstone and along with other ecclesiastical features is a listed structure. Its tower can be seen from several points in the village and surrounding landscape.

27. The Village Hall is situated next to the Church, being positioned back from the road with a recently refurbished garden area, seating and car park. Opened in 1967, this is a single storey building constructed in brick and timber cladding.

28. Adjacent to the Village Hall is the White Horse Public House which dates back to at least the 17th century, is built from local stone painted white, and has a thatched roof. Welton CE Academy occupies the corner plot at the junction of High Street and Well Lane and is a brick construction with slate roof. The building opened for pupils in 1915 and has since been extended to cater for an increased number of pupils.

29. Well Lane/Round Close is now wholly residential with most buildings facing onto the road, albeit at varying distances. Housing extends along the whole of the western side of the road with pre-20th century properties at the southern end and one at the northern limit. All are close to the road on varying plot sizes. The buildings include a 17th century listed Northamptonshire ironstone farmhouse and a former Wesleyan chapel. Set behind some of these at the southern end are three bungalows. Higher up the road later 20th century properties consist of two originally built as bungalows and four large detached houses, all of which were infill developments. Due to the variation in age and style there is no uniform building line along this side of the road. On the eastern side of Well Lane is one pre-20th century stone house set at right angles to the road, with two later 20th century brick built detached homes adjacent to it. Round Close to the north of these consists of semi detached mid 20th century brick bungalows built behind a very old, attractive stone wall on an elevated grass bank. These form a regular building line and were originally constructed as social housing.
30. All the buildings in Ashby Road (numbers 1, 3, 2-20) are residential, with the exception of a small electricity substation next to the Playing Field. The only properties on the southern side are two semi-detached bungalows which form part of the Round Close development. On the northern side there are four pre-20th century houses constructed from Northamptonshire ironstone with some rendering evident, and one in brick with rendering. Two of these are former farm houses, one having a thatched roof, and both are listed. Three are on large plots adjoining open countryside. The remainder consists of mid to later 20th century brick built properties, being either bungalows which have been extended or large detached houses. Most are set back from the road on generous plots adjoining open countryside.

31. In Station Road there is a range of housing of varying size, age and style in this part of the area. Properties on the western side consist of pre-20th century stone and rendered cottages, and brick built former bungalows, with one additional 21st century new build in stone. Beyond Station Road to the north on the Ridgeway, there are two large detached stone houses on generous plots. On the eastern side of Station Road, there is one semi-detached pre-20th century brick cottage, a 20th century bungalow and 20th century housing, including three large detached later 20th century houses in Burrows Close. These properties are adjacent to the detached house at the village’s perimeter, all being brick-built on generous plots.

Roads, streets and routes

32. High Street forms part of the original north-south route through the village and via Station Road allows access to the road network to the north and east (A5, M1, and M6). Ashby Road allows access to the A361 and similarly to the national routes mentioned, as well as to Daventry. Both roads are heavily used by residents and also as through routes by other road users. National Cycle Route 50 runs along Ashby Road and the High Street. The upper end of High Street is narrow and measures have been taken by Northamptonshire Highways to alleviate congestion. Well Lane is similarly narrow in
parts. There are well used public footpaths FH1 and FH10 located between houses on High Street and beyond the Ridgeway respectively. These paths allow immediate access to open and attractive countryside. FH1 also provides access to the Grand Union Canal further to the south.

**Spaces**

33. The Playing Field occupies a prominent central position in this area. It is used for village events, by Welton CE Academy, and it provides informal recreational facilities for children and families. It is owned and managed by the Parish Council. St Martin’s Spinney lies behind the Village Hall and the White Horse Public House with two access points from the High Street, one of which is adjacent to the Village Hall and the other via public footpath FH1. It is owned and managed by the Parish Council. Other open spaces in this area include the triangular island at the junction of High Street, Ashby Road and Station Road, the grassed area in front of Round Close, grassed verges in Ashby Road, and the grassed area outside the Village Hall. The Village Hall, Public House and Welton CE Academy all have car parking facilities.

**Landmarks**

34. St Martin’s Church, the Village Hall, the White Horse Public House and Welton CE Academy form a strong collective focus at the core of the village.

**Green and natural features**

35. The Playing Field contains a range of mature and more recently planted trees on its north and east perimeter. Mature trees feature prominently in gardens in the High Street and include a noteworthy specimen horse chestnut; there is a wide range of trees in St Martin’s Spinney, complemented by hazel hedging; the Churchyard has a number of ancient yew trees. Round Close has seen recent replanting of several hawthorn trees and some shrubs. Spring bulbs are planted on the verge adjacent to the Playing Field and also around the village gateway on Station Road. The approach to this area of the village from Station Road is framed by hedgerows with trees, and those planted in gardens and green spaces.

**Streetscape**

36. The area contains lamp posts and poles for overhead telephone connections, some with lamps. There are some attractive old stone and brick built walls throughout this area including the Churchyard, The Stone House, Ashby Road, Round Close and part of the Playing Field and the school which emphasise the area’s heritage and visual impact. The Village Hall is bounded by attractive iron railings and gates, and there are iron gateways at the entrance to St Martin’s Spinney and St Martin’s Church. Wooden display boards and public seating feature in the Churchyard, St Martin’s Spinney, the Village Hall, and the
Playing Field. There is attractive signage outside the Village Hall, The White Horse Public House and Welton CE Academy.

**Views**

37. Important views in Area 1 are described in the main body of the Welton Neighbourhood Plan (Section 7). These vistas demonstrate the impact of its elevated position in the village.

**Summary**

38. This area is both the historic and the modern core of the village with a very wide range of residential properties. Significantly, all of the village’s current public buildings and both its Local Green Spaces are in this area. It provides a very strong sense of the village’s heritage and identity both of which must be safeguarded for future generations.

**Character Area 2 Ashby Road (numbers 5 west and 22 west)**

**Introduction**

39. Predominately this area contains properties that were constructed shortly before and after the Second World War as social housing. They comprise terraced and semi-detached properties with generous garden plots. The frontages are mostly set back with wide verges giving a pleasing open and spacious feel. Later additions include a number of bungalows to the western end of the area, which contribute to the development of a more sustainable community. Abutting this area to the south, west and north is open countryside, in particular with a paddock containing ridge and furrow, and the Churchyard Extension (cemetery), beyond the western edge.

40. As a later addition to the linear village layout’s spine which takes the development away from its historical direction, this road stands as a Character Area in its own right. The area is one of the most level parts of the village, running along the top of the ridge. It has good access to all key village resources while being adjacent to open countryside.

**Topography**

41. This is a level area along an east-west ridge. It adjoins Area 1, and together they constitute the highest part of the village. It is bounded by open fields and some spinneys beyond the gardens of the houses on both sides of the road, and to the west.

**Land uses**

42. The is a residential area.
Layout and buildings

43. The layout of properties is mainly linear and regular on both sides of the road and the building line is consistent, excepting a small group of houses at the eastern end of the character area. The majority of the properties sit in generous plots notable for their long rear gardens. With one exception they face the road and are set well back, with those on the southern side having wide grass verges. The majority of housing was constructed as social housing between the 1930s and the 1950s and consists of semi-detached and terraced properties in different styles, making a total of 35 properties. Most are brick built, with one remaining of concrete cladding and one recently rendered. At the eastern end there is a mix of 4 pre-20th, 20th and 21st century houses, which consists of an original stone farmhouse with subsequent infill of brick built or stone properties. To the western end of the road, there are 5 late 20th century bungalows which face a 20th century bungalow and house on the opposite side. These are primarily of brick construction.

Roads, streets and routes

44. This area comprises a single straight road which is an important route for residents and other road users passing through the village. There is easy access to the A361 from this road and thence south to Daventry, and north to major routes, as well as east via Station Road. There are significant concerns amongst residents about speeding on Ashby Road and in recent years villagers have tried to combat this through a Community Speed Watch initiative.

45. Footpaths are located on either side of the road with the northern one continuing to the Churchyard Extension (cemetery). The road itself forms part of Cycle Route 50. There is a popular public footpath (FH9) which passes between the houses on the northern side of the road and immediately across open fields to Ashby St Ledgers where there is access to the Jurassic Way.

Spaces

46. There are mown grass verges on both sides of the road which are noticeably wider on the south side.

Green and natural features

47. Two mature deciduous trees are located on house boundaries on the south side and two hawthorns have been planted on the southern verges.

Streetscape

48. There are several steel lamp posts and telephone poles in this area. One of the village’s three post boxes is on a grass verge at the eastern end of Ashby Road.
Views

49. There are outstanding and extensive views from the rear of the houses on the northern side of the road, both looking towards Ashby St Ledgers and back towards the village. From the end of the housing looking south, there are views across fields to The Rookery area of woodland, and out westwards towards the watershed. In addition, there is a further outstanding view towards the south west, taking in rolling arable land and The Pheasantry.

Summary

50. The east-west ridge setting of this area, adjoining the historic core of Welton, facilitated growth of the village from the 1930s, a common feature in many rural settlements. It has a pleasant open spacious feel and incorporates a key route into and out of the village.

Character Area 3 – Welton Park, Clarkes Way and Halford Way

Introduction

51. In the second half of the 20th Century, socio-economic changes drove a move to replace expensive large (and sometimes derelict) houses with detached houses set in large plots. Within Welton, much of this type of development took place across the village’s spine road and replaced Welton House and Welton Place. Chronologically, the new developments were Welton Park, Clarkes Way and Halford Way.

52. The former buildings, set in extensive grounds, provided significant space on which were constructed large detached properties. There was no provision for what today is classified as 'affordable' housing.
53. Since this area encompasses what were former 'manorial' type houses with large grounds, its features include many attractive, mature, specimen trees which were planted in the former gardens. These trees bring added beauty and character to this area which also contains the privately owned lake which, while not publicly accessible, can be glimpsed between the houses in Clarkes Way and below the church. The lake constitutes an important ecological feature and is the focal point for an annual migration of toads.

54. There are significant remnants of these former houses in the form of boundary walls and foundations, demonstrating the history of the village and the families who lived there.

**Topography**

55. Welton Park and Clarkes Way are situated on an east-west axis off the High Street, part of the spine road going down the village. Halford Way lies on the other side of the spine. The first two roads are on the open scarp of the ridge, whereas Halford Way lies in a sheltered sloping area below the Churchyard.

**Land uses**

56. This is a residential area.

**Layout and buildings**

57. Each of the three roads is a cul de sac, with Halford Way forming an informal broadly circular grouping whereas the other two are linear. Properties in Welton Park and Clarkes Way are regularly spaced on generous plots, whereas there is more variation in size and shape of plot on Halford Way. Built in the 1960s, the houses and two bungalows in Welton Park are of brick with some cladding. The houses in Clarkes Way were primarily built in the 1970s and early 80s with some more recent additions in the 90s. They occupy the site of the former Welton Place, are constructed mostly in brick complemented by some stone boundary walling, with rear gardens of properties on the south side bordering the ornamental lake which was a feature of the original gardens. Halford Way is a development from the late 1990s, situated in the grounds of the former Welton House. The houses are constructed of stone or brick with materials from the original house having been used in some boundary walls.
Roads, streets and routes

58. Welton Park and Clarkes Way have curving wide entrances from the main spine road with grass verges creating a spacious aspect. The entrance to Halford Way is from the upper part of Klin Lane and is framed by attractive walling.

Spaces

59. While each of these developments has open aspects, there are no specific public spaces within them.

Landmarks

60. There is a high stone wall that formerly marked the boundary of Welton Place with the High Street. In the wall there is a stone door frame, no longer in use, which used to give residents of Welton Place access across the High Street to St Martin’s Church. This is a listed structure.

Green and natural features

61. Much of this character area is framed by extensive mature trees with The Rookery forming an attractive western wooded hinterland to Welton Park and Clarkes Way. In the latter a number of species trees are particularly evident, including the copper beech at the entrance to this road. A large attractive ornamental lake is situated immediately to the south of Clarkes Way with rear gardens adjoining it.

Streetscape

62. There are steel lamp posts in Welton Park and Halford Way; there is one steel lamp post in Clarkes Way and the remainder are concrete.
Views

63. From the eastern part of Welton Park there is a stunning view of St Martin’s Church, particularly the church tower. Looking to the south and west from this road, there are views of rolling farmland, woodland and individual mature trees. From Clarokes Way looking south and west, the lake can be glimpsed between several of the houses with woodland and fields beyond. As it is an enclosed cul de sac, the views from within Halford Way are comparatively limited, although some houses have extensive rear views over open countryside.

Summary

64. This area consisting of three late 20th century residential developments of large detached properties, benefits from the landscaping of the two very large pre 20th century country houses on which they are sited. The lake and mature trees, many of which have Tree Preservation Orders, enhance the area as does its overall topography.

Character Area 4 – Kiln Lane and Emery Close

65. This area was the first significant 'side road' branching off the village spine, coincidentally where the upper road (High Street) changes to the lower road (Churchill Road).

66. Properties along this road date from the 17th century to the present day and encompass a wide range of styles and sizes. The area includes Emery Close, a development that also provides a range of properties.

67. Descending from an attractive green space with a mature horse chestnut tree and a seating area, past Stockwell Green and its spring, Kiln Lane is a single width road in places. Traditional hedging and small fields where animals are grazed border it. This area provides a sense of the village’s rural heritage and residents young and old value its proximity to the countryside.

Topography

68. This area is situated on a southeast slope, being much steeper as it branches off High Street and levelling out as it progresses downhill to Daventry Road.

Land uses

69. This is a residential area.

Layout and buildings
70. At its junction with the High Street, Kiln Lane runs adjacent to a large attractive open grassed bank with pre-20th century detached cottages set back along a raised footpath, and, on the opposite side, a listed 17th century stone house. Below the cottages, there is a former gatehouse to Welton House, the entrance to Halford Way and a public footpath. Opposite there are two large later 20th century detached houses, one of which has a large adjoining garden area. The lane then narrows and bends with trees and hedging opening onto fields along the whole of its eastern side. On the other side there is a pre-20th century cottage with a large new 21st century house located behind that, on the site of an earlier 20th century detached house. There then follow 20th century properties comprising a bungalow, and 4 detached houses, the last three forming part of the Emery Close development.

71. The next feature is the entrance to Emery Close with the entry road alongside a wide green space, which branches into two arms. The main Emery Close development constructed in the late 1970s consists of 14 detached houses of varying sizes, conforming generally to an overall style, and set in an informal layout. Within this area there are also two later 20th century bungalows and one detached house. Below the entrance to Emery Close, continuing on the western side of the lane there are two semi-detached pre 20th century stone cottages, followed by four large detached houses; three of these are late 20th century and one was built earlier in the century.

72. Throughout this area, 20th century buildings are mainly of brick construction with some stone evident, whereas the pre-20th century properties are built in Northamptonshire stone with some rendering and brickwork. There is some inconsistency of the building line in places due to the varying ages of properties. Plot sizes vary considerably in this area.

Roads, streets and routes

73. Kiln Lane is very narrow and winding in places. Emery Close is a cul de sac. At the upper end of Kiln Lane the footpath is raised. There is then no footpath along the rest of the lane excepting a short distance above the entrance to Emery Close. A public footpath, FH3, is located close to the junction with Halford Way and adjoins footpath FH1 across a small field.
Spaces

74. There are three important open spaces in this area; the triangular green at the top of Kiln Lane, Stockwell Green just to the south of that, and the green at the entrance to Emery Close. There are also grass verges as Kiln Lane joins Daventry Road.

Landmarks

75. The area at the top of Kiln Lane at its junction with High Street and Churchill Road is itself a landmark area within the village; the open space is raised, with an impressive horse chestnut tree. Together, the houses, Stockwell spring and stone walling and the triangular green, further reflect the village’s long history and heritage.

Green and natural features

76. The hedgerow along the eastern side of Kiln Lane, along with small fields, copses and a further hedgerow behind this form an important backdrop to Kiln Lane and Emery Close which emphasise the village’s setting within the rural landscape. A stream runs to the rear of several properties from its source in Stockwell Green.

Streetscape

77. A seat on the triangular green at the top of Kiln Lane commemorates the reign of King George V. There is an electricity substation on Stockwell Green, a post box at the entrance to Emery Close, steel and concrete lamp posts and telephone poles.

Views

78. There is a notable view looking south and east from the open space at the top of Kiln Lane. This aspect takes in the pre 20th century buildings in this area, mature trees and the
open countryside beyond, including Borough Hill in the distance. From the lower part of Kiln Lane, the view south takes in open farmland looking across towards the Grand Union Canal, and north from the bottom of Kiln Lane takes in the rural aspect on the eastern side of the lane and the built environment of properties of varying ages on the west side.

Summary

79. Due to development on one side of the road only for most of its length, this area retains a spacious, rural feel in very close proximity to the countryside. Properties of varying ages, size and design are evident here and the Emery Close development, in particular, adds to the overall mix of properties in the village.

Character Area 5 – Churchill Road, The Paddock, Elms Dyke, and associated areas off Daventry Road

Introduction

80. This area comprises the lower part of the linear village. It includes the two cul de sacs of The Paddock and Elms Dyke. Small developments that are part of this area are Old Manor Court and Churchill Court. Similar to Area 1, this area contains a wide range of properties in terms of age, size and design.

81. The approach to this area from the south forms an attractive entrance to the village with Old Manor Court and Welton Manor situated either side of the road – these properties have significant history and are yet more examples of 'manorial' buildings within the village. Other large properties lie to the southeast of Daventry Road, and are included within this area.

82. As a whole, the range of properties in this area is very diverse. There are maisonettes, bungalows, semi-detached and detached houses of varying size and age, some of which were constructed as social housing.

Topography

83. This area occupies a south facing slope which is steep initially where Churchill Road, the lower part of the main spine road through the village, meets High Street. It eventually levels off to a flat area towards the lowest lying part of the village.

Land uses

84. This is a residential area.
Layout and buildings

85. This character area contains the greatest range of properties in the village in terms of age, size, and design. Building plots and building lines are consequently not uniform, although properties are generally evenly spaced. Most housing is located along the level part of Churchill Road, and in two specific developments off that, The Paddock and Elms Dyke. A further small development at Old Manor Court at the western extent of the village adds to a range of other distinctive large properties adjacent to and mainly on the south side of Daventry Road.

86. Coming down Churchill Road from its junction with the High Street, there are four later 20th century detached properties set on the eastern side around the sharp bend of the road, followed by one 21st century addition in what was a former garden space. Adjacent to this property, there is a uniform line of two brick built semi-detached bungalows and four semi-detached houses, originally built as social housing. On the western side of the road, the first property after The Wilderness is a notable three storey pre-20th century house and immediately after that a wide entrance opens onto The Paddock. The Paddock is a cul de sac with 2 detached and 12 semi-detached later 20th century properties originally built as bungalows, the majority having now been extended. This broad circle of properties on generous plot sizes has wide verges.

87. Opposite the entrance to The Paddock, on the east side of Churchill Road, there are four maisonettes which sit back from the road with their own road access garages to their rear. Next to the maisonettes is the former Red Lion public house, in rendered brick and now a dwelling, with an adjoining house at the rear.

88. Continuing on the eastern side of Churchill Road, there are two brick built cottage-style detached houses, one pre-20th century and one more recently built to resemble the former. Between these is a private road leading to a large detached 20th century property. Next to these is a substantial detached pre 20th century brick painted cottage, and then a large 20th century brick detached house. Another large detached brick house lies at one
side of the entrance to Elms Dyke. After the Elms Dyke entrance there is an interesting pre-20th century detached house with notable architecture, and adjacent to that there is a 20th century house which is set well back from the Daventry Road. Elms Dyke itself consists of six large detached brick and stone built houses, constructed in the 1990s and positioned in an informal arrangement, with one pre-20th century Northamptonshire stone and brick detached cottage at its entrance. Open plan front gardens add to the sense of spaciousness here.

89. On the western side of Churchill Road from The Paddock to the edge of the village, the properties are mainly bungalows, some set at an angle. Two further bungalows are situated where Churchill Road adjoins Daventry Road, facing the green. There are also two 20th century detached houses and a pair of three storey brick built pre-20th century cottages with steeply pitched roofs. From this western side of Churchill Road there is also a small access road to one brick built bungalow which has evidence of cob from an earlier construction, and one brick and Northamptonshire stone house, having been originally part of The Old Manor’s buildings.

90. Old Manor Court, which has its entrance on Daventry Road, includes three houses formed from conversion and extension of the original attractive stone Old Manor. To the south side of Daventry Road, there are four large detached properties: these are: Welton Manor, a substantial pre 20th century property; a large 20th century detached house; a large stable conversion set behind an imposing gateway; and, an extensive brick barn conversion. All are set within large grounds. Welton Manor and The Manor House (now forming part of Old Manor Court) are listed structures.

Roads, streets and routes

91. Churchill Road is a continuation of the main spine road through the village, winding down the hill as it heads southwards to join Daventry Road via two intersections on either side of a large grassed open space. It is narrow as it curves round a sharp bend towards the base of the gradient and opens up more as it reaches the entrance to The Paddock. Both the latter and Elms Dyke are named cul de sacs, but there are also two small access roads off Churchill Road to properties at the rear of other buildings. Daventry Road, one of the key routes from Daventry to the A5 north and thence to the M1, runs along the lower part of this area and its connection with Churchill Road makes this an important route into and out of the village. There is a footpath down the whole of the eastern length of Churchill Road, but the only path on the western side runs along the perimeter of the open space by the intersection with Daventry Road. Having crossed over Daventry Road from this section of footpath, a recently extended tarmac dual use footpath and cycleway, National Cycle Route 50, leads all the way to the Parish boundary and beyond to Daventry. Residents have expressed significant concerns about the speed and volume of traffic on the Daventry Road as it passes through the village; the Community Speed Watch initiative has established that the 30mph speed limit is not always observed.
Spaces

92. There is a wide grass verge on the eastern side of Churchill Road as it curves round at the base of the steep gradient, and grass verges within The Paddock. Two important and attractive open spaces are located at the Churchill Road intersections with Daventry Road and provide a pleasing focal point on entering the village.

Landmarks

93. The entrance to Welton Manor with high iron gates and the entrance to Churchill Court are both significant features as is the high brick wall running between them.

Green and natural features

94. The upper section of Churchill Road runs alongside The Wilderness, an area of woodland with mature trees which is an important wildlife habitat close to the lake. The green open spaces at the bottom of Churchill Road, planted with oak and rowan trees and spring bulbs enhance this approach to the village, as do the mature trees, including some specimen trees in properties to the south side of Daventry Road.

Streetscape

95. There are both steel lamp posts and telephone poles. There is also a post box situated centrally beside Churchill Road. Some properties on the eastern side of Churchill Road have iron railings, complementing some attractive walling. A 30mph gateway structure is located on Daventry Road.

Views

96. The view from the upper part of Churchill Road glimpses the ornamental lake and The Wilderness behind. From the entrance to The Paddock looking south the range of buildings in terms of ages and style is evident. As you approach this area from Daventry, there is an immediate sense of the range of properties, including some older distinctive buildings. A significant number of mature trees is also in view.

Summary

97. Properties of varying ages, size and design are found throughout this area, reflecting the village’s evolution over many centuries. Properties in The Paddock and Elms Dyke are more homogeneous 20th century developments.
Contribution of Open Space

98. Throughout the village there is a variety of open spaces which are regarded as extremely important in terms of their visual quality and their contribution to the form and character of the village. These include:

- the entrance triangle at the bottom of Churchill Road;
- the green at Emery Close;
- Stockwell Green where Welton Brook rises;
- the triangular green at the top of Kiln Lane;
- the Playing Field bounded by High Street and Ashby Road;
- the triangular island at the junction of High Street, Ashby Road and Station Road;
- the grassed area in front of Round Close;
- the grass verges in Ashby Road and elsewhere in the village;
- St Martin’s Spinney;
- the grassed area outside the Village Hall; and
- St Martin’s Churchyard.

Surrounding Landscape Character

99. Despite the expansion of urban areas and transport infrastructure, the West Northamptonshire landscape is generally regarded as a tranquil rural area known for its productive farmland and attractive villages.

100. In 2006, the River Nene Regional Park published a landscape character assessment for Northamptonshire. Most of the current landscape in the parish is described as ‘undulating hills and valleys’ that form part of the Lower Jurassic Landscapes. The key landscape features identified include:

- extensive undulating and productive rural landscape stretching across the west of the county;
- cohesive and recognizable unity of character despite scale and extent;
- variations in underlying geology influence local landform;
- watercourses form part of principal river catchments, including the Nene;
- reservoirs and manmade lakes are conspicuous features in the local landscape;
- navigable canals are an important visual component of the landscape and provide a linear wildlife and recreational asset;
- mixed farming predominates across the landscape although land use and field patterns are strongly influenced by landform;
- numerous small deciduous woodlands, copses and shelterbelts punctuate the rural landscape;
- hedgerow trees, within the hedgerow network, contribute to the perception of a well arboreal landscape and combine with other landscape and landform features to create an intimate, human scale landscape;
- strong historic character underlies this deeply rural landscape;
• numerous villages linked by winding country lanes contribute to the rural character;
• communication routes and urban influences and infrastructure have, where present, eroded local rural landscape character.

Daventry Urban Fringe

101. Daventry town is surrounded by a collection of villages that are dispersed in the rural landscape. All significant development of Daventry has, in recent years, been focused on the area to the north and towards Welton. The relatively narrow open gap between Welton and Daventry is consequently a particularly sensitive landscape in that it maintains the separate identity and character of the village.

102. Nevertheless, development proposals threaten further this vulnerable landscape. In July 2015 outline planning permission was granted for 450 dwellings at Micklewell Park to meet the needs of Daventry. This site is located on the edge of Daventry but is predominantly within Welton Parish (though outside the boundary of the Neighbourhood Area). The proposal includes provision for a 2-form entry primary school, community hub, public open space, allotments and associated infrastructure. The Monksmoor Park development, abutting the parish on the south side of the Grand Union Canal and east of Welton Lane, also includes a 2-form entry primary school. In addition, the substantial Daventry North East Sustainable Urban Extension has been allocated in the adopted West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy. While outside the parish, this urban extension will be clearly visible in the landscape.

103. The countryside now remaining between Welton and Daventry comprises typical attractive Northamptonshire Uplands landscape. The mainly arable fields are interspersed with significant areas of woodland, mature trees and hedgerows. These areas include Mickle Well Spinney. This landscape forms a clear and attractive differentiation between the modern housing developments on Daventry’s northern fringes and the start of Welton village.

104. The nature of the landscape results in the edge of Daventry being visible from parts of the village. The permitted development at Micklewell Park will only exacerbate this issue.

105. Over the past generation, the separation between Daventry’s northernmost extent and the village of Welton has shrunk from 2,000 metres\(^1\) to 560 metres\(^2\). At this rate of expansion, the prospect of coalescence of these communities is a very clear, high and current risk and is of major concern to the residents of Welton.

Note
1. Measured from the old railway track to Old Manor Court
2. Measured from Lang Farm to Old Manor Court
Key Views

106. Welton benefits from some remarkable views within the village itself, including historic buildings within their particular settings and green and natural features, such as the wealth of mature trees which enhance the area. The village also enjoys outstanding views across the rural landscape from many points within the parish. Similarly attractive views into the village are evident from many locations. Together, all these views reinforce and enhance the rural character of the settlement.

Conclusion

107. The character assessment demonstrates that Welton is a small village with a rich history and heritage, located in a beautiful setting, which all serve to enhance its sense of identity as a rural community. Buildings of widely varying age and type are frequently intermingled, reflecting the way the village has grown and adapted to changing times and changing need. Attractive green spaces and an abundance of mature trees complement the village’s steeply sloping setting, adjacent to open fields and areas of woodland, together creating some outstanding views.
Appendix 7

Contributors and Acknowledgements

The Welton Neighbourhood Plan has been undertaken by a Steering Group comprising Geoff Smith (Chair), Carol Bertozzi, Bob Davies, Tony Dodd, John Emery, Mariann Holloway, Chris Miles, Liz Miles and Chris Smith. Their contributions are all gratefully acknowledged as is the support of the other members of the Parish Council: Derek Smith (Chair), Tony Hopes, Cliff Mortimore, Colin Peabody, Elizabeth Snedker, Malcolm Souter, and in particular, Daryl Spires, along with our former District Councillor, Abigail Campbell, and our current District Councillor, Jason Pritchard.

Many other members of the community have also engaged by delivering the Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire, attending consultation events and encouraging debate and feedback from the organisations they represent. Their contributions have been greatly appreciated.

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The use of excellent premises provided by Welton Village Hall and Welton CE Academy has facilitated consultation events. Welton CE Academy and St Martin's Church have allowed the Steering Group to promote the Neighbourhood Plan at events they have organized. All those organisations, along with The White Horse Public House, held copies of the Draft Plan during the pre-submission consultation, thus widening its availability to the community.
Appendix 8

Sources and Links

The links below should provide access to documentation referred to in the body of this draft Neighbourhood Plan. Should any difficulties arise in accessing any reference materials, we would urge consultees to contact the Clerk to Welton Parish Council.

Welton Parish Council
www.welton-pc.gov.uk

Daventry District Council
www.daventrydc.gov.uk/living/planning-policy

The following can be accessed from the above site.
• Daventry District Local Plan 1997
• Supplementary Planning Document (Housing)
• Emerging Settlements and Countryside Local Plan (Part 2)
• Daventry 2040 Masterplan
• Five-year Housing Land Supply and Housing Implementation Strategy

Welton Housing Needs Survey 2016 can be viewed through the following page:
www.daventrydc.gov.uk/living/housing/housing-needs-surveys/

West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy
http://www.westnorthamptonshirejpu.org/connect.ti/website/view?objectId=5130832#5130832

Manual for Design Codes, West Northamptonshire Development Corporation (December 2009). Details regarding Welton Village can be found at the following link:
https://www.welton-pc.gov.uk/manual-for-design-codes/

Northamptonshire Environmental Character and Green Infrastructure Suite
http://www.rnrpenvironmentalcharacter.org.uk/

National Planning Policy Framework

Canal and River Trust
www.canalrivertrust.org.uk