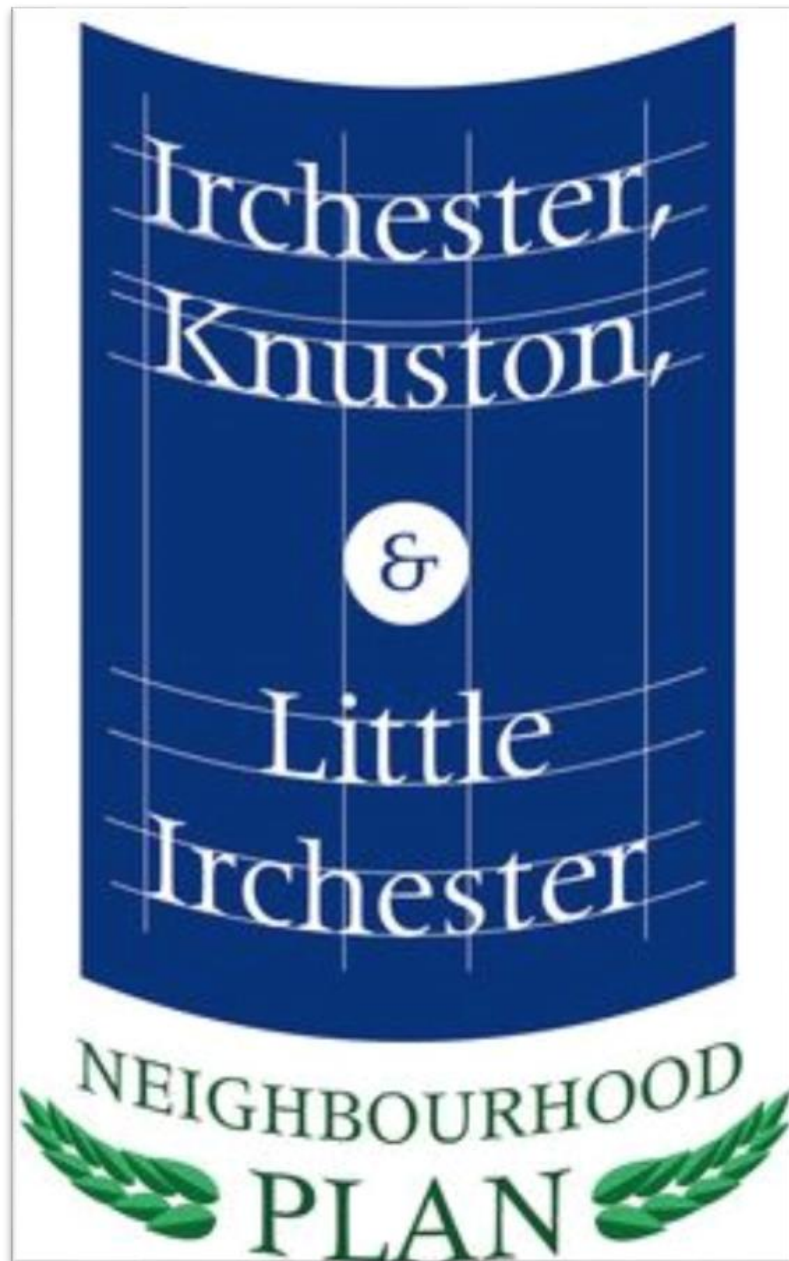


Irchester, Knuston and Little Irchester Neighbourhood Plan 2011–2031



September 2018

www.irchesterparishnhp.com



High Street, Irchester



London Road, Little Irchester



Knuston Hall Residential College for Adult Education

CONTENTS

Foreword.....	5
Irchester Parish Council Statement.....	7
List of Policies and Proposals.....	8
1.0 INTRODUCTION.....	9
2.0 STATE OF THE PARISH OF IRCHESTER	13
3.0 VISION AND OBJECTIVES	28
4.0 LAND USE POLICIES	30
5.0 IMPLEMENTATION.....	44

APPENDICES

Appendix A:	Brief History of the Parish of Irchester
Appendix B:	Listed Buildings, Structure and Scheduled Ancient Monument Sites in the Parish of Irchester
Appendix C:	Residential Development Completed and Commitments 2011-2017 in the Neighbourhood Plan Area and the Parish of Irchester
Appendix D:	List of Key Evidence Base Documents

FIGURES

Figure 1:	Designated Irchester, Knuston and Little Irchester Neighbourhood Plan Area
Figure 2:	Location of the Neighbourhood Plan Area and the Parish of Irchester
Figure 3:	Location in the Neighbourhood Plan Area of SSSI, SPA, Local Wildlife Sites and Irchester Country Park
Figure 4:	Listed Buildings and Structures in Irchester (village)
Figure 5:	Listed Buildings, Structures and Scheduled Ancient Monuments Sites in the Neighbourhood Plan Area and the Parish of Irchester
Figure 6:	Policy 1 – Settlement Boundary Map for Irchester
Figure 7:	Policy 1 – Settlement Boundary Map for Little Irchester
Figure 8:	Roads and Footpaths from where the views of the Church of St Katharine are sensitive to change
Figure 9:	Policy 3 – Land off Austin Close Zonal Drawing
Figure 10:	Policy 4 – Land south of James Street Zonal Drawing

TABLES

Table 1:	Net Housing Completions in the Neighbourhood Plan Area and the Parish of Irchester
Table 2:	Core Funding Priorities

GLOSSARY

Affordable Homes – housing available to eligible households who are not able to purchase or rent homes that are available on the open market. This could include:

- Rented housing from the local authority or other registered providers (also known as housing associations);
- Intermediate housing such as shared ownership and the rent to buy; or
- Housing for sale at a cost below market levels.

Community Infrastructure Levy – the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a planning charge, introduced by the Planning Act 2008 as a tool for local authorities in England and Wales to help deliver infrastructure to support the development of their area. It came into force on 6 April 2010 through the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010. Certain development are liable for a charge under the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) if a local planning authority has chosen to set a charge in its area.

Development Plan – a set of documents that set out a local authority's policies and proposals for the development and use of land in their area. The Development Plan guides and shapes day-to-day decisions as to whether or not planning permission should be granted.

Local Wildlife Site (LWS) – a designation denoting an area of land with local level significance to wildlife conservation.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – a policy document that sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) – a web-based resource launched by the Government in 2014 to assist practitioners. Ultimately the interpretation of legislation is for the Courts but the PPG is an indication of the Government's views.

Plan Period – the period of time covered by a Development Plan document (e.g. a Local Plan) and for which the evidence base supporting the development plan document has been based.

Ramsar Sites – an international conservation designation denoting areas of wetland that are protected for their importance to nature conservation.

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) – a national conservation designation denoting an area that is protected for its importance to nature conservation.

Special Protection Area (SPA) – a European level conservation designation denoting an area that is protected for its importance to the conservation of wild birds.

Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) – a technical assessment to identify an area's housing needs over a proposed plan period. It forms a key piece of evidence in developing planning policy documents and is required by national policy to identify the scale and mix of housing and the range of tenures that the local population is likely to need over the plan period.

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) – a technical assessment to identify potential new land that is suitable and available for housing. It forms a key piece of evidence in developing planning policy documents but does not itself allocate any specific sites for development or suggest that planning permission be given on them.

S106 Agreement – a Section 106 Agreement is a legal agreement between a developer and a Local Planning Authority about measures that the developer must take to reduce their impact on the community. A section 106 agreement is designed to make a development possible that would otherwise not be possible, by obtaining concessions and contributions from the developer. It forms a section of the Town And Country Planning Act 1990.

Windfall Development – development on sites that have not been specifically identified as available in the Local Plan process. They normally comprise previously-developed sites that have unexpectedly become available.

Irchester, Knuston and Little Irchester Neighbourhood Plan

FOREWORD

In February 2012, Irchester Parish Council called a public meeting in Irchester Village Hall of interested developers who wished to build new housing developments in the Parish of Irchester. At the same meeting, the Irchester Parish Council asked if any residents would be interested in developing a Parish Plan for the community and as a result community volunteers came forward to undertake this task.

This group of volunteers, after investigating the purpose of a Parish Plan sought guidance on the new emerging Neighbourhood Plans and decided that this was what they should be working towards for the community. They were supported and endorsed in this endeavour by the Irchester Parish Council and the Borough Council of Wellingborough. As a result of this the volunteers reformed themselves as the 'Irchester, Knuston and Little Irchester Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group' under the direction of the Irchester Parish Council.

The volunteers, with support from their consultants Armstrong Rigg Planning, funding provided by the Irchester Parish Council and the grant giving body 'Locality', have carried out consultation with the community, undertaken research and produced documentary evidence to help them prepare the Plan. Our Vision Statement, which was developed by the Steering Group at the start, stated:

- The Parish of Irchester must maintain its character as a rural and vibrant community
- It must continue to have a close relationship with its surrounding countryside
- It must remain attractive to visitors and residents
- Irchester, Littler Irchester and Knuston must each have their own identity and provide community cohesion for all their inhabitants for current and future generations.

By producing a Neighbourhood Plan (NHP) we aim to make Irchester, Knuston and Little Irchester an even better place to live for future generations.

The Neighbourhood Plan will help us do this. It will cover a 20 year time period (2011-2031) with a review every 5 years. It will ensure that our community has control over where housing development takes place, to influence the type and quality of that development, and to ensure that the change it brings meets local needs and objectives.

The alternative is to rely on the development plans prepared by the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit (NNJPU) or the Borough Council of Wellingborough. This would result in less community involvement.

Working with the support of the Borough Council of Wellingborough our Neighbourhood Plan will be in line with National Planning Policy and local strategic policy. Residents of the parish will, through a local referendum, be able to vote on the Plan and, if approved by a majority, it will be brought into force by the local authority. Developers will then have to work within the policies and priorities contained in the Plan.

The Neighbourhood Plan will sit with the recently adopted North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy as an integral part of the statutory development plan for the area. The new Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough, which is forecast for completion in 2018, will also form part of the statutory development plan for the area.

We hope that you will enjoy reading the Irchester, Knuston and Little Irchester Neighbourhood Plan and look forward to you supporting the many hours of work that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Members and other volunteers have undertaken in preparing this Plan for the community for now and the future.

Kind regards

Irchester, Knuston and Little Irchester Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
December 2017



View of Irchester from Station Road

IRCHESTER PARISH COUNCIL STATEMENT

Irchester Parish Council welcome the hard work that has been undertaken by the dedicated community volunteers in the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan for Irchester, Knuston and Little Irchester.

The many hours of detailed research, consultation with the community, engagement events, obtaining funding grants, updates in the parish magazine 'Village Voice', the maintenance of a website, surveys, reports and the many meetings the volunteers of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group have undertaken have provided this great opportunity for a Neighbourhood Plan for our community for 2011-2031.

This Neighbourhood Plan gives clear controlled guidance on where and how residential development could happen within our community, rather than having it imposed upon us. It also provides focused guidance on how residential development will meet the requirements of the parish and what the community's wants and needs are.

This Plan also embraces the vision of Irchester Parish Council: *"To continually work together with all sectors of the community to enhance the social and economic wellbeing of the people of Irchester so that it is an even better place to live, work and visit."*

We hope you enjoy reading this Neighbourhood Plan, which the Irchester Parish Council fully endorse and hope you will agree it is a good plan for the future of our community up to 2031.

Best Wishes

Irchester Parish Council



High Street, Irchester

List of Policies and Proposals

Land use Policies

1	Settlement Boundary Policy
2	Heritage Policy
3	Land off Austin Close
4	Land south of James Street

Implementation

	Core Funding Priorities
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London Road, Little Irchester

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Purpose

- 1.1 The Borough Council of Wellingborough (BCW) designated the 'Irchester, Knuston and Little Irchester Neighbourhood Area' on 4th December 2012 for the purpose of enabling Irchester Parish Council to prepare the 'Irchester, Knuston and Little Irchester Neighbourhood Plan' (NHP).
- 1.2 The plan overleaf shows the boundary of the Irchester, Knuston and Little Irchester Neighbourhood Plan Area (Figure 1). The area covers the same area as the Parish of Irchester. The Parish Council has prepared the NHP to cover the plan period from 2011 to 2031 in line with the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy plan period. The NHP sets out specific policies and proposals for the use and development of land in the Plan Area over that plan period.
- 1.3 The NHP has been prepared in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended), the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the European Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment 2004.

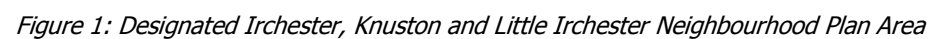
Neighbourhood Development Plans

- 1.4 Neighbourhood Development Plans were introduced in England with the 2011 Localism Act. The Irchester Plan is one of four Neighbourhood Plans either made or emerging in the Borough of Wellingborough. The National Planning Policy Framework states:

"neighbourhood planning ... will mean that neighbourhoods should develop plans that support the strategic development needs set out in Local Plans, including policies for housing and economic development ... (and) ... plan positively to support local development, shaping and directing development in their area that is outside the strategic elements of the Local Plan" (para.16)

"Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and deliver the sustainable development they need. Parishes ... can use neighbourhood planning to set planning policies through neighbourhood plans to determine decisions on planning applications ..." (para.183)

"Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure that they get the right types of development for their community. The ambition of the neighbourhood should be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area. Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. ... Neighbourhood plans and orders should not promote less development than set out in the Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies". (para.184)



"Outside these strategic elements, neighbourhood plans will be able to shape and direct sustainable development in their area. Once a neighbourhood plan has demonstrated its general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and is brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in the Local Plan for that neighbourhood, where they are in conflict." (para.185)

Strategic Environmental Assessment / Habitat Regulation Assessment / Sustainability Appraisal

- 1.5 Neighbourhood Plans are not statutorily subject to sustainability appraisals, however, one of the basic conditions for Neighbourhood Plans to meet is that that they contribute to achieving sustainable development. In the context of this basic condition, Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) recommends conducting a sustainability appraisal as a useful approach to demonstrating how a plan contributes to achieving sustainability.
- 1.6 In addition to the recommendation in the PPG to conduct sustainability appraisals of Neighbourhood Plans, in some limited circumstances, where a Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have significant environmental effects, it may require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). A Draft Neighbourhood Plan proposal should be assessed to determine whether the Plan is likely to have significant environmental effects and whether an SEA is required. This process is commonly referred to as a 'Screening Assessment', the requirements for which are set out in Regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. A SEA Screening Assessment Report has been produced which determines that an SEA is not required by the NHP.
- 1.7 One of the basic conditions that is tested by the independent examiner is whether the making of the Neighbourhood Plan is compatible with European Union obligations. Given the proximity of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA to the Neighbourhood Area it is also necessary to ensure the Plan is compatible with Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora and Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds (often referred to as the Habitats and Wild Birds Directives respectively). The process of assessment is commonly referred to as a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). This establishes whether a Plan is likely to have a significant effect on a European site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. A HRA Screening Assessment has been produced which determines that there is no need for further Appropriate Assessment of the NHP.

Plan Preparation and Consultation

- 1.8 The Plan preparation process was led by Irchester Parish Council, as a 'relevant body' under the Regulations, which delegated decisions to the Irchester, Knuston and Little Irchester Neighbourhood Plan (NHP) Steering Group.

1.9 Irchester Parish Council, through the NHP Steering Group have consulted the local community extensively since the project started in 2012. The established group of volunteers reviewed and agreed which issues should be addressed by the Plan. There have also been community event days, consultation sessions and surveys to obtain the fullest view of local community concerns, needs and wants from the NHP. In particular there have been two main stages of consultation:

- Stage 1 – June 2014: Survey leaflets delivered and consultation event held to ask for the local community's views on 'Potential Development Zones' for housing for Irchester.
- Stage 2 – September 2015: Survey leaflets delivered and consultation event held to ask for the local community's views on 'Preferred Allocation' sites for housing for Irchester.
- Consultation Draft NHP (Regulation 14) – September 2016: Survey leaflets delivered to every household and business premise in NHP Area and consultation event held to ask for the local community's views on the pre-submission Consultation Draft Neighbourhood Plan. Statutory consultees and local consultees also consulted.

1.10 Following consultation on this Consultation Draft NHP, the NHP has been reviewed and revised where necessary. Following submission of the NHP to the Borough Council of Wellingborough in December 2017, it was published for a further 6 weeks consultation period before progressing to independent examination. A majority vote in a successful referendum will lead to the NHP becoming part of the development plan for the parish to manage future development decisions alongside other relevant development planning documents for the Borough Council of Wellingborough and the National Planning Policy Framework.



High Street, Irchester

2.0 STATE OF THE PARISH OF IRCHESTER

An introduction to the community of Irchester, Knuston and Little Irchester

- 2.1 The Neighbourhood Plan Area covers the geographical area of the Parish of Irchester and consists of 2,788 acres. It contains the village of Irchester and the hamlets of Knuston and Little Irchester. The parish is located within the southern area of the administrative district of the Borough of Wellingborough. The centre of the parish is located equidistant from the nearby towns of Wellingborough and Rushden (in East Northamptonshire District), both two miles away. The adjoining parishes, within the county of Northamptonshire, are Wellingborough, Great Doddington, Wollaston, Rushden and Irthlingborough. Towards the south of the village, the parish borders the parishes of Podington, Farndish and Wymington, which are in the Borough of Bedford in Bedfordshire.
- 2.2 The Nene Valley dual carriageway (A45) and the A509 main road to Milton Keynes pass through the Parish. These roads connect the parish to the wider road network by which London is located 65 miles away, Birmingham 73 miles, Peterborough 25 miles and the county town of Northampton is 14 miles away.
- 2.3 The Midland Mainline Railway line from London St Pancras to Wellingborough, Leicester, Nottingham and Sheffield also passes through the parish and geographically separates Irchester from the hamlet of Knuston. The nearest railway stations are at Wellingborough and Bedford. The River Nene forms part of the boundary of the parish and the Nene Way public footpath passes through the parish.
- 2.4 The parish's core village of Irchester contains the greater part of its built-up area including a variety of shops, commercial premises, schools, community venues and facilities. Knuston, a former estate hamlet within the parish lies to the east of the main settlement and comprises approximately 34 dwellings, Pathfields Lodge and Greenfields Care Homes, Knuston Hall Residential College for Adult Education and agricultural farms. Little Irchester was developed in the mid-19th Century around a former railway line and consists of approximately 180 dwellings, a former chapel with community hall attached and industrial premises. Little Irchester is also unique within the Borough of Wellingborough in having both a site for Travelling Showpeople and a site for Gipsies and Travellers (opened in 1969). Little Irchester is separated from the main village of Irchester by the Irchester Country Park (opened 1976) a former ironstone quarry. Adjoining the A45 to the north of the village is the Scheduled Ancient Monument of Chester Farm, a unique Roman Town, preceding Iron Age Settlement, deserted medieval village, Grade II* Listed Chester House and Grade II associated farm buildings, which is being developed by Northamptonshire County Council into a heritage attraction site.

- 2.5 The history of the parish goes back to Roman times and a more detailed overview of the development of the parish can be found in Appendix A. The Roman town of Irchester (beside the present Chester Farm) appears to owe its existence to a strategic location at a crossing of the Nene Valley near the confluence of the River Nene and River Ise, associated with a major long-distance route from Kettering to Magiovinium (Fenny Stratford, Milton Keynes). Situated midway between Duston and Titchmarsh, it is likely also to have performed the function of a local market, administrative focus and religious centre for what was one of the richest parts of the region.
- 2.6 It is not known exactly how or why the modern (medieval) village of Irchester developed approximately 1 mile south-east of the Roman town. The latter is not thought to have survived as a significant settlement into the early middle-Saxon period, there being no current evidence for its occupation beyond the 5th Century AD.
- 2.7 The earliest post-Roman documentary reference to the present Irchester is Yranceaster, dated 973. The development of this place-name, evolving through Irencestre (1168), Ircestre (1330), Archester (1510) and Erchester (1657), related to “Ira’s/Yra’s Ceaster or Roman fort”.
- 2.8 Medieval Irchester appears to have developed as a linear settlement following the logic of a London-centric configuration, common to other places in the area such as Rushden and Wellingborough. The Victoria County History notes in 1937 that “the high road from Wellingborough to London enters Irchester on the north-west, leading southwest into Wollaston”.
- 2.9 The area around the significant Grade I Listed Parish Church of St Katharine’s, (the former) Manor House Farm and the rectorial tithe barn can validly be thought of as the heart of the original village, as these three elements commonly comprise the basis of medieval settlements. William Peverel is recorded as holding one of the two manors in the area at the Domesday Survey (1086), and the land on which the present Manor House is situated may be associated with Peverel’s manor given the physical contiguity of the three key historic land-uses.
- 2.10 The common fields of the parish were Enclosed in 1669 (Knuston) and 1773 (Irchester) marking the end of the ridge and furrow feudal open-field system. The earliest available population figure is 523 for the census year 1801. By 1831 the figure had increased by 50% to 797 and half the male population over 20 years of age were then defined as agricultural labourers with a further quarter involved in “retail and handicrafts” which included rush mat making and lacemaking. In 1851 the population was 960.

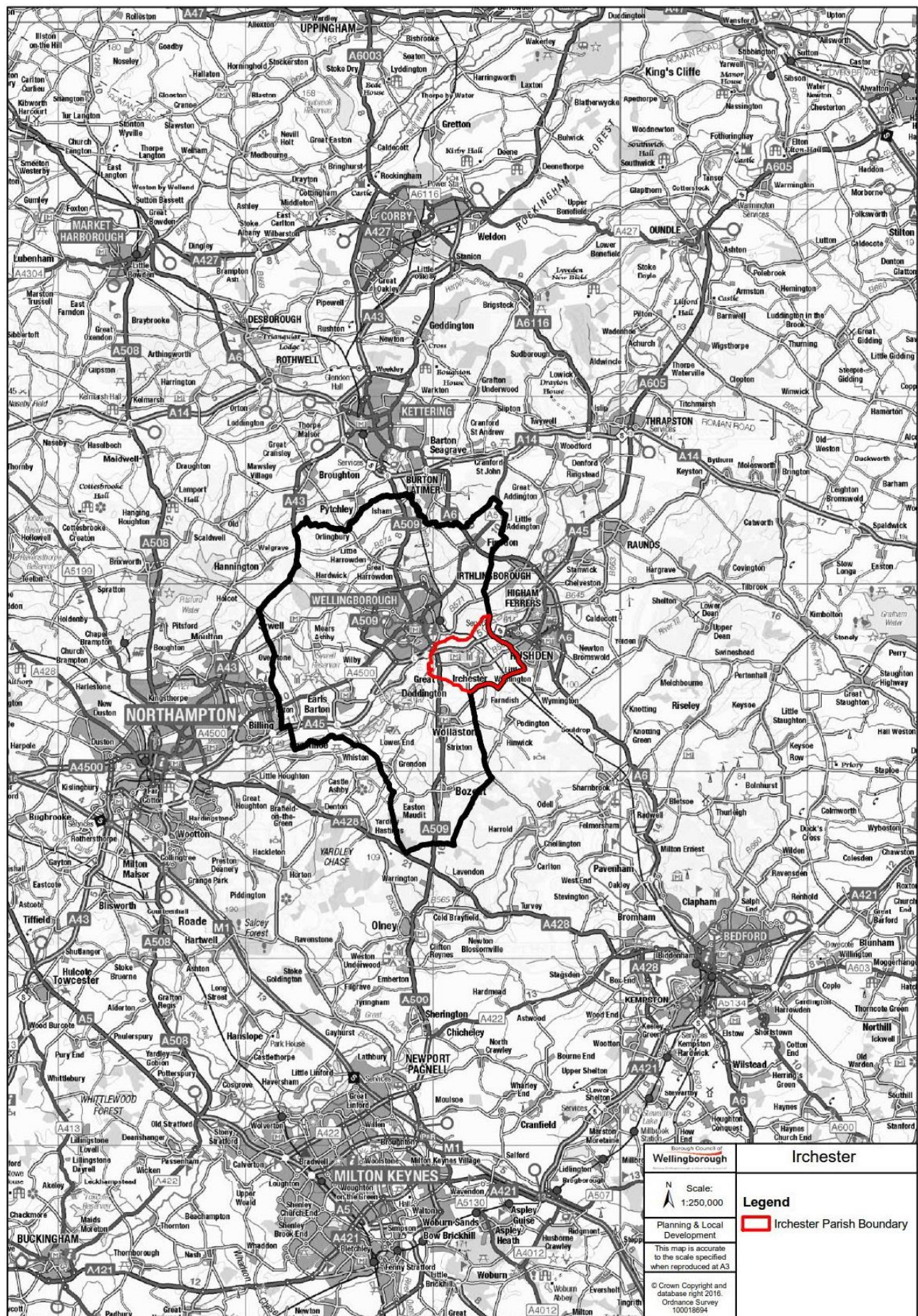


Figure 2: Location of the Neighbourhood Plan Area and the Parish of Irchester

- 2.11 The move from an agrarian to an industrial society gathered pace through the Victorian era, paralleled by steady population growth. This increased from 960 to 1168 in the ten years up to 1861 and was attributed by the British writer and editor, John Marius Wilson, writing in 1872, to “the opening of the railway and from the discovery of iron stone”. He also records that “shoemaking and mat making are carried on”. Kelly’s Directory of 1910 states that “the inhabitants are to some extent employed in agriculture, but principally in making shoes for the manufacturers in Higham Ferrers and Wellingborough”.
- 2.12 In common with several other villages in the Wellingborough area, such as Finedon, Earls Barton, Wollaston and Bozeat, the Irchester workforce therefore played a significant part in the late Victorian and Edwardian eras in the servicing of the county-wide boot and shoe industry. This was at first limited to the making of particular footwear components in workshops in rear gardens or attached to houses, and later in direct employment in the shoe factories themselves (of which there were several in Irchester village). The population level of 2503 reached by 1931 reflects the magnitude of the socio-economic change over the previous 100 years.
- 2.13 The population a generation later in 1961 had increased to 2832, but the rate of change accelerated sharply over the next 25 years with large-scale suburban housing estates built on land south of the historic core of Irchester. The population peaked in 1981 at 5018. By 2011 the population had decreased to 4745.
- 2.14 The following statistics for the Neighbourhood Plan Area and the Parish of Irchester are drawn from a variety of sources, notably the 2011 Census for the Parish of Irchester:

Demographics

- 4745 population (49% male and 51% female) at 2011 (census)
- 4.2 people per hectare at 2011 (census)
- 2962 working age adults (62% v 65% England) at 2011 (census)
- 810 children under 16 (17% v 19% England) at 2011 (census)
- 973 older people over 65 (21% v 17% England) at 2011 (census)
- 2494 economically active residents (53% v 51% England) at 2011 (census)
- 299 self-employed (6% v 8% England) at 2011 (census)

Households

- 2077 households at 2011 (census)
- 191 lone parent households (4% v 12% England) at 2011 (census)
- 305 single pensioner households (6% v 12% England) at 2011 (census)

Homes

- 2114 homes at 2011 (census)
- 478 detached homes (23% of stock v 22% England) at 2011 (census)
- 1024 semi-detached (48% v 31% England) at 2011 (census)
- 480 terraced (23% v 24% England) at 2011 (census)

- 100 flats (5% v 22% England) at 2011 (census)
- 11 caravans or temporary accommodation (0.5% v 0.4% England) at 2011 (census)
- Since 2011 there has been 19 dwelling completed within the parish. As at 31 March 2017 there were planning consents for a further 12 dwellings in the parish.

Transport

- 16.4% households with no car (v 27% England) at 2011 (census)
- 42.6% households with 2 or more cars (v 30% England) at 2011 (census)
- 16.5 km average distance travelled to work at 2011 (census)

Health

- There is a doctor's surgery and pharmacy in the main village of Irchester
- 80% of people in the parish are in good health at 2011 (census)
- 20% of people have limiting long-term illnesses at 2011 (census)

Skills

- 18.2% people with highest qualification (v 27% England) at 2011 (census)
- 28.5% people with no qualifications (v 22% England) at 2011 (census)

Biodiversity

- Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits: to the north of the parish on the north side of the A45, are two small sections of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits; a chain of gravel pit lakes and grassland, that stretches from Northampton in the west along the River Nene to Thrapston in the east, and is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Area, (SPA) and Ramsar Site due to its importance for wetland birds.
- Irchester Old Lodge SSSI: located to the southwest of the parish, this site is protected for its nature conservation importance.
- Local Wildlife Sites: in particular the lakes around the River Nene at Little Irchester as well as the largest significant site, Irchester Country Park. The Country Park is a former ironstone quarry which has a children's play area as well as a network of long and short trails through 83 hectares of mixed woodland. The park is home to the Quarryman's Rest Cafe, Jungle Parc UK (treetop rope adventure course) and the Irchester Narrow Gauge Railway Museum.



View across fields from High Street (Chester Road) to St. Katharine's Church, Irchester

Heritage

- There are no Conservation Areas within the Neighbourhood Plan Area and the Parish of Irchester.
- There are 31 listed buildings and structures in the Neighbourhood Plan Area and the Parish of Irchester, all of which are Grade II except for Chester House which is Grade II* and the significant Grade I Church of St Katharine (see list at Appendix B).
- The Neighbourhood Plan Area and the Parish of Irchester also contains the Scheduled Ancient Monument of a Roman Town and preceding Iron Age Settlement situated at Chester Farm adjoining the A45 which is being developed as a heritage attraction by Northamptonshire County Council. The first phase opened in May 2016.

Economy

- Much of the land surrounding the Neighbourhood Plan Area and the Parish of Irchester is in agricultural use and there are still a variety of farms in the parish.
- Within Irchester and Knuston are a variety of small commercial units, retail premises and care homes for both older persons, young persons and adults with special needs.
- Lower Farm Industrial Estate and Parsons Hall Industrial Estate on the High Street, Irchester, along with Knuston Home Farm at Knuston, provide small units for employment.
- Irchester Community Primary School and Knuston Hall Residential College for Adult Education employ a variety of teaching, administrative and support staff.
- Adjoining the A45 is the Victoria Business Park which consists of large distribution warehouses that employ between 2500-3000 people.
- At Little Irchester can be found the large Whitworth Brothers Flour Mills (established 1886), a baking school and engineering works.
- The former site of a water mill and animal bone processing plant at Ditchford provides the current site for a road haulage business.



Whitworth Mill, Little Irchester

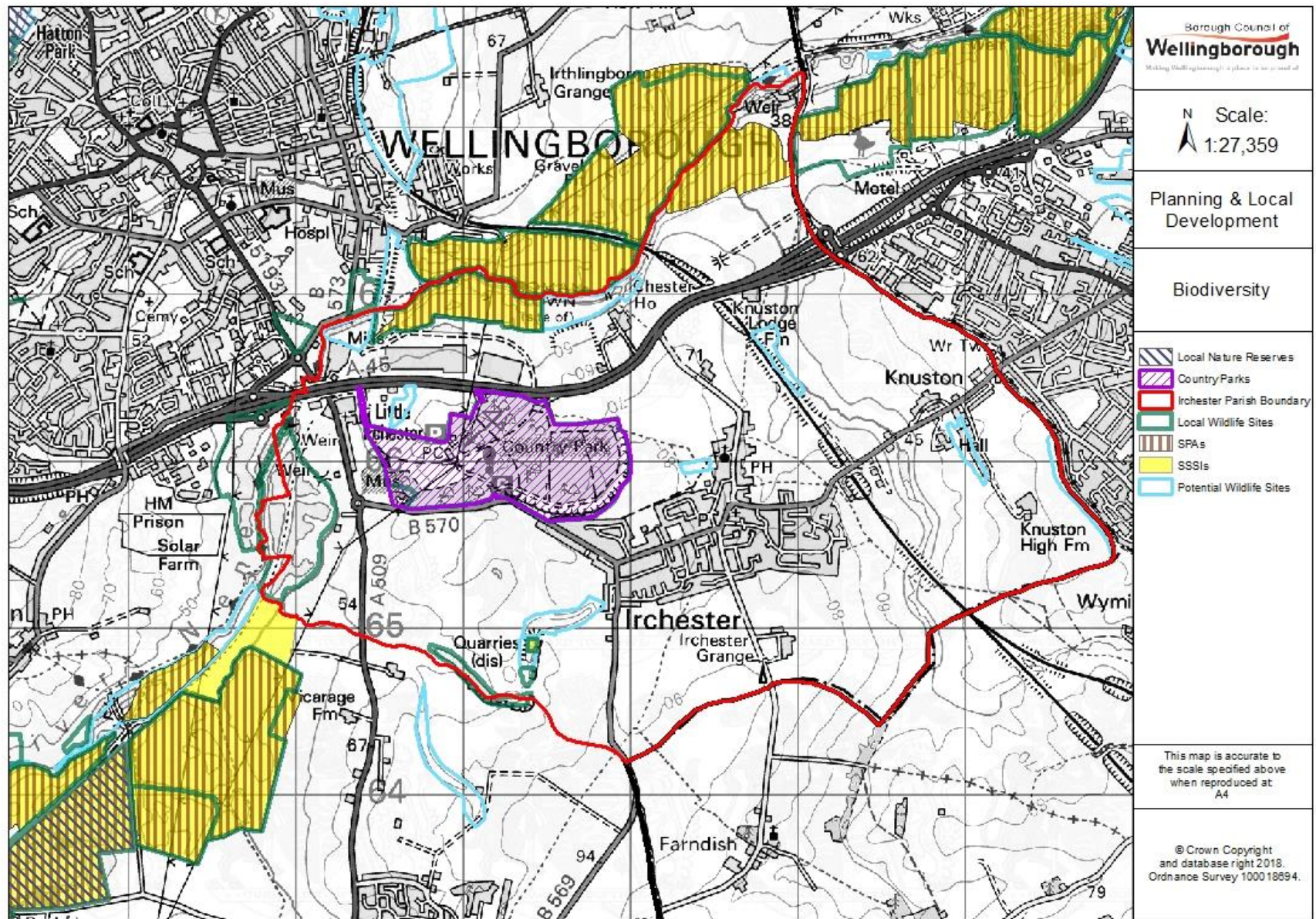


Figure 3: Location in the Neighbourhood Plan Area of SSSI, SPA, Local Wildlife Sites and Irchester Country Park

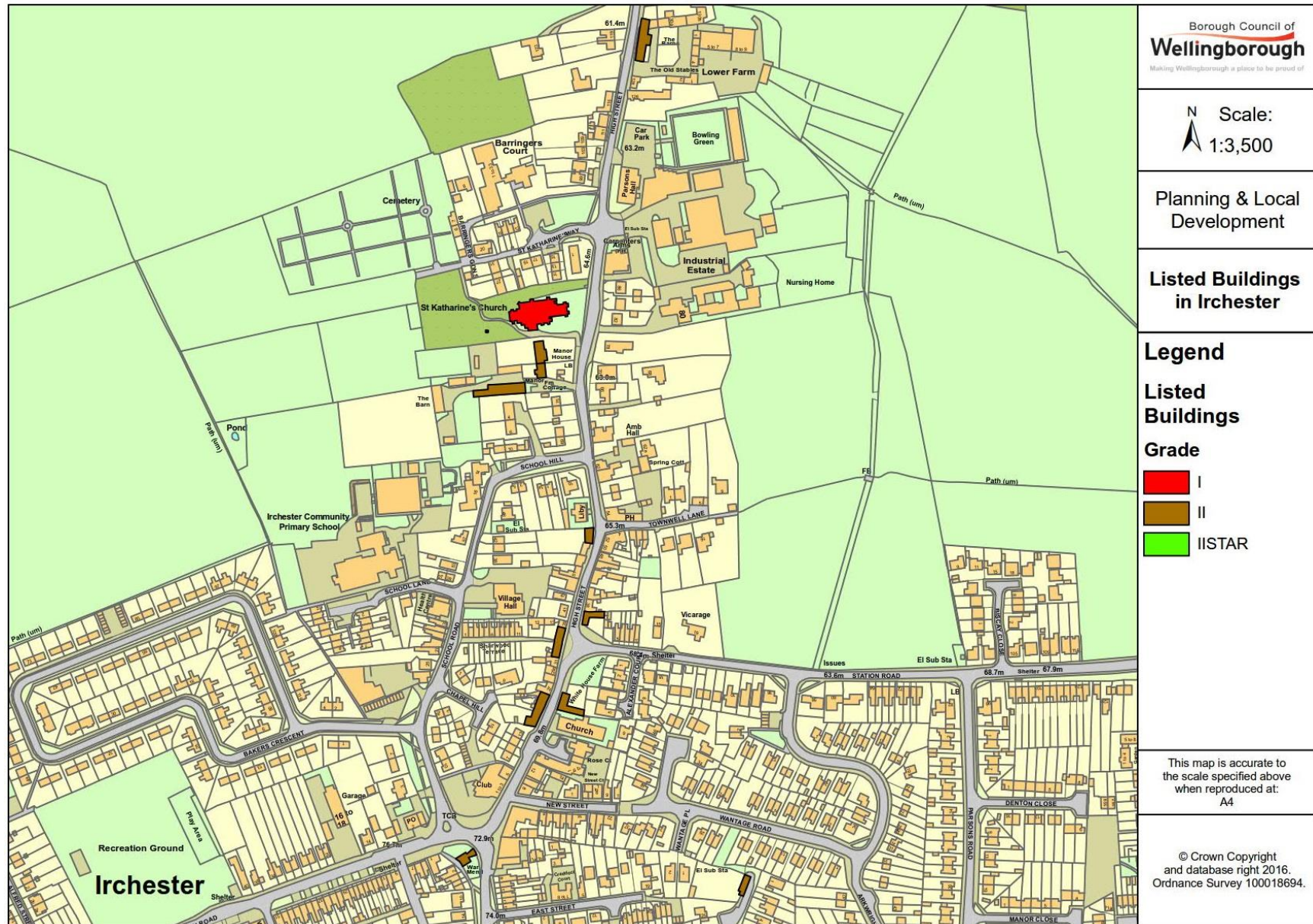


Figure 4: Listed Buildings and Structures in Irchester (village)

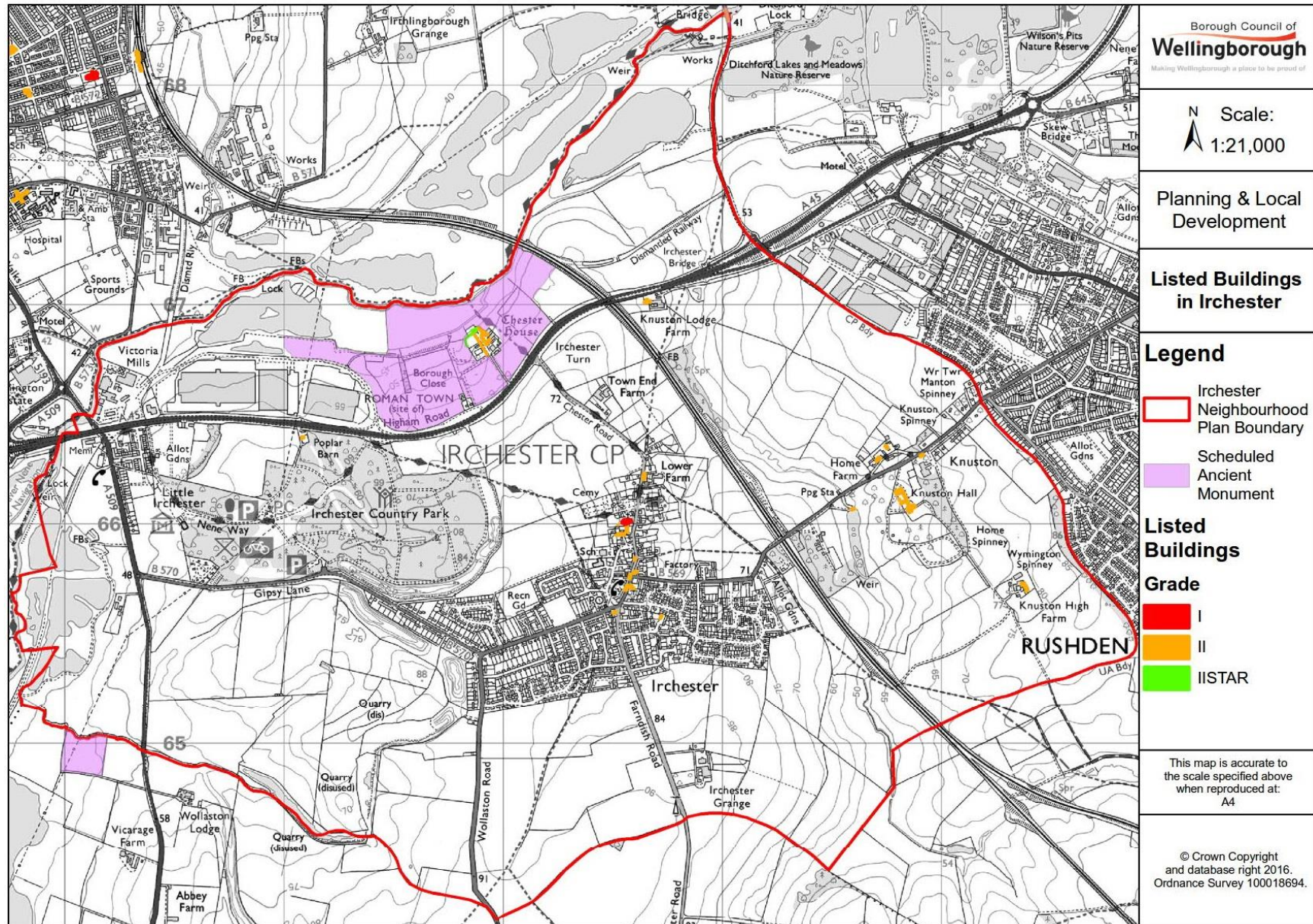


Figure 5: Listed Buildings, Structures and Ancient Scheduled Monument Sites in the Neighbourhood Plan Area and Parish of Irchester

Community Views

- 2.15 Since the launch of the NHP a number of ways of gauging opinion have been established. These have included: Community Events Days at Irchester Village Hall and event evenings at Little Irchester and Knuston. Consultation events along with feedback forms as part of the process of our Stage 1 and Stage 2 consultation of zone/site allocations were also undertaken. Presentations to local community groups, regular monthly updates to the Parish Council and quarterly updates in the 'Village Voice' (the parish magazine) which is delivered to all parish households and businesses. A website was established (www.irchesterparishnhp.com) along with an email address (irchesternhp@gmail.com) to receive comments were also established. Marketing material in the form of pens and postcards were also produced and distributed which highlighted our website. These processes have enabled the community to learn more about the NHP and express its opinions on the future of the Neighbourhood Plan Area and the Parish of Irchester.
- 2.16 The following are some general views that have emerged from most, if not all, of the consultations:
- Key strengths of the Parish – community spirit, adequate shops and pubs in Irchester, close proximity to employment and retail outside the Parish, attractive historic village and parish, high quality surrounding landscapes, good recreational facilities and public open spaces.
 - Problems – lack of affordable housing and homes for rent, issues with parking in the centre of Irchester, improvement to doctor's surgery and school provision needed.
 - Opportunities – shaping the future development of land, better connected for surrounding villages to access local services, to provide both affordable and open market housing to meet demand, identify community assets to protect from inappropriate development proposals, providing affordable homes for local people – particularly the younger people of the community, the need for small properties – particularly 1-3 bedroom homes and bungalows, increase variety and inclusiveness of sport facilities, adequate bus service – but always room for improvement, better connections with cycleway from Irchester to Wollaston/Wellingborough/Rushden, and the upgrading or development of community facilities.
 - Pedestrian/Cycleway footbridge link over A45 needed from Irchester County Park to Chester Farm heritage site to link Irchester to heritage, industry and Nene Valley landscape.
 - Concerns – identifying sites for new homes could result in loss of countryside, impact on highways infrastructure and concerns of traffic increase and speeding, utilities concerns like sewage facilities may not be able to cope.



Irchester Village Hall

2.17 By the use of consultation events and the Stage 1 and Stage 2 consultation, an analysis of the Neighbourhood Plan Area, the Parish of Irchester and wider issues indicates a series of actual or perceived 'strengths' or 'assets' or 'advantages', relative to other places. It also indicates the parish has actual or perceived 'weaknesses' or 'disadvantages'. In both cases, they present a combination of opportunities and challenges that the local community wishes the NHP to address, given there is likely to be a direct influence on land use, planning and development decisions. New development presents the opportunity for some improvement to local facilities in the area. The following comments were frequently made in response to this question during event days, consultation events and surveys:

- Health Centre – a significant number of respondents made comment that this is currently inadequate, with exceptionally long waiting times. Suggestions for improvements were that it needs to be larger, with more doctors and health workers available, with quicker accessibility.
- Improvements to School – very important in the event of additional population, needs to be expanded, needs additional pupil spaces. There were also frequent comments made that parking near the school needs to be improved.
- Provision of Sports Facilities – increase variety and inclusiveness of sport facilities, need better provision for young people.
- Pedestrian Links – in particular, there were frequent requests that pedestrian/cycle connectivity between Irchester to Wollaston be constructed and to Wellingborough/Rushden be improved.
- It was frequently expressed that there were adequate shops/pubs in Irchester.
- In terms of community meeting space – there were many comments indicating there is adequate provision of community spaces in Irchester, albeit a considerable number of people suggested these needed upgrading.

- Improved parking in the village centre in Irchester.
- Improved road safety/road improvements to deal with additional traffic and people speeding through the village.
- The impact on sewerage infrastructure needs to be addressed as there are concerns that it is beyond capacity and desperately needs improving before development takes place.

Development, Applications and Site Promotions

- 2.18 A Housing Needs Survey for the parish was completed by the Borough Council of Wellingborough in January 2013 and indicated that there was a housing need of 39 new dwellings (Irchester Rural Housing Survey, January 2013). This evidence was used to help identify the housing requirements for Irchester in the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy for the period 2011-2031, as outlined as paragraph 9.19 of the JCS. This states that the housing requirements for rural areas are aimed at meeting local need and aspirations and have been identified from information provided by the local planning authorities on the scale of housing expected to take place in the Rural Areas, based on local needs surveys and/or assessment of development opportunities. Irchester is defined within the JCS area as one of the four largest villages within the Borough of Wellingborough. Policy 29 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy identifies a housing requirement of 150 dwellings for the village of Irchester for the Plan period. It also identifies a requirement for 540 dwellings in the remainder of the Borough of Wellingborough outside of the four main villages (Earls Barton, Finedon, Wollaston and Irchester), this would include Little Irchester and Knuston.
- 2.19 Significant development in Irchester since the Second World War has been concentrated on the south of the village. In particular two areas: land south of Station Road which now forms the estate around the Arkwright Road area; and development off the Farndish Road in the James Street and Woodlands Road areas. There has also been a limited amount of modern infill developments within the historic core of Irchester itself.



Irchester Country Park

- 2.20 Table 1 shows the total net dwelling completions in the Neighbourhood Plan Area and the Parish of Irchester for the first 5 years of the plan period. It shows the number of new houses completed, minus any houses that replaced existing dwellings. In addition to these completions there are currently commitments for a further 12 new dwellings. Of these, 10 were under construction as at 31 March 2017 (see Appendix D: Residential Development Completed and Committed 2011-2017)

*Table 1. Net Housing Completions in the Neighbourhood Plan Area and the Parish of Irchester
(Source: Borough Council of Wellingborough)*

Year ending 31 st March	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	Total
Total Dwelling Completions	0	4	7	1	4	3	19

- 2.21 As can be seen from Table 1 and figures of new homes currently under construction or with planning permission, there is a small but steady flow of new homes coming forward in the parish. This flow is insufficient to meet the need for 150 new dwellings in Irchester over the plan period and site allocations for housing are therefore identified in this Plan.
- 2.22 The 2011 North Northamptonshire Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA, 2013) document indicates that there may be land suited to housing development in Irchester. The NHP provided the opportunity to consider these sites within the context of all the detailed, local issues arising in the Plan, together with any other sites identified during the development of the NHP.

Planning Policy Context

- 2.23 The Neighbourhood Plan Area covers the Parish of Irchester, which is part of the Borough Council of Wellingborough, which falls within the County of Northamptonshire.
- 2.24 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published by the Government in 2012 is an important guide in the preparation of Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans. At examination, the submitted NHP must demonstrate that it is consistent with the policies and intent of the NPPF.
- 2.25 The development plan for Irchester, Knuston and Little Irchester currently comprises the saved policies of the adopted Borough of Wellingborough Local Plan (1999 plus amendment 2004) and the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (July 2016). The NHP must be considered to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan. The forthcoming Plan for the Borough Council of Wellingborough will replace the saved policies once adopted, scheduled for 2018. The NHP is being prepared in anticipation of the reasoning and evidence of the new Local Plan but focuses on being in conformity with the relevant saved policies of the Borough of Wellingborough Local Plan and the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.



Irchester War Memorial, Junction of High Street, Wollaston Road and Farndish Road

National Planning Policy Framework

2.26 The NPPF contains a number of key policy principles that will shape the NHP. These are itemised below:

- The presumption in favour of sustainable development (para.14)
- The role of Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDP's) (para.16)
- Supporting a prosperous rural economy (para.28)
- Minimising journey lengths (para.37)
- Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes (para.50)
- Rural affordable housing and exception sites (para.54)
- The vitality of rural communities (para.55)
- The quality of development (para.58)
- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment (para.109-115)
- Conserving and enhancing the historic environment (para.126)
- Neighbourhood Plans (para.183-185)

2.27 The principles above are those of most relevance to the NHP but many other principles in the National Planning Policy Framework have had some bearing on the preparation of the document.

Borough of Wellingborough Local Plan (1999-2004)

2.28 The Borough Council of Wellingborough Local Plan contains a number of 'saved' policies that have a specific relevance to the NHP. These are listed below:

- Saved Policy G4 – Villages
- Saved Policy IR1 – Chester House, Irchester
- Saved Policy L5 – Important Amenity Areas
- Saved Policy L7 – New Open Space

North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (July 2016)

2.29 The adopted North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy contains the following policies that are of particular relevance to the NHP:

- Policy 1 – Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development
- Policy 2 – Historic Environment
- Policy 3 – Landscape Character
- Policy 4 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- Policy 5 – Water Environment, Resources & Flood Risk Management
- Policy 6 – Development on Brownfield Land & Land affected by Contamination
- Policy 7 – Community Services and Facilities
- Policy 8 – North Northamptonshire Place Shaping Principles
- Policy 9 – Sustainable Building and Allowable Solutions
- Policy 10 – Provision of Infrastructure
- Policy 11 – The Network of Urban and Rural Areas
- Policy 12 – Town Centre and Town Centre Uses
- Policy 13 – Rural Exceptions
- Policy 15 – Well-Connected Towns, Villages and Neighbourhoods
- Policy 16 – Connecting the Network of Settlements
- Policy 17 – North Northamptonshire’s Strategic Connections
- Policy 18 – HGV Parking
- Policy 19 – The Delivery of Green Infrastructure
- Policy 20 – Nene and Ise Valleys
- Policy 22 – Delivering Economic Prosperity
- Policy 23 – Distribution of New Jobs
- Policy 24 – Logistics
- Policy 25 – Rural Economic Development and Diversification
- Policy 26 – Renewable Energy
- Policy 28 – Housing Requirements and Strategic Opportunities
- Policy 29 – Distribution of New Homes
- Policy 30 – Housing Mix and Tenure
- Policy 31 – Gypsies and Travellers



Wollaston Road, Irchester

3.0 VISION AND OBJECTIVES

Vision

- 3.1 The Vision for the Parish of Irchester in the period 2011-2031 has sought to capture all the community's views and aspirations for the parish. It therefore forms the basis on which the strategic objectives and proposed policies of the Neighbourhood Plan have been formulated. The key focus for the NHP is on housing and how the plan can shape both the location of new housing development and its potential impacts and benefits on the community. The NHP has not sought to focus on open space provision as this is met through the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and the emerging Local Plan for the Borough Council of Wellingborough which includes all open space and provides policy and guidance. The developed updated vision for the Parish of Irchester up to 2031 is stated as:

"The parish will remain an independent and distinctive rural community comprising the main village of Irchester and the hamlets of Knuston and Little Irchester."

"The parish's rich architectural and environmental heritage will be conserved and enhanced for the benefit of current villagers and for future generations."

"We recognise the need for sustainable growth that will support the future of the community and its facilities."

"Our open social structure and mixed community is sustained and reinforced with activities and facilities that enhance them, including the provision of affordable housing."

"The adverse impact of road traffic on the community will be lessened. Transport and other links to neighbouring communities will be enhanced."

"The overall aim is that residents will want to continue to live in the parish, and that others will wish they could."

Objectives & Measures

- 3.2 To achieve this vision a number of key objectives have been identified. For each objective one or more indicators have been selected to monitor the successful progress of the NHP. Progress against these indicators will be judged against the trends that are identified in the data when it is reported and reviewed (see para 3.5 below). These are as follows:

1. To meet the future housing needs of the parish in terms of:
 - Number of open market homes;
 - Number of affordable homes; and
 - Number of homes of required dwelling types (i.e. house, bungalow, flat) and sizes.
2. To conserve the special historic character of the village including the protection and enhancement of key heritage assets and important views:
 - Number of planning applications affecting designated heritage assets.

3. To protect and support the development of local facilities and services through S106 agreements or Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):
 - Number of facilities and services gained or lost (e.g. shops, schools, health services, sports and leisure and community facilities etc.); and
 - Number of planning applications providing contributions to existing or new facilities and services.
 4. To promote improved transport facilities and connectivity through S106 agreements or Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):
 - Number of developments providing contributions to transport infrastructure improvement.
- 3.3 The objectives cover a range of economic, social and environmental issues that together provide a basis on which the sustainability performance of the NHP can be judged.
- 3.4 They reflect the nature of the Neighbourhood Plan Area and the direction the local community wants the NHP to take, especially in securing the long term future of those community and environmental assets most precious to local people. They also accept and welcome change that will enable the community to grow in a sustainable way.

Monitoring and Review

- 3.5 The NHP will be monitored by the Irchester Parish Council on a regular basis using planning data collected by the Borough Council of Wellingborough. The objectives and measures will form the core of the monitoring activity but other data collected and reported at a parish level relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan will also be included.
- 3.6 It is expected that the NHP will be formally reviewed on a five-year cycle or to coincide with the development and review of the Borough Council of Wellingborough Local Plan if this cycle is different.



Wollaston Road, Irchester

4.0 LAND USE POLICIES

Introduction

- 4.1 The Irchester, Knuston and Little Irchester Neighbourhood Plan (NHP) contains a series of land use policies, the successful delivery of which will achieve the community's vision for the village.
- 4.2 It is not the purpose of the NHP to contain all land use and development planning policies relating to the parish. Development Plan policies that are not replaced by the NHP will be used by the local planning authority to consider and determine planning applications. Should a new Local Plan be adopted that defines a strategic policy framework for the Neighbourhood Plan Area then the NHP will be reviewed to provide an up-to-date Development Plan.
- 4.3 The NHP includes two site allocation policies that allocate 'Land off Austin Close' and 'Land south of James Street' for a combined total of 150 dwellings. These two sites were selected through a process of research, site assessments and public consultation; evidence from which is drawn together in the Sustainability Assessment Report submitted with the NHP which provides a transparent and objective assessment of potential sites considered for inclusion in the NHP. Key to their selection was that they were identified as available and deliverable for housing development, they are located in Irchester, as opposed to Little Irchester and Knuston where there is no identified need for housing. Their development will have little impact on the village's heritage assets. Public consultation has also played a key role in the selection of these sites and while the initial Stage 1 NHP Consultation did not principally identify any particular area of the village that was preferred for housing development, the community expressed support for the development of 75 homes on each of the two sites in the Stage 2 NHP Consultation.
- 4.4 The process of selecting the two sites included the following:
 - Irchester Rural Housing Survey (January 2013) which established the level of housing needed in the Parish of Irchester and that this need was in Irchester as opposed to the settlements of Knuston and Little Irchester.
 - Engagement with landowners whose land borders Irchester to ask if they wished their land to be considered for development as part of the NHP process.
 - An Environmental Assessment produced by ACD on potential development sites (March 2014).
 - A Highways Assessment of sites/broad zones put forward for development by the NHP Steering Group by Northamptonshire County Council Highways (April 2014).
 - Stage 1 NHP Consultation on Potential Development Zones for housing for Irchester (July 2014).
 - A Highways Assessment of sites/broad zones put forward for development by the NHP Steering Group by Northamptonshire County Council Highways (Addendum August 2015).
 - Historic Landscape Assessment by Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA) on potential development sites (September 2015) (Updated Version March 2016)
 - Stage 2 Consultation on Preferred Allocations for housing for Irchester (October 2015).

SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES

Policy 1: Settlement Boundary Policy

Settlement boundaries for Irchester and Little Irchester are shown on the Policy Map Insets (Figures 6 and 7). Within these boundaries, in addition to the development proposed under Policies 3 and 4 in this plan, small-scale infill development or development on previously developed land will be permitted where this would not materially harm the character of the settlement and residential amenity or exceed the capacity of local infrastructure and services.

- 4.5 The following criteria were used to determine the settlement boundaries in accordance with the Borough Council of Wellingborough, Village Boundaries - The Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough: Background Paper (April 2016).

Settlement Boundaries for Irchester and Little Irchester will include:

- A. Buildings and curtilages which are contained and visually separate from the countryside
- B. Areas of land with planning permission at 31st March 2017 which relate closely to the main built-up areas
- C. New allocations in the NHP

Boundaries for Irchester and Little Irchester will exclude:

- D. Areas of employment and leisure use that are detached from or peripheral to the village
- E. Caravan and/or mobile home sites
- F. Individual or groups of dwellings and agricultural buildings that are detached or peripheral to the village
- G. Public open space and undeveloped land that is detached or peripheral to the village

- 4.6 This policy applies the principles of Joint Core Strategy 11.2(b) to any development proposal within the identified settlement boundaries. The sites allocated for housing and associated development under Policies 3 and 4 in this plan have been included within the settlement boundary for Irchester. The policy also allows for the possible redevelopment of previously developed land within the settlements subject to the same criteria. Other statutory development policies will also apply.
- 4.7 All land outside the settlement boundaries, which includes the whole of the settlement of Knuston, is designated as open countryside. Within that area Joint Core Strategy Policies 11.2(d), 13, 25 and 26 apply. On land adjoining the settlement boundaries 'exception sites' may be identified to meet identified local needs in accordance with the Joint Core Strategy Policy 13(1).

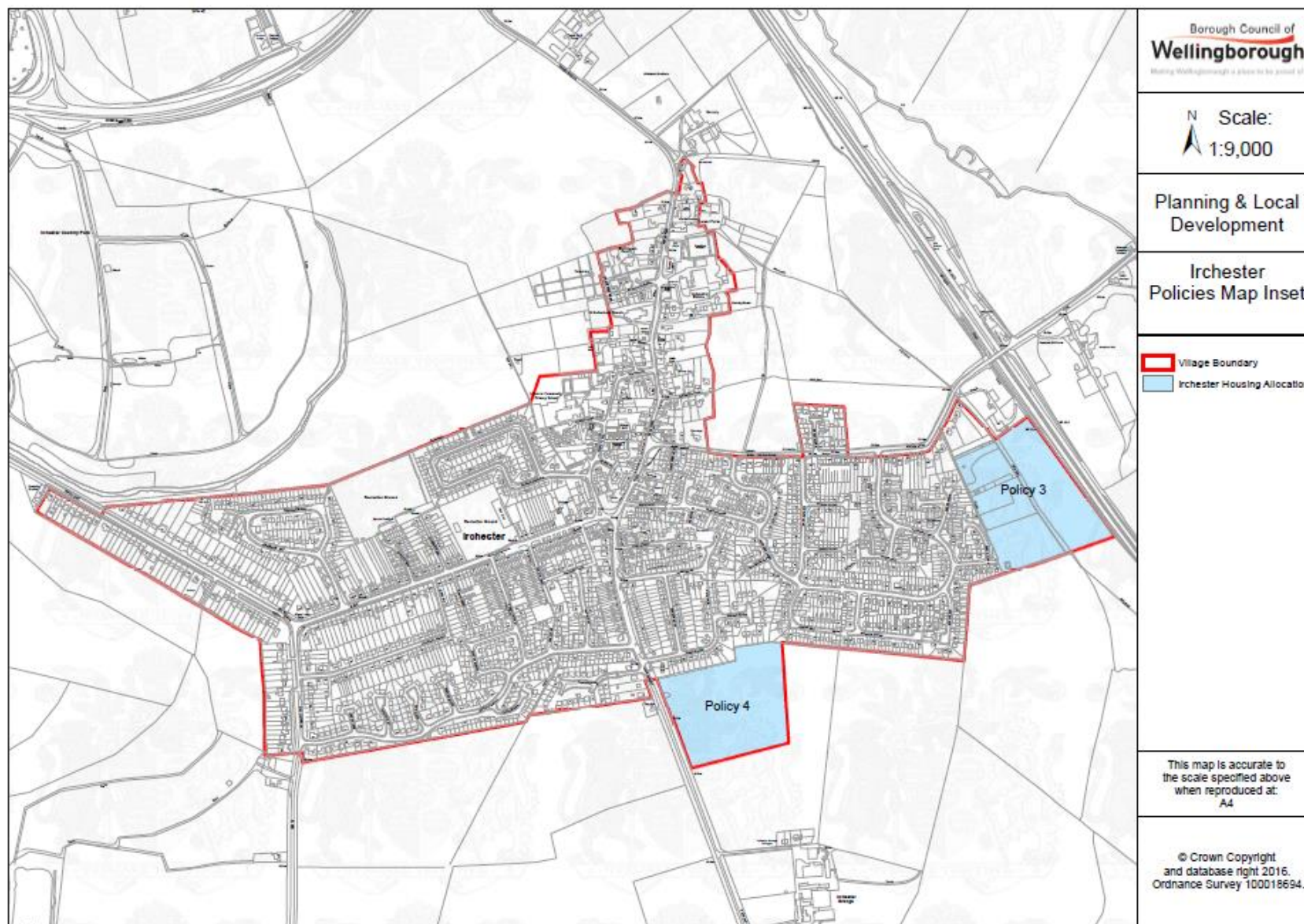


Figure 6: Policy 1 – Settlement Boundary Map for Irchester

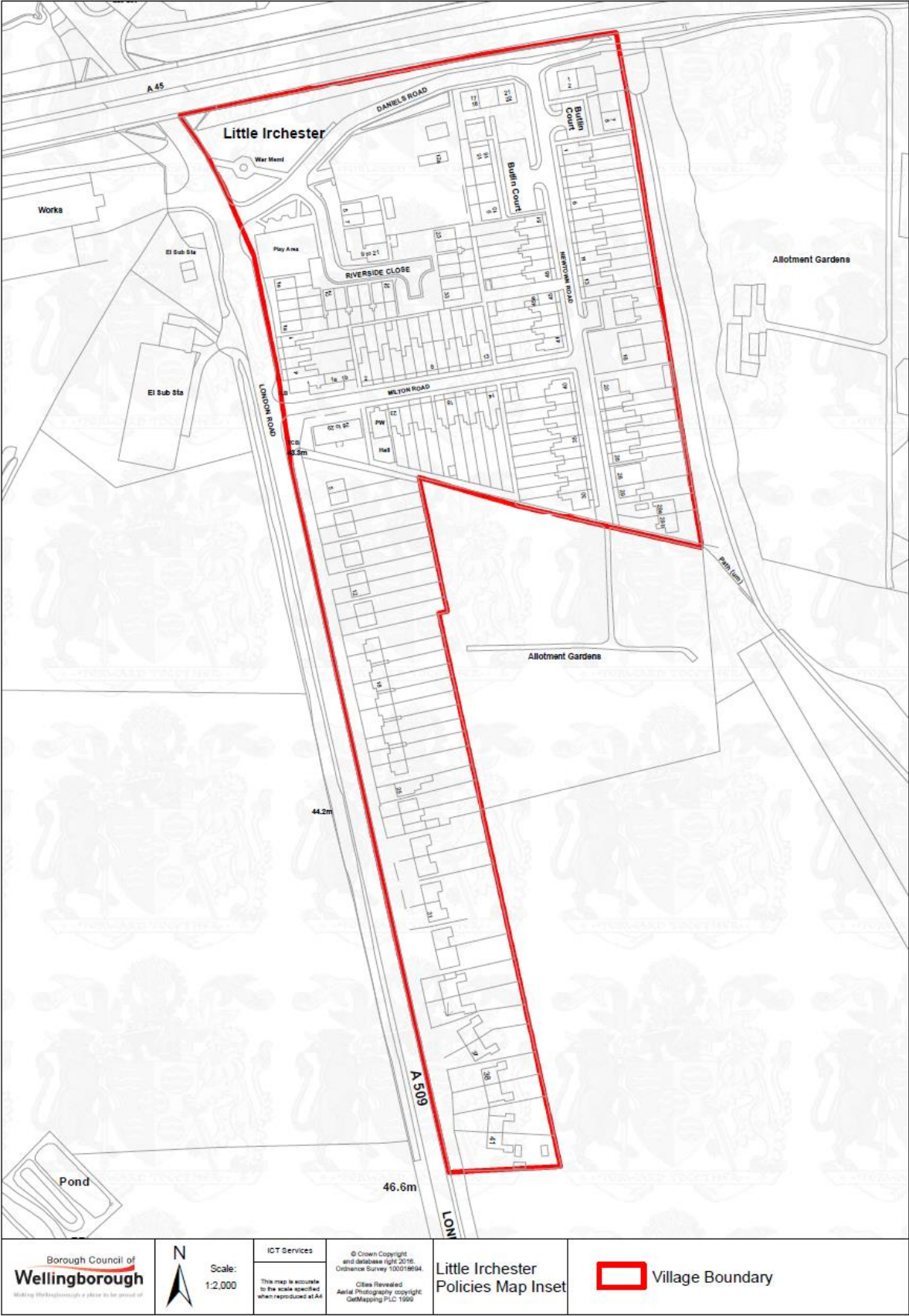


Figure 7: Policy 1 – Settlement Boundary Map for Little Irchester

HERITAGE

- 4.8 Heritage assets and their settings within the landscape have proved to be a key aspect of the development of the NHP. The Joint Core Strategy, Policy 2 (Historic Environment) and Policy 3 (Landscape Character) give clear guidance on planning requirements to protect and enhance heritage assets. However, in the context of the Parish of Irchester, there are aspects that should be highlighted that are significant within the Neighbourhood Plan Area and important to the community.
- 4.9 Details of non-designated heritage assets within the parish can be obtained from the Historic Environment Record (HER).

Policy 2: Heritage Policy

Any development in the Neighbourhood Plan Area and the Parish of Irchester will:

- i. Be designed to protect, preserve or enhance the significance of designated heritage assets in the parish and their settings in particular:**
 - **Grade I Listed St Katharine’s Church**
 - **Scheduled Ancient Monument of the Roman Town of Irchester and preceding Iron Age Settlement at Chester Farm and its associated Grade II* and Grade II Listed Buildings**
 - **Grade II Listed Knuston Hall and its surrounding curtilage and landscape**
 - **Grade II Listed Ditchford Bridge and attached Causeway**
 - **Listed buildings that exist in the main High Street area of Irchester**
- ii. Have regard to national policy guidelines in assessing the potential effect of a proposal on the significance of non-designated heritage assets including the potential for archaeological remains.**
- iii. Protect and, where possible, enhance key views into and out of the settlement towards and from heritage assets. Roads and footpaths from where views of the Church of St. Katharine are obtained and which are highly or moderately sensitive to change are shown on Figure 8**
- iv. Take account of the local character as set out in the Irchester, Little Irchester and Knuston Character Appraisal (April 2017).**



View across fields adjoining Station Road of the Grade I Listed St Katharine's Church

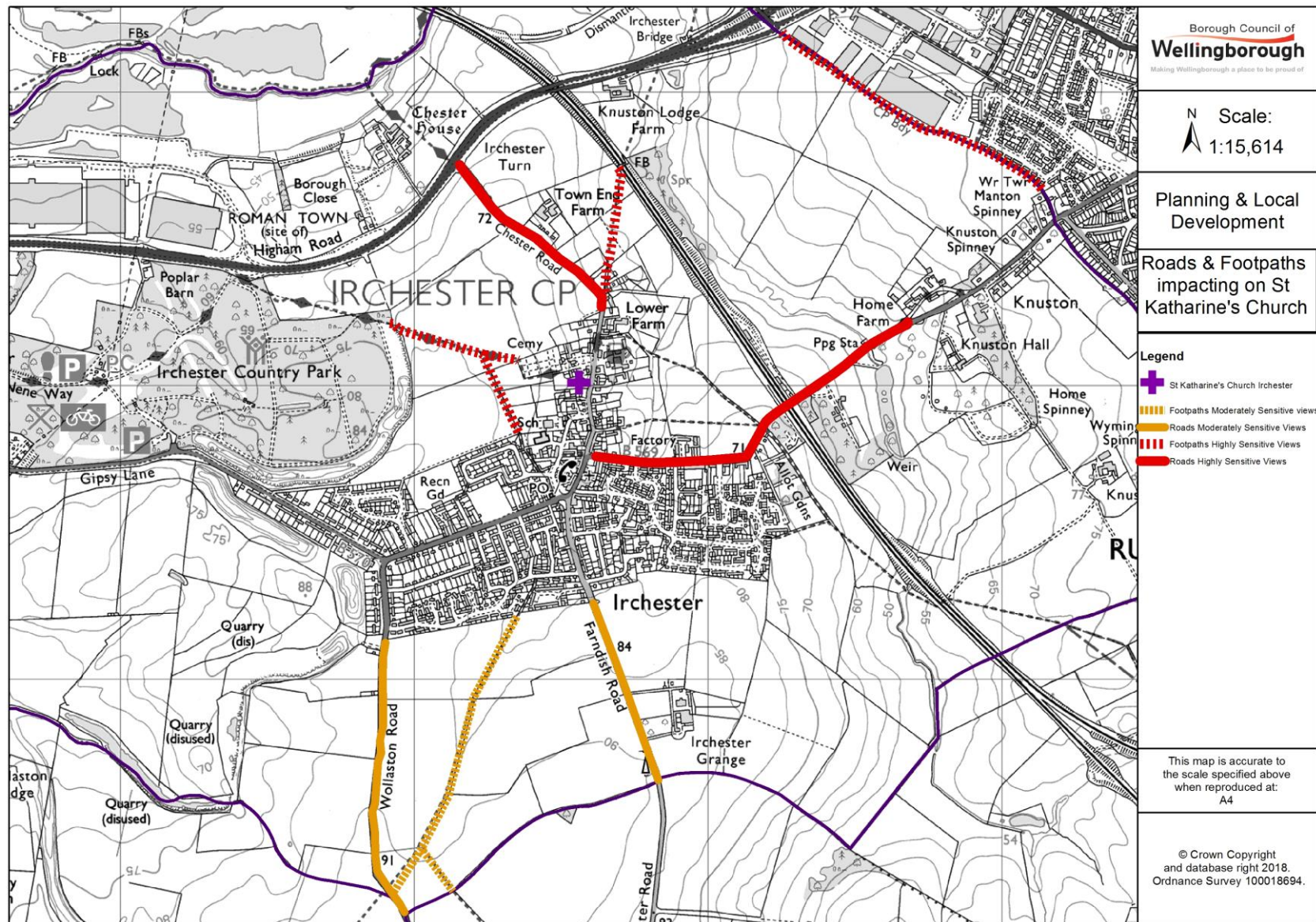


Figure 8: Roads and footpaths from where the views of the Church of St Katharine are sensitive to change

LAND OFF AUSTIN CLOSE

Policy 3: Land off Austin Close

The Neighbourhood Plan allocates 5.14ha of land off Austin Close, as shown on the Policies Map, for housing development of approximately 75 dwellings. The site comprises private land and a 1.1ha area of Public Open Space (POS) owned by Irchester Parish Council, which is required for access into the wider site.

Development proposals for the land allocated for housing will be supported, provided they accord with the following principles:

- i. The development is laid out in general accordance with the zonal drawing provided at Figure 9, including the following provisions:**
 - The vehicular access shall be off Austin Close from the existing turning head located adjacent to No.22 Austin Close and shall be designed so as to ensure the retention of as much of the existing area of open space as possible with a suitable vehicular access to that area provided for maintenance purposes.**
 - Dwellings shall be located to the south of this access road facing towards the Public Open Space.**
 - Public Open Space should be provided on site in terms of its quality, quantity and accessibility to meet the needs of the population generated by the development. An equivalent area to that of the existing Public Open Space which is lost to development should be provided to the north of the remaining area of the existing open space.**
 - The skate park on site shall be retained in its current location.**
 - A turning head or other option shall be provided along the site's southern boundary that would allow future road access into the fields to the southeast of the site should this land be required for development post-2031.**
 - The public footpath that runs through the middle of the site shall be retained and incorporated into the proposal.**
 - The layout should allow for the possibility in the long-term of further development to the south-east and for vehicular access to Station Road.**
- ii. Noise impact from the adjacent railway line will be shown to be adequately mitigated.**
- iii. The mix of housing provided on site will be reflective of the most up to date assessment of housing needs arising in the Parish (currently the 2013 Irchester Rural**

Housing Survey) and include a mix of 1-4 bedroom dwellings including a proportion of flats and bungalows.

- iv. The development will protect and where possible enhance on-site biodiversity.**
- v. The development will make a financial contribution towards mitigating impacts on the Upper Nene Gravel Pits Special Protection Area (SPA) in accordance with JCS Policy 4 and 'The Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area Supplementary Planning Document - Addendum to the SPA SPD: Mitigation Strategy'.**
- vi. As far as possible, the development should be designed to integrate into the wider settlement linking to cycle, pedestrian, public transport and vehicular networks. Pedestrian access to Station Road should be provided along the existing farm access route adjoining the railway.**
- vii. 40% of the total dwellings are provided as affordable homes, subject to viability.**
- viii. The existing scout storage hut located on the open space will require removal to make way for the access road and dwellings fronting it. Alternative provision of this facility (or a financial contribution commensurate with its re-provision) will be sought either on the re-provided open space or elsewhere in the community.**

- 4.10 When considering suitable pedestrian links in accordance with criterion vi the potential for pedestrian access into the site along the former allotments trackway adjoin the west of the site from Station Road should be explored.



Land off Austin Close, Irchester



Figure 9: Policy 3 – Land off Austin Close Zonal Drawing

LAND SOUTH OF JAMES STREET

Policy 4: Land south of James Street

The Neighbourhood Plan allocates 3.98ha of land south of James Street, as shown on the Policies Map, for housing development of approximately 75 dwellings, public open space and a 0.3 ha area reserved for a future community facility.

Development proposals for the land allocated for housing will be supported, provided they accord with the following principles:

i. The development is laid out in general accordance with the zonal drawing provided at Figure 10, including the following provisions:

- Vehicular access/es should be provided from Farndish Road.**
- A pedestrian footpath shall be provided along the eastern side of Farndish Road from where it currently stops to the northwest of the site to the site’s vehicular entrance. Pedestrian entrance into the site shall be provided from Farndish Road at the north-west corner of the site. If only one vehicular access is proposed into the site from Farndish Road this access should also be designed to allow emergency service vehicles a secondary access point into the development.**
- Public Open Space should be provided on site in terms of its quality, quantity and accessibility to meet the needs of the population generated by the development.**
- An area of 0.3 ha should be reserved as the potential location of a future community facility.**
- A landscape buffer should be provided around the site boundaries in order to create a strong and attractive settlement boundary. It should be designed to enhance views towards the Grade I Listed St Katharine’s Church where appropriate by the screening of existing and new development.**

The site layout shall be informed by a detailed assessment of views towards the Grade I Listed St Katharine’s Church (included as part of the Heritage Impact Assessment required by point III. Below) to preserve key views towards the church spire along Farndish Road to the south of the site and to identify key vistas towards the church from within the site that can be designed into the layout to provide newly accessible and uninterrupted views towards the church spire.

ii. The mix of housing provided on site will reflect the most up to date assessment of housing needs arising in the Parish (currently the 2013 Housing Needs Survey) and

include a mix of 1-4 bedroom dwellings including a proportion of flats and bungalows.

- iii. The development will be designed to protect, enhance or better reveal the significance of heritage assets and their settings, most notably the Grade I Listed St Katharine’s Church. It will meet the design requirements set out under point i. and will additionally be informed by a Heritage Impact Assessment and Archaeological Assessments that will be prepared in consultation with Historic England and Northamptonshire County Council.**
- iv. The development will protect and where possible enhance on-site biodiversity.**
- v. The development will make a financial contribution towards mitigating impacts on the Upper Nene Gravel Pits Special Protection Area (SPA) in accordance with JCS Policy 4 and ‘The Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area Supplementary Planning Document - Addendum to the SPA SPD: Mitigation Strategy’.**
- vi. The development will be designed to integrate into the wider settlement linking to cycle, pedestrian, public transport and vehicular networks.**
- vii. 40% of the total dwellings will be provided as affordable homes, subject to viability and national policy regarding affordable housing thresholds.**
- viii. The layout should be designed to facilitate further growth post 2031 should this be required.**
- ix. Farndish Road should be widened as necessary to provide safe vehicular, pedestrian and cyclist access into the site. The application should be supported by a Transport Assessment to demonstrate that impacts on the surrounding highways network can be effectively mitigated.**

- 4.11 There is an existing water main within the boundary of the site covered by Policy 4 which needs to be incorporated into the layout of the site. This should preferably be incorporated within the site’s public open space provision, however if this is not possible then the development can apply to divert existing assets under the Water Industry Act 1991.



Land south of James Street

FLOOD RISK

- 4.12 Areas within the parish are at risk of flooding. In particular, the Wantage Road and London End areas are identified as at risk from surface water flooding. In accordance with JCS Policy 5, development should contribute towards reducing the risk of flooding and to the protection and improvement of the quality of the water environment. Further requirements with regard to flood risk assessments are contained within the NPPF and local standards and guidance can be obtained from Northamptonshire County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority.



Figure 10: Policy 4 – Land south of James Street Zonal Drawing

5.0 IMPLEMENTATION

Introduction

- 5.1 The Irchester, Knuston and Little Irchester Neighbourhood Plan (NHP) will be implemented through a combination of the local planning authority's consideration and determination of planning applications for development in the Neighbourhood Plan Area and through steering local community, public sector and private sector investment and actions into a non-statutory proposal contained in the Plan.
- 5.2 This proposal has emerged during the preparation of the NHP and, although it cannot form part of the statutory land use policy provisions of the NHP, it is included in this section as a non-statutory proposal to provide a comprehensive view of local community aspirations for the parish.

Development Management

- 5.3 The policies of the NHP, alongside those of the Borough Council of Wellingborough Development Plan, will be used by the local planning authority as material considerations in determining planning applications. Many of the policies will be delivered by landowners and developers responding to its allocation of land for development. In preparing the NHP, care has therefore been taken to ensure, as far as possible, that these allocations are achievable by working with the developers of the allocated sites.
- 5.4 Whilst the local planning authority will be responsible for development management, the Irchester Parish Council will also use the NHP to frame its representations on submitted planning applications. It will also work with the authority to monitor the progress of sites coming forward for development.

Project Proposal

- 5.5 During the preparation of the NHP the local community made clear through consultation its desire for the Neighbourhood Plan to support a range of infrastructure projects that are either not related to land use planning or are matters that are not within the scope of a Neighbourhood Plan to determine. This section therefore contains a proposal that will be pursued by the Irchester Parish Council and others in parallel with the implementation of the formal policies of the NHP.
- 5.6 Irchester Parish Council will secure funding from S106 agreements or Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) through the Borough Council of Wellingborough to make financial contributions to a number of infrastructure projects during the life of the plan.
- 5.7 In addition Irchester Parish Council will identify projects for which financial contributions will be secured from a variety of sources to support the planned growth proposed in the NHP.
- 5.8 Core priorities have been identified through consultation events, community event days and the Stage 1 and Stage 2 Consultation Surveys that were undertaken with the community. This has given the opportunity for local residents to provide guidance for community improvements. Further details on the evidence base can be found in the Irchester, Knuston and Little Irchester Consultation Statement

document. These core priorities are all ideas that may, or may not come forward during the Plan period. Some of the key priorities established that could be realised up to 2031 could include:

Table 2: Core Funding Priorities

Core Priority	Relevant to Development at:		
	Land adjoining Austin Close	Land south of James Street	All Development
Upgrade the Zebra Crossing on High Street to a Pelican Crossing to improve safety		✓	
Provision of a pedestrian and cycleway to Wollaston on B569 (Wollaston Road) to reduce car trips, improve health and wellbeing, improve connectivity to education, employment and communities			✓
Upgrade footpaths on B570 and A509 connecting Wellingborough (Wollaston Road/Gipsy Lane/London Road) and Rushden (Station Road and Irchester Road) to provide dual pedestrian and cycleway			✓
Improvements to car parking facilities: a. In the centre of Irchester – Farndish Road, High Street and School Road areas (Parking Bays) b. In Wollaston Road between the junction of Berrill Street and Gray Street (Parking Bays) c. In Baker Crescent (Parking Bays) d. Additional parking provision in Farndish Road (Parking Bays) e. Upgrading the Irchester Village Hall car park f. In Wollaston Road on the Recreation Ground (small Car Park)			✓
Contributions towards the development, care or upgrading of community facilities e.g. community halls, recreational grounds, sporting facilities and parks			✓
Contributions towards the provision or upgrading of playground equipment			✓
Improvements and additions to skatepark	✓		
Ongoing upgrading of Bus Shelters			✓
Provision of new or upgrading of street furniture e.g. barriers, fencing, bollards, bins, seats, lighting & signage			✓
Contributions towards cemetery improvements e.g. pathways, railings, parking provision and landscaping			✓
Contributions to protecting and enhancing our heritage e.g. historical plaques, conservation/improvements of War Memorials			✓
Contributions towards provision of a pedestrian and cycleway footbridge linking Irchester Country Park to Chester Farm heritage site, industry, Nene Valley landscape, Rushden Lakes and Wellingborough/Rushden			✓

5.9 The prioritisation and timing of these projects will be based on an assessment by the Irchester Parish Council of community need, viability and affordability and long-term community benefit and urgency when the NHP is completed. The Irchester Parish Council will also endeavor to keep a record of any potential core priority costing's in order to maximize funding opportunities.

Appendix A

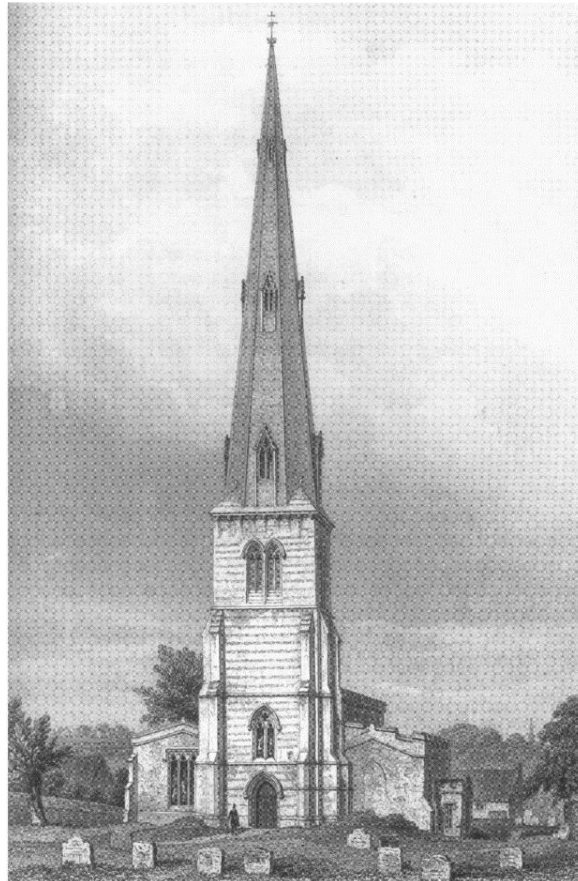
Brief History of the Parish of Irchester

Consisting of 2,788 acres, the Parish of Irchester is situated right in the heart of England and is made up of the main village of Irchester, the estate hamlet of Knuston, the 19th century hamlet of Little Irchester, Ditchford and Chester House. Lying on the banks of the River Nene with its lush meadows is Chester-on-the-Water, a deserted medieval hamlet with the listed farmhouse and farm buildings of Chester House. Adjacent to this is an abandoned Roman township that encompasses a walled Roman town (an Ancient Scheduled Monument) and its surrounding suburbs. This historic site also contains an Iron Age Settlement.

The A45 east-west dual carriageway cuts through this landscape separating it from Irchester, a dramatically developed conurbation, now one of the largest populated villages in Northamptonshire. Major transport links historically connect the parish with the rest of Northamptonshire and beyond. Important stagecoach routes like the Kettering to Newport Pagnell turnpike of 1753-1754 and the Great Staughton to Wellingborough turnpike of 1754-1755 both passed through the parish.

From 1761 the River Nene was navigable from Northampton to Peterborough, and in 1845 the Blisworth, Northampton and Peterborough railway was constructed with a railway station being opened at Little Irchester. This was followed by the Midland Railway's Leicester to Hitchin extension in 1857 which saw a railway station opening in Irchester.

Irchester, with its significant Grade I Listed Parish Church of St. Katharine's dating from the 11th century, originally only consisted of the main High Street until Victorian times. In fact the 'High Street' didn't acquire its name until the late 1800s. Along the High Street can be found some of the oldest buildings in the village dating from the 13th century onwards. These include the Manor House and its adjoining Tithe Barn, the old Vicarage, The Carpenters Arms Public House, a medieval open hall house (33-39 High Street), the original blacksmith's cottage and forge (57 High Street), and thatched and stone cottages dating from the 1600s to early 1800s.



The 160ft high spire of St Katharine's Church, Irchester, 1847

In the centre of the village, in fields adjoining Station Road and Townwell Lane, was found in 2014 the site of medieval remains including a medieval iron production site, which provide valuable new insights into this poorly understood industrial aspect of medieval Northamptonshire.

John Wesley (1703-1791), who started the Methodist movement, visited the village in 1775 whilst on his way to Bedford. He took tea with Dr Thomas Angrave who lived at the Manor House. Dr Angrave went on to establish the Methodist movement in the village, first in a barn within the Manor House grounds and later in a chapel built in 1788 in what became known as Chapel Yard.

Agriculture has always been a significant aspect of the parish. The farming landscape we see today was formed by Enclosure in 1769 (Knuston) and 1773 (Irchester).

In 1801 the population of the parish was 523. During Victorian times there were many changes which caused the population to rise. In 1841 the population was 907 and by 1901 had risen to 2301. Many people in the 19th century in the village were employed in agriculture, lacemaking, rush mat making, or boot and shoe making.

The village also started to expand during the Victorian period, which saw the construction of terrace houses in Station Road, Farndish Road, Wollaston Road, Thrift Street and Berrill Street. Many yards and rows of houses were constructed between the High Street and School Road, in Townwell Lane and around the present St Katharine's Way (which was then called Cattle Lane). Many of these rows of houses were similar to the present Sharwood Terrace in design.

The Victorian expansion of the village also saw community needs being met when the first public school was opened in 1848 on School Hill although pupils had to pay a penny to attend. Shops, a post office, off-licences (or outdoor beerhouses as they are called in Irchester), five shoe factories, the Red Lion Public House (now renamed The 19th Hole), a Baptist Chapel (1850), a new Wesleyan Methodist Chapel (1869) and a 150 seater Primitive Methodist Chapel (1877) were also built. One particular business that developed during the Victorian period was that of Edward Parsons and Son Ltd, Pork Pie Manufacturers whose products were distributed throughout the British Isles.

In 1909 a Carnegie Free Library was opened in the High Street, with a new school in School Lane opening in 1908. The present Co-operative Store opened in 1915 and has been serving the community ever since.

During the First World War (1914-1918), soldiers from The Herefordshire Regiment were billeted in the village as were some of the Belgian refugees. Servicemen and women went off to do their duty both at home and overseas. Many did not return and the War Memorial was unveiled in 1920 to commemorate the 74 servicemen from Irchester who gave their lives for King and Country.



High Street, Irchester, circa 1929



High Street, Irchester, circa 1929

During the interwar years 'Homes Fit for Heroes' were constructed by the local authority when Council Houses were erected in Farndish Road, Edward Road, Wollaston Road, Alfred Street, and Gray Street. Further private houses were also built along the Station Road, Wollaston Road, Prospect Avenue and Gipsy Lane area of the village in a ribbon development. A recreation ground was opened on Wollaston Road and the Irchester Sports Club ground was also opened in Alfred Street in the 1930s. By 1931 the population of the parish was 2503.

The Second World War (1939-1945) saw servicemen and women going away to fight, some of whom never returned, with 16 names being added to the Irchester War Memorial. Evacuees came to the village and many settled into school and village life. On the 20th May 1941 four bombs were dropped by enemy planes on the village. These bombs destroyed the former Primitive Methodist Chapel in Farndish Road and some adjoining houses. Nine people died as a result of the bombing.

In the 1950s many of the Victorian yards and rows of houses were demolished as they were classed as unfit for habitation. Some of the houses along the High Street were also demolished for this reason, which in hindsight perhaps was unjustifiable. In the 1950s James Street, Grange Close, Grange Way, Baker Crescent and Parsons Road were constructed with further building work taking place along Prospect Avenue, Gipsy Lane, Wollaston Road and Station Road. These took residents from the many houses that were classed as unfit for habitation.

Parsons Hall was opened in 1952 as the staff canteen for Edward Parsons and Son Ltd, Pork Pie Manufacturers. Village organizations could also use the canteen as a village hall in the evenings. It was purchased by the Irchester Parish Council in later years and is still used by many organisations.

By 1961 the population was 2832. The 1960s saw Chapel Close (on the site of the 1788 chapel), Arkwright Road, Woodlands Road, and Bradshaw Way estates constructed. The Village Hall and Doctors' Surgery were built in the 1970s in School Road. The Gypsy and Travellers Site was also established in Gipsy Lane in 1969.

Edward Parsons and Son Ltd, Pork Pie Manufacturers, closed in 1965 and the site was developed for housing and other light industrial use. All the five shoe factories have closed since the 1970s and have either been demolished or turned into residences. Many of the smaller shops have also closed as people have taken to their cars to shop and work elsewhere. One former shop, the Co-op Arcade is now used as the Irchester Community Reachout Church. Irchester still continues to have a small selected range of retail outlets.

By 1981 the population of the parish had reached 5018. Since the 1990s Irchester Schools have been expanded to cope with changing pupil and teaching needs. In 2016 additional classrooms were also added to the school to cope with future potential educational growth. Further small areas of the village have also been developed since the 1990s like Coulon Close, Mansfield Way and Biscay Close.

Little Irchester

The hamlet of Little Irchester, developed around a railway in the 19th century, which eventually saw brickworks, maltings, a tannery, shops, three public houses, a chapel, a Mission Church and Whitworth Mill being constructed. Two of the public houses closed in the 1930s and in the 1960s the railway closed, followed by the tannery in the 1970s.

In the 20th century houses were also constructed along the London Road and at Butlin Court. The A45 dual carriage-way was constructed in 1981 linking Northampton with Wellingborough and Rushden.

More recently in the 21st century, the Victoria Business Park opened adjoining the A45, the Mission Church closed and was replaced by two bungalows and Riverside Close was built on the former site of The Cottage Public House and Borough Council of Wellingborough depot.

Separating Little Irchester from Irchester are the former ironstone quarries that were used from 1872-1969. Steam and later electric mechanical diggers were used to excavate the iron ore. The ore was then transported by wagons and steam engines to the railway sidings at Little Irchester before being taken to the blast furnaces at Wellingborough and later Middlesborough. Part of the iron ore quarry is now the Irchester Country Park that opened in 1976 and now also contains the Irchester Narrow Gauge Railway Museum.



Milton Road, Little Irchester, circa 1906

Knuston

The old estate village of Knuston with Knuston Hall (now a Grade II Listed building), its associated farm houses and estate cottages, was owned by the Arkwright family from 1865-1920. It was then purchased by a local shoe factory owner Charles 'Zoony' Green. In 1949 Knuston Hall was purchased by Northamptonshire County Council and in 1951 it opened as an Adult Education Residential College and Conference Centre. Nearby is Ditchford with its medieval bridge and causeway that forms the boundary with Irthlingborough and Rushden.

The population of the Parish of Irchester has nearly doubled from the 1901 figure of 2301 to 4745 in 2011. The Parish of Irchester with its main village of Irchester and the hamlets of Knuston and Little Irchester has continued to change, develop and grow over the centuries but is still a vibrant area to live, with a great community spirit, history and future.

Appendix B

Listed Buildings, Structures and Scheduled Ancient Monument Sites in the Neighbourhood Plan Area and the Parish of Irchester

Irchester

- 19-25 High Street (4 houses), Grade II
- 1a London End, Grade II
- 33-37 High Street (2 houses), Grade II
- 34 High Street, Grade II
- Barn approximately 14m South West of Manor Farm Cottage, High Street, Grade II
- Blacksmiths Cottage, 57 High Street, Grade II
- Chest Tomb approximately 30m South West of Tower of Church of St Katharine's, Grade II
- Church of St Katharine's, Grade I
- 22 High Street, Grade II
- Lower Farmhouse, 130 High Street Grade II
- Manor Farm Cottage, 77A High Street, Grade II
- Manor House, 77 High Street, Grade II
- Poplar Barn, A45, Grade II
- War Memorial, Junction of High Street and Wollaston Road, Grade II

Knuston

- Barn approximately 60m East of Home Farmhouse, B569, Grade II
- Bridge approximately 60m East of Ford Cottage, Grade II
- Fox Cottage and attached outbuilding to East, Grade II
- Home Farmhouse, B569, Grade II
- Knuston Hall including attached outbuildings, Grade II
- Knuston High Farm and attached barn, Grade II
- Knuston Lodge Farmhouse, A45, Grade II

Chester Farm

- Roman Town of Irchester and preceding Iron Age Settlement, Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM)
- Barns, carhouse and stables and attached wall to North approximately 50m South West of Chester House, Grade II
- Cartsheds approximately 80m south east of Chester House, Grade II
- Chester House and attached Cottage to east, attached walls to South and West, Grade II*
- Kitchen Garden Walls approximately 20m south west of Chester House, Grade II

Ditchford

- Ditchford Bridge and attached Causeway (that Part in the Parish of Irchester), Ditchford Road, Grade II

Appendix C

Residential Development Completions and Commitments 2011-2017 in the Parish of Irchester

Residential Completions				
PP Ref	Address	Description	Net Completions	Sub Total per Year
2011 - 2012				
			0	0
2012 - 2013				
WP/2007/0119	Land to side of 185, Wollaston Road, Irchester, Wellingborough, NN29 7DD	New residential building on land to side of 185 Wollaston Road.	1	
WP/2012/0255	188, Station Road, Irchester, Wellingborough	Retention of a timber cabin (mobile home) for use as a Temporary agricultural dwelling and change of use of land for standing of the same (Retrospective Application).	1	
WP/2013/0035	61 & 63, Prospect Avenue, Irchester, Wellingborough, NN29 7DD	Erection of two new dwellings within the gardens of 203-205 Wollaston Road. Amendments to a Previously approved application - changes to the elevations of the approved dwellings	2	4
2013 - 2014				
WP/2011/0159	5 Home Farm, Knuston Road, Irchester, Wellingborough, NN29 7EX	Proposed renovations, conversion and change of use for two barns - amended plans - reclassify the renovations on Barn 1 from 5 no: Holiday Units to 4 no: Residential units	4	
WP/2011/0576	1, Milton Road, Little Irchester, Wellingborough, NN8 2DY	Conversion of ground and 1st floor into 4 no. self-contained flats involving change of use on the ground floor from commercial hot food takeaway (A5) to residential (C3). Additional Information.	3	7
2014 - 2015				
WP/2013/0202	Land adjacent, 66, High Street, Irchester, Wellingborough, NN29 7AB	Reserved matters application pursuant to conditions 1 and 2 of outline planning approval WP/2011/0271/O to consider access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale - amended plan	1	1
2015 - 2016				
	6, School Hill, Irchester, Wellingborough, NN29 7AN	Conversion of garage to annex, 2 no. proposed roof lights and addition of porch to north elevation - works have commenced	1	
WP/2011/0159	5 Home Farm, Knuston Road, Irchester, Wellingborough, NN29 7EX	Proposed renovations, conversion and change of use for two barns - amended plans - reclassify the renovations on Barn 1 from 5 no: Holiday Units to 4 no: Residential units	1	

WP/2014/0562	Knuston Home Farm, Knuston Road, Knuston, Wellingborough, NN29 7EX	Prior approval of a proposed change of use from B1 office to residential (C3) – Amended Plans	2	4
2016-2017				
WP/16/00225	Land adjacent 153 Bradshaw Way, Irchester	Construction of detached dwelling	1	
WP/16/00627	94 and annex Farndish Road, Irchester, NN29 7BE	2 single storey dwellings	1	
WP/2012/0373	Land adjacent 32 Thrift Street, Irchester, NN29 7DU	Residential development consisting of 4no. 3 bedroom dwellings, 1 no. 2 bedroom dwellings and 2 no. 1-2 bedroom maisonettes	1	3
Total completions in the parish 2011- 2017				19
Total completions in Irchester village				9

Commitments as at 31 March 2017				
PP Ref	Address	Description	Net Commitments	Status
WP/15/00272	The Tithe Barn, 75A High Street, Irchester	Conversion of existing barn into 2 no. dwellings together with raising of roof line to smaller barn. New car port. New chimney stack	2	No start
WP/15/00808	Stable building at Manor Farm House, 77 High Street, Irchester, NN29 7AA	Change of use from stable building to residential dwelling with off road parking and amenity space	1	No Start
WP/2012/0251	Land rear of 9 Townwell Lane, Irchester, Wellingborough, NN29 7AH	Erection of 1 new dwelling house and 1 double detached garage, with associated driveway and drainage work	1	No Start
WP/2012/0372	32, Thrift Street, Irchester, Wellingborough, NN29 7DU	Conversion of existing 3 bedroom dwelling to 2 no. two bedroom flats involving alterations to the rear elevation and the erection of a rear staircase access to the proposed first floor flat. Resubmission - amended plans	1	Under construction
WP/2012/0373	Land adjacent, 32, Thrift Street, Irchester, Wellingborough, NN29 7DU	Residential development consisting of 4 no. 3 Bedroom dwellings, 1 no. 2 bedroom dwelling and 2 no. 1-2 bedroom maisonettes including access, 18 parking spaces and associated shared and private amenity space - amended plans and additional information.	7	Under construction
Total net commitments in the parish as at 31 March 2017			12	

Appendix D

List of Key Evidence Base Documents

The list below contains all those documents collected and reviewed in the process of preparing this report. All are available to view on the website: www.Irchesterparishnhp.com

Neighbourhood Area Application Decision Notice (4 th December 2012)
Community Event Day Consultation Responses (April/May 2013)
Stage 1 Consultation Results (July 2014)
Stage 2 Consultation Results (October 2015)
Irchester Rural Housing Survey, Borough Council of Wellingborough (January 2013)
Assessment of sites / broad zones put forward for development by NHP Steering Group by Northamptonshire County Council Highways (April 2014)
Assessment of sites/ broad zones put forward for development by NHP Steering Group by Northamptonshire County Council Highways (Addendum – August 2015)
Environmental Assessment Report, ACD (March, 2014)
Historic Landscape Assessment, MOLA (September 2015) (Updated, March 2016)
Wellingborough Local Plan (1999 plus amendment 2004)
North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (July 2016)
North Northamptonshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update Report (January 2015)
Interim Statement on Housing Requirements in the North Northamptonshire Housing Market Area (Jan 2014)
North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit: Strategic Housing Market Assessment - Final Technical Report (August 2012)
2011 SHLAA for North Northamptonshire (May 2013)
Open Space, Sports and Recreation Report, Borough Council of Wellingborough (2015)
Borough Council of Wellingborough Open Space Assessment and Strategy (2017)
Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment (February 2017)
Sustainability Assessment Report (February 2017)
Irchester, Little Irchester and Knuston Character Assessment (April 2017)
Strategic Environment Assessment - Draft Screening Report – Heritage Update (April 2017)
Historical Assessment - Policy 4: Land South of James Street (July 2017)
Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough Publication Plan (September 2017)



High Street, Irchester

**Thank you for reading the
Irchester, Knuston and Little Irchester Neighbourhood Plan 2011-2031**

