

Newton and Biggin Neighbourhood Plan

2025 – 2041



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Foreword

This Plan has been prepared by the Parish Council of Newton and Biggin to ensure that in the future the views and wishes of the community are taken fully into account when Rugby Borough Council determines planning applications in the Parish.

The process of creating this Plan has been driven by Parish Councillors and members of the community and is part of the Government's approach to planning contained in the Localism Act of 2011. Local people now have a greater say about what happens in the area in which they live by preparing a neighbourhood plan that sets out policies that meet the needs of the community whilst having regard for local and national planning policies. The aim of this Plan is to put forward the wishes of the community regarding future development and to deliver local aspirations within the context of the strategic planning framework. The Parish Council has overseen its development but has delegated the preparation of this Plan to an Advisory Committee.

This Plan contains a number of policies, including some areas where the Parish Council will support development activity, and other areas such as 'Local Green Spaces' that the community wish to protect. These policies have been drafted following engagement with the residents and landowners of the Parish.

We are grateful to officers from the Local Planning Authority who have supported us through the process and to our community for engaging in the process. Many hours of volunteer time and expertise have made this Plan possible. The Parish Council expresses sincere thanks to all the Parishioners who contributed to the development of this Plan.

Ian Davis

Chair, Newton and Biggin Parish Council

1 About this Neighbourhood Plan

Background

As a key part of the Government's Localism agenda, a Neighbourhood Plan is a type of planning document that gives local people greater control and say over how their community develops, now and in the future. This includes, for example, where new homes and businesses should be built; what new buildings and extensions should look like, and which areas of land should be protected from development.

As the Plain English Guide to the Localism Act 2011 states, "Instead of local people being told what to do, the Government thinks that local communities should have genuine opportunities to influence the future of the places where they live".

This Neighbourhood Plan covers the whole of the Parish of Newton and Biggin, including the village of Newton, strategic development sites at Coton Park East and the surrounding countryside. It sets out a long-term approach for the development of the Parish and sets out clear development-related policies to realise this.

The Plan:

- has appropriate regard to national planning policy;
- contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
- will not result in less housing development being delivered in the neighbourhood area than would be the case if the Plan were not made;
- takes appropriate account of climate change mitigation and adaptation;
- takes appropriate account of nature recovery; and
- is compatible with human rights requirements and other relevant legal obligations.

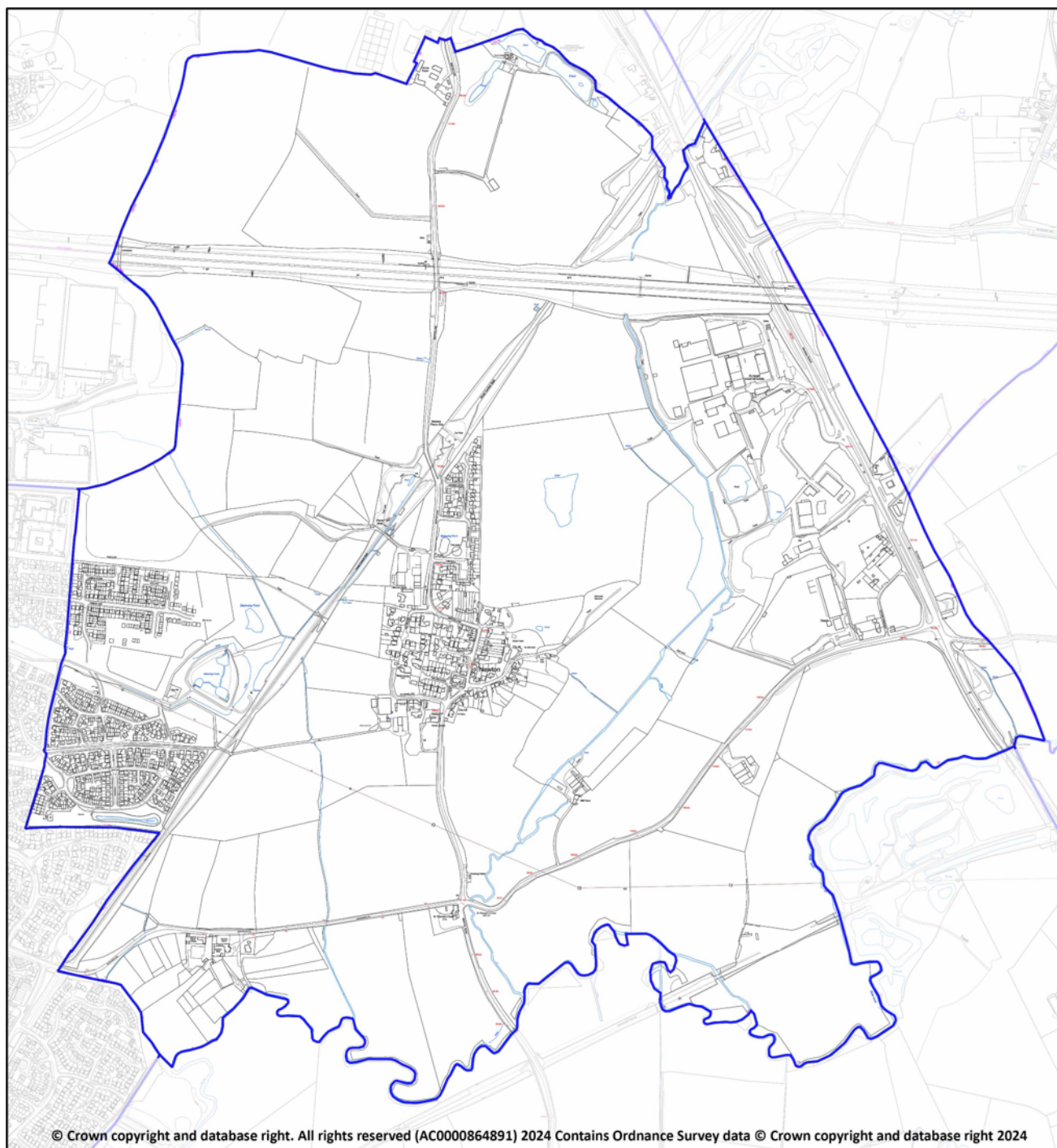
The Plan has now been formally submitted to Rugby Borough Council who will undertake a further round of consultation.

Having successfully passed this stage, it will then be sent to an Independent Examiner, who will check to see that it meets a number of tests called the 'basic conditions', primarily making sure that the Plan meets statutory requirement relating to conformity with the Local Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework. Once the examiner's recommendations have been accepted, the Plan will be put forward to referendum. Those on the electoral register in the Newton and Biggin Parish will be invited to vote on whether or not they support it. Over 50% of those voting must approve it for the Plan to become a 'Made' statutory planning document.

Whilst planning applications will still be determined by Rugby Borough Council, the production of a Neighbourhood Plan will mean that they must have regard to the provisions of the Plan and the relevant locally formulated criteria when reaching planning decisions that affect the Newton and Biggin

Parish. This means that the residents of the Parish will have a far greater control over where development takes place, and what it looks like.

Figure 1 Neighbourhood Area (Designated 20 September 2023)



Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee

The Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee was fully established by the Parish Council and held its inaugural meeting on 25 September 2023. This group comprises both Parish Councillors and other volunteers from the community. The Committee members were approved by the Parish Council and given the authority and responsibility to deliver the Plan. The Group worked hard to drive the process forward, assisted by YourLocale Neighbourhood Plan consultancy.

Two Theme Groups of local volunteers were formed through the process of delivering the Neighbourhood Plan to draw up policies that will inform and guide the future development within the Parish. The first meetings of the Theme Groups took place in October 2024. They focussed on the following Themes:

- Housing and the Built Environment
- The Natural and Historic Environment

Issues relating to sustainability – community facilities, employment and transport – were picked up later on in the process.

The groups were guided by facilitators provided by YourLocale. They reported back to the Advisory Committee, met regularly and gathered information to support the formation of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan policies. Much of the information, which supported the decisions and provided evidence bases, has been gleaned from the extensive research, consultation and local knowledge of the group members.

Newton and Biggin Parish history

The Parish of Newton and Biggin is situated approximately 3 miles north of the centre of Rugby in the northeastern corner of Warwickshire. The northern boundary of the Parish abuts the A5(T) beyond which lie Leicestershire and Northamptonshire, whilst the southern boundary is formed by the River Avon.



The Parish is crossed east/west by the M6 motorway and north/south by the former Great Central Railway, now a popular linear footpath and cycleway incorporating the Five Arches Wildlife Site, designated as having local significance.

At the centre of the Parish is the village of Newton which lies on a spur of higher land above the valley of the Avon. Recent archaeological investigations have revealed evidence of Neolithic habitation in the village.



More is known of the later Roman occupation which saw the construction of Watling Street (now the A5(T)) and the settlement of Tripontium a mile to the north of Newton. Newton is referenced in the Domesday Book and in the 14th Century seems to

have escaped the Black Death more or less unscathed, unlike other villages in the locality. For the next 500 years residents of Newton were engaged in agriculture with some weaving. Then came the railways and road transport and employment diversified into other sectors. This growth in employment saw the village expand from its original core of Main Street and Little London Lane with the construction of

local authority housing to the north and private estates to the west. In the 21st Century the Ellis Gardens added a further 40 houses on the northern end of the village.

Biggin was a former settlement, now disappeared, close to the present Biggin Mill Farm.

The 20th Century saw the development of significant employment areas to the east of Newton off Market Harborough Road along with the adjacent Europark site accessed off the A5(T).

More recently, farmland to the west of the village, known as Coton Park, was developed for residential and employment purposes. A further area, Coton East, is likely to be developed as the historic parish changes and develops with the passing of the years. The Neighbourhood Plan aims to celebrate new development whilst seeking to protect the best of the past.

The Parish Today

Significant residential development is taking place in the Parish, and has done so since the last Census undertaken in 2011. The figures here need to be seen in that context.

The 2011 Census indicates a population of 1,587 for the Parish, a significant increase from the 2001 Census which recorded 572 residents.

Most residents live in large, detached dwellings of 3 bedrooms or more. Over 77% of residents live in properties with at least one extra bedroom.

House prices are such that local households would have difficulty in accessing entry level homes.

Deprivation is not a significant issue in the parish, with over 63% of residents considering themselves not deprived in any area, compared to an equivalent figure of 53% for Rugby as a whole.

74% of residents are economically active, compared to 63% across Rugby as a whole. 37.5% of these individuals work from home, which is higher than that for Rugby as a whole which stands at 30.6%.

Those that work away from home mainly travel to work by car (55.6%) which is similar to Rugby.

2 The Consultation Process

The Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee's mandate was to drive the process, consult with the local community, gather evidence to support emerging policies and prepare the Plan for consideration and ultimately approval by Newton and Biggin Parish Council. A detailed chronology of the approach to consultation and the outcomes is contained within the Consultation Statement that will be included in the documentation with the Submission Neighbourhood Plan.

An Open Event was held in Newton on 14 July 2024 attended by 50 people. The event was very successful with a lot of discussion taking place and comments shared about the priorities for the Neighbourhood Plan.

A community questionnaire produced in October 2024 represented the comments of 116 residents of the Parish, an excellent response, and this helped to identify some of the key issues that would need to be addressed through the Neighbourhood Plan.



The Advisory Committee also gathered statistical information about the Parish from a range of sources to provide a body of evidence on which to base the Plan's emerging Policies.

From October 2024 onwards, 'Theme Groups' were formed of members of the Advisory Committee

along with other residents and stakeholders. The groups met over the following 6 months or so and gathered the evidence needed to progress ideas and to formulate policies.

The Neighbourhood Plan was developed from these discussions, from all the other consultations and interviews conducted by members of the Advisory Committee and from research and evidence collected. A further Open Event took place on 22 June 2025 to share the emerging policies with the community.

3. A Plan for Newton and Biggin Parish

The policies of the Newton and Biggin Neighbourhood Plan are set within the context of the plan-making framework for England. The scope and content of the Newton and Biggin Neighbourhood Plan has been shaped by the priorities and aspirations of the local community, led by the Parish Council's Neighbourhood Planning Advisory Committee. This Plan covers the period up to 2041.

In drawing up this Plan, the following vision and objectives have been prepared:

A Vision for 2041

The aim is to provide a simple and clear vision for a thriving and vibrant community and for its future development based on local consultation and actions.

- To maintain and enhance the quality of life, a strong community spirit, social cohesion whilst providing a safe, vibrant and diverse community for all its residents.
- Continue to be an area where people want to live, work and socialise in with a range of services, facilities and infrastructure that meet the requirements of the community. To ensure transport and movement within the Parish is safeguarded, improved and, where necessary expanded to meet the changing needs of the residents and visitors.
- The most highly valued countryside areas in the Parish will be recognised, conserved and protected to maintain the rural village character of Newton/Biggin and to ensure the residents of Coton Park have access to nearby Countryside.
- Traffic is to be managed in such a way that ensures the safety of pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders, walkers as well as motorists. Endorse policies that ensure any potential increase in traffic volume is kept safe and efficient parameters.
- Existing businesses will be supported and new business welcomed where it provides local employment and avoids harmful impacts to the community.
- Ensuring that any new property development is planned to be beneficial to the sustainable population growth of the Parish and its amenities/facilities.
- Promote sustainability by ensuring that any new residential development is accessible and adaptable, conforms to the highest eco-standards and is readily accessible to essential facilities and employment.

This vision will be achieved by:

- Maintaining the high-quality natural environment with protected wildlife interests.
- Ensuring that any new infill development is planned to be beneficial to the sustainable population growth of the Parish, matching it to support current amenities, e.g. the village hall.

- Retaining and enhancing the character and appeal of the unique assets of the parish, including footpaths, open green spaces and community and recreational facilities.
- Endorsing developments in environmentally acceptable locations that have a positive effect on the sustainability and environment of the parish.
- Promoting the existing local economy including small businesses and farming as well as the larger employment sites. Encouraging, where applicable, new small businesses to the area to benefit the people of the Parish and to provide further employment opportunities.
- Endorsing highways policies that ensure any potential increase in traffic volume is controlled in order to maintain the character of the parish and the safety of the residents and visitors.

It is important to note that when using the Plan to form a view on a development proposal or a policy issue the whole document and its policies must be considered together.

While every effort has been made to make the main parts of this Plan easy to read and understand, the wording of the actual policies is necessarily more formal, so that it complies with statutory requirements.

The Plan will be kept under review and may change over time in response to new and changing needs.

A rapidly changing Parish

The designated Neighbourhood Area coincides with the civil parish of Newton and Biggin. The parish has traditionally been a rural village surrounded by open countryside. The population (2011 census, before Coton Park) was 572, rising by 2021 to 1,587. Significant further development continues to take place in the Parish since the 2021 Census was prepared with strategic residential and economic development sites in progress or planned.

Most English Parish Neighbourhood Plans have policies which reflect the community values and sustainable development needs of a 21st-century version of this kind of spatial relationship between a fairly small, tightly bounded, rural village and its open countryside. Villages which have developed over hundreds of years, such as the village of Newton, have heritage assets, a layout that has evolved historically and well-established, designated open spaces. Countryside can offer recreational and landscape value for residents, sites with biodiversity significance, and farming as part of the local economy. The proportion of built-up to open land is normally significantly less than 10% by area.

In contrast, the strategic urban extension at Coton Park already has a significant number of houses and limited heritage, with no historic relationship with the surrounding countryside.



COTON PARK

The Neighbourhood Plan has tried to take this situation into account and reflect the different characteristics of both the new developments at Coton Park and the village of Newton. Settlement

Boundaries have been drawn for both built-up areas, and policies have taken both areas into account where appropriate.

However, the policy on Design relates primarily to Newton village as Coton Park is subject to a detailed Masterplan. Similarly, the policy on Housing mix applies to Newton Village only, as the housing mix for Coton Park is determined by the Masterplan and subsequent planning applications.

Other policies in the Neighbourhood Plan apply across the Neighbourhood Area.

Planning Context

The procedure for the making of a Neighbourhood Plan is prescribed within the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The Regulations have informed the preparation of policies for the Newton and Biggin Neighbourhood Plan, in particular ensuring that the Neighbourhood Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.

The Neighbourhood Plan has also been prepared having regard to national planning policy and it does not propose a level of housing development lower than would otherwise be delivered in the Parish

Sustainable Development

3.1 A definition of sustainable development is provided within the NPPE. It describes three dimensions to sustainable development and that these dimensions give rise to the need for planning to perform a number of roles:

An economic role

3.2 Contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure.

The community of Newton and Biggin is primarily residential, but there is a strong desire to safeguard its employment locations, including large-scale strategic developments and the farming community. We therefore wish to retain the current level of employment and develop it further where possible and appropriate in line with the Rugby Local Plan.

A social role

Supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by promoting the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations through support for the strategic planning policies contained in the Rugby Local Plan and by maintaining a high-quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being.

The Newton and Biggin Neighbourhood Plan does not anticipate more than limited residential development outside of Coton Park over the lifetime of the Neighbourhood Plan.

An environmental role

Contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment. As part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including supporting the move to a low carbon economy. In order to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment, we are seeking to ensure that:

- Special open spaces within the Neighbourhood Area are protected from development, to protect the village identity and retain the rural nature of its surroundings.
- Development preserves and contributes to the attractive local countryside including replacement of any natural boundaries lost, improvement of existing hedging and encouraging new planting.
- Development recognises the need to protect and, where possible, improve biodiversity and important habitats and includes adding hedging to boundaries of new developments.

Policies

4. General

Introduction

One of the key ways in which the planning system can ensure sustainable development is to direct residential and employment growth to the most sustainable locations.

This is a core principle of the NPPF (December 2024), which introduces a ‘presumption in favour of sustainable development’ (paragraph 11). It is also at the heart of the Rugby Local Plan which seeks to direct growth to the most sustainable settlements based on a Settlement Hierarchy.

In the Rugby Local Plan, Newton and Biggin is categorised as a ‘Rural Village’. The level of services within Rural Villages is more limited than that of Main Rural Settlements and as such the development strategy affords Rural Villages a greater restriction, limiting new development to within existing settlement boundaries. There is a Local Plan allocation at Coton Park East for 800 dwellings and 7.5 ha employment land.

Consultation shows that the community do not wish to see significant housing and other growth in the Parish beyond that at the strategic allocation at Coton Park. but are generally sympathetic to development that helps meet local needs, supports local services and facilities, and fosters diverse and mixed communities.

Through the process of developing a Neighbourhood Plan, consideration has been given to the type and extent of new development required to meet the needs of the local community, where it should be located in the Parish, and how it should be designed. The design guide will not apply to the development at Coton Park East which is subject to a detailed masterplan and design guide. Settlement Boundaries have been established or updated for the built-up area of Newton village and for Coton Park East.

Settlement Boundary

The purpose of the Settlement Boundary is to ensure that sufficient housing and economic activity land is available in appropriate locations that can be supported by existing transport infrastructure and avoid impinging into the local countryside.

Settlement Boundaries were established by Rugby Borough Council in order to clarify where new development activity is best located. They are used to define the extent of a built-up part of a settlement and distinguish between areas where, in planning terms, development would be acceptable in principle, such as in the main settlements, and where it would not be acceptable, generally in the least sustainable locations such as in the open countryside. Such growth would risk ribbon development and the merging of settlements to the detriment of the community and visual amenity of the Neighbourhood Plan area’s surroundings.

The Neighbourhood Plan supports the retention of a Settlement Boundary for the built-up part of Newton village. The Settlement Boundary that was drawn up by Rugby Borough Council in 2011 has been reviewed and updated through the process of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan to reflect recent developments and to allow for suitable growth within the red- line boundary and therefore to accommodate limited organic growth.

A Settlement Boundary has also been drawn for the strategic development site at Coton Park to frame the development site and to reinforce the separation with Newton village.

Within the defined Settlement Boundary an appropriate amount of suitably designed and located development will be acceptable in principle, although some sites within this area are protected from development and all development will be required to take into account the policies within this Plan.

The Parish is predominately rural in nature with the built-up area of Newton village surrounded by open and attractive countryside, up to the extensive strategic development at Coton Park.

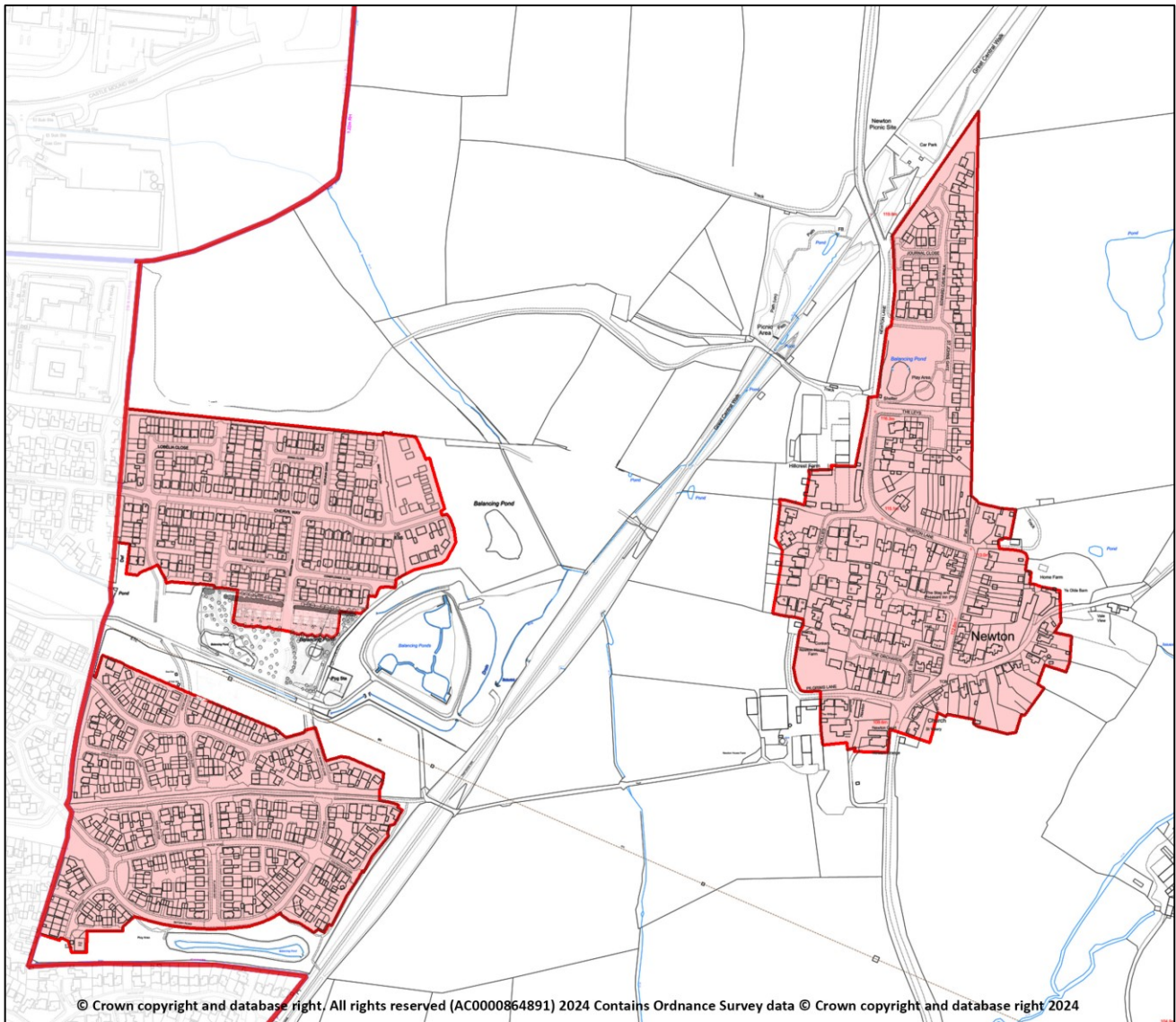
In planning terms, land outside a defined Settlement Boundary, including any small groups of buildings or small settlements, is treated as countryside.

It is national and local planning policy that development in the countryside should be carefully controlled. Supporting “the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it” is identified as a core planning principle in the National Planning Policy Framework, for example. This approach is also supported by this Plan, in particular, because it will help ensure that development is focused in more sustainable settlements with a greater range of services and facilities and infrastructure that has capacity for the expansion, as well as helping to maintain the special landscape character of the Parish and protecting the countryside for its own sake as an attractive, accessible and non-renewable natural resource.

Focusing development within the agreed Settlement Boundary will help to support existing services within the village centre and help to protect the countryside and the remainder of the Neighbourhood Plan area from inappropriate development. The updated Settlement Boundaries have been determined using the following criteria:

- a) Defined physical features such as walls, fences, hedgerows, woodland, gardens, streams, brooks, formal leisure uses, roads and significant changes in levels have been used as the defined boundaries;
- b) Non-residential land, which is countryside, agricultural, paddock, meadow, woodland and/or another green-field use has been excluded;
- c) Isolated development which is physically or visually detached from the settlement has been excluded;
- d) Sections of large curtilages of buildings which relate more to the character of the countryside than the built form have been excluded.

Figure 2 - Settlement boundaries for Newton village and Coton Park



POLICY G1: SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES – Development proposals within the Neighbourhood Area will be supported on sites within the settlement boundaries as shown in Figure 2 the proposal complies with the policies in this Neighbourhood Plan.

Land outside the defined settlement boundaries will be treated as open countryside, where development will be carefully controlled in line with local and national strategic planning policies.

Appropriate development in the countryside includes:

- a) For the purposes of agriculture – including farm diversification and other land-based rural businesses;
- b) For the provision of affordable housing through a rural exception site, where local need has been identified;
- c) For the provision of formal recreation or sport use or for rural tourism that respects the character of the countryside.

The settlement boundary does not apply to land allocated for development in Newton Village in the Rugby Regulation 19 Local Plan (Site ID: 87). Development in this area will be guided by the Local Plan.

Building Design Principles

The Parish of Newton and Biggin has a long and interesting history, resulting in a wide array of heritage assets, attractive landscapes and a distinctive local character.

The biggest challenge facing the future of Newton and Biggin is to balance the desire to protect the character of the Parish with the need for it to grow and evolve in a sensitive and proportionate manner in order to sustain the community and its facilities.

Consultation has showed that many people value the built environment and expressed concern that it should be protected from insensitively located or poorly designed development. The built form of Newton village includes an interesting mix of architectural styles. Newer development within the strategic sites at Coton Park and Coton Park East are largely dealt with by Masterplans produced as part of the Local Plan allocation process.

The Design policy seeks to reflect the design principles which the community believes will help to achieve this aim. They reflect the outcome of consultations with the community and a comprehensive design guide and codes (Appendix 2).

The overall aim is to ensure that new development in the Parish retains the character of the Parish. This can be achieved by the use of the planning system to respond sensitively to the range of historic buildings, structures, landscapes and archaeology situated within the Parish. Future development should seek to enhance, reinforce and preserve this distinctive historic environment.

The NPPF notes that development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies.

To ensure this, new development will be assessed against the criteria in Policy G2 and the accompanying Design Guide. This is in line with national planning policy which promotes good quality design.

The Neighbourhood Plan therefore sets out a planning policy which seeks to identify and protect the distinctive elements which together provide the special qualities of the landscape setting and built heritage of Newton and Biggin Parish.

New development proposals should be designed sensitively to sit within the distinctive settlement patterns of the village. Existing settlement patterns have grown incrementally over time. The buildings date from many different periods, providing a richness and variety of styles and materials. This traditional rural character should be enhanced by new development and schemes should be designed to ensure that new buildings sit comfortably within the existing settlement pattern, and are respectful of their surroundings.

New development proposals should be designed sensitively to ensure that the high-quality built environment of the Parish is maintained and enhanced. New designs should respond in a positive way to the local character through careful and appropriate use of high-quality materials and detail. Proposals should also demonstrate consideration of height, scale and massing, to ensure that new development delivers a positive contribution to the street scene and adds value to the distinctive

character of the area.

POLICY G2: DESIGN – Development proposals, including extensions, should demonstrate a high quality of design, layout and use of materials which make a positive contribution to the special character of the Neighbourhood Area.

As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals should respond positively to the Design Guide and Codes (Appendix 2) and demonstrate how its contents have been incorporated in their design and layout. Development proposals should contribute positively to the existing character of the part of the Neighbourhood Area in which they are located.

5. Housing and the Built Environment

Housing Need

Rugby Borough Council's Regulation 19 Local Plan sets out the Borough's strategy for the overall housing targets for the Parish.

It has considered the housing need across the Borough and the allocation of housing within it. It states that at least 10,812 new homes will be delivered in the period 2025-2042 (636 each year).

The Regulation 19 Local Plan establishes a hierarchy of settlements to help to determine the most appropriate locations for the remaining development. Newton is a 'rural settlement' where only limited development will be permitted.

There is a single residential allocation in the Regulation 19 Local Plan of around 25 dwellings for Newton and Biggin. There is also a strategic development site within the Parish at Coton Park East for 800 dwellings and 7.5 ha employment land.

This more than meets the housing requirement for the Neighbourhood Area over the Plan period. The Qualifying Body has therefore decided against allocating an additional site for residential development in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Housing Mix

The Rugby Local Plan seeks to provide a mix of market housing house types and sizes. Local Plan Policy H1 requires new residential development to contribute to the overall mix of housing in the locality, taking into account the current need, particularly for older people and first-time buyers, current demand and existing housing stock.

A Housing Needs Assessment was commissioned as part of the Neighbourhood Plan process. It found that there has been considerable population growth in Newton & Biggin between 2011 and 2021, linked to the significant development that has taken place at Coton Park. Due to this there have been increases in all age groups. In 2021 the greatest proportion of the population in Newton & Biggin was aged 25-44, at 34.5%. This was followed by children aged 0-14 at 27.2%, a significant increase from 2011. This suggests an increase in family households, not unexpected in areas with large new build developments. The number of people aged 65+ in the NA increased over the decade, but the proportion of the population in this age bracket declined due to more significant increases in younger age categories.

Growth in the Neighbourhood Area over the plan period (outside of the strategic developments) is projected to be driven by older households, with those with a person aged 65 and over projected to increase by 42%.

In 2021, Newton & Biggin had the greatest proportion of households living in detached dwellings when compared to Rugby and England. It also had the greatest proportion of households living in semi-detached dwellings, although to a lesser extent. There were a smaller proportion of households living

in terraced dwellings and flats than the comparator geographies.

In 2011, the greatest proportion of households in Newton & Biggin lived in larger 4+ bedroom dwellings, with this decreasing in 2021. The greatest proportion of households lived in 3-bedroom dwellings in 2021, at 38.7% of households. There was a significant increase in the number of households living in 3-bedroom dwellings over the decade, from 76 to 230, likely linked to Coton Park.

Under-occupancy is relatively common in the Neighbourhood Area, with 77.5% of households living in a household with at least one extra bedroom based on their household size. This is most common in families and single person households aged 66+, and in younger families with no children. This suggests that the larger housing in Newton & Biggin is not necessarily occupied by households with the most family members, but by the households with the most wealth or by older households that have not chosen or been able to move to smaller properties.

Modelling through the Housing Needs Assessment suggests that, outside of the large-scale development of Coton Park East, new housing in the Neighbourhood Area should focus on smaller and mid-sized dwellings. It suggests no further provision of larger 4+ bedroom dwellings in order to reduce the proportion of this dwelling size in the mix. However, it is not necessarily appropriate to completely prohibit any dwelling size.

The housing mix of Coton Park East is to be informed separately, by the Coventry & Warwickshire HEDNA and Coton Park East Masterplan SPD, and most notably the planning permission which sets out the housing mix and level of affordable and specialist housing.

The community questionnaire from October 2024 identified a desire for new housing development to enable older people to move into more suitable accommodation (over 70% of respondents saw this as important or very important) whilst over 67% of respondents saw it as important or very important that affordable housing was available to enable local young people to move into, or to remain living in the Parish. People also expressed the view that there were too few bungalows in the Parish (59.74%) or retirement/sheltered housing (64.79%).

POLICY H1: HOUSING MIX - New development in Newton village should provide for a mixture of housing types having regard to identified local housing needs as identified in the Housing Needs Assessment (2024) or later document updating these findings. The provision of bungalows suitable for elderly people and dwellings of up to three bedrooms will be particularly supported. There will be a presumption against homes with more than 4 bedrooms.

Windfall Sites

A windfall site is defined in the NPPF as one which has not been specifically identified in the development plan. The sites usually comprise previously developed land or open spaces within the Settlement Boundary that have unexpectedly become available.

The Local Plan defines windfall development as follows: A site not specifically allocated for development in a development plan, but which unexpectedly becomes available for development during the lifetime of a plan’.

Such sites have made a regular contribution towards the housing supply in the Parish over the last two decades and it is considered that they will continue to make a contribution to housing provision in the Parish over the lifetime of the Plan.

POLICY H2: WINDFALL SITES – Small scale development proposals for infill and redevelopment sites will be supported where it is within the Settlement Boundary and where:

- a) It respects the shape and form of Newton village and Coton Park in order to maintain their distinctive character and enhance it where possible;
- b) It retains existing important natural boundaries such as trees, hedges and streams;
- c) It provides for a safe vehicular and pedestrian access to the site; and
- d) It does not result in an unacceptable loss of amenity for neighbouring occupiers by reason of loss of privacy, loss of daylight, visual intrusion or noise;

Affordable Housing

The NPPF defines Affordable Housing as: housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers).

The Rugby Local Plan says, ‘Affordable housing should be provided on all sites of at least 0.36 hectares in size or capable of accommodating 11 (net) dwelling units or more (including conversions and subdivisions)’.

It is unlikely there will be development on this scale in Newton village.

However, Local Plan Policy H4 says ‘The development of affordable housing that meets the needs of local people will be permitted as a Rural Exception Site adjacent to defined rural settlement boundaries ...’ This is allowed where there is a local need, there are no suitable alternative sites within the settlement boundary and safeguards are in place to ensure the homes remain affordable in perpetuity. A small number of market homes are allowed if needed for viability reasons.

Rural Affordable Housing is intended to help communities by offering local families, couples and single people the chance to live in the place where they have strong connections. This can be:

- those currently living in the Parish;
- those previously living in the Parish;
- people permanently employed in the Parish;
- those with close connections to people still living in the Parish.

In some circumstances a small proportion of open market housing may be allowed where it can be

shown that the scheme will deliver significant affordable housing and viability is a key constraint.

The Parish Council supports the development of an exception site where a local need can be identified, and this policy reinforces that support.

House prices in Newton & Biggin increased overall in the Neighbourhood Area between 2013 and 2022, with peaks in the median price in 2016 and 2022, and a drop in prices in 2021. The median house price grew by 43.3% between 2013 and 2022, peaking in 2016 at £305,000. The median house price in 2022 was £301,000. The lower quartile house price grew by 24.5% in this time, peaking in 2022 at £255,300.

Local households on average incomes are unable to access even entry-level homes unless they have the advantage of a very large deposit. The median house price would require an annual income approximately 35% higher than the current average.

The Housing Needs Assessment concluded that a mix of 67% social/affordable rented housing and 33% affordable home ownership dwellings as appropriate over the plan period.

In line with national policy, it is recommended that First Homes represent 25% of the affordable mix, ideally at a 40% discount, which would make this product affordable to local people, in line with the recommendations from the Housing needs Assessment.

Policy H3: AFFORDABLE HOUSING – To meet identified needs within the community, the provision of small-scale, high-quality affordable housing through an exception site will be supported where the following criteria are met:

- a) The site adjoins the Settlement Boundary;
- b) The type and scale of affordable housing is justified by evidence of need from a local housing needs survey;
- c) A tenure mix of 66% affordable rent and 33% affordable home ownership is supported;
- d) Planning obligations will be used to ensure that the affordable housing is available in perpetuity for people with a local connection to the Plan area; and
- e) The development consists entirely of affordable housing or is for a mixed-tenure scheme where an element of market housing is essential to the delivery of the affordable housing. The market housing must be the minimum necessary to make the scheme viable and be of the type and size that will meet a specific locally identified housing need for low-cost market housing.

First Homes (at a discount of 40%, subject to viability) are welcomed.

6. The Natural, Historic and Social Environment

Introduction

This section of the Neighbourhood Plan deals mainly with the *environmental* objectives of *sustainable development*, together with open spaces of community value in the *social* objective, as described in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (December 2024), page 5. It aims to balance the requirement for appropriate development in the Neighbourhood Area against the value of environmental and other features that are both *special* – appreciated, in their own right and as community assets, by local people – and *significant* for their wildlife and history. It also deals with broader environmental issues of concern to the community, including protection and enhancement of biodiversity, avoidance of deleterious effects of new development on the best views, planning for resilience to flooding and climate change, and approaches to renewable energy generation.

Care was taken during preparation of the Plan to ensure that the policies (and the sites and areas of environmental significance covered by them) were not unduly restrictive on development during the Plan's lifetime. Including much of the 'informal open space' in the approved Coton Park landscaping plan as well as sites with more formal protective designations, and bearing in mind that the built-up areas of Coton Park in the Neighbourhood Area (c.45 ha) are, or will be, protected through this Plan's policies and the planning system generally from potential environmentally damaging development, the proportion of environmentally protected land across the whole Neighbourhood Area will be 23%:

1. Total area of Neighbourhood Area	c.385 ha
2. Open countryside (and other undeveloped land)	c.325 ha
3. Area designated or recognised in this Plan for <i>environmental</i> protection	c.90 ha

Geology, topography and landscape

Geologically (figure 3.1), the 'bedrock' of the whole area is largely impermeable clay of Jurassic age (c.200 million years old). It is buried beneath much younger sediments everywhere, except for two small areas on the valley side in the southeast, where river erosion has exposed it. The overlying sediments date from the Ice Ages (c. 1 million years ago) to the present; they comprise stony clay, gravel, sand and silt. Much of this material is also impermeable, and this characteristic combined with modern farming methods and building and infrastructure exacerbates the risk of flooding in the Neighbourhood Area, primarily by surface water but consequently from the rivers and watercourses. Quarries extracting sand and gravel in the 20th century have now been mostly restored ('made ground', see figure 3.1) but the effect is that these areas (in the northeast of the Area), where not developed for commercial purposes or adapted as recreational fisheries, now suffer from poor drainage and standing water, some of which has biodiversity value, but which is mostly a further contributor to the risk of flooding and a detriment to productive farming.

The resulting landscape is attractive and valued by residents, and although the topography is not spectacular the difference in elevation between the ridges and valleys is sufficient to provide some

quite extensive views that help to define the settings of both Newton and Coton Park, whose layout of open spaces provides views in several directions including to and from Newton.

Figure 3.1 Geology of the Area
(from British Geological Survey mapping)

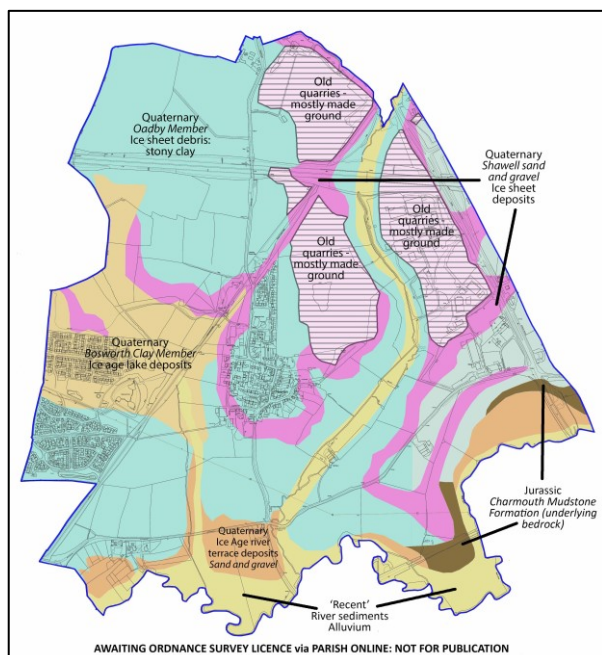
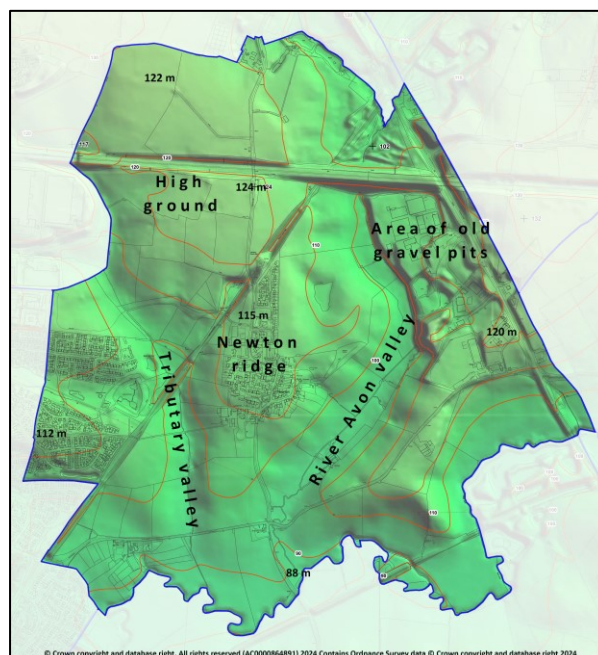


Figure 3.2 Topography of the Area
(from Public Service Geospatial Agreement layers)



Historic environment

Cropmarks in the fields (visible in aerial imagery) together with a number of archaeological finds show that people were living here in prehistoric (Palaeolithic to Bronze Age) times. There was a Romano-British settlement in the area northwest of Newton village – probably occupied until the 4th or 5th centuries CE – while Newton itself was probably established by immigrant ‘Anglo-Saxons’ or their descendants in the ‘Dark Ages’: the placename is pure Anglo-Saxon (Old English – see box below). Most ‘New’ villages in this part of England date from later in the Saxon period, so Newton’s foundation is perhaps 9th century. Historically Newton with Biggin, and Brownsover, were parts of the ancient parish (presumably originally a ‘Dark Ages’ territory) of Clifton upon Dunsmore. Newton was a hamlet or chapelry of Clifton but separated from it by the River Avon. The church was in Clifton, explaining why Newton has no medieval church.

History from placenames

Newton and Biggin

‘New farm/settlement’ with *[its outlying] building[s]*, i.e. a later small farming community (Biggin was a separate manor and settlement in the 12th century)

Elements and their meanings

- **Nīwe** (Old English) New
- **Tūn** (Old English) An enclosure; a farmstead; a village; an estate.
and
- **Bigging** (Middle English) building; later an outbuilding, an outhouse

The extents and locations of the medieval settlements of both Newton and Biggin are preserved in visible earthworks and confirmed by finds and excavations; they comprise traces of house platforms and lanes and areas of medieval ploughlands (ridge and furrow).

The Neighbourhood Area coincides with the (modern) Civil Parish of Newton and Biggin, which dates from 1894.

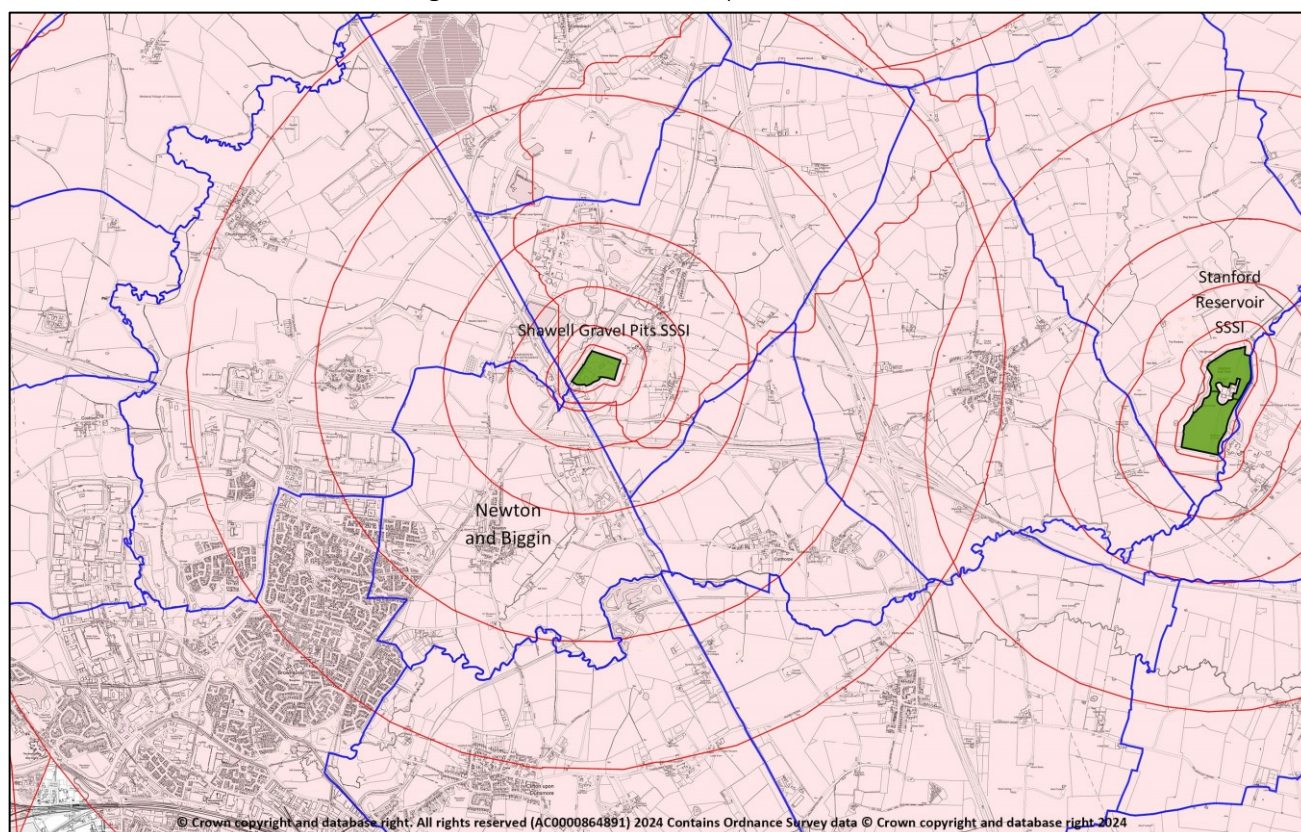
Natural environment

Two millennia of human habitation and land management here means that nowhere is naturally 'wild'. But wildlife has adapted to fit in with whatever opportunities have been provided by the succession of different artificial habitats – historically these have included managed woodland, pasture, arable farmland, water-meadows, ponds and wetlands. Even taking into account 20th-century degradation and local extinctions caused by agricultural intensification, chemical fertilisers and herbicides and new development on previously open countryside, there are still small areas where wildlife persists, in field margins, permanent grassland, gardens, hedgerows and pockets of woodland. New habitat areas are developing too, in abandoned gravel workings and railway land; the loss of habitats and species through recent decades means that all these survivors in the Neighbourhood Area warrant determined protection.

Existing environmental designations

The Neighbourhood Area is located in National Character Areas (NCA) *94 Leicestershire Vales* and *96 Dunsmore and Feldon*. NCAs are landscape areas defined by Natural England for planning purposes.

Figure 4: SSSIs and their Impact Risk Zones



There are no nationally important natural environment sites (SSSIs), although there are two in neighbouring parishes, meaning their impact risk zones (IRZs; the closest SSSI is immediately adjacent to the Neighbourhood Area boundary, see Figure 4) will need to be taken into account by development proposals in the northern half of the Area.

There are ten areas of *Priority Habitat* (as defined by Natural England), together with eight *Local Wildlife Sites* (LWS; sites and linear features) in the Warwickshire Green Infrastructure database.

In the historic environment there are three *Listed Buildings* and 19 further *sites and features of historical environment significance* (Historic England and/or Warwickshire Historic Environment Record), of which five are of direct relevance to this Neighbourhood Plan's environmental policies.

Local Green Spaces

Of the c.105 parcels of open land in the Neighbourhood Area, some 55 have been identified as having environmental significance at local level or higher (see Appendix 3 *Evidence base for Local Green Spaces, Open Space Sport & Recreation sites and other environmentally significant sites*). Of these, three sites (Figure 5; details in Appendix 3) meet the requirements for designation as Local Green Space, as outlined in National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) paragraphs 105-106. They were identified by members of the community and scored highly in the inventory under relevant NPPF criteria; their candidacy was ratified independently by the consultants employed to advise the parish council on preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, and the NP Committee's detailed proposals were confirmed by local people at a drop-in event in June 2025 and by the Pre-submission Plan's Regulation 14 consultation.

The statutory protection afforded by Policy ENV 1 will ensure these sites are protected for future generations.

POLICY ENV 1: LOCAL GREEN SPACES – Development proposals that would result in the loss of, or have an adverse effect on, the following Local Green Spaces (details Appendix 3; locations figure 5) will not be supported other than in very special circumstances.

Great Central Walk (section in Newton parish), nature reserve and Coton Park Pool (figure 5 map references 001 and 002)

Newton allotments (map reference 006)

Figure 5: Local Green Spaces



Open Space, Sport & Recreation sites

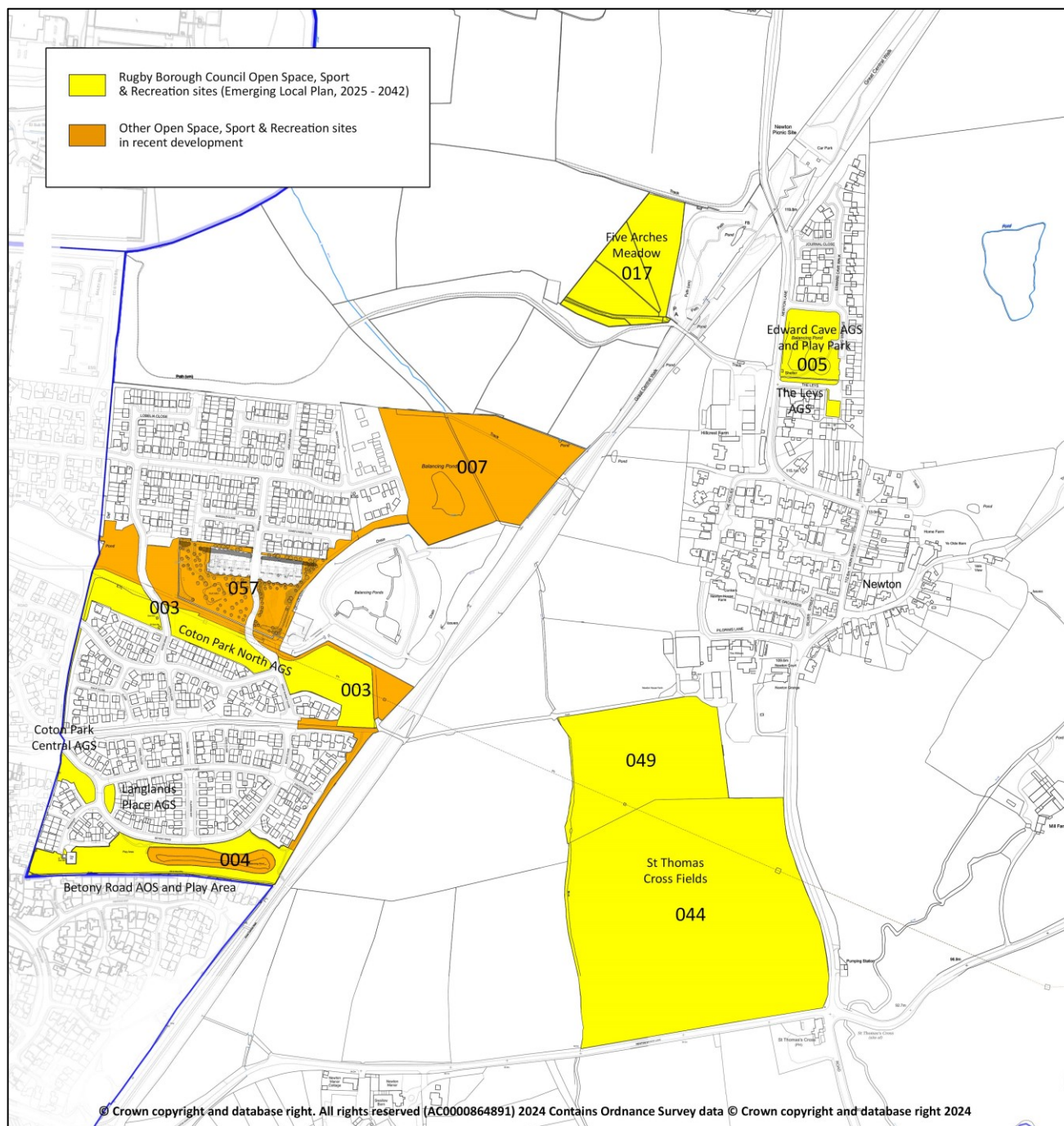
A group of sites in Newton Parish have significant and demonstrable community value as open space for amenity, sport & recreation, children's play, etc., as allotments, and/or for their value as natural environment sites accessible by the public. They have been assessed through fieldwork and their community value confirmed in community consultations

Nine are recognised as *Open Space* (Open Space, Sport & Recreation sites, OSSRs) on the *policies map* (Regulation 19) for the emerging *Rugby Borough Council Local Plan 2025-2041*. Of these, three are designated as two (one is composite) Local Green Spaces by this Neighbourhood Plan (Policy ENV 1); to avoid duplication they are omitted from this Policy (ENV 2) although they remain in the RBC audit

for demonstrating the Borough's open space provision. The other six RBC Open Space designations are endorsed by this Neighbourhood Plan (figure 6 and in Policy ENV 2).

Four further *de facto* open space sites in the parts of the Coton Park development in the Neighbourhood Area are designated OSSR by this Plan (figure 6). Any new public open spaces in later phases of the Coton Park East development (residential or employment), will also be covered by Policy ENV 2 on completion, irrespective of their ownership or management.

Figure 6: Open Space, Sport & Recreation sites



All these sites' values as open space within and close to the two built-up areas and/or their actual or potential value to the communities are recognised in Policy ENV 2 (details, Appendix 3). The policy is in conformity with, and adds local detail to, Rugby BC Local Plan policy HS4. For clarity when Policy ENV 2 is being applied, all the Important Open Spaces in this Neighbourhood Plan have been allocated to appropriate RBC Open Space typologies, as listed in the 2015 Study.

POLICY ENV 2: IMPORTANT OPEN SPACES (OPEN SPACE, SPORT & RECREATION SITES; OSSRs)

2.1 RBC OSSRs: the open spaces shaded yellow in figure 6 are recognised as Open Space, Sport & Recreation sites in the emerging Rugby Council Local Plan (2025 – 2041). They are of high value for recreation, sport and/or amenity. Development proposals that result in their loss, or have a significant adverse effect on them, will not be supported unless the open space is replaced by at least equivalent provision in an equally suitable location, or unless it can be demonstrated that the open space is no longer required by the community:

Edward Cave open space and Play Park and The Leys open space, Newton (Figure 6 map reference 005) *Amenity Green Space and Children's Play and Youth Provision*

Five Arches meadow, Newton/Coton Park (017) *Amenity Green Space and Accessible Natural and Semi-natural Green Space*

St Thomas Cross Fields (044/049) *Accessible Natural and Semi-natural Green Space*

Coton Park North open space (western sections) (003) *Amenity Green Space*

Coton Park Central open space (part in Neighbourhood Area) (004, part) *Amenity Green Space*

Langland Place open space (004, part) *Amenity Green Space*

Betony Road open space and Play Area (004, part) *Amenity Green Space and Children's Play and Youth Provision*

2.2 Other OSSRs: following completion of landscaping, planting, etc., the open spaces in the Coton Park development shaded orange in figure 6 will be subject to the protections afforded by sub-paragraph 2.1 of this Neighbourhood Plan policy:

Begonia Way /Aster Drive open space (003, part) *Amenity Green Space*

Chervil Way fields open space (007) *Amenity Green Space and Accessible Natural and Semi-natural Green Space*

Begonia Way open space and playpark 057 *Amenity Green Space and Children's Play and Youth Provision*

Coton Park North open space (eastern section) (003) *Amenity Green Space*

2.3 Open Space in future development proposals: size-appropriate development proposals will be required to include open spaces (OSSRs) to meet national and local targets. On completion, the sites will be protected as under paragraph 2.1 of this Neighbourhood Plan policy.

NOTES: part of Great Central Walk (reference 001) is an Open Space, Sport & Recreation site (OSSR) in the emerging 2025-41 Rugby Borough Council Local Plan (as shown on the policies map) but, to avoid duplication, it is omitted from Policy ENV 2 because it is designated Local Green Space by this Plan.

Newton allotments (reference 006) an Open Space, Sport & Recreation site (OSSR) in the emerging 2025-41 Rugby Borough Council Local Plan (as shown on the policies map); it is also designated Local Green Space by this Plan, so is not covered under Policy ENV 2 for the same reason as above.

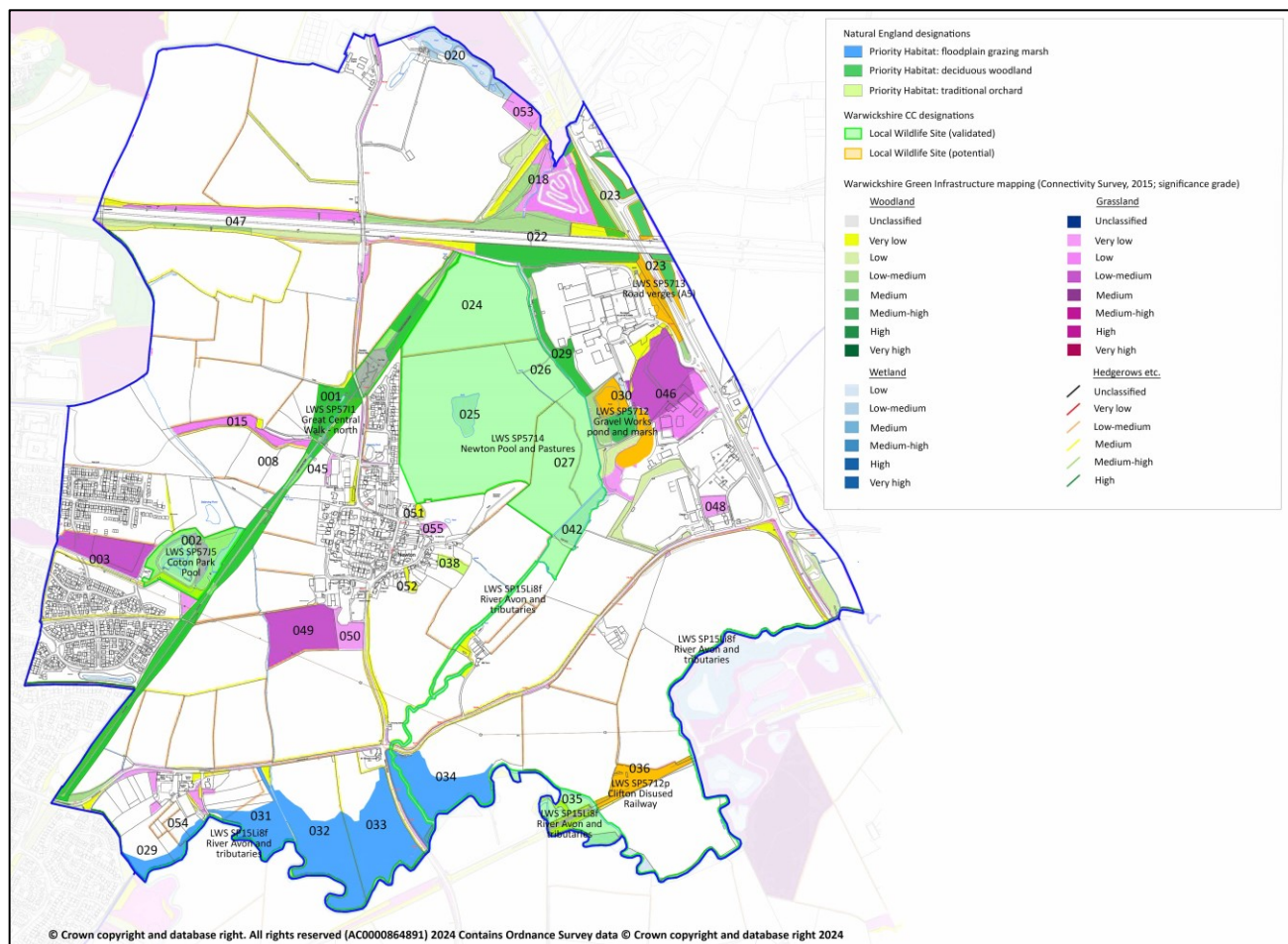
Sites and features of Natural Environment significance

A number of sites in the Neighbourhood Area are important for wildlife (biodiversity). The features and designations for which they have been identified comprise a) sites where *priority habitats* occur (Natural England mapping) or where several *biodiversity action plan (BAP) species* have been recorded; b) sites identified as ecologically significant by Warwickshire County Council, including Local Wildlife Sites, and c) sites identified during the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan as being of high

biodiversity significance in the context of the Neighbourhood Area. The map (figure 7) shows their locations.

Policy ENV 3 delivers *site-specific* compliance in the Neighbourhood Area with the relevant Rugby Borough Council Local Plan policies, the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, the Habitats and Species Regulations 2017-2019, and the UK Environment Act 2021. It has regard for National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) policies 192 and 193. It also refers to the *Planning Practice Guidance* of 2024, in respect of the use of the *biodiversity metric* approach for assessing the wildlife value of development sites and for delivering *biodiversity net gain*.

Figure 7: Sites and features of Natural Environment significance



POLICY ENV 3: SITES AND FEATURES OF NATURAL ENVIRONMENT SIGNIFICANCE – The sites and features mapped in figure 7 (details in Appendix 3) have been identified as being of local or greater significance for the natural environment. They are ecologically important in their own right and are locally valued. The significance of the species, habitats or features present should be balanced against the benefit of any development that would adversely affect them. Development proposals on the identified sites will be expected to include evidence-based, measurable proposals for delivering *biodiversity net gain* at a minimum 10%.

If significant harm to biodiversity cannot be avoided (through relocating to an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated by net gain as above, or compensated for, planning permission should be refused, having regard for paragraphs 193 (a), 193(d) and 195 of the National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024.

Biodiversity and Habitat Connectivity

It might be argued that Newton and Biggin parish is a ‘typical’ area of English Midlands countryside because it has no nationally-rare species or large-scale, nationally important wildlife hotspots, and thus that it has little or no biodiversity significance to be taken into account in the Planning system. This would be a misunderstanding of the concept of biodiversity. England’s biodiversity is entirely and only the sum of the wildlife in all of its individual Parishes: The Neighbourhood Area is as important in this regard as every other Parish, and residents want it to play its essential part in protecting what remains of England’s threatened and diminishing biodiversity.

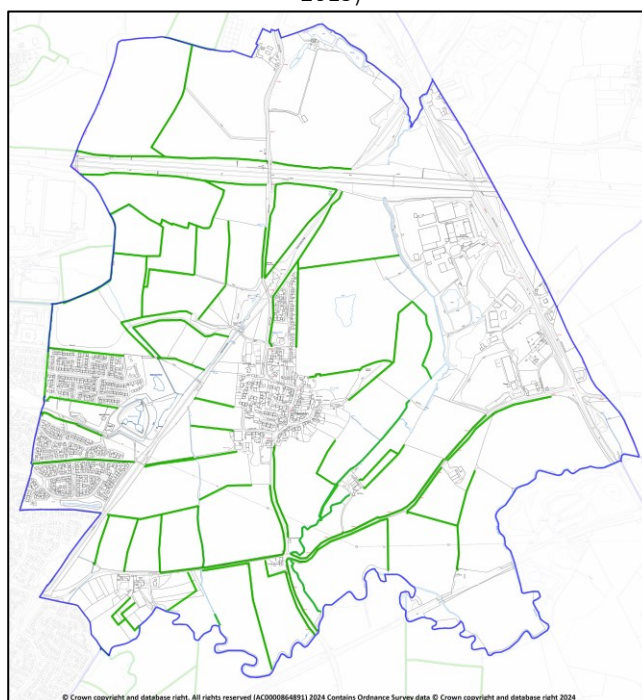
Trees and woodland: The scarcity of trees, and especially woodland, in the Neighbourhood Area means that all surviving individuals, groups and areas, including but not restricted to those already designated (e.g. as Local Wildlife Site or priority habitat) are a vital component of the Area’s biodiversity value and a bulwark against further biodiversity net loss. Development proposals, and decisions made in response to them, should always consider, and act on, the avoidance of destruction of trees and woodland.

Hedgerows: Partly compensating for the paucity of woodland, the hedgerows around Newton (Figure 8) have value for both biodiversity (botanically species-rich, with associated wildlife) and heritage – some of them date from plantings of hawthorn ‘quicks’ soon after the early Parliamentary Enclosure in 1757 and have naturally acquired new species – while, although modern, the hedges planted along the margins of the M6 included a variety of tree species and have now reached maturity.

Habitat connectivity is delivered by *wildlife corridors*, which are designated to prevent obstacles to the movement or spread of animals and plants that would otherwise be imposed by new developments. They also help to re-connect populations and habitats within parishes and more widely. A wildlife corridor is mapped in this Plan (figure 9); its effective functioning in future should be taken into account when development proposals within it are under consideration.

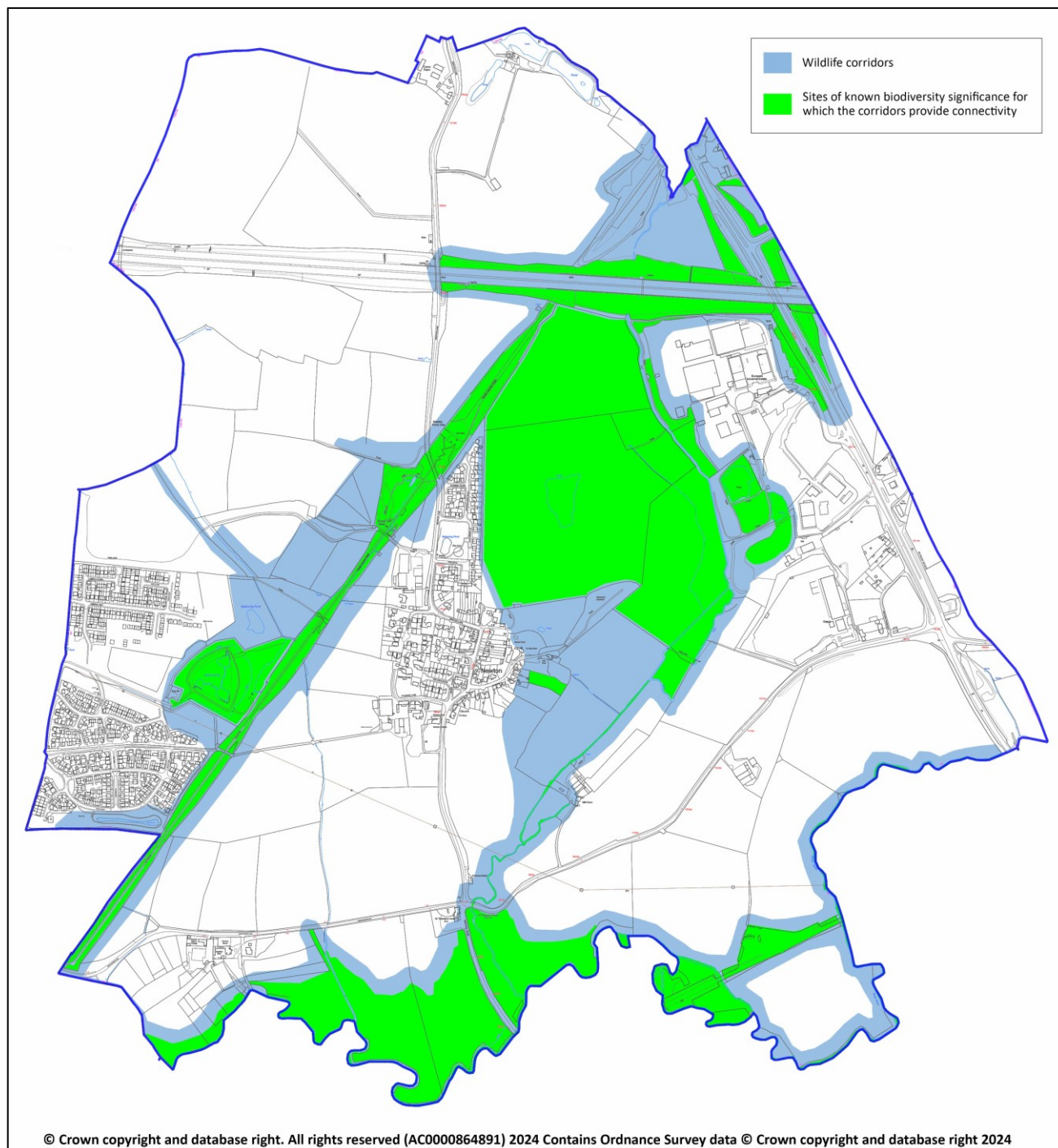
While policy ENV 3 delivers site-specific compliance in the Plan Area with the relevant Rugby Borough Council Local Plan policies, the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, the Habitats and Species Regulations 2017-2019 and the UK Environment Act 2021, this policy (ENV 4) does the same for strategic planning and future development proposals across the Neighbourhood Area. The policy is explicitly supported by National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) paragraphs 187, 192 and 193(a), on which this policy’s wording is partly based. The community also expects all planning strategies, proposals and decisions affecting the

Figure 8: Hedgerows of biodiversity and heritage significance
(Warwickshire Green Infrastructure (Connectivity) mapping, 2015)



Neighbourhood Area to comply with the requirements of the *Climate Change Act 2008*, to follow the spirit of the *Paris Agreement* (UK ratification 2017) and the UK's *25 year environment plan (2018)*, and to plan for *biodiversity net gain* through the mechanisms described in the *Environment Act 2021*, the relevant *Planning Practice Guidance* of 2024 and paragraphs 192(b) and 193(d) of the NPPF December 2024.

Figure 9: Wildlife corridors



POLICY ENV 4: BIODIVERSITY ACROSS THE NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA

- a) All new development proposals in the Neighbourhood Area will be expected to safeguard habitats and species, including those of local significance, and to deliver biodiversity net gain. If significant harm to biodiversity cannot be avoided (through relocating to an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or dealt with through onsite or offsite

enhancement (via biodiversity net gain at minimum 10%), planning permission should be refused, having regard for paragraph 193a of the National Planning Policy Framework December 2024.

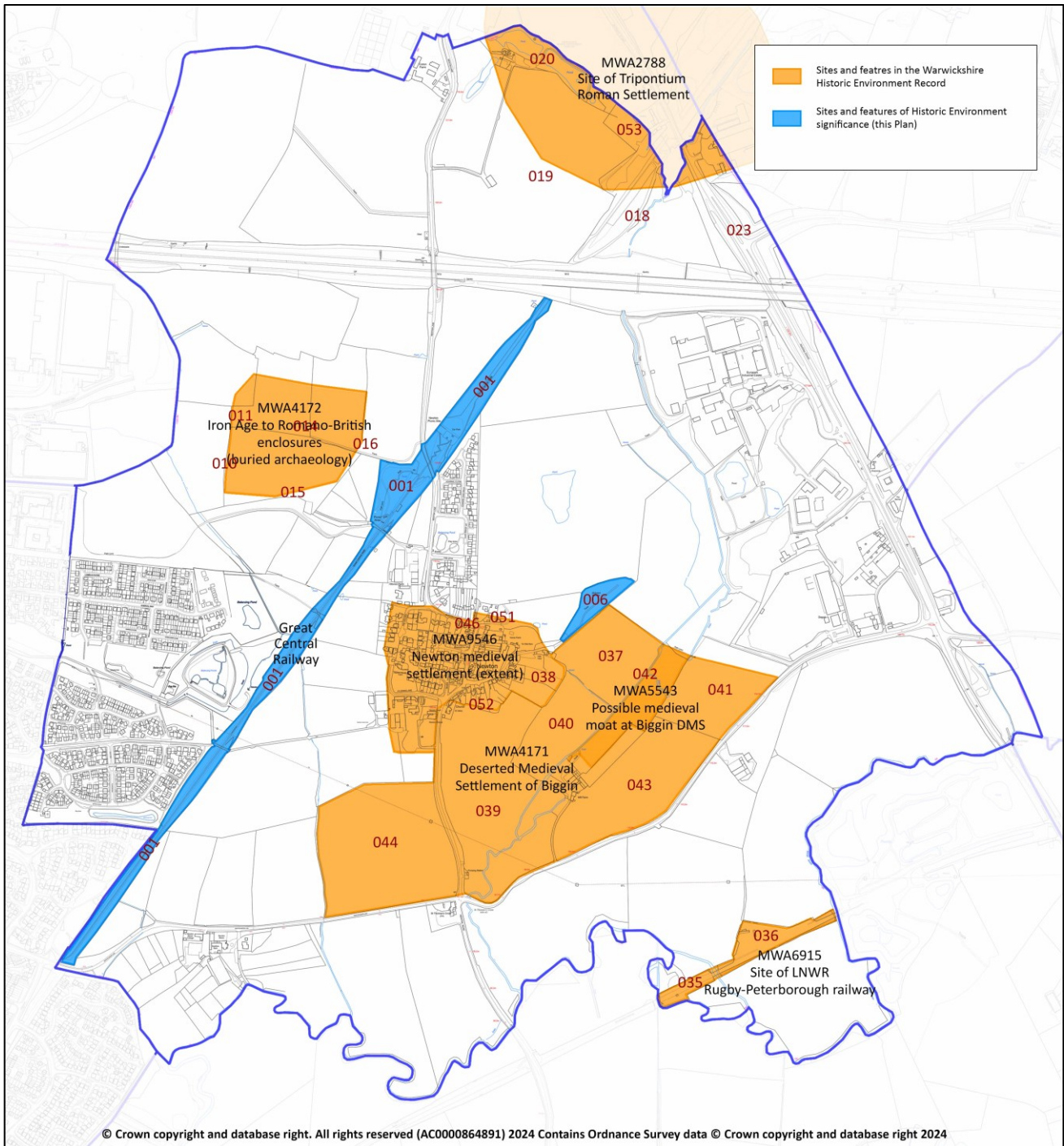
- b) Notable trees (veteran, ancient, those with TPO designations, and those regarded as significant by the community) on sites proposed for development across the Neighbourhood Area should be protected from felling, uprooting or damage unless they have been independently judged by a qualified arboriculturist to present an unmanageable public safety risk. Development proposals that would damage or result in the loss of woodland will not be supported unless the environmental and ecological harm is demonstrably outweighed by the benefits of the development. Development proposals affecting trees or woodland should be accompanied by a full arboricultural survey that establishes the health and longevity of all trees within the site. When fulfilment of biodiversity net gain involves replacement of trees or woodland, compensatory plantings should be of native or appropriate ornamental species and should take account of current best practice regarding plant disease control and aftercare.
- c) Hedgerows should be retained and protected. Where loss is unavoidable, it should be minimised and compensated for by replacement planting of locally-appropriate native species. Only development proposals providing a net gain in length and species diversity of hedgerows will be supported. When fulfilment of biodiversity net gain involves trees and hedges, compensatory plantings should be of native or suitable exotic/ornamental species and should take account of current best practice regarding plant disease control and aftercare.
- d) Development proposals will be supported only if they do not adversely affect the habitat connectivity provided by the wildlife corridors identified in figure 9.

Sites of Historic Environment significance

A number of sites in Newton and Biggin are important for (at least local) heritage and history. They comprise sites and features of relevance to Neighbourhood Plan policies in the Warwickshire Historic Environment Record (HER) and Historic England databases, and a further set identified (from fieldwork and local history publications and knowledge) in the preparation of the Plan. The map (figure 10) shows their locations. The HER sites will all require consideration when development proposals are prepared or scrutinised; proposals should take full account of known surface and subsurface archaeology (MWA5543) and the others should consult with Warwickshire HER officers to ensure potentially significant deposits are identified and appropriately dealt with – including possible pre-development excavation.

POLICY ENV 5: SITES OF HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SIGNIFICANCE- The sites mapped in figure 10 (details in Appendix 3) are of at least local significance for their historical features. The features are extant and have visible expression or there is proven buried archaeology on the site, and they are locally valued. The significance of the features present should be balanced against the benefit of any development that would affect or damage them.

Figure 10: Sites of Historic Environment significance



Ridge and furrow

Although part of a larger 'Dark Ages' territory, by the middle ages much of the land around Newton was owned by Combe Abbey. The medieval township of Newton, including the hamlet of Biggin, was farmed using the *Open Field* system. All the open land, except small fields (closes) backing onto the houses, permanent pasture, and areas of woodland or waste, was worked in a seasonal and yearly rotation of arable crops (cereals, beans), grazing and fallow. Medieval ploughs were pulled by oxen and, because they were not reversible, the plough always turned the soil rightwards as the plough team progressed up and down the furlongs, producing a corrugated pattern of ridges and furrows whose dimensions increased with every season.

The open field system was practised for most of the medieval period until changes in land ownership and use gave rise to a change from large open fields to enclosed smaller fields with hedged boundaries, and a change from mixed/arable to pastoral (livestock) farming. The land in the Neighbourhood Area was enclosed in this way in several phases, probably beginning in the 14th century, continued in the 16th (when the manor passed to William Leigh) and was largely completed by Newton's Parliamentary Enclosure in 1757. The result of these enclosures was to 'fossilise' the ridges and furrows under grass and hedgerows, and this situation persisted until the mid-20th century, when a second agricultural revolution after the Second World War effectively reversed the first one. British governments, and later the European Union, encouraged farmers, mainly through subsidies, to plough the pastures and turn them over to intensive arable production. Wherever this happened, modern reversible ploughs quickly obliterated the ridge and furrow. In most English open field parishes, the loss of ridge and furrow since 1950 has been over 90%. In the late 1990s, English Heritage (now Historic England), realising the scale of this destruction, undertook the first of a series of surveys ('*Turning the Plough*') across the Midlands, including Warwickshire, and made recommendations for protection and management. The extent of ridge and furrow in Newton in 1945 can be seen on 1945 RAF aerial imagery (figure 11.1). This provided the baseline for a new survey undertaken for this Plan in 2024 (figure 11.2). The summary results show the decline since World War II: the situation is now as follows:

1945	c.190 ha (from RAF aerial imagery)
2025	c. 25 ha

These figures represent c. 86% loss by area.

In English legislation ridge and furrow fields (except for the few that are Scheduled Monuments) are not statutorily protected, despite recognition that, in view of the level of loss since the mid-20th century, "*as the open field system was once commonplace in NW Europe, these [surviving] sites take on an international importance*" (English Heritage, 2001). While the seven individual fields with surviving ridge and furrow in the Neighbourhood Area are not claimed to be of international importance, their rarity across the Midlands means that any further, avoidable, loss would be irreversibly detrimental. In conformity with paragraph 194 of the National Planning Policy Framework (including footnote 63) and following the recommendation of Historic England, all surviving ridge and furrow in the Plan Area (figure 10.2) should now be regarded as a non-designated heritage asset and taken into account in the planning system as the visible evidence of a component of national heritage comparable in significance to that of surviving medieval buildings. In future, and whenever possible, increased local housing need or new targets required at a higher level in the planning system should only be fulfilled by allocating development to available sites where there is no surviving ridge and furrow



Figure 11.1: Ridge and furrow in c.1945 RAF aerial photography via Google Earth

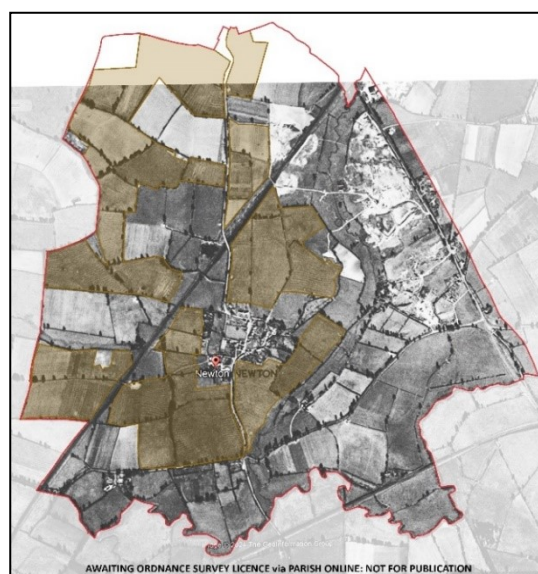
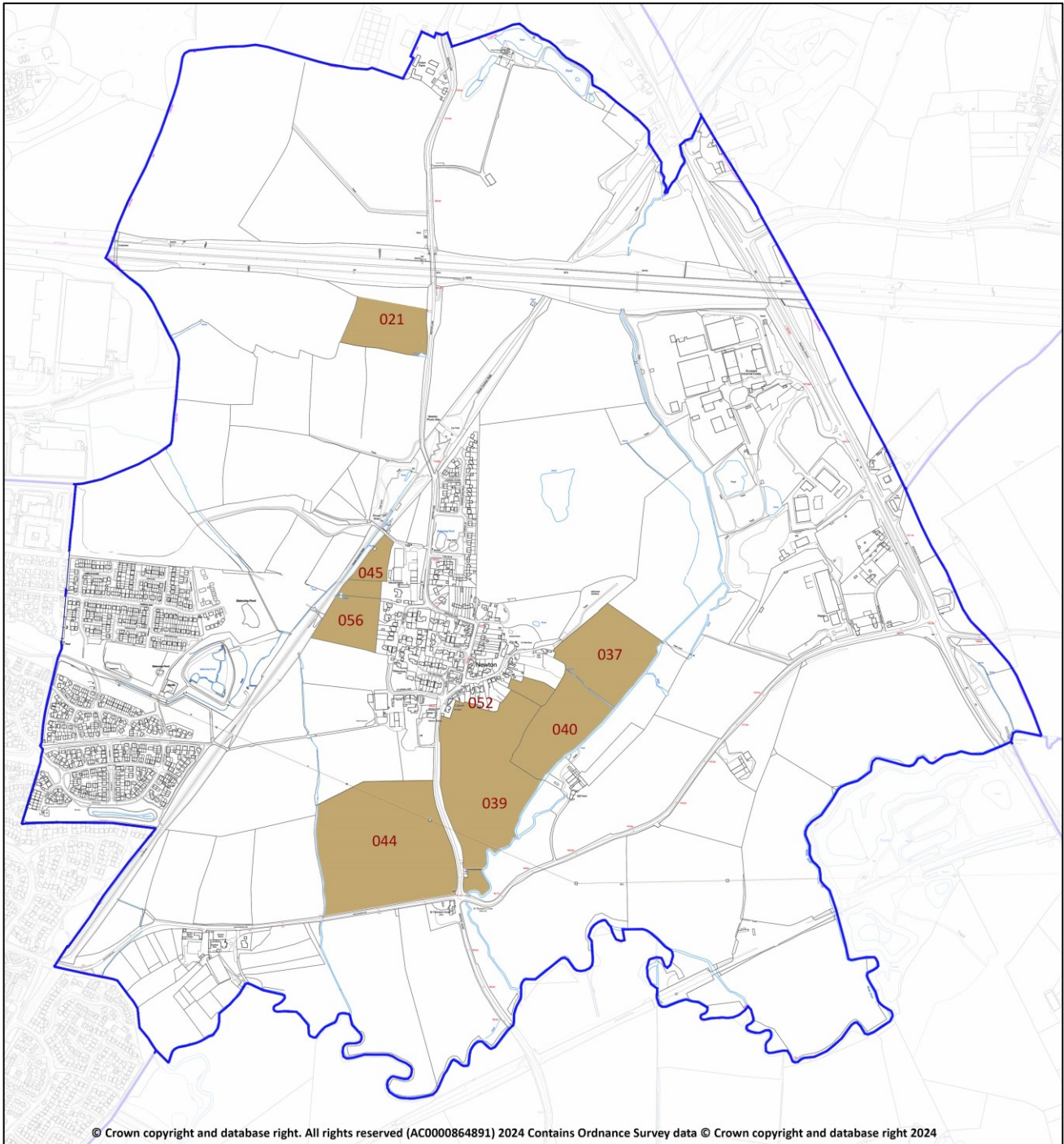


Figure 11.2: Surviving ridge and furrow in 2025 (Surveyed for this Plan)



POLICY ENV 6: RIDGE AND FURROW – The areas of ridge and furrow earthworks mapped in figure 11.2 are Non-Designated Heritage Assets.

Any loss or damage arising from a development proposal (or a change of land use requiring planning permission) is to be avoided; the significance of the ridge and furrow features as heritage assets must be balanced against the benefits of such development.

Statutorily protected Heritage Assets

Four buildings and structures in the Neighbourhood Area have statutory protection through Listing at Grade II. The Neighbourhood Plan lists them here for reference, and to note that new development

proposals will be required to take into account their *settings*, which will be defined on a case-by-case basis by Historic England.

SHELTER SHED

List Entry Number: 1233568

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: NGR SP 5374 7748, Newton and Biggin, Rugby, Warwickshire

HOME FARMHOUSE AND ATTACHED STABLE BLOCK

List Entry Number: 1233569

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: LITTLE LONDON STREET, Newton and Biggin, Rugby, Warwickshire

STAG AND PHEASANT PUBLIC HOUSE

List Entry Number: 1276563

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: MAIN STREET, Newton and Biggin, Rugby, Warwickshire

DOW BRIDGE

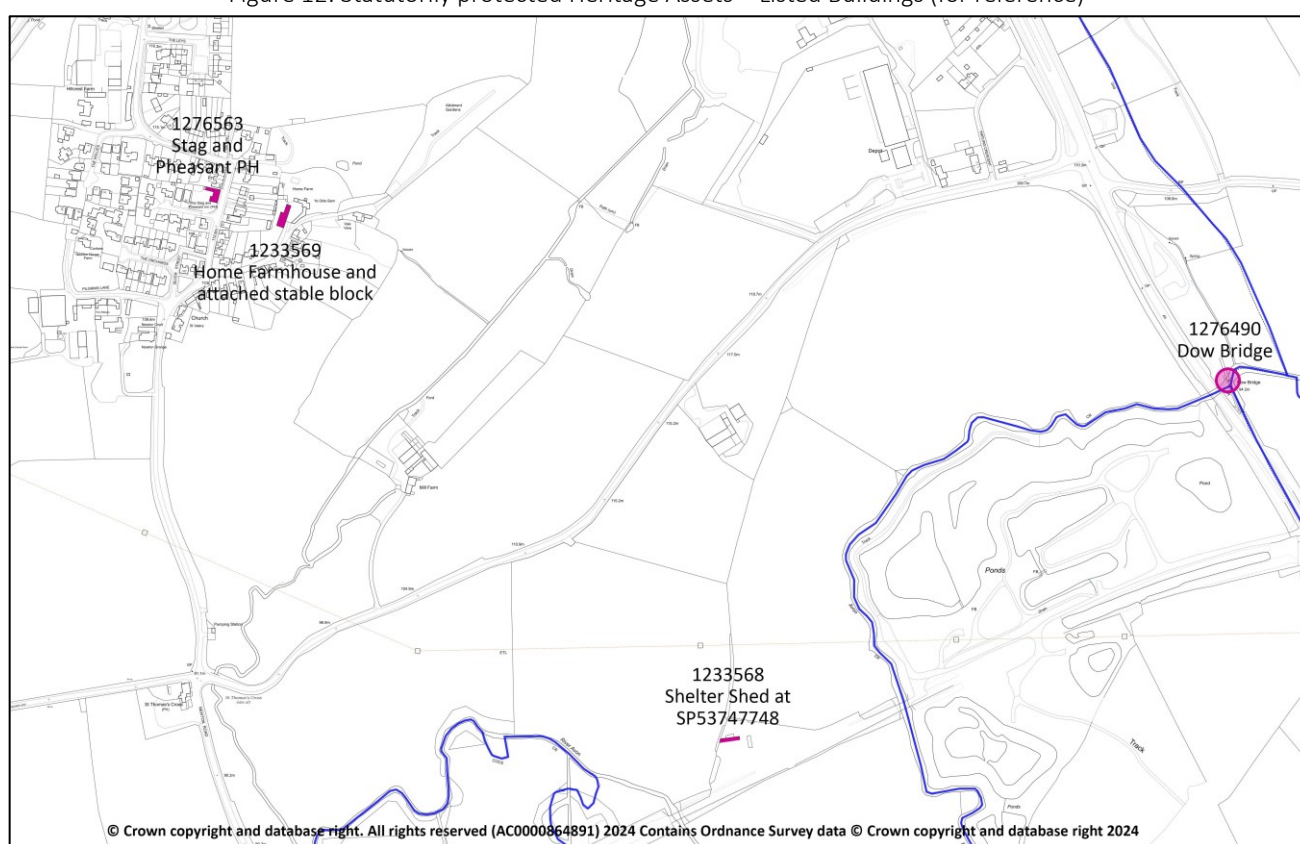
List Entry Number: 1276490

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: WATLING STREET (A5), Newton and Biggin, Rugby, Warwickshire

Figure 12: Statutorily protected Heritage Assets – Listed Buildings (for reference)



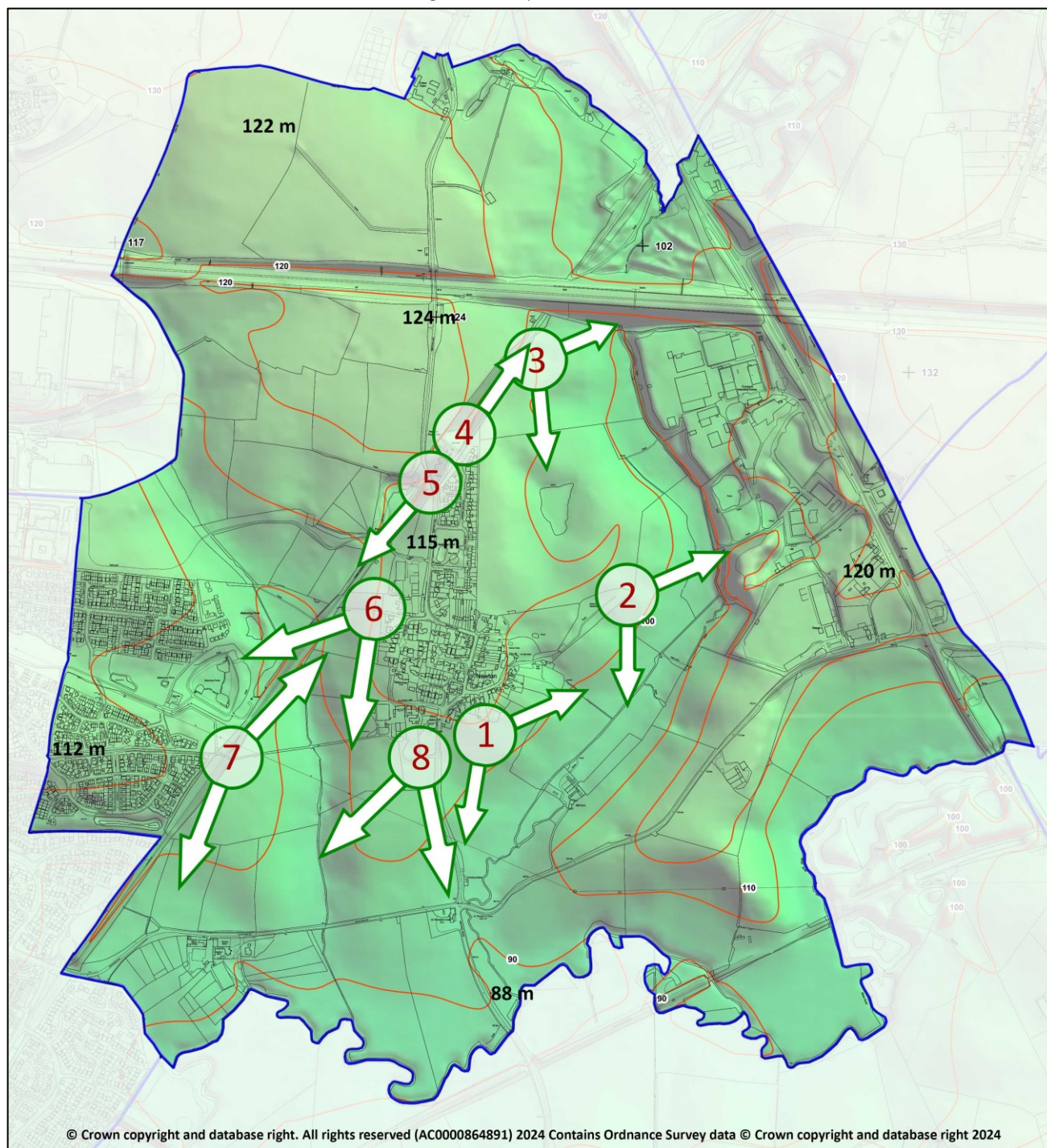
Important views

Consultation during the Neighbourhood Plan's preparation identified a widely held wish to protect the rural setting of Newton, in particular its visual relationship with the surrounding countryside, including the landscapes of National Character Areas *94 Leicestershire Vales* and *96 Dunsmore and Feldon*. One of the main ways in which residents expressed this wish was by describing several highly valued views within and around Newton (and Coton Park), and toward the surrounding countryside.

These consultation findings were supported by the fieldwork for this chapter of the Plan, which although principally aimed at identifying sites of environmental significance also confirmed the sightlines of the suggested views and mapped them. Newton sits on the end of a ridge above the River

Avon, so there are extensive views worthy of protection to the west, south and east and less so to the north (figure 13).

Figure 13: Important views



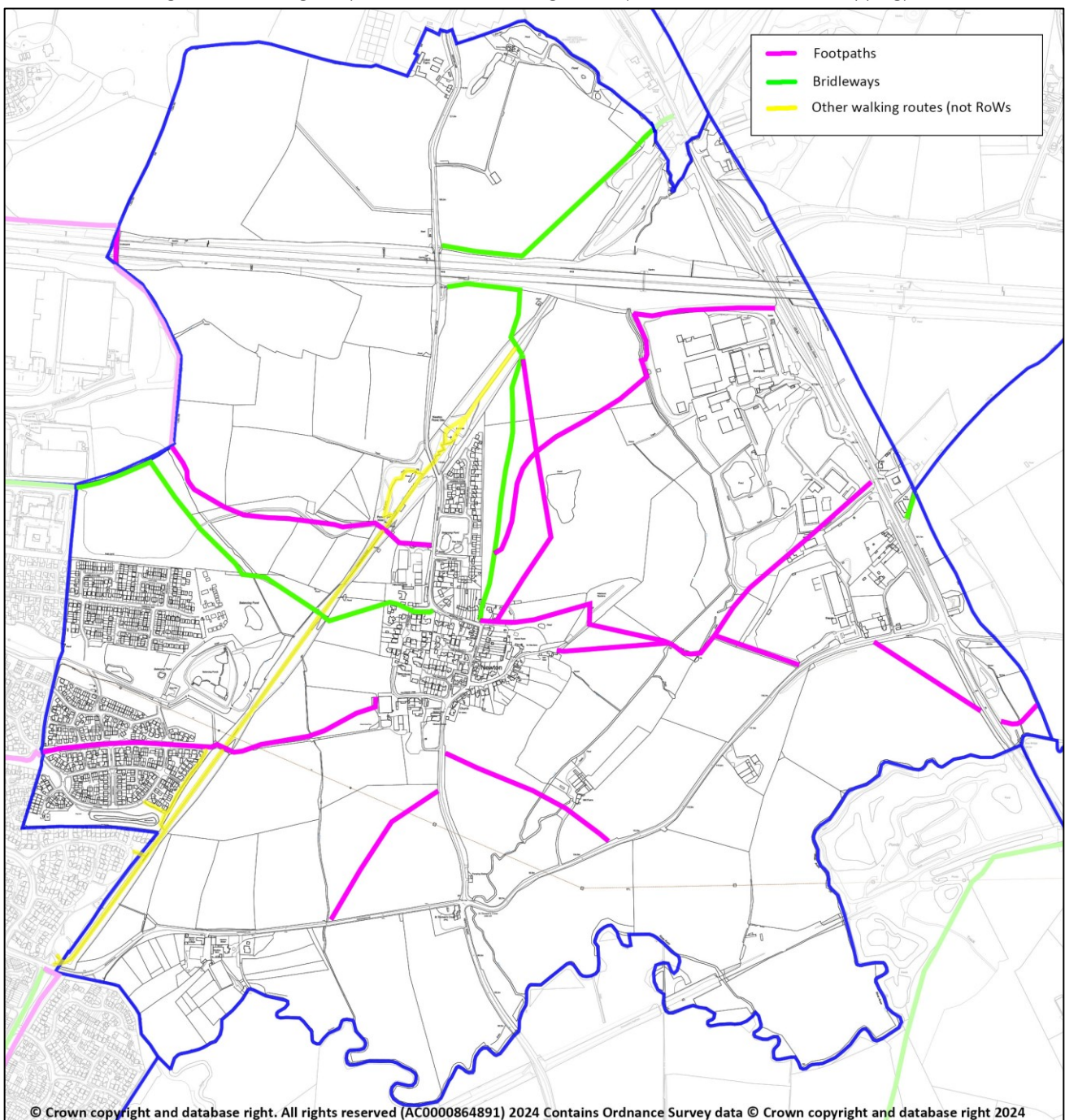
POLICY ENV 7: IMPORTANT VIEWS – The following views (map figure 13, details Appendix 4) are important to the setting and character of the village. Development proposals should respect and whenever possible protect them. Development which would have an adverse impact on the identified views will not be supported.

1. From public footpath off Newton Road, view south and east over rolling countryside with Avon valley.
2. From public footpath leading from allotments to footbridge, view south and east north east over rolling countryside.

3. From junction of public footpaths adjacent to former Great Central Railway, extensive view south and north east.
4. From Five Arches Car Park, view north east along Great Central Walk.
5. From Five Arches Car Park, view south west along Great Central Walk including Five Arches bridge
6. From public footpaths adjacent to The Hollies, view west-south-west and south including Great Central, Coton and spires of Rugby in distance.
7. From public footpaths adjacent at Great Central bridge, view north-east (Newton) and south over open country with Rugby in distance.
8. From public footpath west of Newton Road, view over open countryside towards Avon with Rugby beyond.

Footpaths, bridleways and cycleways

Figure 14: Existing footpaths and other walking routes (from Warwickshire CC mapping)



Public footpaths and bridleways in England are mostly historic rights of way, remnants of the network of 'ways' established by use, over perhaps fourteen centuries, as people walked or rode to the fields, to neighbouring villages or to local markets. Newton has a relatively good network; they are well-used, and residents regard them as important for their recreational (as a contribution to physical and mental health and wellbeing) and for their socio-historical value. Coton Park is less well provided; linear open spaces and footways, although not Rights of Way, give opportunities for walking between the different areas of the development.



With modern recognition of the value of walking routes for health and wellbeing any erosion of the network's extent and character will be resisted.

POLICY ENV 8: FOOTPATHS, BRIDLEWAYS AND CYCLEWAYS- Development proposals that result in the loss of, or have a significant adverse effect on, the existing network of footpaths (figure 14) will not be supported without appropriate mitigation.

Large development proposals (including proposals amending already consented outline, or full proposals) will not be supported if the footpaths and cycleways proposed do not deliver a coherent network providing usable routes within the development and between it and other destinations.

Proposals to enhance the networks of footpaths, bridleways and cycling routes will be supported.

Flood risk resilience and climate change

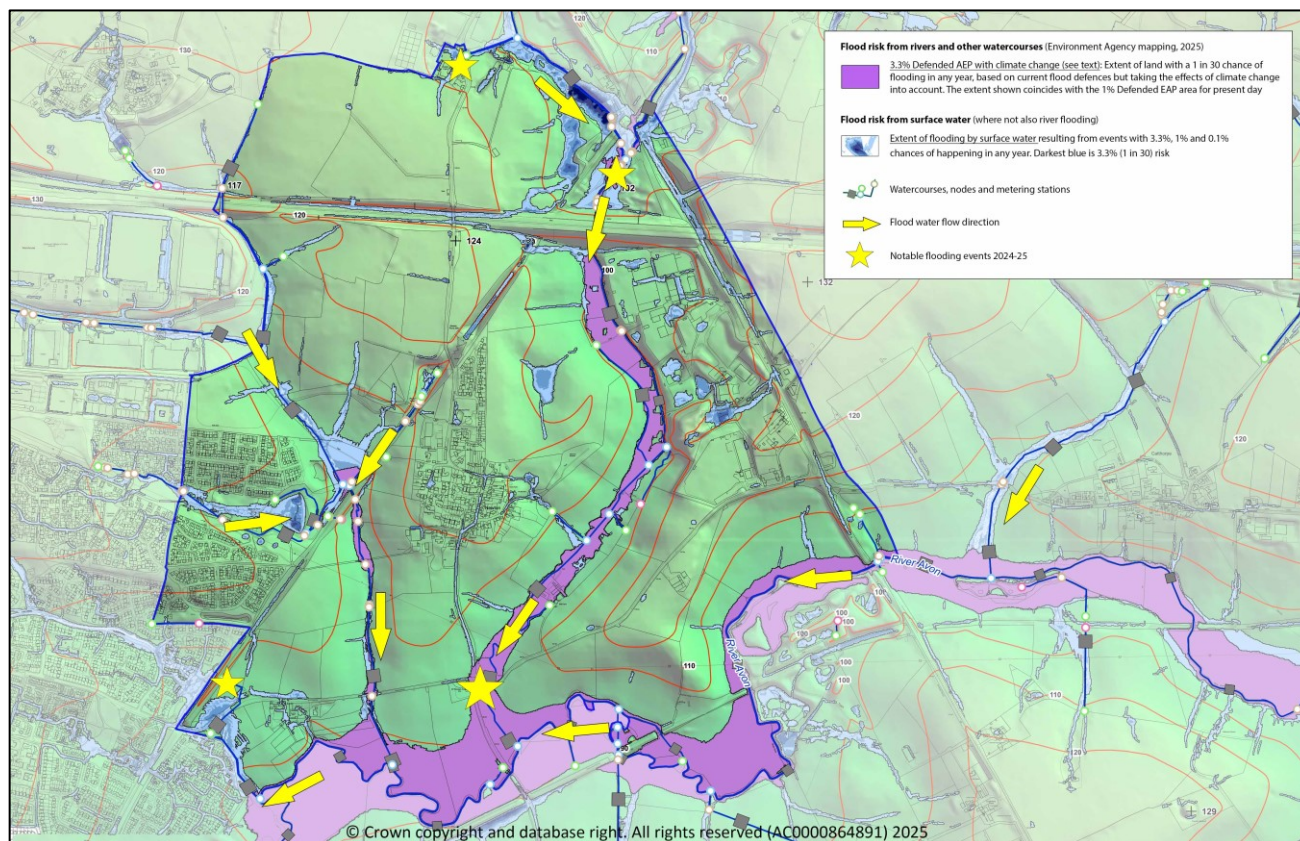
Even if international cooperation and national strategies and policies eventually succeed in halting the human and industrial contributions towards climate change, the effects of recent and current warming on weather events will likely persist for decades. It is therefore desirable to plan for at least a medium-term future, in which weather events will continue to become more extreme, by putting in place measures that manage the effects of climate change on flooding for the lifetime of this Plan and beyond. This objective is explicitly supported by the Environment Agency *National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England* (2019), in which the strategic emphasis shifts from mitigation to resilience; in other words from requiring new development to *reduce* its adverse effects on flood risk to requiring it to *avoid creating or adding to flood risk at all*.



In light of all the above, it is particularly important that the locations (with respect to known flood risk) and technical standards of all new development proposals in the Plan Area should in future be judged on their likely contribution to flooding in a climate change world. To complement this objective, the community will support proposals to improve the infrastructure within the built-up areas for managing flooding from the river and from surface water run-off events, providing this is not unduly detrimental to the historic built environment, biodiversity sites, or open and green spaces.

This policy takes into account Rugby BC Local Plan Policies SDC5 and SDC6.

Figure 15: Risk of flooding from rivers and surface water



Environment Agency risk definitions (updated March 2025) in figure 15:

Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) is the preferred method for describing the likelihood of a flood occurring. This is because it better explains that the chance of a flood of a given magnitude occurring remains constant through time, i.e. 3.3% AEP means that *for any given year* there is a 3.3% chance (1 in 33) of a 1-in-100-year flood occurring. The 3.3% zone has the highest probability but covers the smallest area (nearest to the river causing the flood).

Defended 3.3% AEP Rivers (Climate change). The mapping of this zone takes into account the presence of flood defences and assumes that they will operate in the way they were intended (or designed) to function. The climate change allowance is based on the latest UK Climate Projections (UKCP18) from the Met Office. The specific climate change scenario used in the map is the projection for the 2080s epoch (2070-2125) for risk of flooding from rivers.

- a) Development proposals within or adjacent to the areas indicated as being at risk of flooding from main rivers, other watercourses or surface water in Figure 15 will be required, where appropriate, to demonstrate that the benefit of development outweighs the harm it causes in relation to its adverse impact on flooding in the Neighbourhood Area, or on Rugby Borough Council and national climate change targets, and on the likelihood of it conflicting with locally applicable flood mitigation strategies and infrastructure.
- b) Proposals to construct new (or modify or improve existing) floodwater management infrastructure (ditches, roadside gullies, retention pools, etc.), including within or close to the built-up areas, will be supported, provided they do not adversely affect important green and open spaces, or sites and features of natural or historical environment significance.
- c) Development proposals of one or more dwellings and/or for employment or agricultural development should demonstrate that:
 - I. if in a location susceptible to flooding from rivers or surface water (figure 14), no alternative site is available;
 - II. its location and design respect the geology, flood risk and natural drainage characteristics of the immediate area and is accompanied by a hydrological study whose findings must be complied with in respect of design, groundworks and construction;
 - III. it includes a Surface Water Drainage Strategy which demonstrates that the proposed drainage scheme, and site layout and design, will prevent properties from flooding from surface water, including allowing for climate change effects, and that flood risk elsewhere will not be exacerbated by increased levels of surface water runoff and that the development will not threaten other natural habitats and water systems;
 - IV. its design includes, as appropriate, sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) with ongoing maintenance provision, other surface water management measures and permeable surfaces;
 - V. proposed SuDs infrastructure includes, where practicable, habitat creation comprising e.g. landscaping, access and egress for aquatic and terrestrial animals, and native species planting;
 - VI. it does not increase the risk of flooding to third parties; and
 - VII. it takes the effects of climate change into account.
- d) new developments which open up any existing culverts on a site providing more open space/green infrastructure for greater amenity and biodiversity will be supported. The creation of new culverts should be kept to a minimum.

Renewable Energy Generation Infrastructure

National Planning Policy (NPPF, December 2024, updated February 2025) provides the following guidance of direct relevance to Neighbourhood Plans:

161. The planning system should support the transition to net zero by 2050 [...] It should help to [...] [...] and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.

165. To help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat, plans should [...] consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources, and supporting infrastructure, where this would help secure their development.

169. Once suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy have been identified in plans, local planning authorities should expect subsequent applications for commercial scale projects outside these areas to demonstrate that the proposed location meets the criteria used in identifying suitable areas [...]

The Newton and Coton Park communities support the general objective of paragraph 161 and wish to play their part at scales and in locations appropriate to the landscapes (particularly topographic and historic) and the mixed rural, residential, employment and transport corridor characters of the Neighbourhood Area.

Topographically, Newton and Coton Park are located on bluffs on the gently rising north side of the Avon valley, separated by two quite steep-sided tributary valleys. Their closeness (less than 1 km) and the proximity of Rugby and of Clifton to the south, preclude large renewable installations. There are also sites of natural environment significance, important views, and areas susceptible to flooding by rivers and surface water (policies in this Neighbourhood Plan) to be taken into account when locations for renewable infrastructure are assessed.

The current Rugby Borough Council Local Plan provides no geographical framework for the siting of turbines or solar arrays, although a number of wind and solar farm developments are now located in this north-eastern sector of the Borough and close to Newton. The most recent RBC supporting evidence (strategic level, for Plan-making and allocations) dates from 2011 (*Rugby Borough Landscape Capacity Study for Wind Energy Developments*); this is not site-specific in any detail, however, being based on a general application of national regulations regarding separation of renewable infrastructure from statutorily protected assets, residential and other buildings, etc., and on very broad landscape sensitivity considerations. A small area in the north of the Neighbourhood Area (close to the M1/M6 corridor) is shaded for 'less sensitivity'.

For all these reasons, and to demonstrate that appropriate and suitably located renewable energy infrastructure developments in the Neighbourhood Area have the support of the local community, this Neighbourhood Plan *adds local detail* to national and Local Plan policies by having its own policy for Renewable Energy Generation Infrastructure, including a map showing the areas where proposals for wind and/or solar PV generation in the Neighbourhood Area would be supported (figure 16).

POLICY ENV 10 – RENEWABLE ENERGY GENERATION INFRASTRUCTURE:

1. Proposals for wind generation infrastructure of maximum tip height 90m and/or one solar array up to 10 ha area will be supported in the areas mapped in figure 16, subject to avoidance or mitigation of the following harmful effects on environment and amenity:

- adverse impact (noise, reflections, glare, shadow, flicker, other visual impact, water pollution, smell, air quality impairment, gaseous or particulate emissions) on the health, wellbeing or amenities of residents and third parties
- adverse impact on identified views (policy 7 will apply) or on the sensitivity and character of the landscape
- adverse effect on footpaths and other recreational and amenity walking, cycling and riding routes

- adverse effect on biodiversity or identified species and habitat sites. Proposals will be required to include a practical, measurable strategy to deliver 10% biodiversity net gain (policy ENV 4 will apply)
- adverse effect on statutory historic environment features or sites, and on non-designated heritage assets or ridge and furrow (policies ENV5 and 6 will apply).

In the case of large solar PV arrays, proposals should also include appropriate and relevant assessments and documentation in respect of transport, heritage, archaeology, landscape impact, environmental impact, flood impact, ecology, agricultural land quality, arboriculture (impact and method) and tree protection. They should also be designed to enhance biodiversity through, for example, multiple use as pasture or species-rich meadowland.

2. Small turbines: proposals for small wind turbines associated with individual properties or small businesses, including agricultural, will generally be supported provided that:

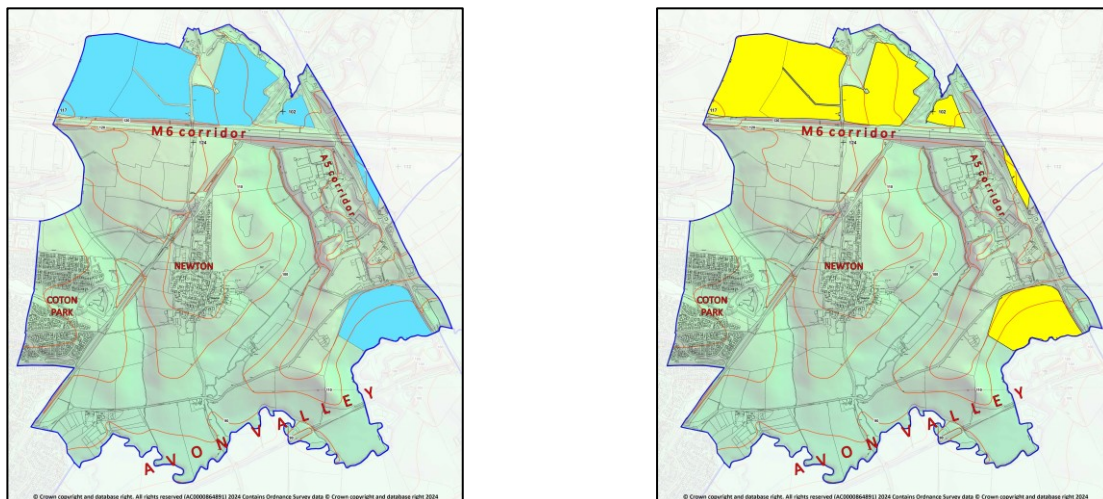
- a) the maximum blade tip height does not exceed 35 metres
- b) the rated turbine capacity does not exceed 30kW
- c) the majority of the annual generated electricity is utilised by the host property.
- d) the increase in noise levels at neighbouring properties accords with the principles established in ETSU-R-97.

3. Small solar: Roof mounted solar with or without battery storage is encouraged other than on listed buildings or within conservation areas. Proposals for small solar schemes associated with individual properties or small businesses, including agricultural, will generally be supported provided that:

- a) the maximum area occupied by panels does not exceed 0.1 hectares
- b) the maximum rated generation capacity does not exceed 50kW
- c) no less than 50% of the annual generated electricity is utilised by the host property.

Proposals for large-scale renewable energy infrastructure in locations other than those identified in figure 16 will not be supported, as they would demonstrably not satisfy the criteria for acceptability in respect of location, environmental, amenity and aesthetic considerations in national and Local Plan policies and as set out above.

Figure 16: Locations where larger-scale renewable energy generation infrastructure (turbines, left; solar, right) would be supported, subject to all conditions in policy ENV 12



7. Community Sustainability

This chapter looks at aspects of village life including: Community facilities; Traffic management & road safety (including parking); and Business & employment.

1. Community facilities

Community facilities and amenities provide important infrastructure for the residents of Newton and Biggin Parish, supporting and enhancing the quality of daily life and contributing to the vitality of the village.

Some of these facilities and amenities offer local employment opportunities whilst others provide a focal point for social interaction and support important services; thereby reducing the need to travel, which is particularly important for those who do not have access to a car.

Newton Village has a number of community facilities. The Memorial Hall is a well-used venue for meetings and recreational activities. The Good Shepherd Church is not only a place of worship but is also used for community activities. The Stag and Pheasant pub is within the village and the St Thomas Cross pub lies just outside but within the Plan boundary.

There are, at present, no community facilities within Coton East,



NEWTON MEMORIAL HALL



STAG AND PHEASANT PUBLIC HOUSE

something that the Plan would like to see addressed through its support for additional provision. The area is, however, well served by a shopping area situated just outside the Plan area and incorporating a supermarket and other retail including a butcher's along with an hotel and pub.

This increases the need to travel, often by car, to nearby settlements. The need to travel outside the Parish to access basic services is one of the main reasons for the high levels of car ownership in the Parish (only 15.6% of households have no car or van according to the 2021 Census).

It also creates challenges for those residents without access to a car. There is a relatively good bus service at Coton Park and this needs to be maintained and extended into areas of new development. In Newton village, a limited bus service is contracted until 2029 but does not meet the needs of all. The 'Indiego' on-demand service would benefit from better promotion.

The loss and threatened closure of facilities and services is, however, a common dilemma for rural communities. The viability of many rural services is likely to be challenged further in future as a consequence of squeezed local authority budgets and more car owning residents commuting to work, driving to retail centres and accessing leisure facilities and other amenities further afield. There is currently no meeting facility in Coton Park, and this is a major deficit as the Memorial Hall in Newton village is not well located to serve residents in Coton Park.

There was provision at planning stage for new primary and secondary schools at Coton. Warwickshire

County Council as Local Education Authority has subsequently determined that a secondary school is not required as existing schools have surplus capacity. However, these schools are relatively remote and improved local educational provision remains an important consideration for residents.

At the Open Event in July 2024 people drew attention to the need for a range of new or better facilities, including the need to improve the bus service and to protect the pub. Improvements to internet speeds was referenced. The Community Questionnaire from October 2024 identified the importance of community facilities such as the Newton Memorial Hall, mobile reception, and street lighting.

The Rugby Local Plan (2019) says that ‘proposals that would result in a significant or total loss of a site and/or premises currently or last used for a local shop, post office, public house, community or cultural facility or other service that contributes towards the sustainability of a local settlement or the urban area will not be permitted’ (Policy HS3), other than in specific circumstances.

POLICY CF1: COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND AMENITIES- Development leading to the loss of an existing community facility (list ...) will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that any of the following apply:

- a) There is no longer any proven need or demand for the existing community facility;
- b) The existing community facility is no longer economically viable and there are no alternative uses for the building that meet a community need;
- c) The proposal makes alternative provision for the relocation of the existing community facility to an equally or more appropriate and accessible location within the Parish which complies with the other general policies of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Proposals that provide new community facilities (in particular a meeting facility in Coton Park) or improve the quality and range of existing community facilities, will be supported provided that the development:

- I. Meets the design criteria stated in Policy G2;
- II. Will not result in unacceptable traffic movements that generate increased levels of noise, fumes, smell or other harmful disturbance to residential properties including the need for additional parking which cannot be catered for within the curtilage of the property;
- III. Provides appropriate levels of car parking;
- IV. Is of a scale appropriate to the needs of the locality and conveniently accessible for residents of the village wishing to walk or cycle; and
- V. Takes into full account the needs of the wider community.

2. Employment

The strength of the local economy and of the community go hand in hand. Supporting the growth of a stronger local economy is recognised as an important theme of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Rugby Local Plan (2019) says that ‘the economy will be strong and provide a range of high quality employment opportunities suitable for the whole community’.

As of the 2021 Census, Newton Parish has a high proportion of economically inactive residents (44.6% compared to 34.5% across Rugby). Only around 13.6% of residents work within a 10km distance of where they live, compared to 37.4% of working people across Rugby as a whole.

Where there are buildings dedicated to business use in the parish it is important that they are protected against being lost to other uses. It should be clearly demonstrated that there is little prospect of existing building or land generating employment before allowing demolition or redevelopment.

Meanwhile, new employment initiatives in the right location can greatly help to boost and diversify the local economy and to provide more local employment opportunities.

The Community Questionnaire from October 2024 saw respondents express a desire for small businesses such as local shops, cafes, convenience stores, hairdressers, and community-oriented facilities like a pub/restaurant. There is also support for local retail in areas like Coton Park, Newton village; even at the pub car park. Suggestions include a village store, independent eateries, craft shops, or a blacksmith.

Residents again expressed a desire for local amenities like a shop or post office for everyday essentials. They also seek better broadband connectivity, and part-time employment opportunities for those over 50.

Some suggested that while the village may not be suitable for direct business development, areas like Coton Park East could support business growth, including spaces for community use and flexible workspaces. There is a call to encourage local business ventures to boost employment.

Overall, maintaining the rural nature of the parish strongly mitigates against any larger scale business development outside the allocated sites.

Any new employment initiatives should be sensitive to the character of the parish. Appropriate employment initiatives include small, locally based start-up businesses or the proportionate expansion of existing businesses. Employment proposals should only be seen as acceptable if they avoid harmful impacts on other matters agreed to be locally important such as air quality, green spaces, increased traffic flows, parking, residential amenity, the preservation of historic/heritage assets and the local environment.

There is, however, a need to recognise and support the increasing numbers of people who conduct their businesses from home. From the 2021 Census, 39.6% of residents work from home compared to 15.9% across Rugby. The Neighbourhood Plan reflects this in its proposals to provide a wider range of housing and to both support conversion of redundant commercial buildings and the development of local business premises where appropriate.

POLICY E1: BUSINESSES & EMPLOYMENT - Development proposals that result in the loss of an employment use will not be supported unless the use is ancillary to a residential use or it can be demonstrated that the current use is not viable and that all reasonable steps have been taken to let or sell the site or building for employment purposes for a period of at least 24 months.

Proposals for employment-related development (for new and/or expansion of employment uses, including homeworking) will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the development will not generate unacceptable disturbance, noise, fumes, smell or traffic; that it will respect and be compatible with the local character and surrounding uses; and that it will, where appropriate, protect residential amenity.

Working from home

The reduction of CO₂ omissions to net zero by 2035 is now enshrined in law, so it is important to consider new employment opportunities in the right location for the residents of Newton in order to help reduce vehicle usage and carbon footprint. Supporting home working promotes this move, along with support for improved broadband facilities, as described in Policy E5. The last census of 2021 identified just under 40% of residents working mainly from home.

The neighbourhood plan therefore supports the rural economy by allowing for new employment planning applications in residential dwellings to provide or safeguard local jobs.

POLICY E2: WORKING FROM HOME- Insofar as planning permission is required the conversion and extension of dwellings for office/light industrial use will be supported where this:

- a) The commercial development of the property is for the primary use of the property residents only and where the proposed commercial use remains ancillary to the main use of the building as a residential dwelling;
- b) Any extension or free-standing building does not detract from the quality and character of the building to which they are subservient by reason of height, scale, massing, location or the facing materials used in their construction; and
- c) Such development will not result in significantly increased traffic movements or significant and adverse impact to nearby residents or other sensitive land uses from noise, fumes, light pollution, or other nuisance associated with the work activity.

Farm diversification

There are 2 working farms in the Parish. The conversion of former agricultural buildings enables farm diversification, leads to the sustainable reuse of vacant buildings and provides opportunities for the establishment and development of small businesses which generate income and employment opportunities for local people. This is a national trend, which the Parish Council would like to encourage within the Plan area to maintain a balanced and vibrant community, subject to the proper consideration of residential amenity for nearby houses, visual impact on the countryside and highway safety issues.

To help maintain the rural economy and protect the open countryside from inappropriate development, the Plan supports the sustainable growth and expansion of business and enterprise through the development and where appropriate conversion of existing farm buildings in the countryside. Specifically, this is intended to promote a viable and sustainable farming and rural economy in the Neighbourhood Area and the diversification of rural businesses; encourage new businesses to provide a wider range of local produce, services and leisure facilities, to provide local employment and attract both visitors and tourists to the parish and maintain and enhance the local environment of rural and agricultural lands.

The change of use of some rural buildings to new uses is already permitted under the General Permitted Development Orders. The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment and Consequential Provisions) (England) Order 2014 allows, under certain circumstances, the change of use of agricultural buildings to residential use and change of use of agricultural buildings to registered

nurseries providing childcare or state-funded schools, under the prior approval system. The policy allows for circumstances where planning permission is required.

The Rugby Local Plan (2019) says 'Where the prospect of new employment development in rural areas is proposed to support the rural economy, including farm diversification and leisure and tourism proposals, policies are included to guide any such proposals and ensure any negative impacts of development are kept to an absolute minimum' (paragraph 6.2).

POLICY E3: REUSE OF AGRICULTURAL AND COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS - The reuse, conversion and adaptation of rural buildings for small businesses, recreation, or tourism purposes will be supported where:

- a) The use proposed is appropriate to the rural location;
- b) The conversion/adaptation works respect the character of the surrounding area;
- c) The development will not have an adverse impact on any archaeological, architectural, historic or environmental features;
- d) The local road system is capable of accommodating the traffic generated by the proposed new use and adequate parking can be accommodated within the site; and
- e) There is no significant adverse impact on neighbours through noise, light or other pollution, increased traffic levels or increased flood risk.

Broadband

A policy on broadband can help to ensure that future development builds in capabilities for improved broadband facilities.

The Rugby Local Plan (2019) considers the issue of Broadband Infrastructure in Policy SDC9. This neighbourhood plan recognises the fundamental importance of ultra-fast broadband to the development of the local economy and that rural communities must not be disadvantaged with a poor communication infrastructure. Such facilities are particularly important for promoting and developing homeworking as outlined in policy E2.

POLICY E4: BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE- Proposals to provide improved access to faster broadband for businesses and households in Newton Parish will be supported; this includes suitable connectivity for future generations of mobile technology.

Improvements to the mobile telecommunication network that serves businesses and households within the Parish will be supported. If a new mast is installed, this should be shared, where possible, by more than one provider.

Any infrastructure improvements requiring above ground network installations, must be sympathetically located, designed to integrate into the local area, and not be visually intrusive in open landscapes.

3. Traffic

Traffic management

The Open Event from July 2024 received a number of comments from residents about traffic management. Footpaths featured heavily as did problems with the St Thomas Cross Junction were commented on by many, as was the issue of poor parking.

The Community Questionnaire highlighted comments from a number of respondents about the lack of public transport in the Parish and transport related issues more generally.

87% of those responding believe that additional speed restrictions in the parish are important or very important.

Key areas mentioned for implementing these measures include Main Street, Newton Lane, Coton Park, and St Thomas Cross, with several respondents calling for speed control throughout the Newton village. The St Thomas Cross junction is of a non-standard configuration and is inadequate to accommodate the safe movement of increased vehicle flows. The Parish Council will continue to seek measures for its improvement

POLICY T1: TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT – In order to minimise any increase in vehicular traffic, all new housing and commercial development must:

- a) be designed to minimize additional traffic generation and movement through the village and residential areas of Coton Park and on single-track roads;
- b) avoid additional on-street parking and ensure provision is made for cycle storage by meeting Rugby Parking Standards;
- c) Not remove or compromise the use of any existing off-road parking areas unless a suitable equivalent alternative is provided;
- d) provide any necessary improvements to site access, communal parking and the highway network; and
- e) Provide for traffic calming measures as appropriate.

The introduction of measures to improve the St Thomas Cross Junction is supported.

Electric Vehicles

The UK government has recently announced its intention to ban sales of new petrol and diesel cars from 2035 to combat rising levels of air pollution (in particular NOx) and address climate change concerns. The implication is that the number of 'pure' (i.e. not hybrid) electric vehicles (EVs) on the road will increase rapidly; there is some evidence this is already starting. This raises the crucial question for the planning system of providing infrastructure for EV battery recharging.

This issue is already influencing planning and building regulations, and it would seem wise to include such requirements for new developments in Newton, if rural communities are not to be left behind. Similarly, commercial rapid charging facilities are growing across the country (making use of 3-phase

supply not possible at the domestic level and reducing the 7kW re-charge time by a factor of 3). These could be utilised in Newton for example by installation in a permanent parking area as described above, providing re-charging for residents with no off-road parking, and allowing opportunity fast re-charge for all residents.

POLICY T2: ELECTRIC VEHICLES- The provision of communal vehicular charging points within the Parish will be supported where there is universal access, and their presence does not impact negatively on existing available parking in the Parish.

8. Monitoring and Review

The Neighbourhood Plan covers the period up to 2041. During this time, it is likely that the circumstances which the Plan seeks to address will change.

The Neighbourhood Plan will be regularly monitored. This will be led by Newton and Biggin Parish Council on at least an annual basis. The policies and measures contained in the Neighbourhood Plan will form the core of the monitoring activity, but other data collected and reported at the Parish level relevant to the delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan will also be included.

The Parish Council proposes to formally review the Neighbourhood Plan in 2030 or to coincide with the review of the Rugby Local Plan if this cycle is different.