

Hallaton Parish Neighbourhood Plan – Executive Summary

1. Background

The opportunity to prepare a neighbourhood plan (NP) was established through the 2011 Localism Act. Once the NP has been formally ‘Made’ by Harborough District Council, it will sit alongside the District’s Local Plan and all planning decisions taken by Harborough District Council will need to take the NP’s policies into account. It adds Hallaton h-specific detail to the strategic policies contained in the Local Plan and National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The NP has to be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the District’s Core Strategy and have regard for the NPPF. It cannot promote policies that do not accord with these requirements.

NPs are opportunities for local people to shape planning policy in their area and helps to make sure that planning decisions taken by Harborough District Council reflect local issues and not just District-wide concerns.

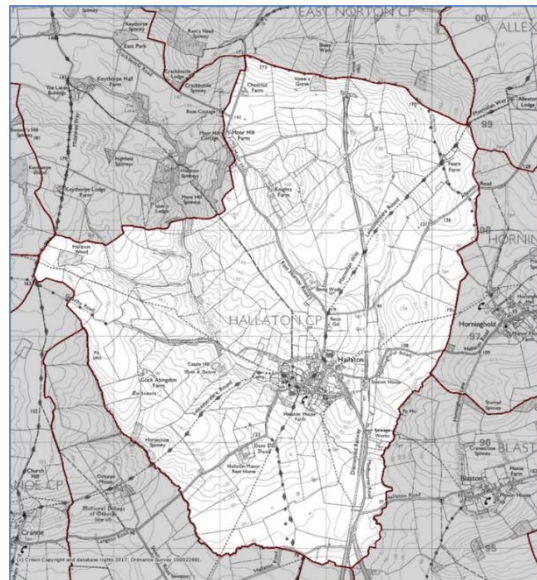
2. Introduction

The process of creating the Hallaton Neighbourhood Plan has been driven by Parish Councillors and members of the community. The aim of this NP 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 whole of the parish was formally designated by Harborough District Council for neighbourhood planning purposes on 27 January 2017.

An Advisory Committee was established, and an initial consultation day was held on 14 October 2017. 59 people attended and shared their thoughts about the Parish and what the NP should consider. A questionnaire was distributed to each household in the Parish in November 2017. An excellent response rate of 21% of adults was achieved, representing up to 40% of each household.

Three Theme Groups were established to identify the policies needed to deliver an effective NP for the Parish, looking at areas such as housing, the environment and community sustainability. They continued to meet until September 2018 when the policies were drafted. A further Open Event on 3 November 2018 shared the draft policies with the community with 104 people in attendance and overwhelming support for the policies on display.

This work is now concluded. Given the time that has elapsed since the NP was finalised, it is hoped that this Executive Summary helps to reach everyone in the parish and explain in plain English why we are preparing a Neighbourhood Plan and what policies it contains.



Neighbourhood Area.

The NP has now formally passed Examination and is awaiting a Referendum at which everyone in the Parish who is on the electoral roll will be able to vote. The Plan will pass or fail on the basis of a simple majority.

3. Vision

Our vision for the parish up to 2031 (a timescale deliberately chosen to mirror that of the Harborough Local Plan) is as follows:

The Neighbourhood Plan for Hallaton seeks to ensure that in 2031 the village maintains its significant and unique historical heritage and character while providing a safe, vibrant and diverse rural community for all of its residents and many visitors to enjoy for generations to come.

Hallaton is recognised for its thriving village school, church with Norman origins, two pubs, recreation ground, village hall, museum and expansive green spaces - all of which are used extensively by residents and visitors from the local area. Its annual bottle kicking event held on Easter Monday attracts thousands of visitors from across the country. From the quintessential village green with historic Butter Cross, extending to the church, this street scene is a defining feature of its historical integrity and serves to attract many visitors to the village. The historic importance of the village also includes the early Norman Motte and Bailey castle, St Morrell's chapel remains and of course the Hallaton hoard which was the largest collection of 1st century AD coins together with the Roman helmet.

As such, development will have provided appropriate new housing while enriching the people-focused community.

4. Housing policies

The policies in this section seek to shape residential development in line with locally important issues.

The Parish will be required to contribute to the supply of new housing across Harborough irrespective of whether it prepares a Neighbourhood Plan.

The Neighbourhood Plan can shape the type, size and location of new housing in the Parish – executive houses, family houses or starter homes. It can specify expensive or affordable homes, specialist housing for older people or people with support needs. It can also influence housing design and protect locally important buildings from inappropriate development.

The Parish of Hallaton Parish has a long and interesting history, resulting in a wide array of heritage assets, attractive landscapes and a distinctive local character. A policy on design helps to maintain this.

The biggest challenge facing the future of Hallaton is to balance the desire to protect the character of the village with the need for it to grow and evolve in a sensitive and proportionate manner in order to sustain the community and its facilities. Policy HBE1 on design seeks to reflect the design principles which the community believes will help to achieve this. The overall aim is to protect Hallaton so that it retains its character within a unique and distinctive Parish.

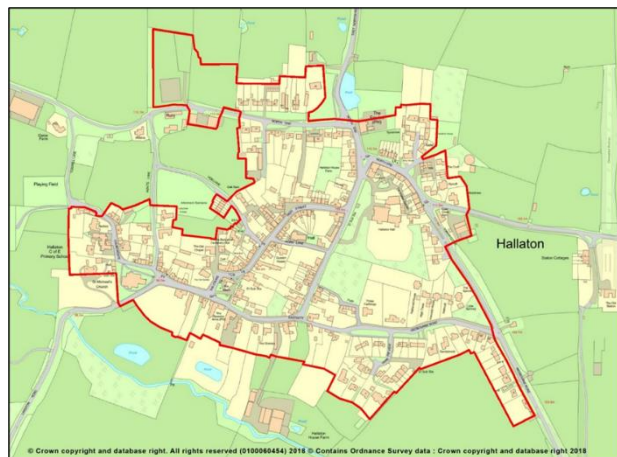
This can be achieved by the use of the planning system to respond sensitively to the range of historic buildings, structures, landscapes and archaeology situated within the Parish.

The Policy requires development to reflect the guidance in the Village Design Guide (produced to support the NP) and to respect local character, having regard to scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout, materials and access. Development should not disrupt the street scene and development should follow a consistent design approach. Contemporary materials and design will be supported where positive improvement can be demonstrated.

Development proposals should aim to protect and enhance biodiversity by maintaining connectivity of habitats for hedgehogs; provide integral bird next boxes. Where possible and appropriate, development proposals should incorporate sustainable drainage systems with maintenance regimes to minimise vulnerability to flooding.

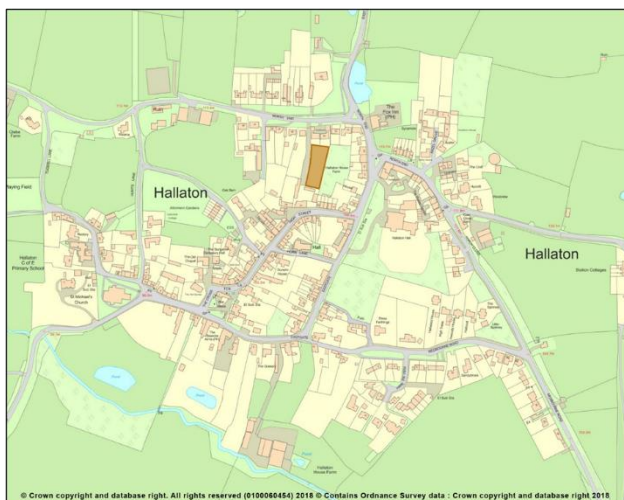
The Harborough Local Plan sets a minimum target for an additional 30 dwellings in the Parish.

25 subsequent planning approvals have reduced this target to 5, and the NP allocates a site for 2 dwellings which, in conjunction with a windfall allowance, meets the minimum target. It has removed Limits to Development (LtD) as a planning tool. The NP re-establishes the LtD which is marked by the red line in the figure below, which demarcates the built-up area of Hallaton from the countryside. Policy HBE2 states that development proposals within the LtD will be supported where they comply with other policies in this Plan.



Limits to Development

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



Residential Allocation.

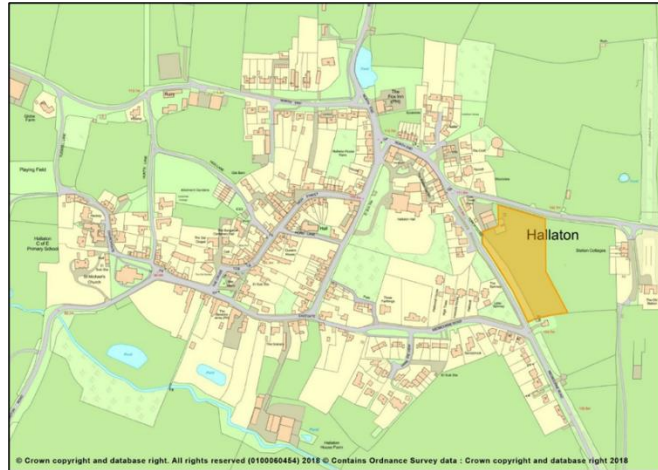
The principal aim of the NP has been to consider the current housing situation and deliver the future housing provision that is required to meet the needs of the parish in a holistic fashion.

To contribute towards this target, the NP allocates a single site for residential development for a maximum of two dwellings (Policy HBE3). Following a comprehensive site selection process, the preferred site is the rear of 31 High Street in the centre of the village.

Allocating this site helps to protect more sensitive areas from inappropriate development in the future.

The remainder of the required housing numbers is to be made up through windfall development which has made a steady contribution to the housing supply in the parish over recent years. NPs which allocate sites for residential development have greater power than NPs that do not and are better able to control development into the future.

In the event that the housing target increases during the Plan period, a reserve site has been identified (Policy HBE4). This site will only come forward for development if required because of a shortfall in housing due to a failure of the delivery of the allocated site or if additional dwellings are required through the Local Plan.

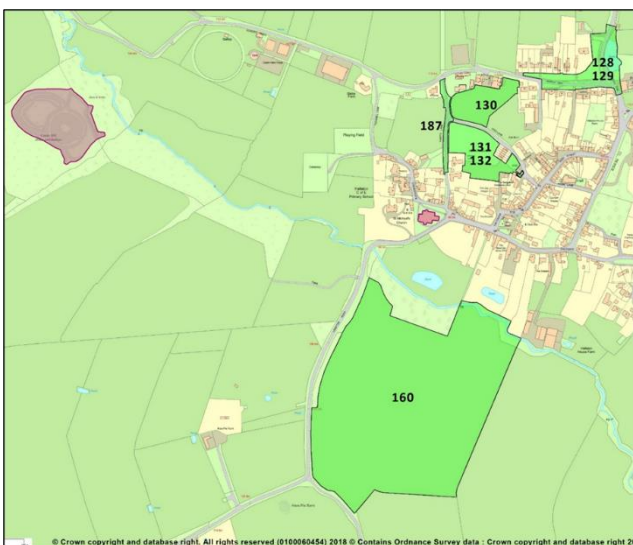


Reserve Site

The parish has more large houses than the district average. Policy HBE5 seeks to provide for a mixture of housing types to meet a locally identified need and promotes the provision of bungalows and small properties of 3 or fewer bedrooms.

Housing affordability remains a key issue for the parish. Policy HBE6 requires Affordable Housing, where provided, to be spread throughout the development and to be indistinguishable from the market housing. Priority is to be given to people with a connection to Hallaton.

5. Environment policies.



Local Green Spaces in Hallaton

The policies in this section seek to identify and protect the most important environmental aspects of Hallaton Parish from inappropriate development. They have been informed by the completion of an ‘environmental inventory’ of fields in the parish, compiled by local people who have measured each field against national policy criteria, resulting in a comprehensive catalogue of environmental features.

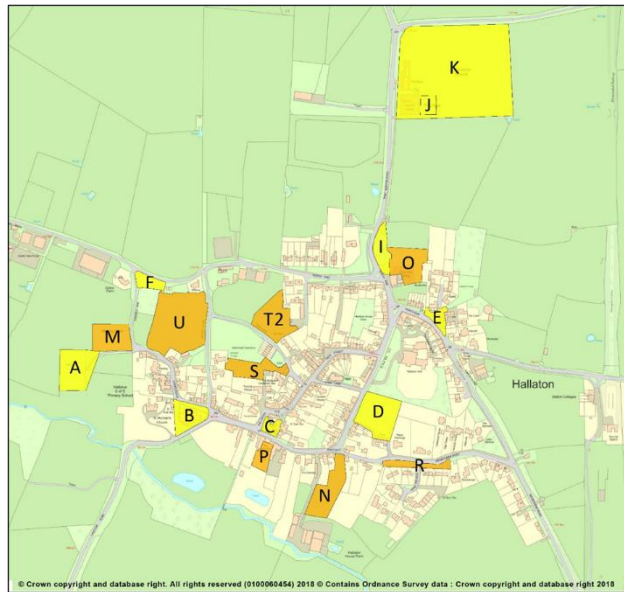
Policy Env1 designates the most important local environmental sites as ‘Local Green Spaces’. These areas will be protected from inappropriate development in perpetuity

and will be given the same level of protection in planning terms as the Green Belt.

The fields selected for this designation are as shown on the figure above and comprise Hare Pie Bank, Lady Close, Hacluit’s Pond, Walnut Paddock and Hunts Lane.

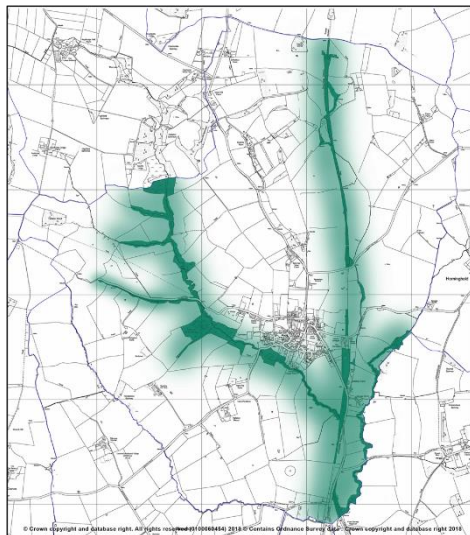
16 Important Open Spaces in the Parish are identified in policy ENV2 and shown on the map alongside. Development resulting in the loss of any of these sites will not be supported unless the open space is replaced by equivalent or better provision in an equally suitable location, or unless it can be demonstrated that the open space is no longer required by the community.

NPs can designate 'local heritage assets' for recognition in the planning system. Policy Env3 highlights local buildings and structures which have heritage value in the Parish. There are 25 structures identified as 'non-designated heritage assets' and afforded a degree of protection in the planning system against inappropriate development either to the structure itself or to its setting. These are to be found in Appendix 10 of the NP.



Important Open Spaces

The surviving areas of ridge and furrow are recognised in policy Env4 which requires the benefit of any development to outweigh the significance of the ridge and furrow. Policy Env5 identifies 60 high value trees. Policy Env6 protects them from felling, uprooting or wilful damage. Policy Env6 designates a Local Landscape Character Area within which development having a harmful effect will not be supported. (See over).

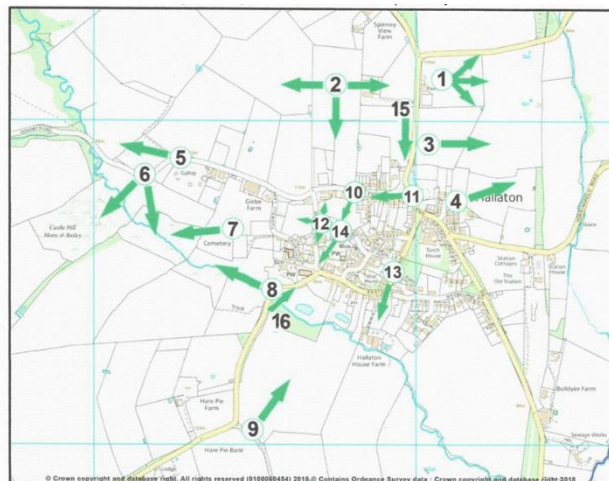


Wildlife Corridor

The protection of biodiversity, woodland, hedgerows and habitat connectivity is described in policy Env7 which seeks to ensure that development protects and enhances biodiversity and does not adversely affect the wildlife corridor identified in the map alongside.

16 views are identified across the parish of being of local importance and policy Env8 resists development that

fails to ensure that the key features of the view cannot continue to be enjoyed.



Important views

Support for farmers wishing to diversify is provided in policy BE4 with conditions to ensure that the development does not impact adversely on the community. Appropriate tourism proposals are supported in policy BE5 and proposals to provide access to superfast broadband supported through policy BE6, where any above ground infrastructure improvements are sympathetically located and designed.

10. Review

The NP will be subject to formal review to ensure it remains a helpful tool in determining planning applications. This is likely to occur when the Harborough Local Plan is updated or when housing need increases.

11. Community Actions

During the development of the Plan, a number of Community Actions were identified that will help to improve the community and help satisfy wider community aspirations. They reflect future work activities that it is proposed be undertaken within the Parish which will involve a wide range of third parties alongside the Parish Council to help improve the Parish in line with the outcome of community consultation. Community Actions are not planning policies.

These include working with third parties to protect the features of Important Open Spaces; maintaining the range of local community assets; developing a coherent action plan to address traffic and parking issues; liaison with Western Power to ensure the future energy needs of the community can be met and working with the community to enhance tourism in the Parish.

12. What Happens Now?

Now that the Examiner's report has been accepted and the changes made, the final NP is to be put before the community of Hallaton in a referendum, and the NP will pass or fail on the basis of a simple majority.

Everyone living in the parish who is on the electoral roll will be able to vote in the referendum. Once the NP is 'Made', it will be used by Harborough District Council to determine planning applications in the Parish.

The date for the referendum is not yet known as the Coronavirus has impacted on timescales. It will not be before 6 May 2021 as this is the earliest date that can be available for neighbourhood plan referenda.

However, the Government has stated that neighbourhood plans which have passed Examination have 'significant weight' in the planning system so will be used by Harborough District Council when determining planning applications in the Parish.

We hope that you have enjoyed reading about the way development will be shaped in the Parish as a result of the Neighbourhood Plan and that you take the opportunity to read the document and all appendices and exercise your right to vote in the referendum.

The full NP and appendices can be found on the Leicestershire County Council Communities website <https://www.leicestershirecommunities.org.uk/np/hallatonnp.html> and the NP itself is available on the Harborough District Council website <https://www.harborough.gov.uk>