

FELSTED

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

2018-2033

Respecting our Heritage, Defining our Future



FELSTED PARISH COUNCIL

PRE-SUBMISSION DRAFT

Felsted Neighbourhood Plan

Foreword

Welcome to the Felsted Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan).

Work began on the Plan in July 2014 with the Parish Council's support for the formation of a Steering Group (SG) and our first meeting. The Plan is based entirely on the many months of consultation, the hundreds of comments and submissions made by you, the members of the community, to the Steering Group through surveys, at meetings and presentations and on independent research commissioned by the Steering Group. The Plan also draws on the Felsted Parish Plan completed in 2012 including the historical context of the Parish, which remains unchanged.

During the consultations, there has been a passionate desire to see our valued amenities, like a doctor's surgery and dispensary together with the village shop and Post Office, protected and improved. There have also been strong and well-articulated objections to still further housing development.

However, simply saying 'no' to any housing development is not an option that was ever open to us or any community preparing a Neighbourhood Plan. In complying with the principles of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Uttlesford's Local Plan, we were required to take a positive approach and to '*contribute to the achievement of sustainable development*'.

The obligation on us as a Steering Group is to present a Neighbourhood Plan that provides for the development of no less housing than the UDC Local Plan allocates for Felsted. (This obligation is clearly set out in UDC Neighbourhood Plan Protocol document published in July 2016. Appendix 3) Though UDC has been extremely helpful and supportive in many other ways, the Authority has been unable to tell the Steering Group what is the '*minimum amount of development allocated*' to Felsted. So, without that guidance, we had to find an alternative mechanism.

We have tried to meet our obligation to take a positive approach to sustainable development and to identify development projects that offer the greatest community benefits, deliver some of the identified objectives, contribute to the vision for the Parish and finally – in the face of concerted and understandable objection to *any* further development in the Parish – fairly distribute development. The Plan presented here is what the Steering Group sincerely believes most of the community in Felsted has said it wants from planning policies from now until 2033.

As parishioners, it is axiomatic that the members of the SG have special interests in the future of Felsted. However, from the outset, the SG has been scrupulous in ensuring that members' conflicts or potential conflicts of interest have been fully disclosed and minuted.

Change is difficult. We don't expect that *everyone* in the Parish will be supportive of *every* aspect of the Plan. However, we hope that, when taken as a whole, the Plan will be seen as offering an ambitious, positive and innovative way forward for the next 15 years for the good of our community and we urge you to support it.

Finally, we would like to thank the members of the Steering Group and everyone in the Parish who contributed many hundreds of hours to developing this blueprint for our future.

Graham Harvey
Chairman
Felsted Parish Council

Roy Ramm
Chairman
Felsted Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

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Section 1 - Introduction

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Felsted Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan) is a new type of planning document. It forms part of the Government's new approach to planning, which aims to give local people more say about what development takes place in their area. This is set out by the Government in the Localism Act that came into force in April 2012.
- 1.2. Although the Government's intention is for local people to decide what development is permitted in their towns and villages, the Localism Act sets out some important 'basic conditions' for Neighbourhood Plans, the legal requirements that we must meet before we can proceed to a local referendum. One of these is that all Neighbourhood Plans must be in line with higher level planning policy. That is, Neighbourhood Plans must have regard for national policy and guidance including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and be in general conformity with local strategic policy, in our case, Uttlesford District Council's (UDC) Local Plan.
- 1.3. At the time of preparation, UDC has published a new draft Local Plan which is unlikely to be adopted before early 2019. In producing the Plan, we have been mindful of the content of the draft and also of the extant 2005 UDC Local Plan.
- 1.4. Neighbourhood Plans must also be in accordance with European "Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004", which are concerned with environmental assessment and habitat regulations. A full assessment of how Neighbourhood Plans meets the 'basic conditions' is provided in the Basic Conditions Statement, which will be submitted alongside the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.5. There is a large amount of background information that has helped in producing the Plan (This is known as the 'Evidence Base'.) A summary document (Felsted Neighbourhood Plan: Evidence Base Summary) will be available via the Neighbourhood Plan website for 2 years. This provides an overview of key parts of the Evidence Base.
- 1.6. The Plan has given local people the power to decide where new housing, businesses and parish amenities should be located. Without the Plan, the Parish Council has limited power to influence planning decisions and UDC would, based on the extant Local Plan, make these decisions on behalf of the people of Felsted.
- 1.7. Felsted Parish Council received approval from UDC to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan in 2015. On 15th December 2015 the Felsted Neighbourhood Area was designated for this purpose which is entirely coterminous with the boundary of the Parish of Felsted.
- 1.8. The Parish lies in the south-east corner of the District of Uttlesford, some 9 miles or 14.5 Kilometres directly north of the City of Chelmsford. Felsted adjoins the parishes of Stebbing, Flitch Green and Little Dunmow, Great Waltham, Little Leighs, Great Leighs, Great Notley, Braintree, Rayne and Great Saling.
- 1.9. The Felsted Neighbourhood Plan covers the period 2018 – 2033 and is known as the Plan period. This was chosen as the minimum period over which a strategic assessment of the Parish could reasonably be projected and aligns with the UDC Local Plan which also extends to 2033. We have examined what has happened in the previous 20 years and used this as an indicator of the pressures for change, but considered alignment with UDC to be an overriding factor.



2 Map of Felsted and the Plan Area

- 1.10. The Plan provides a vision for the future of the Parish of Felsted and sets out clear planning policies to realise this vision. As required by the Localism Act these policies accord with higher level, strategic planning policies of UDC and the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 1.11. The Plan has been developed through extensive consultation with the people of Felsted and other stakeholders with an interest in the Parish. Details of the consultation have been recorded in a series of reports that are available to download from Felsted Neighbourhood Plan's website (www.felstednp.org.uk).¹ As required by legislation, a Consultation Statement will be submitted alongside the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.12. The stage the Plan has now reached in the process is that this is the pre-submission draft plan that we are now publicising and circulating for formal consultation prior to submission to the local planning authority. The local planning authority, Uttlesford District Council, will then publicise the Plan for a further 6 weeks, before it is independently examined to ensure that it meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements. The Plan will then finally come back to the Parish for a referendum.

¹The background survey data will remain available on the www.felstednp.org.uk website for 2 years after the plan is formally made.

Section 2 - The Neighbourhood Area

2.1. Geography

- 2.1.1. Felsted (sometimes spelt "Felstead") lies in the north west of Essex, south of the A120 and is located west of Braintree, east of Great Dunmow and north of Chelmsford. It lies on the north bank of the River Chelmer as it leaves Great Dunmow and turns south towards Chelmsford.
- 2.1.2. Felsted Parish enjoys the underlying charm of a beautiful rural setting. The historic village of Felsted is the heart of the Parish and is surrounded by 15 individual Greens and Hamlets. This is what attracts people to the area and what the Parish Council has a historic duty to protect. Preservation of our heritage is balanced with a duty to ensure that the Parish thrives and meets the evolving future needs of the community. The Parish is shown on Map 1.
- 2.1.3. The value and importance of Felsted as an outstanding place to live is often recognised. Most recently it has been:
- Winner of Rural Community Council for Essex Village of the Year 2015.
 - Identified as "One of the best places to live in the East of England and a 'Top drawer village'" – The Sunday Times (2017)

2.2. Historical Overview

- 2.2.1. There was probably a settlement in Felsted as early as the Stone Age and there is evidence that the village was inhabited throughout the Bronze Age and the Roman Occupation. The first written evidence of a settlement comes with the Domesday Book of 1086 when about 360 people lived in the village.
- 2.2.2. The Normans were responsible for the tower of Felsted's Grade I listed Holy Cross church, which dates from 1120. From the time of the Domesday Book to the fourteenth century the whole of Felsted Parish was under the ownership of the Lord of the Manor of Felsted. At the time, the Manor House was in the centre of the village, close to the Grade II listed Bury. The Manor was owned by the Holy Trinity Abbey in Caen until the war with France in 1338 when it was confiscated by the Crown. One hundred years later the manor was given to the Abbey of Sion who held it until the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII in 1536.



3 The south door of Holy Cross Church Felsted

- 2.2.3. After the dissolution, most of the properties confiscated by the Crown were redistributed to allies of the King. One such ally was Richard Rich, who 'acquired' up to 100 manors, mainly in Essex. He built a mansion for himself on the site of the old Augustinian priory (Leez Priory) on the outskirts of the village. Parts of the Grade I listed building still stand today.
- 2.2.4. Richard Rich became Lord Rich of Leez. He started a series of good works in Felsted and his foundation was that of Felsted School founded in 1564 in the vacant 'Trinity Guildhall' in the centre of the village. He also established the village alms houses. During the 1600s, after marrying Elizabeth Bouchier of the Felsted Manor of Grandcourts, Oliver Cromwell sent three of his sons to Felsted School.
- 2.2.5. Throughout this period and the 1700's, Felsted was a place of rural industry; it had at least one windmill and two watermills. In 1842 the industrial revolution brought the brewery to Hartford End, the brickworks to Causeway End and the railway came along in 1869, although most the land remained agricultural. In Victorian times the population of Felsted grew to about 1,860.
- 2.2.6. During the twentieth century, agriculture in Felsted saw the biggest change, as small farms disappeared, with the farmhouses becoming private houses and their land being merged into larger holdings. Livestock also disappeared, most of the remaining farms being solely arable. The century also brought other changes, including in 1926 the building of the sugar beet factory just over our Parish boundary in the Parish of Little Dunmow. In 1999, the factory was demolished and replaced by the new Parish of Flitch Green (Oakwood Park) housing development.
- 2.2.7. Following the Beeching reorganisation of the national railway system in the late 1960s the railway and Felsted Station closed. The population of Felsted grew slowly in the twentieth century, with small pockets of housing in-filling gaps in the village.
- 2.2.8. The population of the Parish is now around 3,000 (2011 UK census data). Where in the past residents worked in or near the village, a substantial proportion of parishioners now commute to the surrounding towns and far beyond. The largest single employer in the Parish is Felsted School.
- 2.2.9. The village of Felsted is the heart of the Parish and the village centre a place of great historical importance with 150 statutorily listed buildings. Much of it falls within the designated Conservation Area and within it are many listed properties (see Map 2). Some of these are shops and restaurants, generally domestic in scale. The church is the most ancient building and its tower and expansive graveyard dominate this part of the Conservation Area. Other fine structures lie just beyond the existing boundary including the restored Bury Farm barn, listed Grade II*, that adds much architectural interest and diversity².

"Of the 50 Listed Buildings/groups of buildings identified on the English Heritage list in the Conservation Area, 18% date from the 15th century or earlier; 20% from the 16th century; 30% from the 17th century; 12% from the 18th century and some 20% from the 19th and 20th centuries.

2.3. Character and Heritage

- 2.3.1. In preparing the Plan a full Character and Heritage assessment was commissioned from AECOM and is available to view on the website.

² Further information on the Felsted Conservation Area can be found in the Felsted Conservation Area Character Appraisal published by UDC in December 2012.



4 1838 Map of Felsted

- 2.3.2. The Parish enjoys a highly valued rural setting with many attractive feature areas, including the Fishponds that stretch from Leez Priory to Leez Lodge and which are listed as an 'ancient monument', important woodland in Stebbing Road to the southwest of the Flitch Way and the Flitch Way itself.

2.4. Our People

- 2.4.1. At the time of the 2011 census there were 1,083 households in the Parish and a total population of 3,051 individuals. Since then more than 90 further homes have been constructed or approved.
- 2.4.2. Felsted's population is comparatively much older in relation to the national profile and the Uttlesford profile. Whilst people aged between 55 and 64 represent of just over 10% of the population of Uttlesford, the figure for Felsted is 18%. For the age group 65-74 the difference is 16% versus 12% for Uttlesford and for those over 75 the figures are 12.5% and 9.0%. Overall both the median and the mean age of the population of Felsted is circa 40 years of age with 46% of the population aged over 55. It follows that easily accessible amenities, like health care and convenience shopping will become increasingly important to this ageing community.
- 2.4.3. Comparing house price data is difficult. Anecdotally, estate agents surveyed say that property in 'Felsted' commands a higher price than in surrounding areas. 'Zoopla' data indicates the current average value of property in the Parish is significantly above the national average house price (£225,621) and Essex averages (£368,356). Felsted, with an overall average value of £607,958 was more expensive than nearby Rayne (£377,635), Dunmow £458,845 and Great Notley (£404,742). In the past 5 years house prices in Felsted increased by 28.92 % and in the last 20 years, by 233%.

2.5. Amenities

- 2.5.1. The Parish is well-served by amenities which are highly valued by the community. In the village centre there is a doctors' surgery and dispensary, a highly regarded village shop and Post Office, two pubs – both serving food and one offering accommodation - an active branch of the Royal British Legion, a Chinese restaurant, an Indian restaurant, a tea shop and patisserie, a local estate agent, a hairdressers and beauticians, a farm shop and two further retail outlets in the village centre. Bed and breakfast accommodation and holiday lets are also available in the village and elsewhere in the Parish.
- 2.5.2. The Parish has a much-loved Memorial Hall which is some 90 years old and a village playing field with excellent and exciting modern play facilities for children. There are also play areas at Watch House

Green and Willows Green.



5 Children's Play Area – Braintree Road

- 2.5.3. In the wider Parish, there is a nursery school at Whipper-Snappers and pre-school care is also offered by Little Acorns.
- 2.5.4. Elderly residents benefit from the Felsted Alms Houses Charity. The charity built seven bungalows in 1876 and substantially renovated them in 1998. The charity caters for older or disabled persons, preferably with connections to the area. Monthly social activities include: over 60s friendship clubs, organised by local village clubs.



5 Felsted Alms Houses – Braintree Road

- 2.5.5. There are equestrian centres within the Parish and a successful wedding venue on the edge of the Parish at Leez Priory.
- 2.5.6. The spiritual needs of the community are met by Holy Cross Church, the United Reform Church and the Crix Green Mission.
- 2.5.7. The Parish has a substantial allotment area in the village centre opposite Bury Chase (Woodleys) car

park. The allotments are held in trust and must remain as such.

- 2.5.8. The fishponds between Leez Priory and Leez Lodge in the Ter valley are an ancient monument and there are important woodlands in Stebbing Road to the southwest of The Flitch Way.
- 2.5.9. Maintaining the amenities we enjoy, providing opportunities for their development and addressing issues like accessibility to the doctors' and traffic congestion in the historic village centre throughout the Plan period are both key objectives and substantial challenges.

2.6. Getting Around

- 2.6.1. The only A road passing through the Parish is the A120. Most of the northern boundary of the parish is formed by the B1256 (the old A120). The B1417 is the main north-south route through the Parish linking with the B1008 to the south and the A1256 in the north-west and directly to the A1256 and indirectly to the A120 in the north east. The main junction in the Parish is in the centre of the village where the B1417, the Chelmsford Road meets Station Road and Braintree Road.
- 2.6.2. The Parish is served by the 16 bus which runs four times a day between Chelmsford and Wethersfield via Felsted. The 133 bus also runs through the village centre providing an hourly service from Colchester to Stansted Airport, where there are connections to the wider transport network.
- 2.6.3. There are local private hire car services in the Parish.
- 2.6.4. There is an extensive and greatly valued footpath network throughout the Parish, including a major section of linear park known as The Flitch Way, providing an unrivalled amenity for walkers, cyclists and horse riders. The Parish also enjoys an extensive bridleway network and a number of designated 'Quiet Lanes'.
- 2.6.5. Part of the Parish formed a section of the 2016 Tour de France, increasing the Parish's attraction to cyclists increased still further. The lanes throughout the Parish are now major destinations for cycling enthusiasts and clubs. Part of the National Cycling Route also passes through the Parish.

2.7. Education

- 2.7.1. Felsted is a flourishing independent HMC school for boys and girls aged four to eighteen, based on a safe, rural 80-acre village campus. It offers day, full and contemporary boarding options with daily bus routes from across the Region. With a distinguished 450-year history, occupying an iconic building on a visually significant site in the centre of the village and being the largest local employer, Felsted School's contribution to the social, sporting cultural and economic fabric is critically important. Felsted School is rated 'Outstanding' in all areas of pastoral welfare and "excellent in every aspect" by the Independent Schools Inspectorate. Felsted School has a major impact on the reputational status of the Parish.



6 The Tour de France in Chelmsford Road in 2014

- 2.7.2. State Primary education is provided by the Felsted Primary School. Though the physical presence of the state Primary School at Watch House Green is by comparison more modest, its academic status is rated 'Outstanding' by Ofsted. The school is very highly valued, attracting two thirds of its pupils from outside the Parish. As such, the Primary School also makes an important contribution to Felsted being known more broadly as a place of educational excellence and, for that reason, a highly desirable place for families to live. There is no state secondary school in the Parish.

2.8. Health and Wellbeing

- 2.8.1. Primary health care is provided by the practice at the Felsted Surgery and dispensary which is part of the John Tasker House and Felsted Surgeries group. The Practice was visited by the Care Quality Commission in 2015 and was rated as 'Good'. Within the community, the Practice is a highly regarded and valued asset.

Section 3 - The Key Issues

3. The key issues that were raised throughout our extensive consultation:

In preparing the Plan we conducted multiple consultation events and collected information through the use of various community surveys. Residents and stakeholders were kept informed via the Neighbourhood Plan website and updates to the Parish Council website. A full report of our consultation activity and how it has influenced the preparation of the Plan will be set out in the Consultation Statement and submitted alongside the Neighbourhood Plan. The issues the community asked us to address in the Plan were clear.

3.1. About Traffic and the Village Centre

- 3.1.1. Problems caused by limited parking facilities and increasing traffic and congestion are a serious cause for concern among residents who want a greater focus on pedestrians in the village centre. This is particularly acute because of the numbers of school children crossing Braintree Road and Stebbing Road during the day.
- 3.1.2. The negative impact of the weight, both in terms of numbers and size, of vehicular traffic on the fabric of buildings in the Historic Village Centre (HVC) and the harm caused by vibration and fumes was another issue of concern expressed by residents. These concerns are exacerbated looking forward over the Plan Period as the Parish faces the challenges of very large developments in neighbouring parishes.
- 3.1.3. School traffic has a negative impact on congestion. In the village and at Watch House Green congestion during the morning drop-off and the afternoon collection periods is a major concern. Observation and complaints from parishioners confirm that the number and size of vehicles is increasing. Badly parked vehicles obstruct the highway and the footway and are hazardous to other road users and pedestrians.
- 3.1.4. Stebbing Road runs directly through the 80 acre site occupied by Felsted School. The school has major facilities for students on both sides of Stebbing Road, frequently requiring students to move across the road during the school day. The road has a 30mph speed limit. The further development of facilities on the site will increase pedestrian traffic. Though a public thoroughfare, consideration needs to be given to how priority can be afforded to pedestrians and to slow vehicular traffic.
- 3.1.5. The Royal British Legion is a respected and valued amenity. However, the Legion building is unattractive and detracts from the visual amenity in the village centre. Additionally, the site occupied by the Royal British Legion and some adjacent properties also offer a valuable opportunity in the centre of the village to improve parking, increase public open space and to create a focal point around Holy Cross Church as it approaches its 900th anniversary in 2020. It could provide a location for the recently discovered and historic Felsted Market Cross stone.
- 3.1.6. The visual amenity of the historic village centre and the listed buildings are also seen to be vulnerable to insensitive signage, overhead cables and excessive lighting.
- 3.1.7. In the longer-term traffic volumes in the village and throughout the Parish would be very seriously negatively impacted by any changes to the junctions on the A120. Currently only westbound traffic on the A120 can exit the dual carriageway and enter Felsted via the roundabout at the junction with the B1417. There is no eastbound exit from the A120. Any changes to the junction with the B1417 that allowed east bound traffic on the A120 to both join and exit the dual carriageway would

increase traffic volumes considerably, particularly if new large settlements are developed on our Parish borders.

- 3.1.8. Outside of planning policies, the Plan makes strong recommendations intended to further reduce congestion and to give priority to pedestrians in the village centre.

3.2. About Amenities

- 3.2.1. Retaining and improving village amenities is a key issue of concern to residents.
- 3.2.2. The services provided by the doctors' surgery and dispensary are greatly valued. With an increasingly ageing community, demands for high quality local healthcare are inevitably increasing. There are concerns that access to the surgery is restricted and finding adjacent parking is often difficult, particularly for the disabled.
- 3.2.3. The existing surgery building does not meet National Health England standards. The current Practice has indicated that they will not be able to continue providing a service from the existing premises beyond the next 3-5 years. The current site of the surgery and dispensary is not suitable for redevelopment as a surgery. Unless a new site for a modern surgery and pharmacy is identified, Felsted will lose the local doctors as an amenity.
- 3.2.4. The West Essex Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) indicated that they support the continued presence of a General Practice within the Parish of Felsted but accept that the current surgery building has limited viability and will not be fit for purpose for future needs.
- 3.2.5. The provision of a sustainable doctors' surgery has been of key importance to the Parish throughout the preparation of the Plan. The Steering Group initially pursued the idea of the development of a new Community Hub in a sustainable, central location in the Parish to provide more accessible and long-term access to valued services, including the doctors' surgery, the village shop, and Memorial Hall. Disappointingly, a coincidence of factors meant it became unrealistic to deliver this aspect of the project. Of critical importance to the SG was to ensure continued access to these amenities, so the SG found other ways of achieving the same strategic goals for the future of our Parish.



7 Felsted Surgery, Braintree Road (left of image)

- 3.2.6. The current village shop and Post Office is also highly valued but, it occupies a Part Grade 1 Listed

building in the centre of the historic village. It struggles to offer the facilities that shoppers require. Access is difficult for people with even relatively minor disabilities and there is limited opportunity for the shop to offer the full range of goods and services customers seek. Deliveries to the shop and frequent short term on-road parking add to congestion at the Chelmsford Road, Braintree Road, Station Road junction.

- 3.2.7. A need for a new village hall was also clearly expressed during consultation. The Memorial Hall has served the Parish well but is 90 years old, in need of extensive maintenance and, in a parish of over 3,000 people, is only able to accommodate events for a maximum of 90 people. It does not meet the needs of the community currently or for the Plan period. Re-development of the Memorial Hall on its existing site is feasible.³
- 3.2.8. The burial ground in the churchyard at Holy Cross church has reached its capacity and is closed for further interments. The United Reform Church burial ground in Chelmsford Road is currently accepting burials of other denominations however, this is not a permanent solution. The community want a suitable new site identified within the Parish.
- 3.2.9. The independent professional advice received from UDC's advisor on deliverability is that funding for community amenities as outlined above is usually provided, at least in part, from market housing development, potentially making protecting our amenities a particularly challenging and contentious policy objective to achieve in the face of community resistance to further housing development.



8 Felsted Memorial Hall

3.3. About the Schools

- 3.3.1. Throughout the consultation process it has been clear that the importance of the schools is well recognised and highly valued by the community, both as amenities and major sources of employment.
- 3.3.2. Currently the Primary School has a single form intake and the Board of Governors has indicated that they currently intend to meet the School's immediate accommodation needs on the existing site. However, given population growth and housing developments within the School's catchment area, it is considered prudent to provide a policy framework to support the Primary School in the likely event that it would need to expand or move during the Plan period.

³ See AECOM Feasibility Study on the FNP website

- 3.3.3. Felsted School has also indicated its intentions to expand and develop new facilities in and around its existing site.



9 Felsted School

- 3.3.4. The community wants the Plan to support expansion and redevelopment of the schools, to ensure the schools are better integrated into the wider community but also wants to ensure planning policies mitigate any negative impact of the Schools on congestion created or exacerbated by School traffic.

3.4. About Housing

- 3.4.1. Felsted is a very desirable place to live. The result of a survey of estate agents indicated that the demand for property within Felsted is extremely high, creating continuing and unrelenting pressure for additional market housing development.
- 3.4.2. In the last twenty years, *excluding* replacement dwellings constructed on a one-for-one basis, over 200 new homes have been built in the Parish. Though increasing the demands and pressures on local amenities and infrastructure, they have delivered little or no contribution to the development or enhancement of amenities or responded to any specific significant needs identified by the Parish Council.
- 3.4.3. From the outset and throughout the Neighbourhood Planning process, the overwhelming response from parishioners has been that the Plan should resist further market housing development beyond that imposed by Uttlesford District Council's Local Plan or which has been identified as 'needed affordable housing' by independently conducted housing needs surveys. The Localism Act allows the Neighbourhood Plan to provide more than this number of houses and an amount of employment land, but it does not allow the Plan to provide for less.
- 3.4.4. Since the SG commenced work on the Plan, the pressure from central government on local authorities, including Uttlesford, for the development of more homes has increased considerably. Without a demonstrable 5 year housing supply pipeline, UDC has been much less effective in preventing development that has been resisted by parish councils. To meet its housing requirements, UDC have had to reconsider the Type A villages and other settlements in respect of housing allocations in the revised UDC Local Plan.

- 3.4.5. Concerns about excessive market housing development are repeatedly expressed by the Parish Council and many individual parishioners in their objections to planning applications. Through these comments, the community makes it clear that it wants the Plan to offer the strongest possible protection to the physical integrity of the Parish and its quiet rural nature.
- 3.4.6. These views are consistent with those expressed during the consultation work on the Parish Plan published in 2012 and have been repeatedly expressed by parishioners to the Parish Council and in objections to planning applications.⁴
- 3.4.7. Accurately identifying the need for affordable housing is essential to developing effective housing policy. Housing Needs Surveys should be conducted every five years to ensure that 'need' is properly understood on a continuing basis throughout the Plan period to 2033. In May 2016 the Rural Community Council for Essex conducted a survey on behalf of Felsted Parish Council to determine the affordable housing need for the coming 5 years. The survey identified a need for 14 affordable units and 1 starter home, although it is noted that this focussed solely on locally-identified need.
- 3.4.8. There is also concern that developments have not resulted in increased opportunity for moving within the Parish. Active, older residents, finding themselves unable to downsize into smaller high-quality homes, rather than leave the Parish, are remaining in homes they consider to be too large for their needs, meaning that high-demand housing (larger, family homes) are not as available as part of the market stock.

3.5. About Integrity and Character

- 3.5.1. The community is vocal and determined in expressing its concern that 'excessive development' of market housing is harming the character and heritage of the village, the constituent Greens and hamlets and the rural nature of the Parish. This has been raised consistently as a key concern throughout our consultation.
- 3.5.2. There are also concerns that coalescence with neighbouring parishes puts at risk the integrity and the unique identity of historic Felsted. In addition to the concerns about development within the Neighbourhood Area, the situation is greatly exacerbated by the uncertainty of development proposals to the west of the Parish at 'Chelmer Mead', to the east in the development described as 'West of Braintree' and to the Great Leighs development in Chelmsford. These proposed developments present very significant risk, threatening to put unprecedented pressures on Felsted's infrastructure and amenities.
- 3.5.3. Similarly, the individual charm of the constituent Greens and hamlets is also seen to be threatened by coalescence. Avoiding coalescence does not mean that the Plan rejects all development in a Green or hamlet but, it does require the Plan to place restrictions on developments that threaten the individual integrity of a settlement by increasing the risk of coalescence between settlements within the Parish.

3.6. About the Rural Economy

- 3.6.1. The community is also concerned to protect and encourage the rural economy and to offer local employment by providing suitable opportunities for business. These aspirations go to the heart of ensuring that the Parish remains a vibrant and discrete community offering employment opportunity within its boundaries.
- 3.6.2. There is also concern that the development of economic activity in the Parish should be unobtrusive and appropriate to the rural setting.

⁴'Felsted Parish - A Plan for the Future' Published by Felsted Parish Council, available on www.felstednp.org.uk

- 3.6.3. We surveyed the attitudes of business owners in the Parish. Felsted is fundamentally a rural parish with a strong agricultural base. In general, farmers were concerned that it remains as such. The few responses received from other businesses were, with very few exceptions, were concerned only with issues outside the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan, like improved internet access and faster broadband speeds.

3.7. About the Countryside and the Environment

- 3.7.1. The community is fiercely protective of the natural environment and green spaces that surround the village and give access to the 15 individual Greens and Hamlets that comprise the Parish. The community demands that planning policies both protect the countryside and wildlife and ensure access is maintained.
- 3.7.2. Concern is that insufficient importance is given to the ecology of the Parish and more information needs to be offered to users of the footpaths and bridleways to ensure they better understand the environment and their impact on it.
- 3.7.3. Areas such as the nature area in the village allotment site and the nature reserve at the recently enlarged Felsted Fen, are highly regarded and valued.
- 3.7.4. Many of the concerns expressed during the consultations have been expressed to the Parish Council and to UDC over many years. Policy EN9 in the draft UDC Local Plan, which offers far reaching environmental protection measures is reflective of the values expressed by the community.



10 The River Chelmer to the west of Mill Road

3.8. Consultation Timeline

When?	What?
July 2014	Inaugural Meeting of the Felsted Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
December 2014	Felsted Neighbourhood Area designated by Uttlesford District Council
March 2015	'Setting the Agenda for Consultation' document launched
May 2015	First village open day
Spring 2015	Consultation with schools and survey
Spring 2015	Consultation with Doctors' Surgery and survey
September 2015	Traffic survey
August 2015	Focussed workshop on key themes (1 of 3)
September 2015	Focussed workshop on key themes (2 of 3)
October 2015	Focussed workshop on key themes (3 of 3)
January 2016	Rural Community Council of Essex – housing needs survey
January 2016	Youth survey to accompany housing needs survey
March 2016	Estate agents survey
May 2016	Feedback session on Housing Needs Survey, Youth survey and Estate agents survey
Throughout 2016	Heritage and character assessment undertaken by green leaders
Throughout 2016 and 2017	Feedback on drafting the plan via website and updates to the Parish Council
July 2017	Presentation of the Policy Intentions Document
April 2018	Update on the Neighbourhood Plan and housing
Summer 2018	Pre-Submission Consultation

Section 4 - The Vision for Felsted

4.1. Developing the Vision

- 4.1.1. The vision for Felsted developed in the Neighbourhood Plan reflects the community's concerns and aspirations, identified as key issues through consultation. It attempts to say what we want our Parish to be working towards throughout the fifteen years of the Plan period to 2033.
- 4.1.2. The Plan brings forward policies that respect our heritage and define our future. Some things need to change but many aspects of the Parish will remain the same. One of the key objectives has been to plan to value what we have and to change as little as possible; another is to ensure that where inevitable and necessary changes take place they are appropriately planned for to ensure they bring real and enduring benefits to the people of Felsted.
- 4.1.3. Each of the policies in **Section 5** is directly related to and aimed at delivering an aspect of our vision.
- 4.1.4. There are some issues raised through the consultation process that are not deliverable through planning policies. These are nonetheless important to the community and though the Neighbourhood Plan cannot propose policies to facilitate their implementation they are supported.

4.2. The Vision

Over the Plan period Felsted will continue to be a special place to live in a rural setting.

Our village amenities will have been expanded and enhanced, particularly our primary health care and village shopping. We will have a new larger community hall providing a focus for Parish public and private events.

Congestion at peak times will have been eased and pedestrians will be able to move around the village centre and our schools in safety and comfort.

The setting of listed buildings in the village centre along with Holy Cross Church will have been protected in an enhanced public space, which will have created a clearly defined historic centre, articulating to residents and visitors the value and importance of this ancient settlement dating back to the Domesday Book.

The dispersed nature of the Parish of Felsted with its 15 individual Greens and hamlets will remain. This Plan will have ensured the character and identity of this place and its ecology are protected from housing and infrastructure changes in the surrounding area.

Felsted will have met housing needs and supported additional market housing development where it supports provision of parish amenities and facilitates continuity of residence in the Parish.

Local employment will have been encouraged through supporting small business development.

Our schools will continue to be emblematic of educational excellence, meet

emerging demands and will play an active role in the community.

The natural environment will have been protected and enhanced.

New technology will have been used to provide information to users of footpaths and bridleways about the historical setting of the countryside, its wildlife and what might be expected to be seen at any given location.

- 4.2.1. The SG recognises that achieving this vision is very challenging. The SG would have ideally liked to have seen the key amenities provided in one place in a single development. Achieving this during our work on the Neighbourhood Plan has not proved possible. What is possible is the provision of a much-improved Surgery in community ownership with a small development of market housing at Station Road West. This will generate a revenue stream for community amenities, which could include the redevelopment of the Memorial Hall and the relocation of the village convenience shop and Post Office.

4.3. How we will deliver the Vision

- 4.3.1. The vision will be delivered through the implementation of the Planning Policies detailed in Section 5 of this Plan, through the creation of a charitable trust to receive and distribute funds generated by supported development projects and by identifying issues to the Parish Council that are not deliverable through planning policy, but which have a material impact on our community.

4.4. The Felsted Community Trust

- 4.4.1. The SG considered that establishing a charitable trust an effective mechanism to help secure the community benefit objectives of the Plan. The SG has worked with the Parish Council to create the Felsted Community Trust. Initially, contributions to the Trust may be required from the landowners and developers of schemes supported by the Plan. A doctors' surgery will be a capital project donated to the Felsted Community Trust by a developer of the identified site in Station Road. This will remain an asset of the Trust for the benefit of the community
- 4.4.2. Over the Plan period, the surgery will generate a return in rent from the doctors' practice that in turn will be available to the trustees to distribute to community projects, including funding for the village hall.

4.5. Issues that are not deliverable through Planning Policy

- 4.5.1. There are a number of issues that have emerged through the consultation process as concerns or objectives which are outside the scope of the Plan's planning policy remit. These issues are nonetheless important and their resolution would benefit the community. The Parish Council will seek to implement these projects through the identification of key partners and sources of funding.
- a) To facilitate community cohesion and a broader demographic, developers should be encouraged to build a mix of properties including those suitable for first time buyers and for those seeking to downsize. These properties should be offered exclusively to purchasers with a direct connection to Felsted for a period of not less than 3 months before being offered on the open market.
 - b) Notwithstanding the requirement in policy SC2, the road surfaces in Stebbing Road from the junction with Braintree Road to the junction with Garnett's Lane should be changed to indicate a pedestrian priority area.
 - c) In the event that further school facilities are developed on the playing fields to the west of Stebbing

Road, the same considerations as described in (b) above should apply to the road surface between Garnetts Lane and the section of Stebbing Road adjacent to the playing fields. (See Map 4)

- d) The construction of a new access for Felsted Primary School.
- e) Where significant developments in close proximity to the Parish are proposed, the Plan supports the Parish Council in expecting such proposals to be accompanied by a "Travel Plan, Transport Assessment and Statement" to assess the predicted flow of through traffic in the Felsted Conservation Area. Where potential increases are identified, mitigation measures will be sought to constrain traffic flow through the Felsted Conservation Area and avoid the Parish becoming a 'rat run' for traffic.
- f) New technology should be embraced, for example to provide charging points for electric vehicles and to communicate information about the Parish's history and ecology, Quick Reader codes should be used on public signage, including footpath signs and way markers offering access to information about the Parish.
- g) As part of traffic mitigation measures, School 'Park and Ride' schemes should be encouraged.
- h) Following any move of the village shop away from the 'T' Junction, the Parish Council should review parking restrictions in Station and Braintree Roads.
- i) A Pavement Parking Prohibition Order should be obtained and enforced to cover the whole village.
- j) Priority for local purchasers will be encouraged by asking developers to offer 'priority purchase' schemes, wherein parishioners are given an exclusive 3-month window during which they are able to express an interest in acquiring a newly developed property before it goes to open market.⁵

⁵Non-Planning Policy

Section 5 – The Policies

5.1. Protecting the Historic Village Centre

- 5.1.1. The Parish is substantially defined by an area in the centre of the Village that comprises some of the most iconic and best-known buildings in Felsted. To ensure this small area is properly recognised and protected and to allow the development of appropriate policies the Plan designates this area as the Historic Village Centre (HVC). The area is shown on Map 2. It is not coterminous with the Conservation Area (CA) but many of the 49 Listed Buildings in the CA are in the HVC. The heritage assets of the village are described in detail in the comprehensive Felsted Heritage and Character Assessment report produced by AECOM.
- 5.1.2. Frequent short-term visits by customers and deliveries to the village shop in the HVC are identified as major causes of congestion at the 'T' junction of Braintree Road, Station Road and Chelmsford Road. Parking and deliveries for The Swan, The Boote House and The Royal British Legion are also, at different times, contributors to congestion. Holy Cross Church and Smylie Hall together with the Doctors' surgery and dispensary, Felsted School, and Felsted Primary School traffic, further east at Watch House Green, also contribute significantly to congestion.
- 5.1.3. The Plan seeks to address these concerns and meet the ambitions of the community by bringing forward policies on the use of premises that cause congestion, including the Schools, requiring them to include off road parking as part of any development proposals.
- 5.1.4. The Plan proposes policies that support the relocation of the village shop and Post Office and the Royal British Legion away from the Village Centre to alleviate traffic concerns whilst also providing the opportunity for expansion of services in new, more sustainable premises. The intention is to encourage the use of the vacated premises in ways that will attract less short-term visitation at peak times.
- 5.1.5. The Royal British Legion, the small car park (known locally as Woodley's car park) and the premises shown on Map 2 occupy important sites within the HVC. However, The Felsted Conservation Area Character Appraisal states that the car park provides a poor setting for the adjacent Norman church and other historic and listed buildings.⁶ The Character Appraisal lists relatively modest ways in which the car park could be improved (e.g. replacing the wooden fence that defines the car park's western boundary with a native species hedgerow or reducing the impact of the wooden fence through planting). It also suggests that the site is an ideal location for a sensitively designed public convenience. The Plan is much more ambitious for the HVC and identifies a much more substantial opportunity for improvement and considers that these sites could be used to greatly enhance the general setting of the Felsted Conservation Area and the particular setting of the Grade 1 Listed Holy Cross Church. The Plan therefore includes policies that recognise and make the best use of the potential of these sites.
- 5.1.6. The policies in the Historic Village Centre are intended to:
- Reduce congestion
 - Preserve and enhance the historic environment

⁶Felsted Conservation Area and Management Proposals, Uttlesford District Council, 2012
(<https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=1919&p=0>)

- Improve the pedestrian environment

HVC1 The plan designates the Historic Village Centre (as shown on Map 2) for its historic significance, its contribution to the character of the Parish, as well as for its amenity value which provides a focal point of facilities and amenities for all residents and visitors alike.

Development proposals should:

- Seek, where opportunities arise, to alleviate existing congestion and not exacerbate existing congestion in the Historic Village Centre; and
- Maintain a good, safe, and attractive pedestrian environment and seek, wherever possible, to improve the quality of the pedestrian environment.



11 Grade 1 Listed Holy Cross Church

Existing Village Shop and Post Office

- 5.1.7. The UDC draft Local Plan includes a policy (RET4) which resists the loss of shops and other community facilities beyond the district's town and local centres.⁷ This Plan complements that approach by taking a similar approach to these uses within the HVC.
- 5.1.8. Policy HVC1 establishes what uses would be supported at the site of the existing village shop and Post Office in the event that they are vacated. It is of priority that existing traffic congestion and parking concerns at this location are not exacerbated and, where possible, improved as a result of any changes at this site.
- 5.1.9. Throughout the extensive consultation undertaken during the preparation of the Plan, it was particularly evident that the village shop and Post Office are highly treasured assets within our community. It is recognised that the existing shop and Post Office are not in the most appropriate location to secure their ongoing commercial viability, and that an alternative site may be secured in the Plan Period in the parish. The Plan supports the sustainability and continuation of the service provided by the shop and Post Office, and seeks to provide the opportunity for the shop and Post Office to remain in the parish in the longer term.

⁷ UDC Draft Local Plan Policy RET4

HVC2 The Plan supports the relocation of the village shop and Post Office to an alternative site within the Felsted Neighbourhood Area in a sustainable, accessible location which includes adequate car parking.

In the event that the village shop and Post Office are vacated, the Plan supports change of use from Class A1 (Shops and retail outlet) to Class A3 (Food and drink), Class B1 (Business) and/or residential use on the site (shown on Map 3). Proposals for additional services and facilities within the HVC will only be supported subject to the following criteria being met:

- (i) access arrangements and off-street parking can be satisfactorily provided without impinging on adjoining residential and non-residential uses.
- (ii) the proposal will help alleviate traffic congestion and not adversely affect the free-flow of traffic on the adjoining highway.
- (iii) the proposal will not generate unacceptable noise, fumes, smells or cause disturbance to neighbouring residential properties.

Support for any proposal is substantially dependent on the proposed use not exacerbating existing traffic congestion and parking concerns at this location.

Royal British Legion Site

- 5.1.10. The Plan recognises and seeks to support The Royal British Legion (RBL) as a valued and respected asset to the community. However, notwithstanding the affection in which it is held by members, the current building is of no architectural merit, detracts significantly from the setting of the Grade 1 Listed Norman Church and is not located centrally in relation to the more significant areas of population in the Parish. Parking is also limited. In the event that the RBL should seek to relocate within the Parish, the Plan supports moving the Club premises further east.
- 5.1.11. The existing site of the RBL building and adjacent properties identified on Map 2 is ideally situated for the creation of public open space. In the event of any of those identified properties being vacated, opportunities are presented to create significant improvements to the setting of the Grade 1 Listed Holy Cross Church which serves as a significant focal point for the HVC in terms of character and local identity.
- 5.1.12. The Plan supports the creation of more public open space at the western end of Holy Cross Church incorporating the relocated Market Cross.

- 5.1.13. Due to the significance of this site in providing enhanced open space and public realm within the setting of the adjacent Holy Cross Church and due to the need to retain existing car parking capacity on the site it would not be appropriate to re-develop the site for housing or other uses that generate significant additional demand for parking spaces.

HVC3 The Plan supports the relocation of Royal British Legion (RBL) elsewhere within the neighbourhood area and, in the event that it successfully relocates within the Parish, the Plan safeguards the site for community use and for the provision of accessible public open space. The Plan only supports re-development proposals on the existing site shown on Map 2 which:

- i) Incorporate a public open space to enhance the setting of the Grade 1 Listed Holy Cross Church;
- ii) Accommodate the Market Cross stone;
- iii) Enhance the Conservation Area by creating a focal point using public realm improvements;
- iv) Facilitate the provision of public conveniences through a Section 106 Agreement.

Additional car parking in the Historic Village Centre

- 5.1.14. Congestion in the HVC at the 'T' junction of Chelmsford Road, Station Road and Braintree Road was amongst the most serious areas of concern raised during the consultation process. There are two main factors that contribute to the congestion; parked vehicles at all business premises at the 'T' junction and congestion caused by parents dropping and collecting children from Felsted School, especially those turning right into and out of the school grounds from Braintree Road.
- 5.1.15. In 2015, the SG arranged for a traffic survey to be undertaken by volunteers from the Parish. The survey was conducted during school term-time, to monitor the levels of traffic moving through the village. The results demonstrated nearly 4,000 traffic movements through the Parish at peak time of 7 – 9am, an increase of some 25% on a similar survey undertaken in 2007.
- 5.1.16. There is very limited scope in the HVC to increase parking facilities to resolve these issues. Consequently, the Policy HVC3 seeks to ensure that development takes account of the need to reduce traffic and, where reduction is unachievable, to mitigate its impact.

HVC4 The Plan supports the creation of additional parking spaces within the Felsted Village Development Limits (as shown on Map 13) where they respect the character and appearance of the local area, are landscaped, sensitively-designed and alleviate pressure on the local highways network.

Managing Road Congestion at Felsted Village T Junction

- 5.1.17. The following measures are intended to reduce congestion at and around the 'T' junction and to ease traffic flow through the village in particular locations that are pinch points. See also Map 2.

HVC5 Development proposals which would increase the number of access points or increase the volume of traffic will need to demonstrate that they do not further inhibit the free flow of traffic or exacerbate conditions of parking stress, including conflict with larger vehicles, in the areas identified on Map 2 as follows:

- (i) that section of Station Road between the Mill Road and Chelmsford Road junctions;
- (ii) that section of Chelmsford Road between Station Road and Cromwell Park; and
- (iii) that section of Braintree Road between Chelmsford Road and the War Memorial.

5.2. Village Amenities

- 5.2.1. Throughout the consultation process, the community has been insistent that the Plan should do everything possible to protect the amenities we currently enjoy. This has proved challenging. The Doctors expressed a strong preference for a new location on the extreme western edge of the parish. In general development on the edge of parish is inconsistent with another objective, that of resisting coalescence.
- 5.2.2. The shop is another valued amenity. Many parishioners have said it is the 'heart of the community'. However, the shop occupies historical listed premises in the village centre that constrain its ability to offer the kind of range of services that will be required throughout the plan period to remain as a viable commercial enterprise. Even if the shop could expand on this site, it would then exacerbate the problem of congestion in the village centre, another issue the SG has also been asked to resolve. If the shop is to continue to operate competitively and extend its services it will eventually, and in our view during the Plan Period, need to move to a larger and more accessible site. The heart needs to be transplanted.
- 5.2.3. The SG attempted to find a site that would allow co-location of amenities in a new Community Hub that met the needs of all stakeholders but was unable to do so. The Plan therefore proposes policies that offer as much support as possible to the individual amenities to preserve their accessibility throughout the Plan Period.
- 5.2.4. During the course of preparation of the Plan, the SG received a presentation on a 'Dementia Unit' project by for 120 residents in a community setting. The SG was impressed by the presentation. The SG considered that the unit was innovative and potentially offered a valuable amenity for our ageing community which, because of the proposed style, had relatively limited impact on the rural character of the parish. It also offered some limited benefits in relation to rural employment. On balance, the SG supported the project. However, we carefully considered whether it was within our remit to support the specific proposal and concluded that it had not been consulted on sufficiently for a specific policy to be included in the Plan.

Doctors' Surgery

- 5.2.5. Retaining a surgery is a key community objective identified for inclusion in the Plan and it is the intention of this Plan to support the re-location of the doctors' surgery within the Parish. Parishioners expressed strong support for the doctors but wished to see a surgery that offered easier parking, better accessibility and a wider range of health services.
- 5.2.6. The existing single storey surgery building is located in the Conservation Area in close proximity to the Grade 1 Listed Cricket Pavilion. Any replacement structure of more than a single storey risks negatively impacting on the setting of this heritage asset. The Plan ensures that the existing surgery site is not redeveloped without concern for the character and nature of the village setting and does not continue to contribute to congestion in the village.

VA1 In the event of the GP surgery and dispensary closing or being successfully relocated within the neighbourhood area, the Plan supports the redevelopment of the existing surgery/dispensary site for uses that have a low impact on the immediate surroundings, for example as;

- Residential dwelling(s) or
- Offices

Support for the redevelopment is dependent on the proposed use not exacerbating existing traffic congestion and parking concerns at this location.

Memorial Hall

- 5.2.7. Now over 90 years old The Memorial Hall, though greatly valued, can no longer be expected to meet all the needs of our enlarged community. The Hall is relatively small and was constructed to accommodate the needs of a population of just a third of the current size. It is lacking in modern amenities and has no real capacity to expand. The community has said it wants a larger place to meet; to hold private functions e.g. family parties, to facilitate larger community groups and to provide a venue for public meetings.
- 5.2.8. The site of the Memorial Hall is also important in that, potentially, it could provide vehicular access from Braintree Road to the Parish playing field and children's activity area. The current access is for pedestrians only: there is no vehicular access directly from Braintree Road. In the event that the Memorial Hall is relocated or redeveloped, the Plan seeks to improve vehicular access to these amenities.
- 5.2.9. A board of trustees administers the Memorial Hall. The trustees made it clear to the SG that their first choice is for the Memorial Hall, which they consider has significant sentimental value and important visual impact, should remain as it is and simply be refurbished. As an alternative the trustees would consider moving to the back of the existing site. Whilst this may provide access to the children's play area (5.2.6 above) neither of these proposals contribute to the Plan's wider objectives in relation to enhancing amenities.
- 5.2.10. The Plan therefore seeks to support the delivery of a new Village Hall as an asset for wider community use and safeguards the existing site for the benefit of the community.

VA2 The Plan supports the redevelopment of the Memorial Hall to accommodate up to 250 seated people; on the existing site or at another suitable site within the Parish.

In the event that the current Memorial Hall site is vacated the Plan safeguards the site (as shown on Map 3) to be used for a community use and/or an A1 Retail for a village Convenience Shop and Post Office, (as defined as a 'Small Shop' by the Sunday trading Hours Act 1994) and access to the recreational areas improved to provide vehicular access.

Infrastructure Priorities

- 5.2.11. Also pivotal to maintaining the integrity of Felsted is preserving the amenities within the Parish. In

the event of housing proposals coming forward which trigger a Local Plan requirement for affordable housing and where there is no unmet need for such housing in the Parish, the infrastructure requirements set out in Policy **VA3** will take priority. Development proposals will be expected to contribute towards the delivery of necessary community infrastructure where appropriate. Section 106⁸ contributions will meet the tests set out in the NPPF and be:

- Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- Directly related to the development; and
- Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

5.2.12. It is likely that over the course of the Plan period, the existing primary school will increase intake to become a two form entry school, see section 5.3, below. The Plan therefore directs infrastructure provision to support the potential expansion of the primary school, or appropriate enhancement of the existing facilities on the site, for example through the replacement of existing temporary buildings to facilitate the anticipated future growth.

5.2.13. Similarly, there are local aspirations for the replacement of both the Royal British Legion and the Memorial Hall. Conversations about both projects are ongoing, and the Plan includes policies to support those ambitions. The Plan therefore directs developer contributions through the Felsted Community Trust or Section 106 monies to support the realisation of projects such as improvements to the primary school, securing continued provision of a village hall and the Royal British Legion within our parish.

VA3 When considering the nature of developer contributions in respect of planning applications in the Neighbourhood Area, the following local infrastructure requirements will be given priority:

- Improvements to and enlargement of the Primary School;
- A village hall to accommodate up to 250 seated people;
- Premises for the relocation of the Royal British Legion

Burial Ground

5.2.14. The cemetery at Holy Cross Church is closed and there is concern that there is no alternative facility. The Plan seeks to support the identification of a new sympathetically located burial ground within the Parish that provides safe vehicular access and adequate parking for visitors.

VA4 The Plan supports the designation of a new burial ground within the Parish that provides safe vehicular access and adequate and sympathetically designed parking for visitors.

⁸ Section 106 (S106) Agreements are legal agreements between Local Authorities and developers linked to planning permissions and are also known as planning obligations. They often include requirements for financial contributions from developers. Should Section 106 be supplemented by the introduction of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) the conditionality in VA3 is intended to similarly apply.

5.3. Developing Our Schools

- 5.3.1. The development of the schools in the Parish is strongly supported but, whilst recognising their cultural, social and economic importance, the community has demanded that greater consideration be given to their overall impact on the Parish. In particular there is concern that insufficient recognition is given to the congestion caused by school traffic.
- 5.3.2. Felsted School has developed new facilities and the Plan recognises the likelihood of a continuing need for development throughout the Plan period.
- 5.3.3. Felsted Primary School at Watch House Green also needs better facilities. Temporary classrooms need to be replaced and some additional buildings may be required during the Plan period in light of anticipated growth in demand for school places.
- 5.3.4. The Plan seeks to address these concerns by establishing generic policies for all School's development and specific policies for each school. The policies are intended to:
- Mitigate the impact of school traffic
 - Secure the future of a primary school within the Parish
 - Control parking and improve road safety
 - Encourage wider community use of school facilities

Supporting our Schools

- 5.3.5. Felsted is known as much for the quality of its schools as it is for its beautiful rural setting. Both the state primary school and Felsted School do much to enhance the reputation of the community, provide employment and enhance the social fabric of Felsted. The Plan seeks to offer the schools support and to encourage their development as places of educational excellence. At the same time, the Plan also seeks to mitigate the negative impacts of the schools on wider parish life by focusing on the schools impact on traffic congestion.

SC1 The following development proposals by the schools will be supported:

- Proposals to enable expansion and improvement of the schools and, other than those specifically supported in SC5, subject to it being demonstrated that they will:
 1. Ease the free flow of traffic and reduce parking stress.
 2. Wherever possible provide wider community benefit.
- Park and Ride or Park and Walk schemes which are sympathetically designed, alleviate pressure on the local highways network and respect the character and appearance of the local area.
- Proposals that provide additional sympathetically designed parking within or adjacent to the existing school site boundaries and include effective and deliverable traffic management schemes.

Proposals on school sites that do not include adequate parking provision or effective and deliverable traffic management schemes will not be supported.

Felsted School

- 5.3.6. Stebbing Road runs directly through the 80-acre site occupied by Felsted School. The school has major facilities for students on both sides of this road, frequently requiring students to move across the road during the school day. Stebbing Road has a 30mph speed limit. The further development of facilities on the school site will increase pedestrian traffic. Though a public thoroughfare, consideration should be given to how priority can be given to pedestrians and in turn to slow vehicular traffic. The Plan makes recommendations in the non-planning section to address this issue.

SC2 Subject to SC1, the Plan supports the expansion of Felsted School's permanent facilities off Stebbing Road providing they include a deliverable pedestrian priority plan to improve public safety in this section of Stebbing Road as marked on Map 4.

Felsted School Follyfield Site

- 5.3.7. The location of the School's facilities in the centre of the village present a particularly acute challenge. The Plan seeks to ensure that the partial alleviation of congestion, currently provided by the use by the School of the Follyfield site for parking, are not lost through development of additional School facilities.

SC3 Any redevelopment of Felsted School's Follyfield site (as shown on Map 4) must include adequate provision for parking and not reduce the existing off – road parking facility (68 vehicles) or the existing 'kiss and drop' facility. It must result in a single vehicular entry and a single vehicular exit point to the public highway between the houses on Braintree Road known as The Folly and Rose Cottage and must also include a deliverable traffic management scheme to manage 'right turns' to and from the public highway.

Felsted School Facilities off Braintree Road or Garnetts Lane

- 5.3.8. Whilst recognising the economic importance of Felsted School and supporting its continuing need for development, the Plan also recognises the need to ensure that development does not impair the open aspects of the village centre or create an urban or overbuilt environment detached from the overall rural community setting of the Parish. Consequently, the Plan supports the growth and redevelopment of Felsted School facilities, but requires consideration to be given to their impact on the wider community and *where possible* to sharing amenities for wider community use.
- 5.3.9. The AECOM report notes the important contribution that Felsted School makes to the character of the Parish. The Plan supports that contribution and developments of the School that are sensitive to local character. The report highlights the substantial areas of well-maintained green space within Felsted School, which provide the setting of the historic buildings of the School. The report also highlights that the cumulative impact of continued development of Felsted School has the potential to erode the character of the area and that open space in the village and rural fringes contributes positively to the setting and significance of heritage assets in the area.
- 5.3.10. Views from Braintree Road and Garnetts Lane across the significant open space in front of the main school building are defining factors in the character of the parish and make important contributions to the character of the village centre, something truly local and distinctive. Further developments in Braintree Road or in Garnetts Lane have potentially negative impacts on the open vistas and the views of the school.

SC4 Any further development of Felsted School Facilities off Braintree Road or Garnetts Lane will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated through a townscape impact appraisal that the existing open vistas and views of the school will be maintained or enhanced.

Felsted Primary School – Modernisation

- 5.3.11. Currently the School has 'single form entry'. It is likely that during the Plan Period, there will be proposals for a "double form entry", requiring the School to expand its facilities. The Plan seeks to both meet the School's current needs and provide a contingency for expansion.
- 5.3.12. The Plan recognises and seeks to support the Primary School's need for modernisation. In particular, the existing temporary structures are incompatible with the delivery of high quality education of the standard the community demands throughout the Plan period.
- 5.3.13. The primary aim of the policies in this section of the Plan is to support improvements and growth of Felsted Primary School on the *existing* site.

- 5.3.14. Notwithstanding the requirements of SC1, the Plan considers it unreasonable for modernisation of Felsted Primary School to be constrained, in limited circumstances, by any requirement for the school also to be required to address external issues of parking and traffic management. Therefore, the Plan supports the replacement of *existing* temporary structures without the conditionality contained in SC1 above.

SC5 Notwithstanding the general conditionality of SC1, the Plan supports the modernisation of the Primary School on the existing site shown on Map 5 through the *replacement* of existing temporary buildings.

Felsted Primary School Expansion

- 5.3.15. Parking and congestion is already a very significant concern at the existing Primary School site. The community is concerned about congestion around the School, its impact on through traffic and the risk of accidents involving vehicles and pedestrians.
- 5.3.16. To alleviate these issues, the Plan applies policy SC1 and SC6 and makes any *expansion* of the school's facilities conditional on significant improvements to parking, public safety and traffic congestion. Additionally, the Plan identifies a site at Sunnybrook Farm for the development of new homes contingent on the developer providing both parking and drop-off facilities for School.

SC6 The Plan supports the development and expansion of the Primary School on the existing site as shown on Map 5 providing the proposal is supported by a detailed and deliverable traffic management scheme that provides:

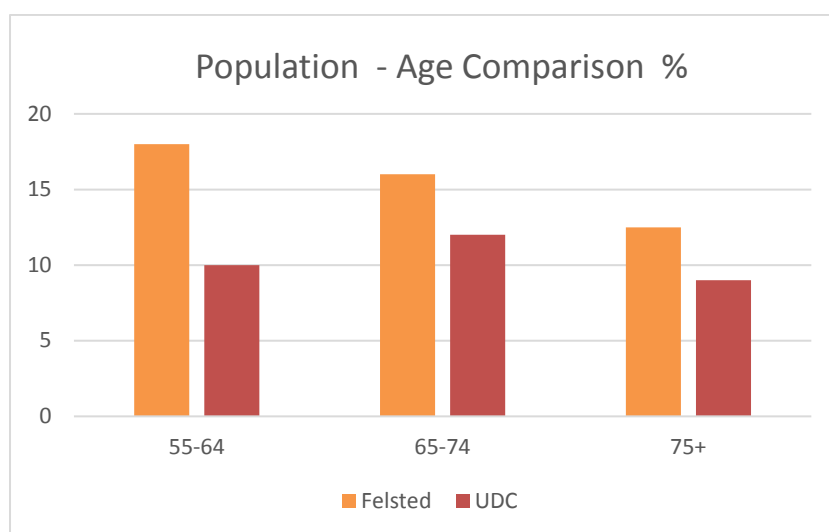
- i) New vehicular access and egress for the school
- ii) Substantial off street short term waiting
- iii) Adequate off-street parking for staff
- iv) Safe off-road drop-off and pick-up areas

- 5.3.17. A secondary aim of Schools Policy in the Plan is to provide support *should* it become necessary to relocate Felsted Primary School within the Parish.

SC7 In the event that the Primary School is successfully relocated to an alternative location within the neighbourhood area, the Plan supports the principle of market housing on the existing Primary School site (as shown on Map 5) providing the housing mix includes 2 and 3 bedroom properties that meet both the needs of an ageing population looking to downsize and those requiring Starter Homes for the under 30s. Any such proposals would need to involve active engagement with the community, via the provision of a development brief prior to any application, in line with Policy HN1 of this Plan.

5.4. Meeting Housing Needs

- 5.4.1. The Plan policies aim to meet housing need and address the community's concerns by offering policies which take a positive approach to sustainable development but which also ensure maximum community benefits.
- 5.4.2. Consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework, the Plan supports a positive approach to the consideration of development proposals by the Parish Council to identify sustainable proposals that can contribute positively to the Parish.
- 5.4.3. Neighbourhood Plans are not required to allocate sites for housing development. However, in order to maximise the benefits of accepting new housing development, and in a climate of there being an identified "housing crisis" and an increasing demand for housing in Felsted, the Steering Group took the decision to allocate housing sites to meet current and anticipated future demand in Felsted.
- 5.4.4. The ageing demographic of our community requires that special consideration be given in planning policy to ensuring that valued amenities like the doctors' surgery, dispensary, village shop and Post Office are supported so they remain viable and accessible.
- 5.4.5. Accurately identifying the future need for affordable housing is essential to developing effective housing policy. Housing Needs Surveys should be conducted every five years to ensure that the Parish's 'need' is properly understood on a continuing basis throughout the Plan period to 2033.
- 5.4.6. The Rural Community Council for Essex (RCCE) conducted a survey to determine the affordable housing need for the 5 years commencing May 2016. The survey identified a need for 14 new affordable homes.
- 5.4.7. A significant consideration for the Plan is meeting the specific needs of the ageing demographic of the Parish. Felsted's population in relation to the national profile and the Uttlesford profile is comparatively much older.



12 Office of National Statistics - 2011 Census data

- 5.4.8. Among this increasing number of older members of the community in Felsted, there is concern about the lack of suitable properties for downsizing. Many active older people occupy substantial family houses and, whilst they would like smaller, easier to manage properties, they do not want to relinquish the standard of comfort and amenity their homes provide or move away from Felsted - where they have long established social and family connections - to find suitable smaller places to

live.

- 5.4.9. The survey of estate agents confirmed the anecdotal evidence gathered. Felsted is a highly desirable place to live and there is demand for housing of all kinds. This can be summed up by the comments of one agent who said, 'Build whatever you like in Felsted and it will sell'. Smaller homes, which encouraged older owners of large well-appointed family homes to downsize were in short supply as were lower cost, entry level homes.
- 5.4.10. Housing policies in the Plan are intended to maintain the rural character and heritage of the Parish as characterised in the AECOM report and to:-
- Meet any identified need for affordable housing
 - Help younger people remain in the Parish
 - Ensure development is controlled and is sustainable
 - Extract the maximum community value from major ⁹ development
 - Encourage the development of small high-quality homes suitable for downsizers with local connections to the Parish
 - Protect the Parish and its constituent hamlets from coalescence
 - Protect the character and heritage of the Parish
- 5.4.11. The policy response to consultation requests, '*to provide more opportunity to downsize*' and '*to create opportunity for younger parishioners to remain*' is important to create conditions that foster family cohesion. Policy should also encourage people to give up homes which are too large for their needs and provide opportunities for families to acquire larger family homes in the Parish without excessive over-development.

Meeting Housing Needs

- 5.4.12. UDC's draft Local Plan identifies Felsted as a Type A village. In early drafts of the Local Plan, Felsted (or other Type A villages – with the exception of Quendon and Rickling) were not identified as settlements that would see additional housing development through allocation in the Local Plan. However, in October 2017, the Government launched the consultation document "Planning for the Right Homes in the Right Places", which set out a revised methodology for Local Planning Authorities' Objectively Assessed Needs for housing growth. The consultation document stated very clearly that the figures calculated for each Local Planning Authority would be a minimum. The document stated a figure of some 136 units per year higher than set out in the draft UDC Local Plan. In the absence of a 5 year supply of deliverable housing sites (a requirement of the NPPF), there is an increasing level of interest and speculative development proposals coming forward, particularly in Felsted which has a very strong housing market.
- 5.4.13. Following informal conversations with UDC planning officers and consideration by the SG, it was recognised that the Parish would strongly resist any further housing development, but at the same time it was likely that the revised draft Local Plan would allocate housing sites for development in Felsted. UDC were unable to provide figures on a parish-by-parish basis, so were unable to identify a target number of units that Felsted would have to accommodate.
- 5.4.14. In order to maximise the benefits and choice for the community from the likely housing growth in the Plan period, the SG decided to push ahead with allocating housing sites for development in order to meet likely future needs, and to contribute to the higher target at a Local Plan level. Although the SG were reluctant to include further housing development in the Plan, it was recognised the responsible

⁹ 'Major development' means inter alia, '10 or more dwellings' (TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING, ENGLAND. The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. Part 1, Article 2.)

way forward would be for the NP to allocate housing sites in order to prevent unwanted or unsuitable development that would otherwise be likely to come forward over the Plan period.

- 5.4.15. UDC have not provided a housing target at a neighbourhood-area level, and the SG therefore had to develop an appropriate methodology which is based on Planning Practice Guidance. This methodology also reflects local circumstances and the range of sites that may come forward as suggested by the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)¹⁰. The process of establishing a housing target for Felsted and the consequent site selection to meet this target is set out in the Site Assessment Evidence Base document.
- 5.4.16. The Plan's support for *any* additional market housing in the Parish has been strictly conditional on the basis that the schemes we have identified bring with them significant long-term benefits to the community. The specific development proposals we have identified in this Plan reflects many months of negotiations with stakeholders and provides a unique opportunity to secure one of our most valued assets for generations to come. This opportunity would have been lost if the SG had not engaged with prospective developers.

HN1 The Plan sets a housing target of 63 new residential dwellings on allocated development sites over the Plan period.

Housing Site Allocations

- 5.4.17. Identifying sites for development has been the most difficult aspect of the NP process. Parishioners have been unanimous in resisting further development. We have been particularly mindful of the strenuous opposition to any further development voiced by the residents of some areas of the Parish who feel besieged by building that has, in their view, irreversibly damaged the amenity of their communities. The community at Watch House Green has been particularly vocal in its objections to any further development. However, we have an obligation to support some development. So we have carefully considered the long-term benefits, which could accrue from limited developments throughout the Plan Period and we have ensured that no single area bears the burden of unwanted development.
- 5.4.18. Sites have been considered and objectively assessed for their suitability, deliverability, achievability and availability and their contribution to the community. The potential sites were identified from the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). The assessment provided by the SHLAA formed the basis for the SG's Site Assessment work. Each site assessment included the UDC Status comment and where relevant the comments submitted to UDC by Felsted Parish Council.
- 5.4.19. Following the assessment process, and with consideration of the target set by Policy HN1, the sites at Sunnybrook Farm in Braintree Road (SHLAA site 20FEL15) and land adjacent to Bury Farm on the north side of Station Road (SHLAA site 01Fel15) were considered both appropriate and sustainable sites for new housing development in Felsted. Both sites offered very significant community benefits. Details of the assessment process are provided in the Site Assessment Evidence Base document.

¹⁰ The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) is a technical study that informs the development of planning policies. It forms a register of available and achievable development sites and is used by the Local Planning Authority to determine how much land is available for housing. Sites are submitted to the SHLAA for consideration during the Local Plan process and may be allocated by the Local Authority for housing development.

- 5.4.20. **The Sunnybrook Farm site in Braintree Road. SHLAA site 20FEL15:** Traffic congestion around the Felsted Primary School is a significant problem the community wants the Plan to address. Currently the school has a single form entry. During the Plan Period the likelihood is that the school will become a two-form entry school and classes will increase from 9 to 14. Development of the school is outside the control of the Parish. A larger primary school pupil population will undoubtedly attract additional vehicles and exacerbate existing problems of traffic congestion and public safety. Therefore it is considered prudent not only to address the current problem, but to make some provision for any increase in the size of the school over the Plan Period.
- 5.4.21. The Sunnybrook Farm site is immediately adjacent to the Primary School. Housing development on this site provides an opportunity to mitigate the congestion currently caused by school traffic and to provide some contingency for an increase in the size of the school. Support for the development proposal is itself entirely contingent on the provision by the developer of a new road to the west of the School and generous off-road parking and drop-off areas. The specific location, design and details should take account of any operational requirements of the school and education authority and maximise land use, including the potential for the integration of land under the control of Essex County Council, the education authority.
- 5.4.22. The developer has agreed to convey the land for the parking and the 'kiss and drop' area to the Parish through the Felsted Community Trust. Over the period of the Plan, the acquisition of this parking area offers the Trust an opportunity for a revenue stream through providing funding at the Trust's discretion for future community projects.
- 5.4.23. Whilst in general the Plan resists 'back land development', the Plan supports the development of 24 dwellings on this site on the basis of the additional benefits to the community by alleviating traffic congestion caused by the School at Watch House Green through the provision of significant off-street parking, a 'kiss and drop' facility and the proposed housing mix which promises opportunities for downsizing and first-time buyers.
- 5.4.24. The SG also carefully examined the issue of coalescence and consider that the visual transition from Felsted village to the settlement at Watch House Green is maintained by the proposal to retain the existing hedgerows and to 'double plant' a buffer zone.
- 5.4.25. This site has also been identified and accepted as a SHLAA site by UDC, but we attach significantly greater weight to its importance to deliver the objectives of the Plan for the Parish. Indicative drawings for how the scheme would be laid out when brought forward by the developer are showed in Appendix 1.
- 5.4.26. The Plan recognises that due to the provision of the parking and kiss and drop facilities, the viability of the overall scheme is dependent on the agreement between UDC and the developers to commute all the affordable housing requirements (40% of dwellings). This will be agreed in writing between the developers and Uttlesford District Council as the Local Planning Authority.
- 5.4.27. The SG have had extensive discussions the developers of this site and have agreed that the scheme, when brought forward, will include:
- Proposals for on-site SUDS through the provision of swales to mitigate surface water run-off¹¹;
 - Measures for screening and landscape buffers to the site to avoiding coalescence;
 - A kiss and drop facility for the Primary School and significant car parking; and

¹¹ SUDS: Are physical structures built to receive surface water run-off and provide a drainage system;
Swales: Are dry channels or ditches and basins are dry "ponds".

- A mix of dwellings to address local needs.

HN2 The Plan allocates the Sunnybrook Farm Site (Site A) as shown on Map 6 and Map 7 for market housing development of up to 24 units. Development on this site will:

- Include mitigation measures for the identified traffic issues relating to the Primary School in the vicinity of the site, notably a new access road, a kiss and drop facility and significant off-road landscaped car parking provision, including contingency provision pending future expansion of the Primary School. These should be designed to take account of any operational requirements of the school and maximise land use. These measures will be secured through a Section 106 Agreement between the developer and the Highways Authority;
- Be well-screened to the western and northern boundaries to mitigate the visual impact of the development on the landscape;
- A landscape buffer behind the existing properties at Braintree road;
- Swales to provide SUDS running along new roads; and
- Provide a mix of housing to meet existing and future needs of our community by including a significant proportion of starter homes and accessible homes that are suitable for the elderly.

Development should be based on active consultation with the community and the Parish Council through the provision of a development brief prepared prior to the submission of a planning application.

- 5.4.28. **Land in Station Road to the west of Bury Farm. SHLAA site 01Fel15:** This site is identified by UDC as a development site. It was also identified by Strutt and Parker, in an independent report commissioned by the SG, as a suitable site for a Community Hub including a doctors' surgery. However, this site is on the extreme western edge of the Parish and the SG did not consider that it could be recommended to the community as, in any accepted sense, a 'hub' for all the key village amenities. Unfortunately, no other suitable site for a community hub could be found and the SG has worked with the developer, the landowner and doctors' surgery to secure the provision of a new fully-built surgery on this site.
- 5.4.29. To maintain the financial viability of a doctors' surgery in the Parish, the Practice needs to grow its patient list. Over the Plan period the doctors believe that an increasing proportion of their patients will come from new developments outside the Parish to the west. They consider this site to be perfectly located to meet the emerging demand, thereby providing the financial viability to the Practice to support expanded services, including additional doctors and space for visiting consultants, offering substantial direct benefits to our community.
- 5.4.30. The Plan therefore supports development of no more than 39 dwellings on this site as being the most favourable option for our community. The development of the site will provide a building for a new doctors' surgery and dispensary acceptable to the existing doctors' Practice. It presents both the best opportunity of retaining medical services within the Parish and an opportunity for long-term financial gain to the Parish through rental returns.
- 5.4.31. To limit the impact of coalescence with Flitch Green and to retain as much as possible of the existing streetscape, the Plan gives conditional support to a development boundary which extends in a straight line from a point directly opposite the boundary of the existing dwellings on the west side of Station Road to the angle formed by the northern and eastern boundaries of the site. Additionally, the developer will give the northern segment of site identified in SHLAA Site FEL1 which extends from the northern boundary of the proposed development in a triangular shape as a 'buffer' preventing further development.

- 5.4.32. This additional Parish public amenity land offers an area of open space directly opposite the extension to the Felsted Fen, enhancing the enjoyment of the adjacent footpaths, providing added public amenity and an opportunity to mitigate against harm caused by the development to existing on-site ecology features, such as the hedgerows that bound the site. Importantly, it will be secure from any future development.
- 5.4.33. The plan's support for this site is also conditional on the careful landscaping of the western boundary of this development retaining or reinstating hedgerows to secure a positive visual transition and to minimise any visual coalescence with the development at Flitch Green.
- 5.4.34. The developer has agreed to convey the land and building for the surgery to the Parish through the Felsted Community Trust for leasing to the Doctors' Practice. Over the period of the plan, the acquisition of this asset offers the Trust an opportunity for a unique revenue stream providing funding at the Trust's discretion for future community projects. The 'buffer' of the amenity land to the north of the site will be transferred directly to the Parish.
- 5.4.35. The site for the surgery is shown on Map 6 and Map 8. Indicative drawings of how the scheme would look when brought forward by the developer are showed in Appendix 2.
- 5.4.36. The Plan recognises that due to cost of providing the land and building for a new doctor's surgery, the viability of the overall scheme is dependent on the agreement between UDC and the developers to commute all the affordable housing requirements (40% of dwellings). This will be agreed in writing between the developers and Uttlesford District Council as the Local Planning Authority.
- 5.4.37. The Plan recognises the need to address access concerns regarding the road layout, safety and how the site will be accessed. However, it is not for the Plan to resolve these issues. They will be dealt with by the planning application process and negotiated by the Highways Authority and the developer.

HN3 The Plan allocates Bury Farm Site (Site B) as shown on Map 6 and Map 8 for market housing development of up to 39 units and for the development of a doctor's surgery.

Development of this site will:

- Provide land and building for the development of a doctors' surgery which:
 - Will feature as part of the comprehensive development of the wider site;
 - Provides space for 5 practising doctors and 7 consulting rooms unless otherwise agreed with the Parish Council and CCG/surgery;
 - Provides adequate car parking; and
 - Is designed and landscaped to a high standard.
- Incorporate a mix of housing to suit the needs of the community, including the provision of high quality smaller homes for downsizing or for first time buyers;
- Include highways mitigation measures to address issues immediately approaching the site;
- Not extend beyond the end of the built form on the southern side of Station Road and provide landscaping and screening to the edge built-up area of the development to avoid coalescence with Flitch Green and provide a positive visual transition into the village;
- Provide on-site natural open space to the western end of the site as a continuation of the Felsted Fen and access to the adjacent Public Right of Way, gifted to the Parish and safeguarded from future development;
- Avoid unnecessary removal of hedgerows and where removal is necessary provide on-site replacement native hedgerows; and
- Address the elevated topography of the site and the effect of the development on the landscape and views that make a contribution to the character of Felsted;

Development should be based on active consultation with the community and the Parish Council through the provision of a development brief prepared prior to the submission of a planning application.

Residential Development within the Development Limits

- 5.4.38. There are 4 identified areas of Development Limits in the Parish: Felsted Village, Causeway End, Watch House Green and Bannister Green (shown on Map 12 and Map 13). The draft Local Plan provides for development within identified Development Limits that is in keeping with the local character and built environment.
- 5.4.39. Policy HN4 supplements that by defining appropriate development within Felsted's development limits.

HN4 Residential development proposals will be supported within Village Development Limits (VDLs) subject to:

- i) The development contributing positively to the character and heritage of the Parish
- ii) The development not having an unacceptable adverse impact on congestion in the Historic Village Centre or on the local highways network.
- iii) The proposed housing mix being appropriate to identified local housing needs including specific provision for older people looking to downsize, younger people looking to remain in the Parish, opportunities for shared ownership, starter homes and affordable housing.
- iv) It being demonstrated that necessary infrastructure is in place or will be provided to serve the development.

Residential Development Proposals outside the Village Development Limits

- 5.4.40. As identified by Policies HN1, HN2 and HN3, the SG recognises that new housing development will come forward in Felsted during the Plan period. Housing sites have been identified that are adjacent to the edges of the identified Village Development Limits in Felsted.
- 5.4.41. It is recognised by the SG that during the plan period, other development proposals may come forward outside the Village Development Limits which would be appropriate despite their countryside location. Policy HN5 defines acceptable sustainable development outside of the Village Development Limits.

HN5 The Plan resists residential development proposals outside Village Development Limits other than:

- i) Rural Exception Housing, subject to the need being established through an up to date professionally assessed housing needs survey, restricting its allocation in perpetuity to those with a direct connection with Felsted Parish, to include rented, Shared Ownership, Affordable Homes and in relation to Starter Homes for 5 years;
- ii) Limited market housing required to enable the delivery of rural exceptions Affordable housing;
- iii) Replacement dwellings where the new dwelling is no greater than 25% larger by footprint than the dwelling it replaces;
- iv) Supplemental residential dwellings in line with Policy HN6;
- v) Development allowed in exceptional scenarios on the edge of the VDLs by other policies in this plan (SC4 and SC6) where the community has been actively engaged, via the provision of a development brief and where exceptional benefits to the community (including delivery of infrastructure requirements identified in this Plan) can be clearly demonstrated; and
- vi) Sites allocated in this plan (HN2, HN3)

Supplemental dwellings

- 5.4.42. The Plan recognises the value in providing opportunities for older people to downsize and to remain close to their established community. Similarly, where a greater degree of health care is required than that which can be provided in a primary dwelling, a supplemental development within the curtilage of existing residential dwellings could provide a solution with considerable community benefits. Supplemental dwellings are defined as residential units developed within the curtilage of existing homes which are necessary to enabling the existing resident to remain in their own homes, through using the supplemental dwelling to house carers or family members whilst providing care to the resident.

- 5.4.43. The 2018 consultation NPPF includes a definition of older people as *“people over or approaching retirement age, including the active, newly-retired through to the very frail elderly; and whose housing needs can encompass accessible, adaptable general needs housing through to the full range of retirement and specialised housing for those with support or care needs”* and Policy HN6 is to be interpreted using this definition.
- 5.4.44. Care is required to ensure that the policy intentions are not abused to secure development where it would otherwise be resisted. The Plan therefore offers limited support for supplemental dwelling but also requires an applicant to surrender any unused rights to Permitted Development on the primary dwelling to limit over-development of a residential site.

HN6 The Plan supports development of a single supplemental dwelling wholly within the curtilage of an existing residential dwelling where Permitted Development Rights for the primary dwelling have been surrendered and the supplemental dwelling:

- i) Is essential to maintaining a familial or community link to an older person (or older people).
- ii) Has a footprint no greater than 60% of the primary property’s footprint.
- iii) Is complementary to the primary property in design, style and setting.
- iv) When taken together with the primary property, does not result in over-development or excessive occupational density of the whole site by comparison with its surroundings.

Implementation of this policy shall be by means of a condition forming part of any planning consent for a supplemental dwelling which restricts the separation for sale of the primary and supplemental dwellings for a period of 15 years and gives effect to the following intention:-

For a period of not less than 15 years from the grant of planning consent occupation of the dwelling shall be restricted to either of:-

- i) A qualifying person, defined as the person who prior to the grant of the consent owned and occupied the property within which the dwelling is to be built, or the spouse or dependant of such a person, or the widow or widower of such a person.
- ii) A carer employed by or on behalf of a qualifying person.

Housing Mix

- 5.4.45. **Support for Young Residents.** The Plan also recognises the need to offer scope for younger and less well-off members of the community to find an opportunity for independent living.
- 5.4.46. Felsted’s population in relation to the national profile and the Uttlesford profile is comparatively much older. The average (mean) age of residents was 41.8 years (this compares with an average (mean) age of residents across the district 40.6 years. 20.9% of the parish’s population was over the age of 60 at the time of the 2011 Census compared with 17% of the district’s population.
- 5.4.47. In total there were 1,122 household spaces. Of these, 1,083 (96.5%) had at least one usual resident and 39 (3.5%) had no usual residents.
- 5.4.48. In terms of house sizes, the table below provides an indication of house sizes in the parish compared to the district and the country. The table indicates that the parish is well stocked with larger homes and under provided with smaller homes.

- 5.4.49. Meanwhile, 21.3 % of households in Felsted parish are one-person households with 13.3 % of these being aged 65 or over. Of the 71.77 % family households in Felsted parish, 13.8 % are aged 65 or over.
- 5.4.50. Together with the findings of the Felsted Housing Needs Survey published in 2017, the statistics below indicate a clear evidenced need for smaller homes to come forward in the parish during the plan period.

	Felsted		Uttlesford		England	
	No	Percent	No	Percent	No	Percent
All Household Spaces With At Least One Usual Resident ¹²	1083		31316		22063368	
No Bedrooms	0		31	0.10%	54938	0.25%
1 Bedroom	50	4.62%	2258	7.21%	2593893	11.76%
2 Bedrooms	207	19.11%	6601	21.08%	6145083	27.85%
3 Bedrooms	330	30.47%	11375	36.32%	9088213	41.19%
4 Bedrooms	306	28.25%	7456	23.81%	3166531	14.35%
5 or More Bedrooms	190	17.54%	3595	11.48%	1014710	4.60%

Local Housing Needs Survey

- 5.4.51. An Affordable Housing Needs Survey was commissioned by Felsted Parish Council from RCCE (Rural Community Council of Essex) in January 2016. The survey was completed in March 2016. Of 1,085 forms distributed a total of 347 were returned. In summary the findings were:

An identified need for:

- 12 units for open market
- 3 units for shared ownership
- 14 units for affordable housing
- 2 starter homes

A recommendation from RCCE for the delivery of 14 affordable housing units as follows:

- 2 x 2 Bedroom Bungalows on the open market
- 2 x 2 Bedroom Houses on the open market
- 1 x 3 Bedroom Bungalow on the open market
- 1 x 3 Bedroom House on the open market
- 1 x 2 Bedroom House for shared ownership
- 1 x 2 Bedroom physically adapted bungalow at affordable rent
- 2 x 2 bedroom bungalows at affordable rent
- 2 x 2 Bedroom houses at affordable rent
- 2 x 3 Bedroom houses at affordable rent

- 5.4.52. The report noted “a significant need identified for downsizing accommodation for older residents within the parish, something which should be considered for future development.”
- 5.4.53. The 2017 Felsted Housing Needs Survey represents a snap shot in time and it is generally recommended that they are updated every 5 years. The need set out above indicates existing need for housing in the parish rather than need for a longer duration.

¹² Source: Census 2011 Number of Bedrooms (QS411EW)

- 5.4.54. Policy HN7 therefore encourages new developments to come forward that provide a mix of housing to meet locally-identified need.

HN7 The Plan supports new housing developments that provide a mix of house types and sizes to meet the identified need in Felsted and supports the increased provision of smaller 1 and 2 bedroom affordable or Starter Homes to meet the needs of our younger population.

The Plan also supports provision of homes suitable for the elderly wishing to downsize.

Major Development proposals will be accompanied by an up-to-date housing needs assessment where one has not been conducted by a reputable source within the last 5 years to demonstrate how the development will meeting local housing need.

5.5. Integrity, Character and Heritage

- 5.5.1. Throughout the consultation, Parishioners wanted the Plan to ensure that where development is permitted it is complimentary to the character of the Parish as a whole and in particular to its heritage assets. There was particular antipathy towards high density development and ostentatious housing of the style found in other areas of Metropolitan Essex which are considered unsympathetic to a rural village setting.
- 5.5.2. To inform the Plan, Felsted Parish Council secured the support of AECOM (via Locality support for the NP process) to undertake a detailed heritage and character appraisal of the NP area. The appraisal resulted in the Felsted Heritage and Character Assessment (FHCA) which is now a key supporting document to the Neighbourhood Plan and is available to view alongside the Plan. Development proposals should reflect the FHCA report and be subject to early consultation with the Parish Council
- 5.5.3. The FHCA identifies five distinct Landscape Character Areas (LCA) which are shown on the maps LCA 1-5 in the Assessment (available on the website). They are also shown on Map 9.
- 5.5.4. The FHCA includes a detailed analysis of each LCA and, as part of this analysis, identifies positive aspects of character, issues to be addressed and sensitivity to change. It is important that applicants for developments in the Parish, when drawing up detailed proposals, refer to the FHCA to ensure schemes are compliant with policy ICH1
- 5.5.5. The positive aspects of the Felsted NP area in terms of heritage and character are summarised below:
- A very strong local vernacular, specifically cream rendered frontages sometimes with pargeting, red tiled roofs, wooden front doors, external red brick chimney stacks and unique decorative features such as house names and external lights;
 - Distinctive clusters of settlement that flank the primary road network;
 - Survival of many historic buildings, some of which have been converted to residential use but retain the historic façade;
 - A landscape that includes much field boundary vegetation promoting a strong sense of enclosure therefore enabling a rural character to prevail in close proximity to settlements;
 - Links to the wider landscape through the network of public rights of way and “Quiet Lanes”;
 - The triangular green that sits at the centre of many settlements is a distinctive feature of the area and settlements are separated from each other by areas of open countryside;
 - The ‘heritage style’ palette of wayfinding signage promotes a rural and historic character; and
 - The prominence of mature specimen trees delineating field boundaries.
- 5.5.6. When preparing planning proposals, to ensure compliance with policy ICH1, the Felsted Conservation Area Character Appraisal (FCA), (produced by Officers of Uttlesford District Council and approved by Cabinet 13 December 2012), should be a “Material Consideration”. The FCA Character Appraisal includes additional planning controls which are important to the designated areas and accord with the statutory definition, including land or buildings that afford special interest.
- 5.5.7. The positive aspects of the FCA in terms of heritage and character are summarised below:
- The general character and setting of Felsted and elements that should be retained or enhanced;
 - The historical significance of 50 Listed Buildings and their setting;
 - The setting of the Grade 1 Holy Cross Church;
 - The large area of open space attached to the school which is visually very important and

makes a significant contribution to spatial quality; and

- The significance of specific features such as certain trees, hedges, walls, gates and railings.

High Quality Design

ICH 1 All development proposals in the Plan area will contribute positively to the character and heritage of the Parish. This means for all development:

- Sustaining, reinforcing or enhancing the positive aspects of Felsted's character as described in detail in the Felsted Heritage and Character Assessment and summarised in supporting text to this policy
- Being locally-distinctive through architectural quality, choice of materials, height, scale, design and layout
- Maintaining and respecting visual integrity of the historical settlement patterns and identities within the Parish
- Sensitive boundary treatment retaining where possible vegetated boundaries particularly those of native hedgerows and trees and incorporating boundary treatments that are sympathetic to local style and vernacular

For countryside locations:

- Sensitive treatment of the rural edge particularly around Felsted village with regard to impact on heritage assets and their setting including the surrounding landscape
- All new build proposals outside the development limits shall be accompanied by a landscape visual impact assessment
- Any replacement dwelling in an area of low density and isolated buildings in a large plot should respond to and respect the setting and should enhance the character of the area.

For the Conservation Area:

Preserving or enhancing the heritage significance of the Conservation Area itself (including its setting) and the individual heritage assets within them (including their setting) and demonstrating due regard to the Felsted Conservation Area Character Appraisal

Heritage Assets

- 5.5.8. The Felsted Heritage and Character Appraisal identifies buildings that are of historic significance and make a positive contribution to the built environment of Felsted. These heritage assets are a mixture of Listed Buildings (afforded significant protection by other statutory tools) and those non-designated heritage assets. It is appropriate for the Plan to define and plan for sustainable development that affects heritage assets (both designated and non-designated) and their settings.
- 5.5.9. In addition to the nationally Listed Buildings, the Conservation Area Character Appraisal identifies the following buildings as being important to the character of the conservation area: Felsted School Chapel, Stebbing Road; Felsted Preparatory School building between The Folly and Stewart House; Felsted Preparatory School building west of Stewart House; no. 5 Station Road; The Swan Public House; Barn Court, Braintree Road; house corner of Braintree Road Stebbing Road; The Chequers Public House. At time of writing, the District Council are undertaking consultation on a Draft Local Heritage list which includes these buildings.

ICH2 Development proposals shall preserve or enhance the heritage assets of the HVC and the rest of the parish including designated and non-designated heritage assets.

Development affecting designated or non-designated heritage assets will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that there is an understanding of the historic significance of the assets and how the development will respect the historical attributes in ways that are beneficial to maintaining the historic character of Felsted.

Signage and Light Pollution

- 5.5.10. The character and feel of the Parish can also be harmed by inappropriate signage and damage by light pollution. Concern was expressed about the harm done to areas of heritage or scenic value by excessive street signs, road markings and unnecessary lighting detracting from the enjoyment of the night sky. These latter issues are outside the remit of the Plan but the Plan seeks wherever it can to exercise control of what is perceived by the community as pollution.

ICH3 Sensitively designed signage will be permitted provided that the proposal alone, or in combination with other signage, does not detract from the character or appearance of any heritage assets or the Historic Village Centre.

ICH4 Development proposals must limit the impact of overhead cables and light pollution from artificial externally visible light sources.

Avoiding Coalescence

- 5.5.11. The character and integrity of the Parish is threatened by coalescence, both from developments on its boundaries and between settlements within the Parish. The Plan seeks to avoid development that would merge the Parish of Felsted with the Parishes of Flitch Green, Great Leighs, Great Notley, Rayne or other settlements along the Parish boundary. Policy **ICH5** seeks to offer protection from development that causes coalescence.

ICH5 The Plan resists development where it would result in or increase the risk of coalescence of Felsted hamlets with any other settlement and or hamlets within the parish or any neighbouring parishes including the areas on Map 9.

5.6. Supporting the Rural Economy



13 Farmland in Mill Road

- 5.6.1. An objective of the Plan is to recognise the need to protect and encourage the rural economy and to offer local employment by providing suitable opportunities for business and to help encourage younger people to remain in the Parish. These aspirations go to the heart of ensuring that the Parish remains a vibrant community offering employment opportunity within its boundaries.
- 5.6.2. It is recognised that small-scale businesses (including farming) are integral to the rural economy. A thriving rural economy in one settlement or Parish can support a whole network of satellite parishes and also provide important local employment opportunities.

Start-up and small businesses

- 5.6.3. There are a range of businesses in Felsted (see Evidence Base) which operate at a small-scale. In order to support the ongoing economic sustainability of the Parish (and that of nearby Parishes), the Plan provides for suitable small-scale business development in the Parish which does not have adverse impacts on local residential amenity.

RE1 The Plan supports the development of start-up and small business enterprises on 'brown field sites' or within the curtilage of existing business sites (as shown on Map 10) where the road and communications infrastructure can support the size and additional volume of the business traffic and there being no adverse impacts on local residential amenity.

Loss of employment uses

- 5.6.4. To protect the economic sustainability of the Parish, the Plan resists the loss of employment and business opportunities which are valuable assets to the local community. Local employment opportunities also reduce the level to which Felsted is a "commuter" village, where those who live in the village travel elsewhere for work. Through the continuation of local employment opportunities, the Plan contributes to economic and also environmental sustainability.

RE2 The Plan resists the change of use away from business premises (Use Class B) to any other use unless it can be demonstrated that there is no longer demand for the use to which the premises are committed. Evidence shall be required of an active marketing campaign from estate agents detailing exactly how, where and when the property was advertised, the number of sales particulars sent out, details of any inquiries made, and some professional assessments of the market value of the property.

Re-use of rural buildings

- 5.6.5. The enthusiasm for encouraging business development is tempered by concerns about the potential impacts on infrastructure, specifically the road network, which is particularly unsuited to high volumes of commercial or heavy goods vehicles.

RE3 The Plan supports development proposals for the reuse of existing rural buildings that create or prevent the loss of local employment opportunity, where the road and communications infrastructure can support the size and volume of the business traffic and there being no adverse impacts on residential amenity.

Home working

- 5.6.6. The government's commitment to better internet connectivity for rural communities creates a welcome and valued opportunity for more people to work from home. Whilst this is broadly welcomed and supported, there is a need to ensure that domestic premises used for home working should not become a nuisance to neighbours.

RE4 The Plan supports development for home working where it does not change the overall character of the property's use as a residential dwelling, remains an ancillary use, and does not cause excessive nuisance or disturbance.

Opportunity for new businesses

- 5.6.7. In addition to the measure to support home working, the Plan seeks to ensure that existing opportunities for employment in the Parish are maintained as far as reasonably possible and that additional opportunity for commercial development is provided where it least impacts on the rural nature of the Parish.

RE5 The Plan supports the development of business premises (Use Class B) on the land between the A120 and the B1256 between the bridge at Straits Farm and the junction with the B1417 as shown on Map 10.

5.7. Protecting the Countryside and Wildlife



The Saffron Trail - towards Leez Priory

- 5.7.1. Felsted is renowned for its rural setting which is enjoyed both by residents and visitors. Respecting the countryside is of fundamental importance to the Parish. The community demands measures to protect wildlife and the countryside. The Plan seeks to put the environment at the centre of planning policies. It requires consideration to be given to:
- improving access;
 - protecting vistas;
 - protecting open spaces; and
 - existing and new natural assets.

Landscape and Countryside Character

- 5.7.2. The Parish of Felsted lies within a high quality agricultural countryside landscape. The preservation of the landscape character of Felsted is important to the community, providing as it does the backcloth to the individual greens and hamlets that make up the parish.
- 5.7.3. The countryside character of Felsted is integral to the unique identity of the Parish and should be protected for its own sake, as well as the important contribution that it makes to the health and well-being, through the opportunities it provides for outdoor sport and recreation.
- 5.7.4. Open and green spaces in the Parish make an important contribution to the overall character of Felsted, as well as providing opportunities for outdoor sport, recreation and play. This contributes to the health and well-being of the Parish, as well as providing opportunities for increased social interaction and community cohesion

CW1 The plan protects the countryside for its own sake. Development which results in the interruption or severance of the landscape character of the countryside, including important views and vistas, traditional open spaces and including that which results in the coalescence of the individual greens and hamlets in Felsted or our parish with surrounding parishes, will not normally be permitted.

Development will only be permitted where it includes mitigation measures that minimise the visual impact of the development through appropriate screening and design, and should include measures to enhance the landscape character.

Felsted Fen

5.7.5. The enlarged Felsted Fen is a uniquely valued amenity. The Plan seeks to protect its diverse fauna and flora and ensure, subject to any requirement identified through VA5 in relation to the need for a burial ground, it remains otherwise undeveloped throughout then Plan period.

5.7.6. Felsted Fen is a designated Local Wildlife Site (reference UFD276) and the designation states:

Although planted with Willows, this site retains a valuable fen-like vegetation of abundant Pond-sedge, Purple Loosestrife, Angelica, Soft Rush, Comfrey, Giant Horsetail and Nettle. Situated in the flood plain of the River Chelmer, this vegetation type would formerly have been more widespread but has been largely lost due to drainage or other developments. It is likely that the site extended northwards before being used for tipping.

CW2 The Plan designates the area defined on Map 11 as a nature reserve and, subject to any requirement supported by policy **VA5**, resists any and all development thereon.

Footpaths, Bridleways and Cycleways

5.7.7. The Parish is served by an extensive network of Public Rights of Way, including footpaths, bridleways and cycleways. It is vital to the Parish that these are protected and where possible enhanced, as at present they are sometimes poorly maintained.

5.7.8. The amenity of the existing bridleways is greatly valued by horse riders but the network does not provide a circular route without the necessity of riding on some of the busier roads in the Parish. Whenever development takes place, the Plan requires every effort to be made to improve the bridleway network with the aim of creating a route that minimises the need for horses to be ridden on or across public roads.

- 5.7.9. The Plan recognises the importance to the community of the extensive Right of Way network in the Parish and seeks to ensure that it receives the highest level of protection and, where possible, enhancement.

CW3 Any new housing development on or adjacent to the existing Public Rights of Way network (as shown on Map 11) in the Parish is required to enhance or extend the network, for example through improving accessibility or connectivity.

The Plan supports the development of a circular bridleway route for horse riders in Felsted and other extensions to the network where they improve access to the countryside.

Section 6: Appendices

Appendix 1: Sunnybrook Farm Block Plan

Sunnybrook Farm, Watch House Green, Felsted



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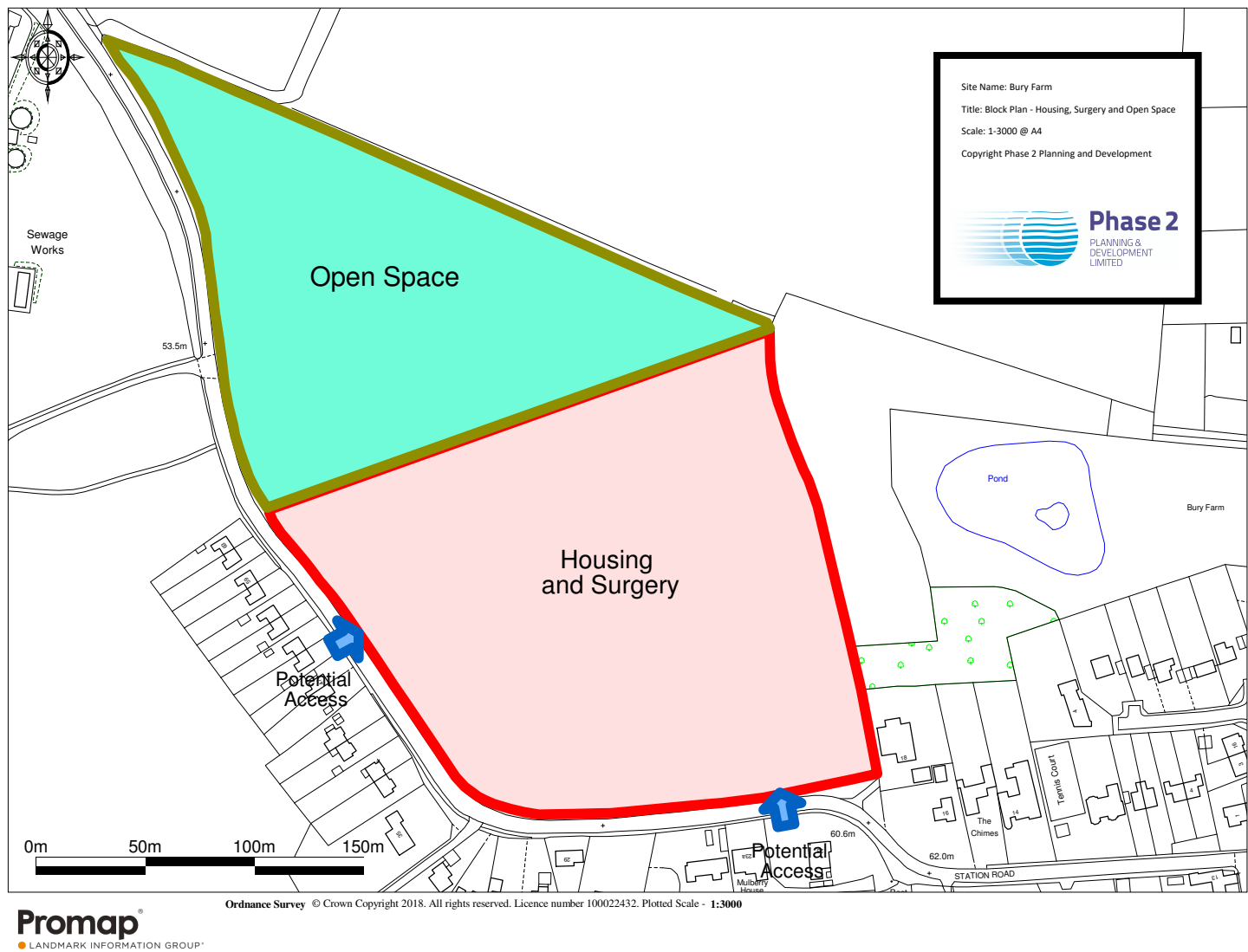
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Title: Block Plan - Housing, Car Park & Amenity Land
Date: July 2018

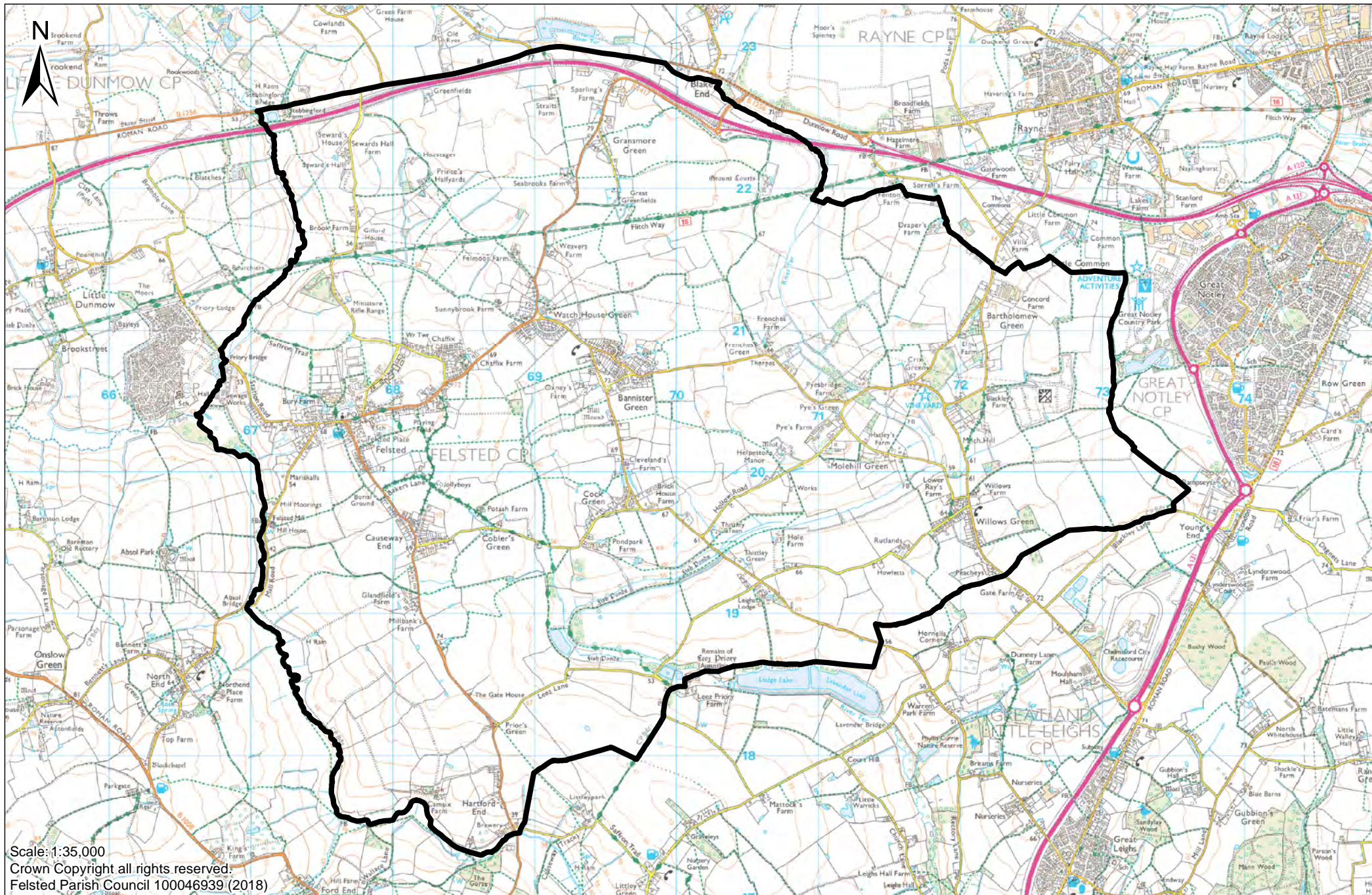
Appendix 2: Bury Farm Block Plan



Appendix 2A: Bury Farm Doctors' Surgery Examples

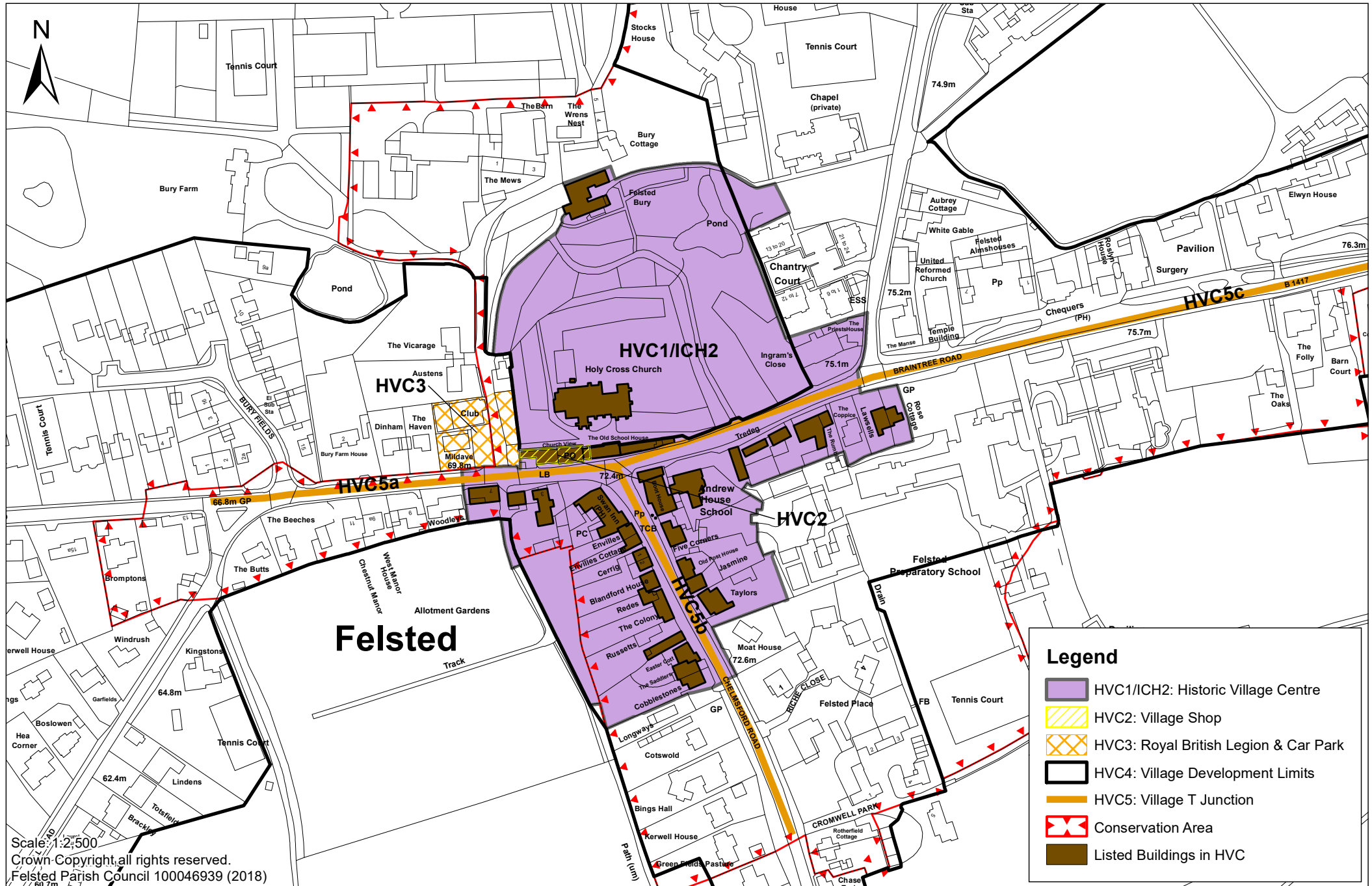


Map 1: Felsted Neighbourhood Plan Area

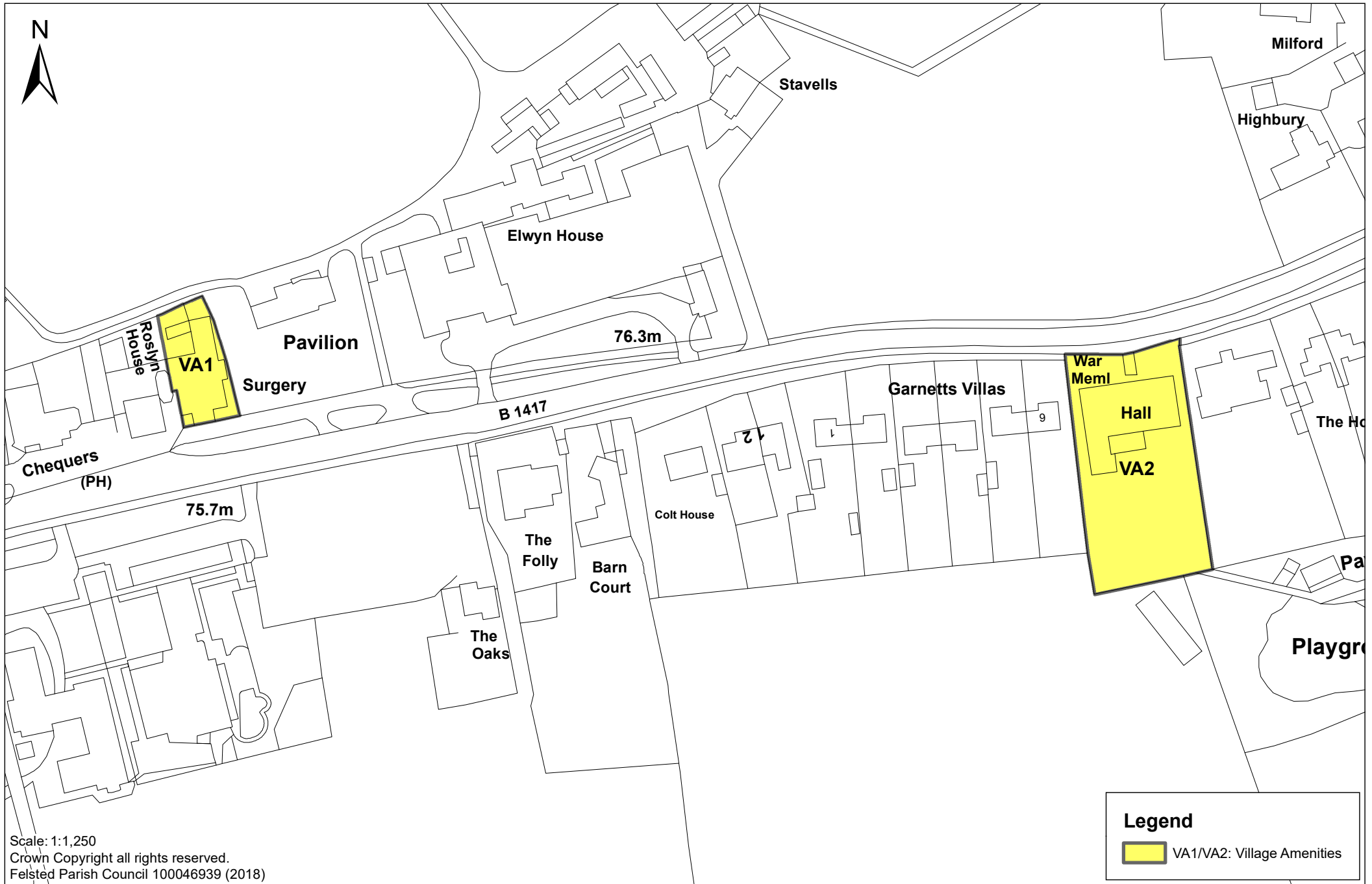


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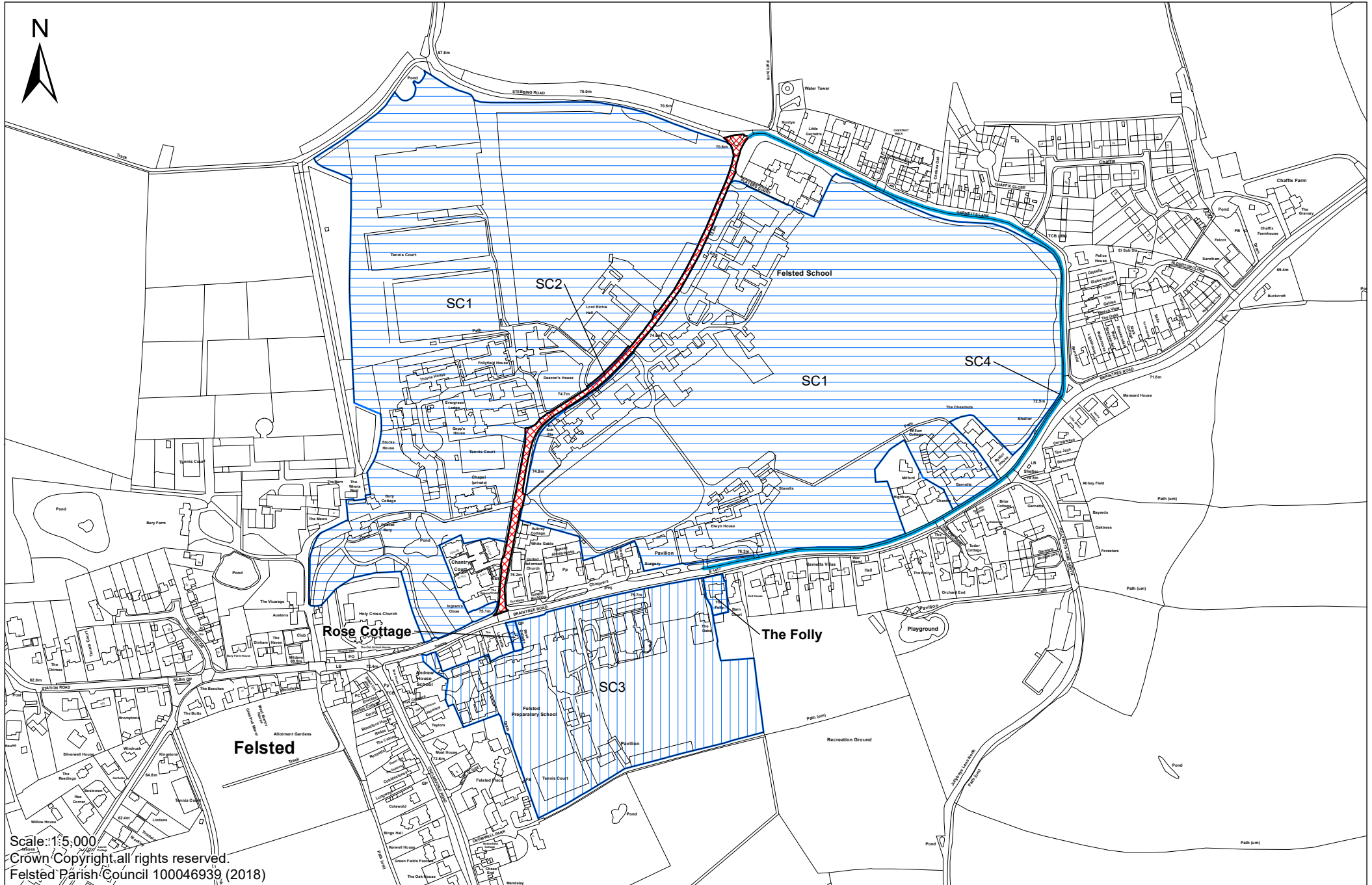
Map 2: Historic Village Centre



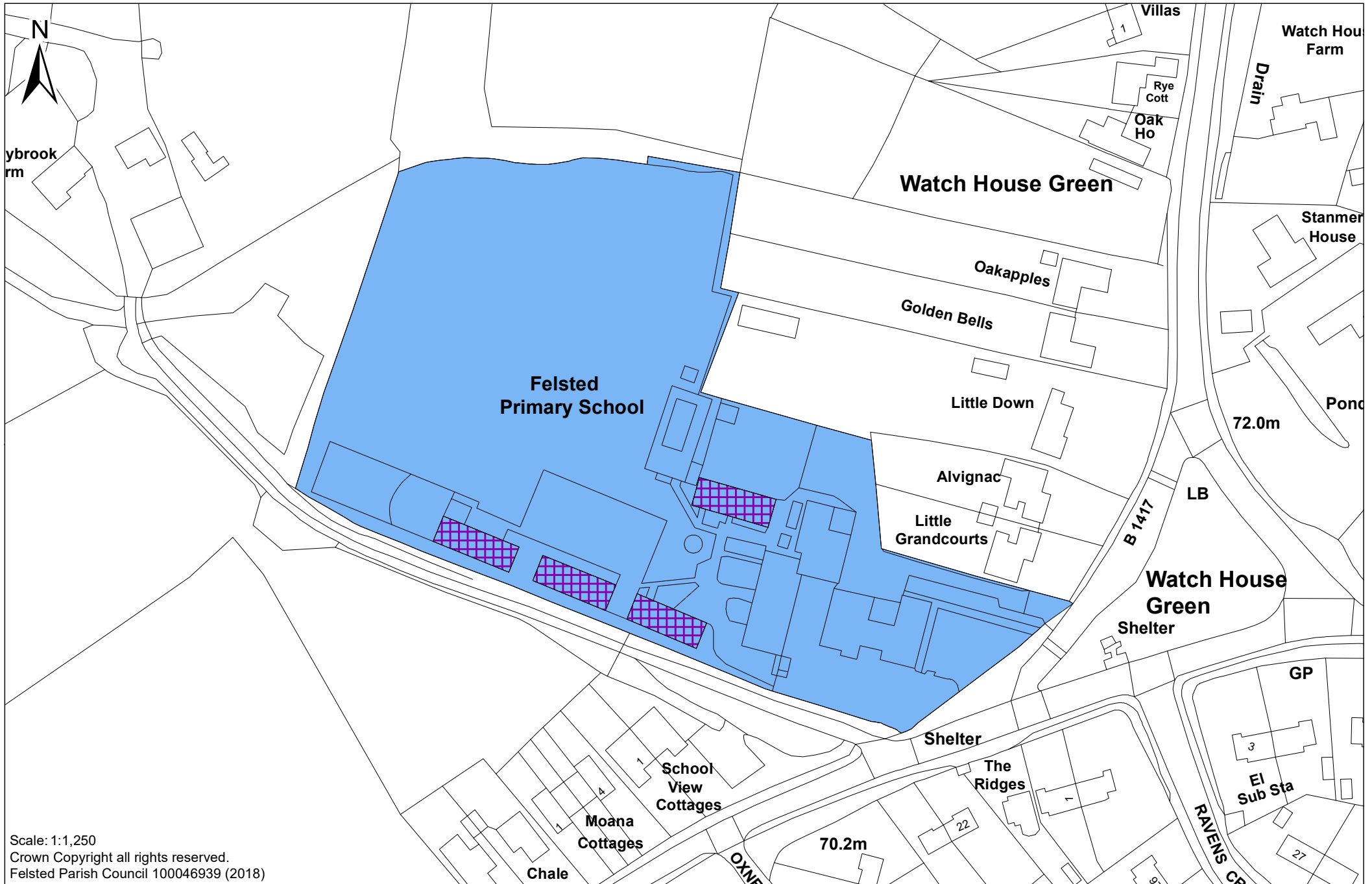
Map 3: Village Amenities



Map 4: Felsted School



Map 5: Felsted Primary School



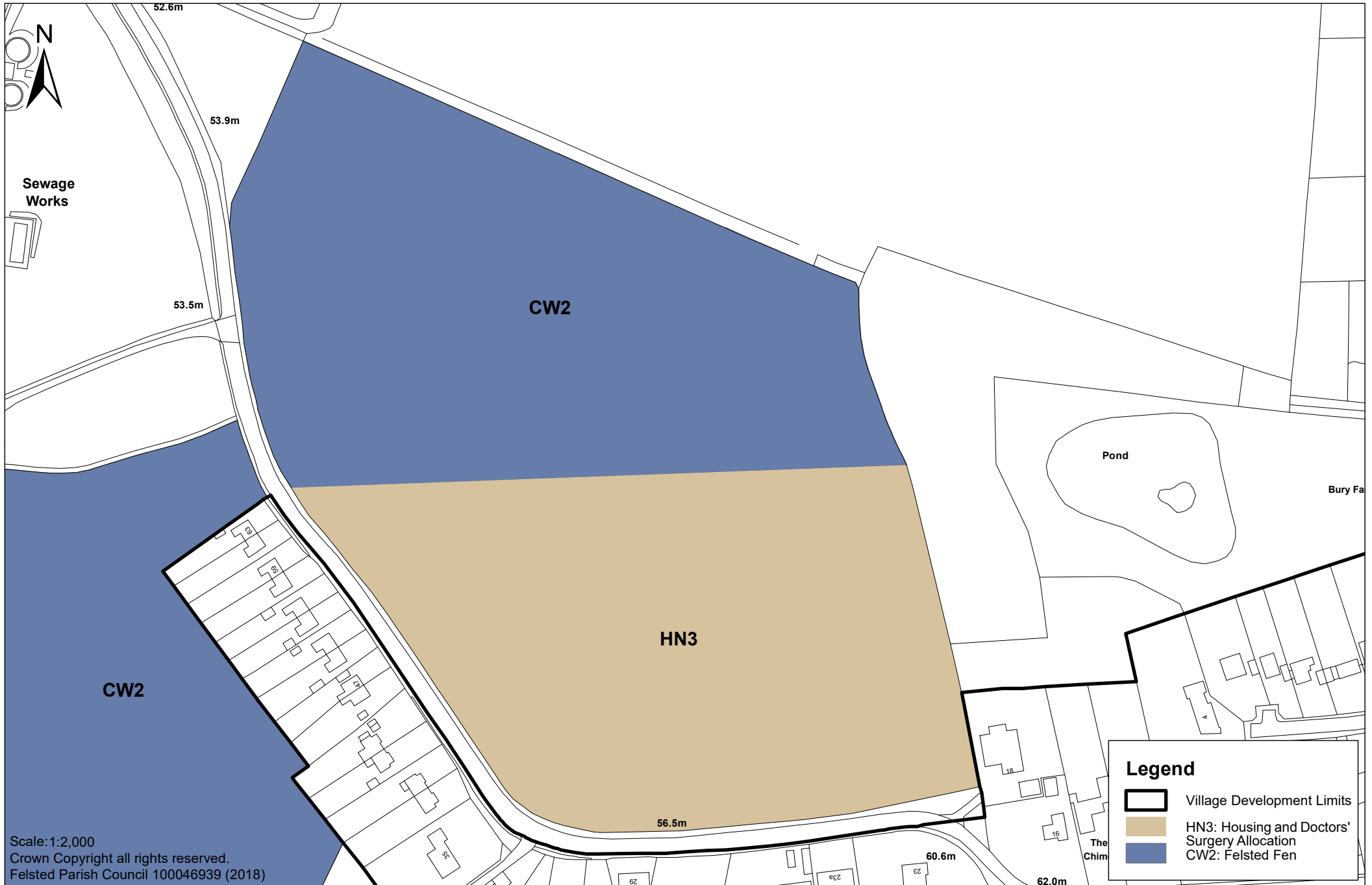
Map 6: Housing Allocations



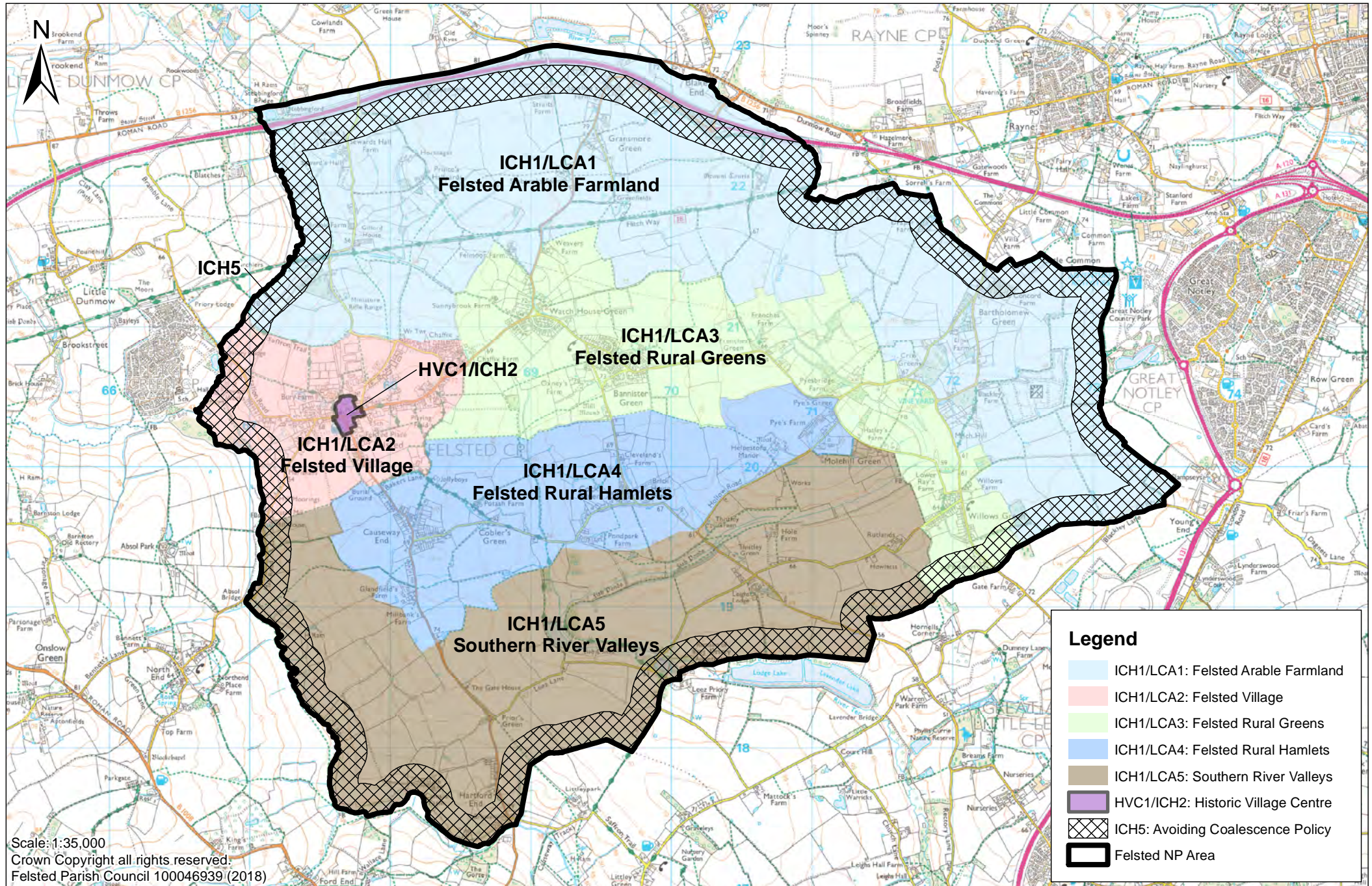
Map 7: Sunnybrook Farm Site



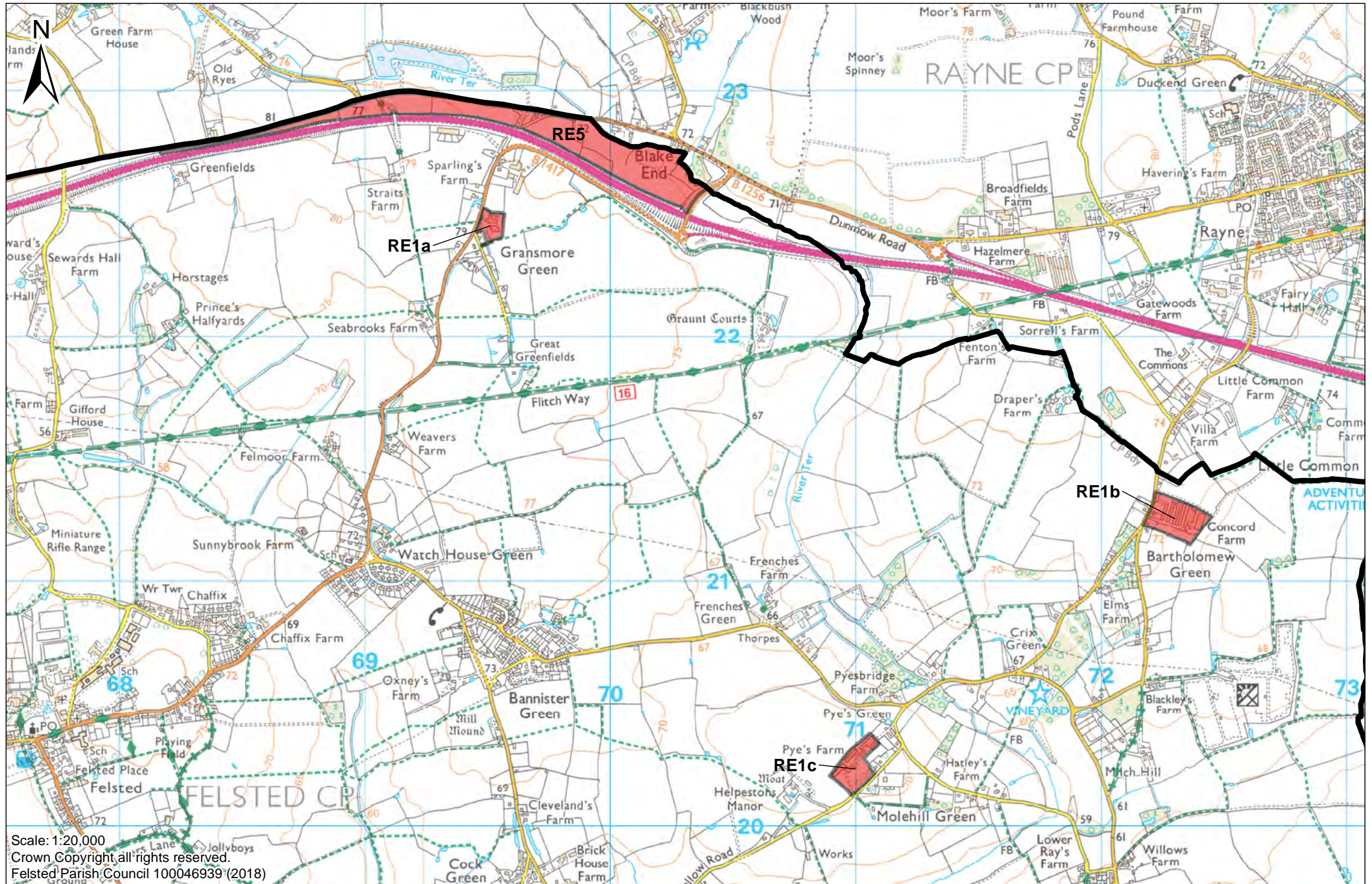
Map 8: Bury Farm Site



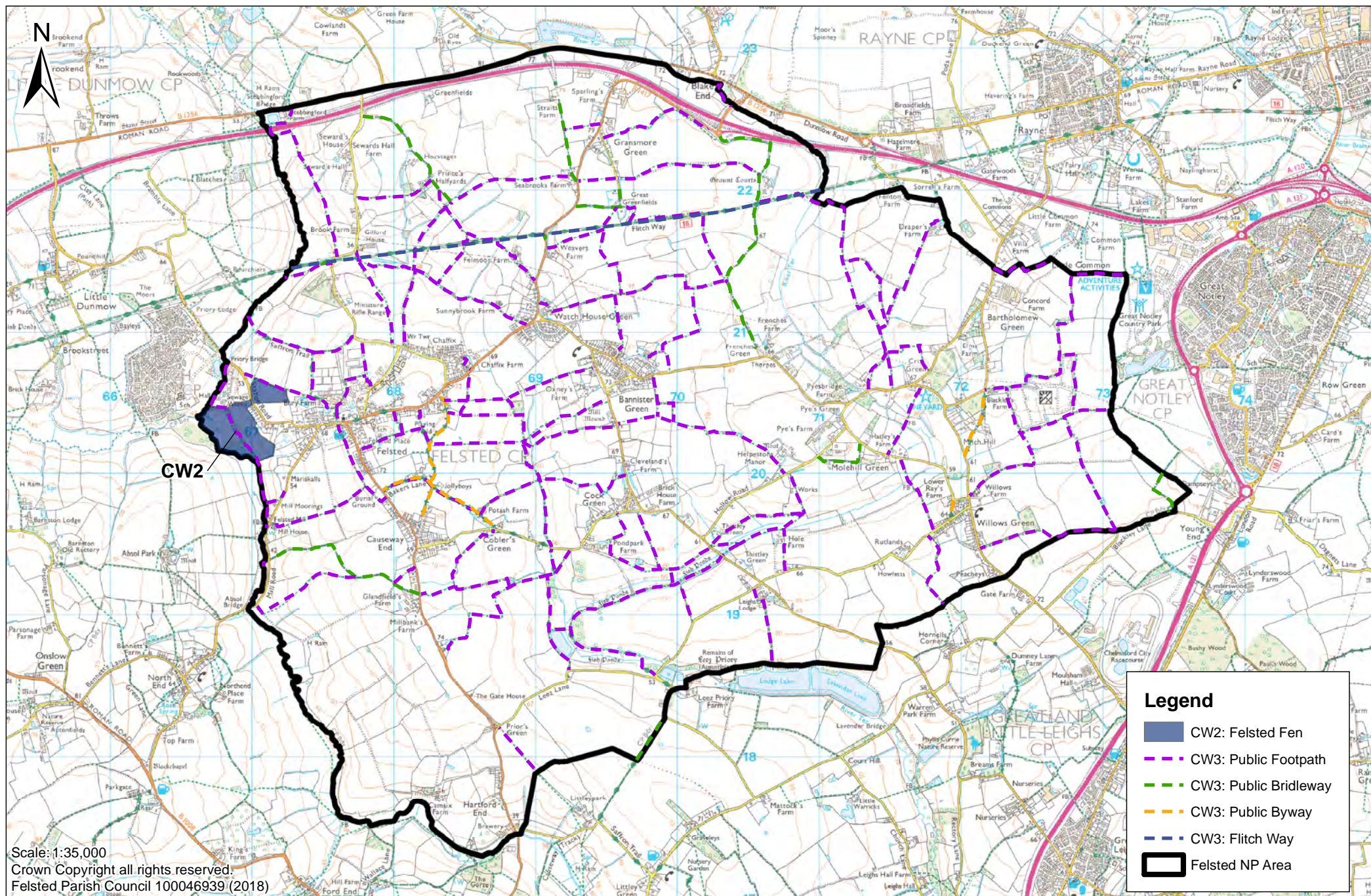
Map 9: Integrity, Character & Heritage



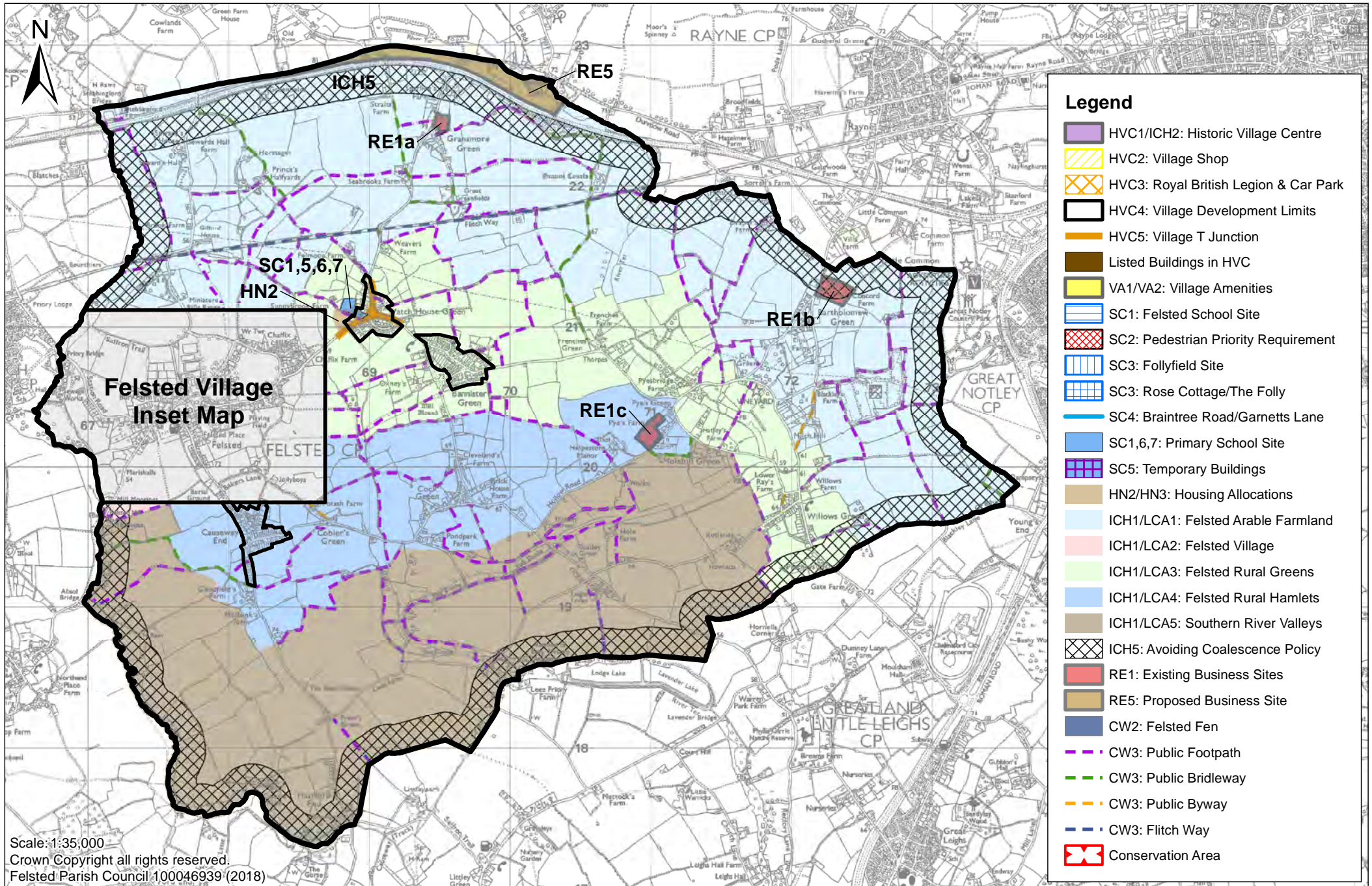
Map 10: Rural Economy



Map 11: Countryside & Wildlife



Map 12: Policy Map



Map 13: Felsted Village Inset Map

