



# Rushmere St Andrew Neighbourhood Plan

2018-2036

## REFERENDUM PLAN

---






Rushmere St Andrew Parish  
Council  
December 2022



Rushmere St Andrew Parish Council  
Supported by Places4People Planning Consultancy

**PLACES4PEOPLE** **P4P**  
PLANNING CONSULTANCY

# CONTENTS

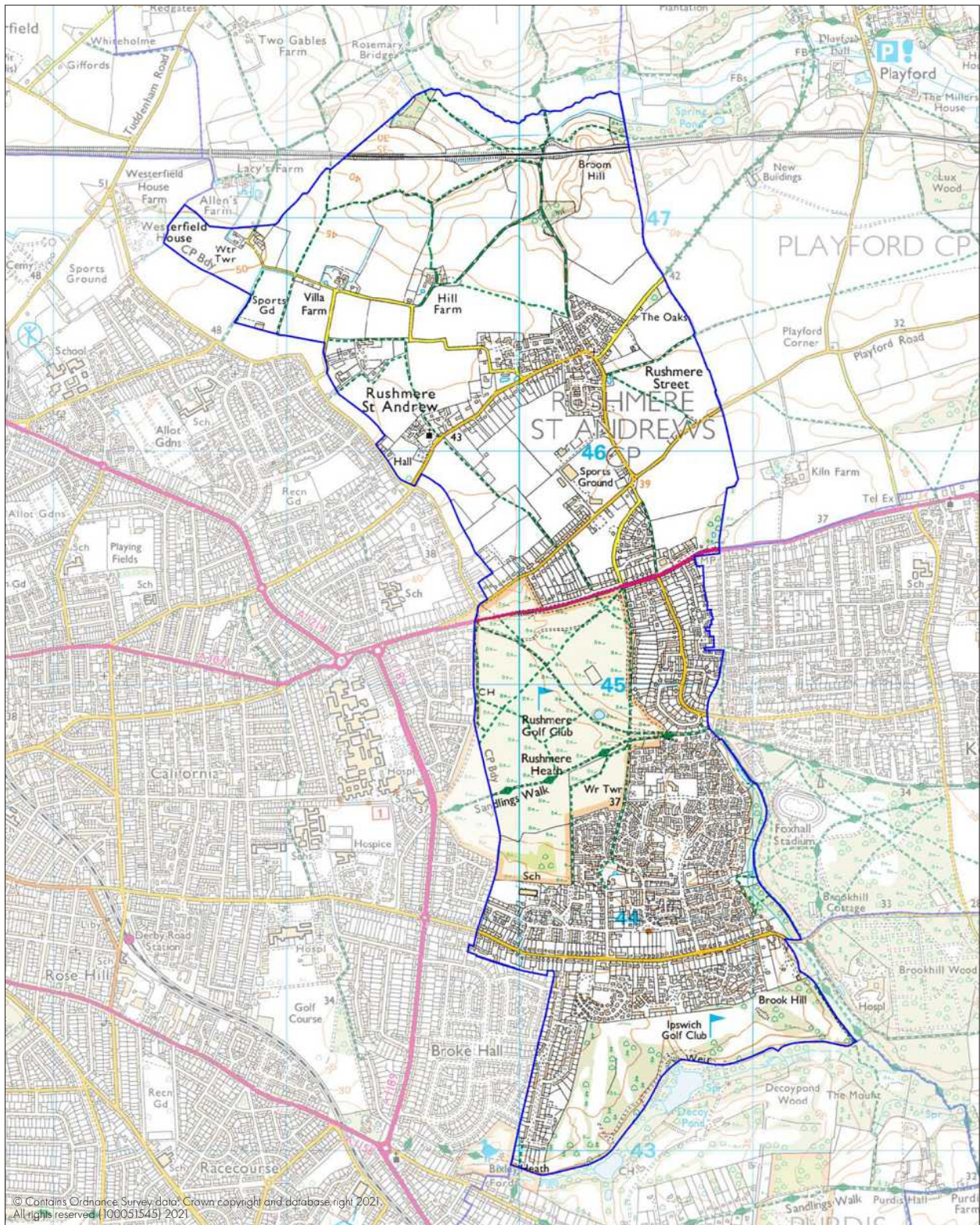
	1. Introduction	4
	2. About Rushmere St Andrew	8
	3. Planning Policy Context	10
	4. Vision and Objectives	13
	5. Planning Strategy	14
	Policy RSA1 - Planning Strategy	14
	Policy RSA 2 - Land at Humber Doucy Lane	15
	6. Landscape and Natural Environment	17
	Policy RSA 3 - Protection of Landscape Character and Important Views	20
	Policy RSA 4 - Protection of Trees, Hedgerows and Other Natural Features	21
	Policy RSA 5 - Settlement Gaps	23
	Policy RSA 6 - Local Green Spaces	24
	7. Historic Environment	25
	Policy RSA 7 - Non-designated Heritage Assets	25
	Policy RSA 8 - Rushmere Village Special Character Area	27
	8. Development Design	29
	Policy RSA 9 - Design Considerations	31
	9. Services and Facilities	33
	Policy RSA 10 - Village Services and Facilities	33
	Policy RSA 11 - Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities	34
	10. Highways and Travel	36
	Policy RSA 12 - Public Rights of Way	39
	Policies Map	41
	Appendices	43
	Glossary	46

# 1. INTRODUCTION



- 1.1 The Localism Act 2011 introduced new rights and powers to allow local communities to prepare Neighbourhood Plans, which establish planning policies for the development and use of land in the neighbourhood. These Plans, when properly "made" become part of the legal planning framework for the designated area.
- 1.2 A Neighbourhood Plan is, therefore, a community-led planning framework for guiding the future development, regeneration and conservation of an area. It is about the use and development of land and contains a vision statement, aims, planning policies, proposals for improving the area or providing new facilities, or allocation of key sites for specific kinds of development.
- 1.3 Town and parish councils are encouraged to produce their own Neighbourhood Plans, enabling local people to have a say as to how their neighbourhood grows and develops. In a designated "Neighbourhood Area", that council is responsible for the preparation of the Plan. Neighbourhood plans cannot contradict the main government planning policies or the strategic policies in the Local Plan for the area. For example, they cannot propose less development than is planned for in the adopted Local Plan.
- 1.4 In November 2019 Rushmere St Andrew Parish Council established a Working Group to investigate whether a neighbourhood plan for the parish would be feasible and whether sufficient parishioners would be interested in joining a Working Group. Subsequently, at the Parish Council meeting on 13 February 2020, it was agreed to prepare a neighbourhood plan which would cover the whole of Rushmere St Andrew parish. On 26 February 2020 East Suffolk Council designated the parish as the Neighbourhood Plan Area. That area is illustrated on Map 1. The Plan period is 2018 to 2036





MAP 1 - Neighbourhood Plan Area

- 1.5 Given the relationship of neighbourhood plans and local plans, and the fact that East Suffolk Council adopted Suffolk Coastal Local Plan in September 2020, the Rushmere St Andrew Plan focuses on planning matters of local interest by adding value to the content of the local plan rather than repeating it.

The Plan therefore covers the following themes:

- Landscape and Natural Environment
- Historic Environment
- Development Design
- Services and Facilities
- Highways and Travel



- 1.6 The Plan is structured to provide information about the Neighbourhood Plan process; the parish's distinct character, history and geography; sets out a Vision and related Objectives; and contains planning policies that, when the Plan is complete, will be used by East Suffolk Council when considering planning applications.

#### How the Plan has been prepared

- 1.7 The Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Government's Neighbourhood Planning Regulations, following a number of distinct stages that can be simply illustrated in the diagram on the right and, in particular, has involved the local community at key stages of the process.





- 1.8** In December 2019 and January 2020 a leaflet was circulated to every household stating that a Neighbourhood Plan for the parish was to be prepared and seeking volunteers to join the Working Group.
- 1.9** The first major task of the Working Group was the preparation of a Residents' Survey for all over the age of 18 years, while a separate Youth Survey was available for those aged under 18. The survey took place over Christmas and New Year of 2020/21 and a total of 225 responses were received from adults while 21 youth surveys were completed. Relevant sections of the Plan illustrate some of the results and a full report of the results is available to view on the Neighbourhood Plan pages of the Parish Council website.
- 1.10** As part of the Government's support for the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans, a grant was secured to commission a Landscape Appraisal of the parish and the same programme provided free support for the preparation of Design Codes for the parish, to provide guidance on the design of new development.
- 1.11** In March 2021 a leaflet was circulated to all households providing feedback from the Residents' Survey and information about the content of the Landscape Appraisal and Design Codes documents. At the same time, residents' opinions were sought on the potential designation of Local Green Spaces and Non-Designated Heritage Assets.



## The Draft Neighbourhood Plan

- 1.12** This is the Referendum version of the Neighbourhood Plan. The draft Neighbourhood Plan was subject to extensive "pre-submission" consultation in September and October 2021. At the end of the consultation, comments were reviewed and any necessary amendments to the Plan made ahead of submission to East Suffolk Council. A further round of consultation was then carried out prior to the Plan being assessed by an independent examiner. Amendments required by the examiner have now been made and a referendum of Rushmere St Andrews's residents on the Electoral Roll will be held to vote on whether the Plan should be used by East Suffolk Council when deciding planning applications.
- 1.13** The Neighbourhood Plan contains planning policies that, when the Plan is complete, will be used alongside the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan as a starting point for consideration of planning applications. In addition to planning policies, the Neighbourhood Plan contains "community aspirations" that, although they do not form part of the development plan, identify local initiatives that address issues and concerns raised during community engagement. The community aspirations are identified differently from the planning policies to avoid confusion.



## 2. ABOUT RUSHMERE ST ANDREW

- 2.1** The Parish has a very long and fascinating history which can be traced back to the Stone Age and Iron Age through to the current day. People have lived here for at least 1000 years, farming on the light soil, keeping pigs in the woods where they obtained firewood and timber for their houses; and getting clean water from the streams. Rushmere – a mere or lake where the rushes grow. Rushes grew at the Decoy ponds in the sub-manor of Bixley, now outside the southern parish boundary.
- 2.2** The light sandy soil and rich loam were easy to work with ancient ploughs. Pre-1700 there was mixed farming of arable and livestock, later mainly corn and barley. Several hop fields were to be found near Bent Lane and Bixley Decoy Ponds. The Rushmere Heath Common, which is visited daily by residents of Rushmere St Andrew, Kesgrave, East Ipswich and further afield, has been home to the Ipswich gallows until the late 18th Century, was the training base for the Suffolk Hussars at that time also, was the focal point for a Chartist rally in the following century, was secured as a Common in the 19th century and became home of the original Ipswich Golf Club in the late 1890s before becoming Rushmere Golf Club in the 1920s.
- 2.3** Since 1959 several farms have been developed into housing estates, though the north of the parish remains as open countryside crossed by the railway line between Ipswich and Woodbridge.
- 2.4** In 1803 troops fighting Napoleon trained on the Heath, 10,000 of them in 1813. From 1814 to 1819 payments were made by the government for damage by troop activity. The Common was run under the ownership of local manors for at least two centuries, with the Marquis of Bristol among the most unpopular with the Commoners. A committee was formed in 1881 to resist his claims and his attempts to prosecute some of the individuals. A prominent champion of Commoners' rights was Nathaniel Abblit, who outlined their rights in a stone tablet.
- A plaque about this was set up in 1861 and can be seen on the wall of the Baptist Church in the village. All the parish landowners, i.e. most residents, have had 'Commoners' rights on the heath since 1881.
- 2.5** The Common has hosted plenty of executions, with some figures estimating around a hundred between 1735 and 1797 for crimes including burglary, murder and robbery. Public executions included that of John Hodgson, 26, for highway robbery and defrauding the army of £600 by enlisting no fewer than 98 times and receiving payments but rarely performing any military duties. Thankfully, the gibbet which was located on the heath close to the present A1214, has long since been removed.
- 2.6** The Saint Andrew part of the village name refers to the church which was built on Saxon foundations. In 1086 the church had 20 acres valued at 40 old pence. By the mid-12th century a stone church with Norman doorway had been built. In 1828 a large brick schoolhouse was built on the north side of the nave, attended in 1833 by 50 children. In 1861 the church was entirely rebuilt due to the fabric of the building being in a 'ruinous condition'.
- 2.7** The church tower contained six bells, two made in Ipswich in 1675, three made in London between 1426 and 1456, the last and sixth was made in London in 1885. In 2000 a new tenor bell was cast to replace the original tenor bell which had become cracked. A new structure was built inside the tower from which the old bell was hung to provide the hourly chime to the church clock. The village pond is by The Limes, about a quarter of a mile east of the church. Beside it is the village sign erected in 1980, showing St Andrew's Cross and the local ducks. Further east, just beyond Holly Lane, is the Baptist Church built in 1859 and nearby is Chestnut Pond.





**2.8** The village sign, erected 1980 beside the pond in Rushmere Street, depicts the figure of St. Andrew as a Saint and as a Fisherman, the pond, rushes and ducks. A bronze plate recording the event, with a short history of the name of Rushmere St Andrew, is fixed to the post together with the Parish Council Motto 'Seek the common good'.

**2.9** The first of the village halls (erected in 1921, rebuilt in 1991) stands in Humber Doucy Lane near the original village school built in 1846. The bell from the old village school is now housed in the entrance of Broke Hall County Primary School. On the opposite side of the road stood Rushmere Hall built in the 1600s but reduced to a farmhouse by 1846. Humber Doucy Lane is now outside the present parish boundary and forms part of Ipswich.

**2.10** The workhouse known as Heathfields Poor Law Institution, built in 1898 stood on heathland near the corner of Woodbridge Road and Heath Road, which by 1912 housed 385 inmates and 17 officials. With the demise of the Poor Law system in 1930, it became the Ipswich Borough General Infirmary. Some of the buildings still survive as part of Ipswich Hospital NHS Trust. The old Tollgate, standing at the junction of Bent Lane and Woodbridge Road, was demolished in the 1930s.

**2.11** With the building of the large housing estate on Bixley Farm (north of Foxhall Road) in the 1990s, a community hall was built along with a playground, nursery and shops. A second village sign depicting the water tower and the Common sign erected on 11 May 2002, is adjacent to the junction of Gwendoline Close and Bladen Drive.

### **Rushmere St Andrew today**

**2.12** Today, the built-up area of the southern part of the parish is hardly discernible from greater Ipswich, especially along Foxhall Road. By contrast there

remains a distinct and important gap between Humber Doucy Lane and the traditional village centre by the Church.

**2.13** The most recent population estimate of the parish is 6,371 (mid-2019 government estimates). This represents a 5% increase since 2001 while the East Suffolk District population grew by nearly 10% in the same period. Approximately 28% of the population is aged 65 or over but it is difficult to identify any detailed demographic information at the time of preparing the Plan as the 2021 Census results have yet to be published and the 2011 data is now 10 years old.

**2.14** Most of the recent house building has taken place off Bixley Drive and Broadlands Way and between 2008 and 2019 a total of 161 new homes were completed across the parish.

**2.15** Because of the proximity to Ipswich, the parish is well placed for access to work, facilities and services. Within the parish there are local centres providing shops and services, at St Andrew Walk off Broadlands Way and at Beech Road, while there are a range of individual retail and business premises spread across the parish. In addition, there is the Broke Hall Community Primary School, and a children's nursery. There are no dedicated health facilities in the village, the closest being found at the Two Rivers Medical Centre or The Birches Medical Centre, although there is a pharmacy on Foxhall Road.

**2.16** Sports pitches dominate the older part of the parish, in the area north of the A1214 Woodbridge Road, with around 30 hectares of land used by either Ipswich Town FC, Ipswich School, Ipswich YM Rugby Club or Ipswich Wanderers FC. There are also two golf courses in the parish, Rushmere Golf Club which is based on the Common, and Ipswich Golf Club along the southern boundary with access off Bucklesham Road to the south of the parish.

### 3. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1** The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in the context of the content of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the relevant Local Plan documents that cover the parish. The Plan must have regard to the content of with the NPPF and be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted Local Plan. The paragraphs below identify how these are relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan.

#### National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.2** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's high-level planning policies that must be taken into account in the preparation of development plan documents and when deciding planning applications. In July 2021 the Government published a Revised NPPF. The Framework sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Paragraph 11 of the NPPF states:

*Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For plan-making this means that:*

- a) all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects;
- b) strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas, unless:
  - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area; or
  - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

- 3.3** The NPPF requires that communities preparing Neighbourhood Plans should:

- Develop plans that support the strategic development needs set out in Local Plans, including policies for housing and economic development; and
- Plan positively to support local development, shaping and directing development in their area that is outside the strategic elements of the Local Plan.

#### The Local Plan

- 3.4** The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in the context of the strategic policies in the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, which was adopted in September 2020. Some 121 policies in the Local Plan are noted by East Suffolk Council as meeting the NPPF definition of strategic. Throughout the topic sections that follow, reference is made to the strategic policies that are not repeated in the Neighbourhood Plan, but which are relevant and should, as appropriate, be taken into consideration when proposing development.

- 3.5** The Local Plan designates Rushmere St Andrew village as a "Small Village" while the remainder is identified as part of the "East of Ipswich" Major Centre that also includes Kesgrave and Martlesham Heath. The development approach generally seeks to protect existing employment and service provision and would only allow new housing in small groups or as infill plots.

- 3.6** The Local Plan approach to Rushmere St Andrew is spelt out in Policy SCLP12.18 - "Strategy for Communities surrounding Ipswich" stating their purpose "is to maintain the healthy and vibrant communities which provide a diverse mixture of residential and employment opportunities alongside services and facilities by maintaining and enhancing the relationship with Ipswich and other parts of the plan area." Policy SCLP 12.22 of the Local Plan protects the sports pitches and other open areas between the village and the parish boundary as recreation and open space, to retain settlement separation.

**3.7** The main implication of the Local Plan is the allocation of a site for housing north of Humber Doucy Lane and straddling the boundary with Ipswich Borough (Policy SCLP12.24). In all, it is anticipated that around 600 homes will be built on the site (see Chapter 5). The neighbourhood plan cannot promote less growth than the Local Plan and the part of the allocation in East Suffolk is for approximately 150 dwellings. Ipswich Borough Council adopted its Local Plan in March 2022, which includes the remainder of the overall allocation.

**3.8** Local plans have a role of identifying the housing growth requirements for neighbourhood areas. The Suffolk Coastal Local Plan identifies the requirement for those neighbourhood areas designated when the Plan was prepared and, other than in these areas, identifies the specific sites that will deliver the Local Plan minimum housing requirement. As the Rushmere St Andrew Neighbourhood Area was not designated until after the Local Plan had been examined, a minimum housing requirement has not been specified. East Suffolk Council has prepared and adopted a methodology for calculating housing

requirements for new neighbourhood areas but, given the number of planning permissions in the parish and the allocation in Humber Doucy Lane, the Neighbourhood Plan considers that the adopted Suffolk Coastal Local Plan adequately addresses how the future housing needs of the parish will be met and that it is not necessary to allocate further sites for housing in this Neighbourhood Plan.









## 4. VISION AND OBJECTIVES

- 4.1** The vision and objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan have been prepared taking into consideration the outcomes of the community engagement referred to earlier in this Plan as well as the evidence collected from published data, surveys and assessments. They also take account of the need to prepare a neighbourhood plan that conforms with the strategic policies of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan. The Vision sets out the over-arching approach as to how future development proposals in Rushmere St Andrew will be considered through the application of the Neighbourhood Plan policies. This is amplified through the definition of Objectives for the topic areas that have, in turn, guided the identification of both the planning policies and community aspirations contained in the Plan.

### VISION

In 2036, Rushmere St Andrew will be a great place where:

- Young people can settle and raise their own families because there is an abundance of facilities for them (play areas for younger and older children, sports facilities, schools, access to nature, community centres, etc)
- Parents can be confident to let their children walk or cycle to school knowing that they are safely separated from motorised traffic
- Professionals are happy to locate their businesses in the parish because of the outstanding infrastructure, facilities and access to transport networks
- Older people can be confident that the parish has appropriate housing, services and facilities for their needs
- All residents can have continued and improved access to enjoy the natural landscape in and around the parish
- The parish's heritage, environment and natural surroundings are rigorously protected from development and encroachment from the main Ipswich and Kesgrave conurbations
- Environmentally friendly infrastructure and transport options for residents is developed.

## 5. PLANNING STRATEGY

**5.1** The Neighbourhood Plan supports development in the parish in accordance with its designation in the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (2020). It is essential that any growth is focused on the existing built-up areas as defined by the Local Plan Settlement Boundaries in order to mitigate any impact on the high quality landscape that provides the setting for the village.

**5.2** Where necessary, development will need to mitigate any impact on the historic and natural landscape and existing infrastructure, including in the wider area and, specifically, internationally designated habitats present in the Orwell and Deben Estuaries. East Suffolk Council has worked in partnership with Ipswich Borough Council and Babergh Mid Suffolk Council to develop the Recreational Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) to mitigate recreational disturbance impacts on habitats sites. The approach set out in the RAMs document published by East Suffolk Council will apply across the neighbourhood plan area.

**5.3** Settlement Boundaries are identified on the Neighbourhood Plan Policies Map and provide a mechanism to manage the location of future development and to protect the countryside from inappropriate development.

**5.4** In accordance with Policy SCLP3.3 of the Local Plan, new development will be focused within the Settlement Boundary defined in the adopted Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, and will only be allowed outside that area where particular circumstances set out in the NPPF or the Local Plan are met. This approach will ensure that the undeveloped rural countryside is preserved and remains largely undeveloped.

### **Development between Humber Doucy Lane and Tuddenham Lane**

**5.5** The Suffolk Coastal Local Plan and Ipswich Local Plan (adopted in March 2022) identify a strategic growth site between Humber Doucy Lane and Tuddenham Lane for a housing led development, with an additional segment between Humber Doucy Lane, the Rugby Club and Seven Cottages Lane.

The site, as illustrated on Map 2, straddles Rushmere St Andrew and Tuddenham St Martin parishes as well as Ipswich Borough. In total, it is anticipated that some 600 dwellings will be constructed on the site. Approximately 150 dwellings are allocated within part of the site located in East Suffolk and 449 allocated on the part of the site located in Ipswich.

### **POLICY RSA 1 - PLANNING STRATEGY**

The Neighbourhood Plan area will accommodate development commensurate with Rushmere St Andrew's designation in the adopted Local Plan.

The focus for new development will be within the Settlement Boundary, as defined on the Policies Map.

Proposals for development located outside the Settlement Boundary will only be permitted where they are in accordance with national and Suffolk Coastal Local Plan policies as they relate to the Neighbourhood Area.

#### **Relevant Suffolk Coastal Local Plan Policies:**

Policy SCLP3.1 Strategy for Growth

Policy SCLP3.2 Settlement Hierarchy

Policy SCLP3.3 Settlement Boundaries

Policy SCLP12.1: Neighbourhood Plans

**5.6** The development of that portion of land in the Neighbourhood Plan Area will be expected to have regard to the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan as relevant, particularly in relation to landscape impact, highways infrastructure, and services and facilities. In particular, development proposals should have regard to the rural nature of the northern edge of the site where it abuts Tuddenham Lane or Seven Cottages Lane. The lanes are proposed Quiet Lanes (see Chapter 10) and it is essential that no new vehicular access is made onto it. In addition, a substantial area



Tower. Proposals for the site will also be expected to have regard to the content of the East Suffolk Cycling and Walking Strategy and the proposals contained therein.

In addition to the provisions for the development of land for housing at Humber Doucy Lane set out in Policy SCLP12.24 of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan and as identified on the Policies Map, development proposals should make provision for a significant reinforcement of existing planting and additional native tree planting of local provenance along the north-eastern / eastern boundary of the site adjoining Tuddenham Lane and in the vicinity of existing residential properties off Tuddenham Lane. In particular, the planting scheme should be designed on the premise of maintaining the separation of the enlarged urban area of Ipswich with the rural and tranquil nature of this part of the Neighbourhood Area and proposals should be accompanied by a management plan which will ensure the successful establishment of the new planting and its continued growth through to maturity.

[illegible]

MAP 2 - Site at Humber Doucy Lane allocated for housing in Suffolk Coastal Local Plan and Ipswich Local Plan



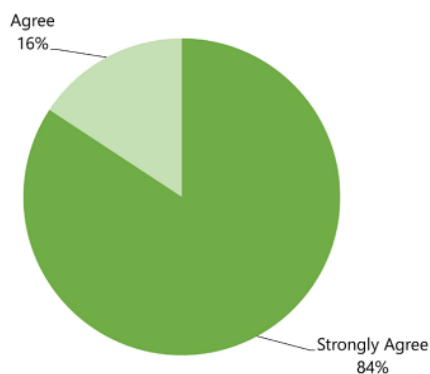




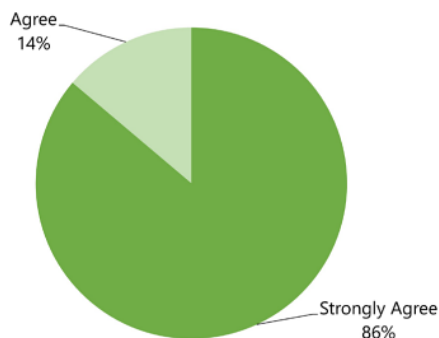
## 6. LANDSCAPE AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

**6.1** The Residents' Survey indicated that there is strong support for the natural environment and a recognition of its role in reinforcing sense of place and providing a quality environment in which to live. Some 82.7% of respondents strongly agreed that it is important to preserve the landscape features of the parish and 85% strongly agreed that protecting and preserving trees, hedgerows and ponds should be sought where appropriate in planning applications.

**It is important to preserve the landscape features of Rushmere St Andrew**



**Protecting and preserving trees, hedgerows and ponds should be sought where appropriate in planning applications**



**6.2** In support of the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, a Landscape Character Appraisal was commissioned. The final report is available to download on the Neighbourhood Plan pages of the Parish Council website. In summary, the Appraisal "reviews existing documentary evidence on the settlement and its landscape and considers the historic evolution, describes landscape setting, key views, gateways and landmarks as well as valued characteristics and spaces. Opportunities for environmental initiatives which seek to enhance local identity and settlement distinctiveness are highlighted where relevant."

**6.3** The Landscape Appraisal notes that the parish falls within four landscape types, as defined in the Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment, namely:

- Rolling Valley Farmlands and Furze (associated with the Fynn Valley)
- Ancient Rolling Farmlands (associated with Rushmere St Andrew village)
- Estate Sandlands (associated with Rushmere Golf Course/Common as well as north of Kesgrave and built-up urban areas)
- Rolling Estate Sandlands (associated with Mill River valley)

The extent of these typologies is illustrated on Figure 1 of the Appraisal.

**6.4** A more detailed assessment was published in 2018 by the District Council in support of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan. The Suffolk Coastal Landscape Character Assessment closely follows the county-wide landscape typology in defining landscape character areas which are unique and geographically specific. The defined areas are:

- Fynn Valley
- Culpho and Westerfield Rolling Farmland
- Kesgrave Sandlands
- Mill River Valley

**6.5** The distinct features of these character areas are identified in the Landscape Appraisal and development proposals in these areas should have regard to the identified features of the character area within which the site is located.



**6.6** The following special qualities have been identified which, wherever possible, should be retained and enhanced.

- Significant areas of open countryside, common and wooded valley within easy access of housing areas
- Strong distinction in landscape and built character to the north and south of Woodbridge Road
- Open arable fields form a rural setting to the village on three sides
- Soft vegetated and indented urban edges help retain rural character of adjacent open spaces and countryside
- Individual Farms (including listed buildings) on outskirts of village form part of its setting
- Distinctive sandlings character to the central portion of the parish with gorse, bracken, heather, birch and pine being characteristic
- Small stream valleys create topographic variation across the Common and through built-up areas to the east
- Distinctive landmarks include the parish church and water tower
- Historic narrow rural lanes radiate out from the village and are fossilised within the urban fabric south of Woodbridge Road
- Meres and waterbodies are a feature of the area
- Incidental areas of open space and former green corridors along lanes and hedgerows form important landscape features within the built-up areas

**6.7** This detailed analysis also noted some changes which have resulted in loss of the distinctive qualities of the settlement. They are highlighted in order to inform decisions regarding any future development or environmental initiatives/management of the settlement setting.

- Creation of abrupt edges to development with little vegetation or landscape on the edge of settlement
- Urban extension to the village which undermines its small-scale rural character and/or causes coalescence with Ipswich and or Kesgrave
- New infill housing which appears out of scale in terms of height and mass and blocks important gaps between buildings/connections to the landscape
- Loss of rural lane character as a result of curtilage treatment, mown verges, loss of hedgerows and road furniture/signage.
- Planting of leylandii hedging and urban fencing/signage associated with sports pitches
- Ad-hoc incremental development along rural lanes
- Ad-hoc loss of incidental open space and proliferation of close board fencing where it impacts on street character.
- Loss of mature trees and lack of succession planting

### **Wildlife Management and the Environment**

- 6.8** Responses to the Residents' Survey revealed the critical importance placed on the relationship between the well-being of residents and the natural environment in and around Rushmere St Andrew. Several initiatives are underway with more to follow. It is particularly pertinent that this Neighbourhood Plan covers the years to 2036 in that, projects such as "rewilding", naturally lend themselves to be long-term. Monitoring of the schemes will be in place both to ensure "success" and that financial resources given over obtain best value.
- 6.9** Rushmere Heath (Common Land) is a County Wildlife Site which is managed by The Trustees of Rushmere Common. A significant part of the Common is given over to the fairways and greens of Rushmere Golf Course. Immediately adjacent is a protected area The Sandlings Local Nature Reserve. The boundary between common land and nature reserve is seamless. Just a short distance from the eastern edge of the Sandlings Nature Reserve lies the Millstream Local Nature Reserve.
- 6.10** The Trustees of the Common maintain a careful watch over the wildlife on their patch. The Parish Council share the responsibility for care and maintenance of the nature reserves with East Suffolk Council. Much of the maintenance is carried out by the East Suffolk Council supported Greenways Project Team of volunteers..
- 6.11** In Rushmere Village itself there are two natural ponds with associated surroundings which are in the care of the Parish Council. Adjacent to Chestnut Pond are the village Allotments which are bounded by significant hedges and trees. The Lawn Cemetery (to the rear of the parish church) is also maintained by the Parish Council. The current consecrated ground and the new extension have been planned with great care given to the importance of wildlife within a tranquil setting.



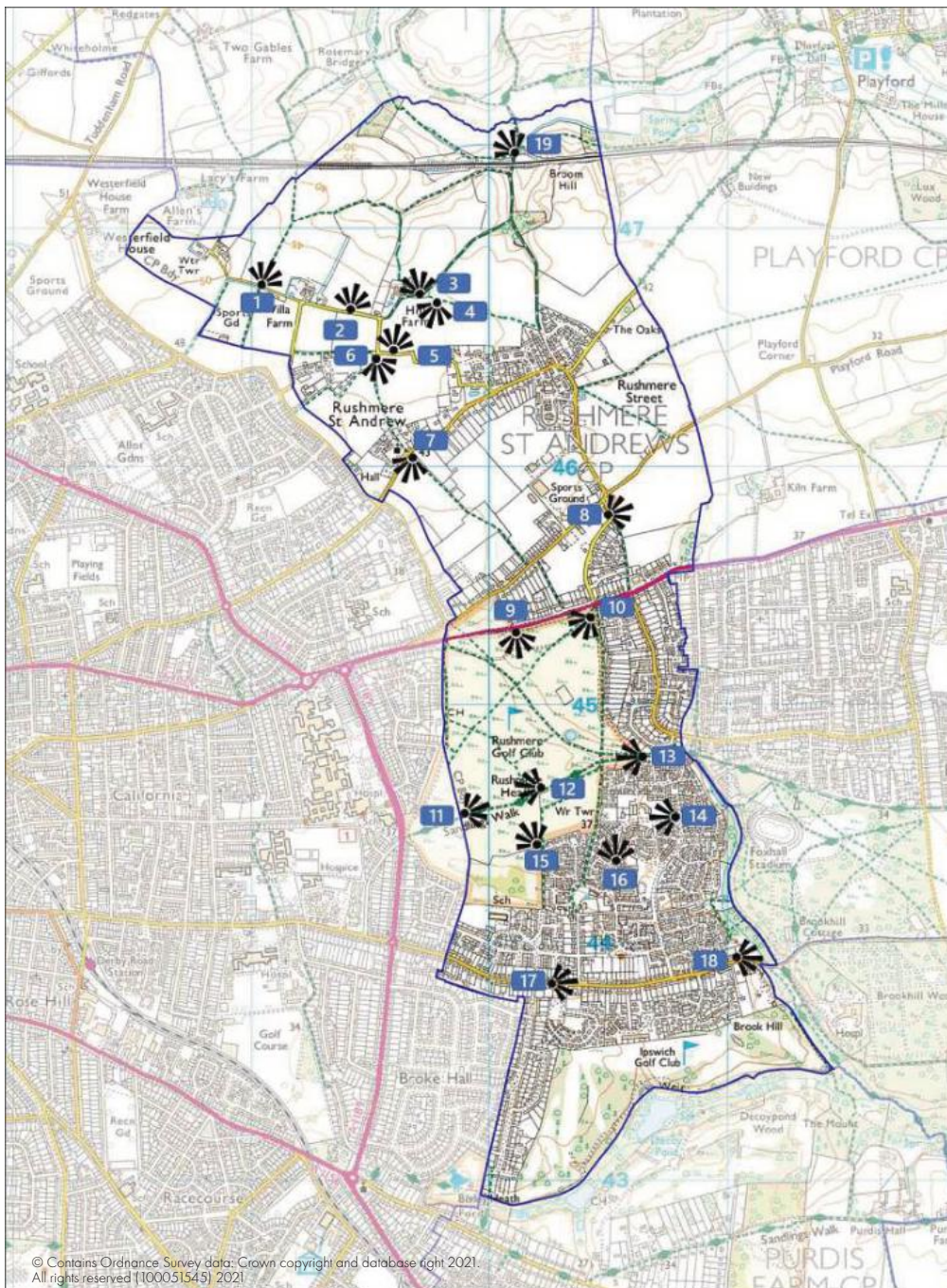
### **Important Views**

- 6.12** The landscape of the parish is such that it lends itself to accommodating important views into and out of the built-up areas. The Landscape Appraisal noted that views are critical in defining and reinforcing sense of place and local distinctiveness, connecting places where people live with the wider environment, providing opportunities to appreciate special qualities and connecting to local landmarks which can aid orientation. They also help express the relationship between settlement and wider landscape setting and a sense of arrival and gateways.



- 6.13** Map 3 illustrates important views identified in the Landscape Appraisal and development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how, as appropriate, they have had regard to the key features of the views and how the development would protect those key features.





MAP 3 - Important Views

## POLICY RSA 3 - PROTECTION OF LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND IMPORTANT VIEWS

As appropriate to their scale, nature and location and to ensure that they conserve the essential landscape, heritage and rural character of the parish, development proposals should demonstrate how they:

- i. have regard to, and conserve, or enhance, the landscape character and the setting of the parish, as referenced in the Rushmere Landscape Appraisal; and
- ii. will ensure that there is no unacceptable impact on the key features of the important views identified on the Policies Map.

Relevant Suffolk Coastal Local Plan Policies: Policy SCLP10.4: Landscape Character



**6.14** Across the parish the influence of trees and hedgerows play a significant role in determining the character of the area. This is evidenced by individual specimen trees, such as those found in The Street, tree belts and woodland, such as found around the Mill Stream and the Fynn Valley and hedgerows that separate fields, line lanes and form front boundaries. The screening and natural habitats that these features create are vitally important within the parish and the wider area and their retention and enhancement will be supported.

**6.15** There may be occasions where a new access to an otherwise acceptable development site would result in the loss of part of an existing hedgerow. Where this is necessary, a new hedgerow should be planted using native species on the visibility splay returns to minimise the loss of hedgerow and habitat and maintain the character of the area.



## **POLICY RSA 4 - PROTECTION OF TREES, HEDGEROWS AND OTHER NATURAL FEATURES**

Development proposals should avoid the loss of, or substantial harm to, distinctive trees, hedgerows and other natural features such as ponds and watercourses. Where such losses or harm are unavoidable:

- i. the benefits of the development proposal must be demonstrated to clearly outweigh any impacts; and
- ii. suitable mitigation measures, that provide better replacement of the lost features will be required to achieve measurable biodiversity net gain.

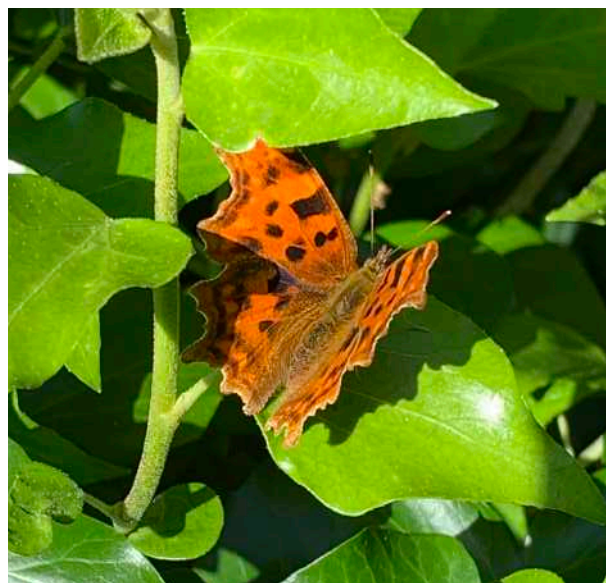
Any such mitigation measures should form an integral part of the design concept. In addition, the layout and design of the development proposal concerned should be landscape-led and appropriate in relation to its setting and context and have regard to its ongoing management.

Where new access is created, or an existing access is widened, through an existing hedgerow, a new hedgerow of native species shall be planted on the splay returns into the site to maintain the appearance and continuity of hedgerows in the vicinity.

**Relevant Suffolk Coastal Local Plan Policies:** Policy SCLP10.1: Biodiversity and Geodiversity

### **Our Wildlife and Landscape Initiatives**

- 6.16** Preparing the Neighbourhood Plan has enabled the consideration of how the natural environment of the parish can be protected and further enhanced for future generations. The Neighbourhood Plan proposes a number of initiatives, which take the form of Community Aspirations, the delivery of which will be facilitated by the Parish Council.



#### **Community Aspiration 1 - Wildlife Management**

There will be continued liaison with the Trustees of Rushmere Common and East Suffolk Council to identify and implement wildlife management across the Common and adjacent local nature reserves.

#### **Community Aspiration 2 - Wild East Project**

The Parish Council will continue to develop wildlife projects as a member of the Rewilding Forum within the Community Partnership Team of East Suffolk Council. In turn, parishes are encouraged to look to support the Wild East project. <https://www.wildeast.co.uk>

#### **Community Aspiration 3 - Re-wilding**

The Parish Council will take an important lead in "re-wilding" areas deemed suitable within Rushmere St Andrew.

#### **Community Aspiration 4 - Veteran and Ancient Trees**

A project is to be established to identify and map the species type and location of Veteran and Ancient Trees across the parish along with mapping significant tracts of other trees and hedges. This project will complement previous tree surveys and it is anticipated that the initial survey will take up to two years using the skill and expertise of trained arboriculturists and it is anticipated it will be financed by Locality Fund Budgets.

#### **Community Aspiration 5 - Plugging the gaps**

Essential to the identification of significant hedgerows and tree belts will be to identify "gaps". The Parish Council will seek to work with residents, developers and landowners to look to "plug the gaps" wherever possible. "Plugging the gaps" is a further project emerging from the Rewilding Forum mentioned above, which is to identify and map "Wildlife Corridors" throughout the parish and beyond.

#### **Community Aspiration 6 - Planting Initiative**

The Parish Council is planning to plant approximately 2,500 trees over a five-year period (to represent the approximate number of households in the parish). It is anticipated that the first planting will take place in early Spring 2022.

### Important Gaps

**6.17** The Landscape Appraisal highlighted that, due to the close proximity of Ipswich and Kesgrave, there are places where the distinction between local communities has become blurred. This is either because the built development has extended to be contiguous with that in the parish, or where there are remnant areas of open space which form an important gap but where the gap may be particularly narrow or subject to more urbanising land uses either within it or adjacent.

**6.18** Areas of open land which are considered important to retain as a gap between development are identified on the Policies Map. These areas of land are considered important to preferably remain in active agriculture or semi-natural habitat in order to safeguard the perceived separation and rural setting of the parish. Furthermore, the land to the north of Rushmere St Andrew village forms an important setting to the village and especially the church and listed farm clusters. Policy SCLP12.22 of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan identifies Recreation and Open Space between Ipswich and Rushmere St Andrew. There is a degree of overlap between one of the proposed Settlement Gaps identified in this Plan and the Recreation and Open Space identified in the Local Plan. Within this parcel of land (to the east of Humber Doucy Lane) proposals for open recreational use will be supported.

**6.19** The Suffolk Coastal Local Plan identifies some of these areas as important open space, but there remain areas that might, in the longer term, remain susceptible to development pressures from Ipswich. Although not in the Neighbourhood Plan Area, the Draft Ipswich Local Plan identifies remaining frontages onto Humber Doucy Lane as "Countryside" where development proposals will not be supported. Given the various localised designations in the respective Local Plans, the Neighbourhood Plan makes an additional designation to safeguard land south of Lamberts Lane and Tuddenham Lane and south-west of the sports pitches as an important gap. Development proposals which can demonstrate that they are appropriate to be located outside the Settlement Boundary that are located in a "Settlement Gap" will not normally be supported

unless it is incidental to an existing development and a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment accompanies the proposal which identifies the key landscape characteristics of the site and its setting and identifies how the proposal would not result in the degradation of the gap.

## POLICY RSA 5 - SETTLEMENT GAPS

The generally open and undeveloped nature of the Settlement Gaps, as identified on the Policies Map, will be protected from development to help prevent coalescence and retain the separate identity of Rushmere St Andrew.

Development which is otherwise in conformity of Policy RSA 1 will only be permitted within a Settlement Gap where:

- i) it would not undermine the physical and/or visual separation of the settlements; and
- ii) it would not compromise the integrity of the Settlement Gap, either individually or cumulatively with other existing or proposed development.

### Relevant Suffolk Coastal Local Plan Policies:

Policy SCLP10.5: Settlement Coalescence Geodiversity





### Local Green Spaces

- 6.20** There are a number of important open areas within the parish that make important contributions to the character and setting of the built environment. The NPPF enables the designation and protection of land of particular importance to local communities as Local Green Spaces ('LGS') in neighbourhood plans. Such designations rule out new development other than in very special circumstances. Paragraph 102 of the NPPF states that the designation should only be used where the green space is:
- In reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
  - Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example, because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
  - Where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land. It is recognised that the designation of Local Green Spaces should not be used simply to block development.
- 6.21** A separate Local Green Space Appraisal has been undertaken as part of the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, which demonstrates how certain local spaces meet the criteria in paragraph 102 of the NPPF. The spaces that meet the criteria are identified in Policy RSA6 and are illustrated on the Policies Map.
- 6.22** It is recognised that Rushmere Heath has many of the qualities of a Local Green Space but, due to its size, it would represent an "extensive tract of land" and would fail the NPPF criteria. Nevertheless, it has protection given that it is registered Common Land and cannot be built upon unless replacement common land of equal size and in the same vicinity is provided.
- 6.23** The identification of these spaces as Local Green Space means that development is restricted to that which has to be demonstrated as being essential for



the site, in line with the Green Belt policies defined by the NPPF. Permitted development rights, including the operational requirements of infrastructure providers, are not affected by this designation. Policy RSA6 follows the matter-of-fact approach in the NPPF. In the event that development proposals come forward on the local green spaces within the Plan period, they can be assessed on a case-by-case basis by East Suffolk Council. In particular, it will be able to make an informed judgement on the extent to which the proposal concerned demonstrates the 'very special circumstances' required by the policy.

### POLICY RSA 6 - LOCAL GREEN SPACES

The following Local Green Spaces are designated in this Plan and identified on the Policies Map:

1. The local greens either side of the Street and Playford Road Roundabout
2. The greens in Playford Lane and Holly Lane
3. The green opposite Elm Road
4. The greens between Holly Road and Elm Road
5. Chestnut Pond, The Street
6. The Limes Pond, The Street
7. Little Heath
8. Sandlings Local Nature Reserve
9. The Mill Stream
10. Broadlands Way Open Space
11. Brookhill Way Open Space
12. Salehurst Road Play Area
13. Chestnut Close Play Area
14. Bladen Drive / Gwendoline Close Open Space

Development proposals within the designated local green spaces will only be supported in very special circumstances.

#### Relevant Suffolk Coastal Local Plan Policies:

Policy SCLP8.2: Open Space

## 7. HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

### Listed Buildings

- 7.1** The parish has relatively little in the way of designated historic buildings or sites. There are just five Listed Buildings in the parish, as identified below. There is no conservation area in the parish but there are likely to be recorded archaeological sites and Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service's Historic Environment Record provides details of finds. The Service should be consulted at the earliest possible stages of preparing a planning application. Combined, these are defined as "Heritage Assets" a term defined in the Glossary.

### Listed Buildings (source Historic England - July 2021)

- Barn about 60 metres east north east of Hill Farm House, Lamberts Lane
- Hill Farmhouse, Lamberts Lane
- Garden Store, 10 metres north of Villa Farmhouse, Lamberts Lane
- Church of St Andrew
- Rushmere St Andrew War Memorial, St Andrew's Churchyard

### Other Heritage Assets

- 7.2** The preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan has provided an opportunity to identify whether there are buildings or features across the parish that might have special qualities or historic association and make a "positive contribution" to the character of the area in which they sit. Historic England define these as Non-Designated Heritage Assets and East Suffolk Council has published criteria against which potential candidates for such a list should be judged.
- 7.3** Some 22 individual or groups of properties have been identified as meeting the East Suffolk Council criteria for designation, the details of which are set out in a separate Appraisal of Non-Designated Heritage Assets. Local Plan Policy SCLP11.6 states that proposals for the re-use of Non-Designated Heritage Assets which are buildings or structures will be supported if compatible with the elements of the fabric and setting of the building or structure which contribute to its significance. Applications, including those for a change of use, which result in harm to the significance of a Non-Designated Heritage Asset

will be judged based on the balance of the scale of any harm or loss, and the significance of the heritage asset. In considering proposals which involve the loss of a non-designated heritage asset, consideration will be given to:

- a) Whether the asset is structurally unsound and beyond technically feasible and economically viable repair (for reasons other than deliberate damage or neglect); or
- b) Which measures to sustain the existing use, or find an alternative use/user, have been fully investigated.

### POLICY RSA 7 - NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

The Plan identifies the following buildings as shown on the Policies Map as non-designated heritage assets.

1. The old shop terrace, Holly Lane
2. The Old Forge and Blacksmiths House, The Street
3. The cottages opposite The Forge, The Street
4. The two cottages on South of Playford Lane
5. 148 and 150 The Street
6. The Lodge, The Street
7. The Limes Lodge, The Street
8. Rush Cottage, Playford Road
9. Colombia House, Playford Road
10. The Carmelite Nuns House, 23 Birchwood Drive
11. The Cottage, The Street
12. The Old Rectory, The Street
13. The Old Church Hall, Humber Doucy Lane
14. Baptist Church / The Chapel, The Street
15. The Old School (Community Hub), Humber Doucy Lane
16. Villa Farm, Tuddenham Lane
17. The Water Tower, Bixley Drive
18. Bixley Hall, Bixley Drive
19. The Golf Hotel, Foxhall Road
20. The former Falcon PH and adjoining cottages, Playford Road
21. Seven Cottages, Seven Cottages Lane
22. Old Water Tower, SW of Tuddenham Lane

Proposals for any works to a Non-Designated Heritage Asset will be assessed in accordance with Policy SCLP11.6 of the adopted Local Plan.

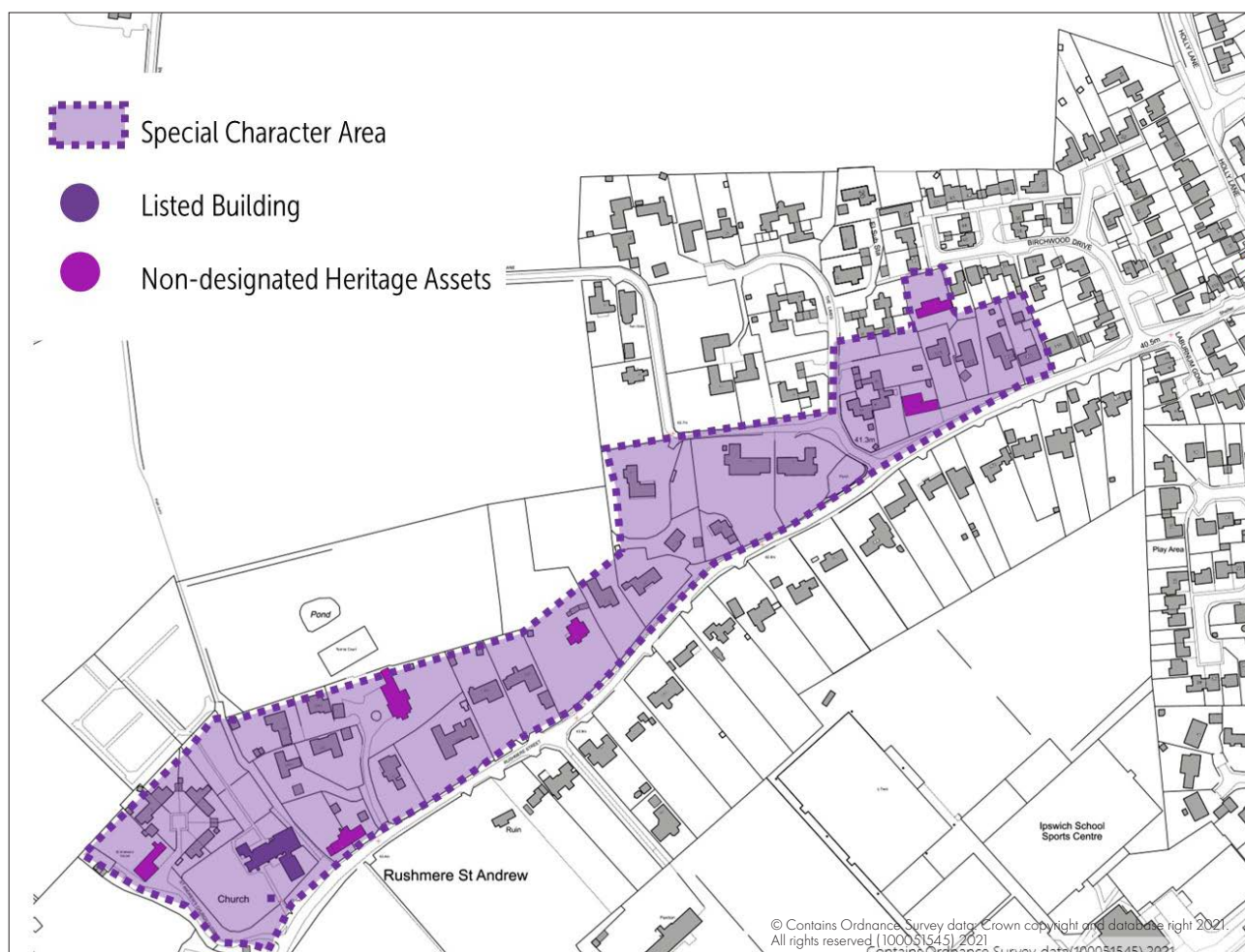


**Relevant Suffolk Coastal Local Plan Policies:**  
Policy SCLP11.6: Non-Designated Heritage Assets

**The Street Special Character Area**

**7.4** Although there is no designated Conservation Area in the Neighbourhood Area, properties along The Street and the environment in which they sit do, in combination, have distinct qualities that are of high environmental value. A number of the non-designated heritage assets identified in Policy RSA 7 are located north of The Street and this area also has a blanket Tree Preservation Order covering it. Appendix 1 provides further information about the special qualities of this area.

**7.5** In the light of these special qualities, the Neighbourhood Plan designates the area on the northern side of The Street, as identified on Map 4, as a Special Character Area. The designation does not have a statutory status but development proposals that do not take account of the built and natural qualities of this area could have a significant wider impact on its character and will not be supported. The second part of Policy RSA8 highlights the approach which will be taken through the development management process. Where appropriate, any public interest benefits which arise from a proposed development will be considered against the harm which may arise.



**Map 4 - Special Character Area**

## POLICY RSA 8 - RUSHMERE ST ANDREW VILLAGE SPECIAL CHARACTER AREA

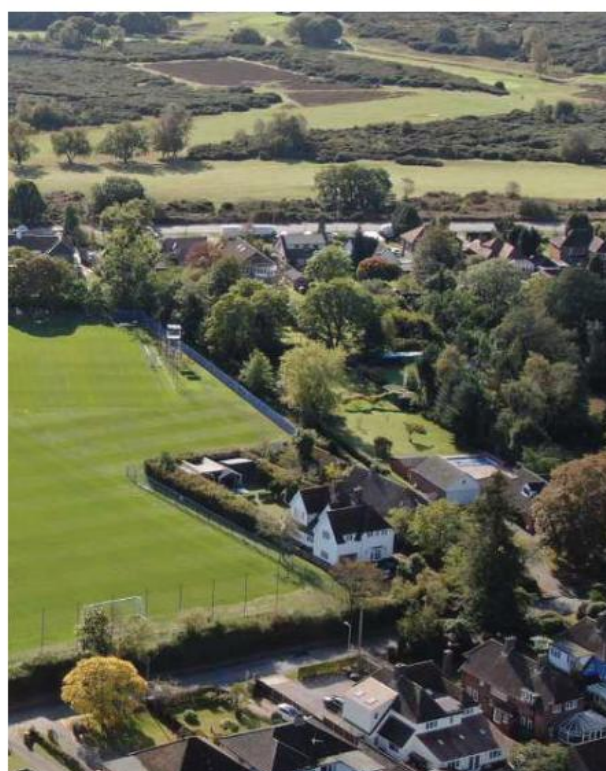
A Special Character Area is identified on the Policies Map. Within this area, as well as having regard to the need to preserve or enhance the significance of the heritage assets in or adjoining the area, development proposals should respond positively to the distinctive characteristics of the identified area as illustrated in Appendix 1.

Development proposals which would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the Special Character Area will not be supported.

### Relevant Suffolk Coastal Local Plan Policies:

Policy SCLP11.1: Design Quality

Policy SCLP11.3: Historic Environment









## 8. DEVELOPMENT DESIGN

**8.1** As part of the government-funded Neighbourhood Planning Technical Support package, Design Guidelines and Codes have been prepared for the parish by AECOM Consultants. The document is published as supporting evidence to the Neighbourhood Plan and seeks to inform the design that any future development should follow. The Guidelines were produced before the National Model Design Code was published by the Government in July 2021. However, the Guidelines do reflect the

ambitions of the Model Design Code insofar that detailed principles for the consideration of aspects of development design particular to Rushmere St Andrew are contained within them.

**8.2** The Design Guidelines and Codes concluded that there are four distinct built character areas across the parish, as described below.

### **The village of Rushmere St Andrew**

The northernmost part of the parish, it remains predominantly rural and is dominated by open fields surrounding the historic village of Rushmere St Andrew. It concentrates the oldest structures of the parish, including all of its listed buildings, and is its most architecturally diverse area. Open space in the form of fields and sport pitches enables the village to remain physically separate from the built-up area of Ipswich as well as the more suburban areas of the parish. The historic village core is supplemented by small clusters of more recent infill developments. The large number of mature trees, landscaped hedges, and large planted front gardens help the village retain an open and green character. The limited road network is a mix of rural lanes and short cul-de-sac roads.

### **Beech Road**

The area, located east of Rushmere Common and south of Woodbridge Road, is dominated by mid-20th century detached and semi-detached bungalows with a minority of semi-detached two-storey houses. Vegetation is largely absent from the public realm apart from a few narrow verges and is instead located in private gardens. The area does not contain green spaces but benefits from its proximity with Rushmere Common.

### **Bixley Estate (north of Foxhall Road)**

Located south of Rushmere Common, this area is dominated by suburban tract housing and contains the most recently developed parts of the parish. Tract housing developments give the area the highest degree of architectural homogeneity in the parish despite variations in construction materials and forms. Most houses are two-storey detached houses arranged in clusters served by loops and cul-de-sac roads. A small retail cluster at the junction between Broadlands Way and Brendon Drive, next to which is a small group of terraces. The area contains small pockets of green spaces and trails and benefits from the proximity of Rushmere Common, Sandlings Nature Reserve, and Mill Stream Nature Reserve.

### **South of Foxhall Road**

The southernmost part of the parish, it abuts the northern and western fringes of Ipswich Golf Club and can be divided into different sub-areas. It is dominated by an area of large two-storey houses served by cul-de-sacs distributed along Brookhill Way. This area contains many mature trees that were either retained in the public realm or integrated into private gardens, while boundaries are marked by dense landscaped hedges. Immediately west of this area is a trailer park served by Heathlands Park. Ribbon development can be observed along Foxhall Road, and its western fringe are extensions of an area of detached and semi-detached two-storey tract housing from neighbouring Ipswich.



**8.3** Development proposals will be expected to have regard to the local character as well as the overall Design Guidelines for the parish, expressed in design principles addressing:

- Site Layout
- Well-connected roads and footpaths
- Maintaining the local character
- Quality of place
- Sustainability

Associated with these principles the Design Guidelines and Codes include a development design checklist, reproduced in Appendix 2 of the Neighbourhood Plan. All development proposals should, as appropriate to the development, seek to respond to the checklist and identify how the matters are addressed at the time of the planning application.

**8.4** In some areas of the Parish houses are characterised by long narrow plots typified by “ribbon” development along the main roads leading to Ipswich centre. Such houses normally have long rear gardens and there have been instances where new homes have been constructed in rear gardens, creating dwellings in tandem with the existing. This type of development can have a detrimental impact on the character of the area as well as the amenity of neighbouring residents due to overlooking and disturbance. Proposals for tandem development in large rear gardens will not be supported. where it would result in a detrimental impact on the character and densities of the area within which the site is located, particularly through the loss of large gardens and where the residential amenity of residents living in neighbouring dwellings would be compromised

### Flooding

**8.5** Few, if any, homes in the parish are located within flood zones and therefore the risk of flooding from watercourses is minimal. However, many roads, in particular, suffer from surface water flooding after heavy rain. This is especially a problem in the older part of the parish in the area north of the A1214 Woodbridge Road, where old surface water soakaways have now failed and The Street, between St Andrew’s Church and Chestnut Pond, is especially

susceptible to large puddles due to poor drainage. The Neighbourhood Plan itself can’t do anything to rectify existing surface water flooding issues as this is the responsibility of Suffolk County Council, but it can put in place measures to ensure new development does not add to the problem.

**8.6** Where new development is proposed, Sustainable Drainage Systems are required in order to manage water run-off from hard or impermeable surfaces. These could include:

- wetland and other water features, which can help reduce flood risk whilst offering other benefits including water quality, amenity/ recreational areas, and biodiversity benefits; and
- rainwater and stormwater harvesting and recycling; and other natural drainage systems where easily accessible maintenance can be achieved.



## POLICY RSA 9 - DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

Proposals for new development must reflect the local characteristics and circumstances in the Neighbourhood Plan Area as identified in the Rushmere St Andrew Landscape Appraisal and the Rushmere St Andrew Design Guidelines and Codes, and create and contribute to a high quality, safe and sustainable environment.

In addition to having regard to the National Model Design Code, all planning applications should demonstrate how they satisfy the requirements of the Development Design Principles in Appendix 2 of the Neighbourhood Plan, as appropriate to the proposal.

In addition, and as appropriate to their scale, nature and location, proposals will be supported where:

- a. the key features, characteristics, landscape/building character, local distinctiveness and special qualities of the area are maintained and enhanced;
- b. they protect and where practicable enhance open, green or landscaped areas in the immediate locality which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the parish;
- c. taking mitigation measures into account, important landscape characteristics including trees and ancient hedgerows and other prominent topographical features identified in the Neighbourhood Plan Landscape Appraisal are not adversely affected;
- d. designs, in accordance with standards, maintain or enhance the safety of the highway network ensuring that all vehicle parking is provided within the plot where practicable and seek always to ensure permeability through new housing areas, ensuring safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle routes are available or can be made available to local services and facilities;
- e. not result in water run-off that would add to or create surface water flooding, through the incorporation, as appropriate to the development, of above ground open Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), which could incorporate wetland and other water features;
- f. as appropriate, they make adequate provision for the covered storage of all wheelie bins and secure cycle storage in accordance with adopted cycle parking standards;
- g. suitable ducting capable of accepting fibre to enable superfast broadband is included;
- h. one electric vehicle charging point per new off-street parking place created is provided;
- i. the design and materials have regard to the Rushmere St Andrew Design Guidelines and Codes and does not adversely change the character of the site or its setting;
- j. they are located so as users and nearby residents would not be significantly and adversely affected by noise, smell, vibration, overlooking, light or other forms of pollution unless adequate mitigation can be incorporated as part of the proposal; and
- k. they would not result in new dwellings being constructed in rear gardens of existing dwellings. that would have a detrimental impact on the character and densities of the area within which the site is located.

### Relevant Suffolk Coastal Local Plan Policies:

Policy SCLP5.7: Infill and Garden Development

Policy SCLP5.14: Extensions to Residential Curtilages

Policy SCLP7.1: Sustainable Transport

Policy SCLP7.2: Parking Proposals and Standards

Policy SCLP8.2: Open Space

Policy SCLP9.2: Sustainable Construction

Policy SCLP9.6: Sustainable Drainage Systems

Policy SCLP9.7: Holistic Water Management

Policy SCLP10.3: Environmental Quality

Policy SCLP11.1: Design Quality







## 9. SERVICES AND FACILITIES

### Community Facilities and Services

**9.1** As noted earlier in the Plan, residents of the parish are well placed to access services and facilities due to its location on the edge of Ipswich, but it is important that there remains an appropriate level of services at a local level to meet day to day needs of residents. However, it is recognised that demands change over time and it would be unreasonable to require the retention of facilities if there is no longer a proven need or demand for them. In such circumstances, it might be appropriate for those uses to be lost where specific criteria can be met.

**9.2** During the lifetime of the Plan there may be circumstances that force the closure of a shop or community facility and where there is no demand, or it is not viable for it to remain in its current or alternative community use. In such circumstances it might be better for the premises to revert to an alternative use but only if certain circumstances can be proven. Policy RSA10 provides criterion which, together with the policies in the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, will be used to determine any such proposals.

### POLICY RSA 10 - PARISH SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Proposals that would result in the loss of the following services and facilities, as identified on the Policies Map, will be determined in accordance with Policy SCLP8.1 of the Local Plan.

- The Village Hall
- Broke Hall Primary School
- Allotments
- Tower Hall
- St Andrew's Walk Local Centre
- Beech Road Local Centre
- St Andrew's Church
- Rushmere Baptist Church
- The Golf Hotel PH
- The Oak Tree Community Farm

Individual retail premises not identified on the Policies Map are also covered by the provision of the policy, in circumstances where planning consent would be required that would result in the loss of the facility.

Proposals for the enhancement of the existing services and facilities will generally be supported subject to there being no unacceptable impact on the natural and historic environment, infrastructure and the amenity of residents.

#### Relevant Suffolk Coastal Local Plan Policies:

Policy SCLP8.2: Open Space

Policy SCLP8.3: Allotments



## Sport and Recreation Facilities

**9.3** The provision of sport and recreation facilities can play a significant role in supporting the health and welfare of residents of all ages. The parish is rich in playing field provision, but this is mainly for private use of schools, sports clubs and Ipswich Town FC. The loss of any sport and recreation facility will have a significant impact on the provision of opportunities to participate in fitness and sport and it is essential that these facilities are maintained and improved to support healthy lifestyles in future years.

**9.4** Paragraph 99 of the NPPF states:  
*"Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should*

*not be built on unless:*

*a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or*

*b) the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or*

*c) the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use."*

This approach will apply to the sports facilities and playing fields in the Neighbourhood Plan Area.

## POLICY RSA 11 - OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Proposals for the provision, enhancement and/or expansion of amenity, sport or recreation open space or facilities (including those identified on the Policies Map) will be permitted subject to compliance with other Policies in the Development Plan and a demonstration that the facility can provide sufficient car parking on-site to meet demands. Support will be given where facilities include provisions that encourage travel by sustainable modes of transport, such as secure cycle parking.

Development which will result in the loss of existing amenity, sport or recreation open space or facilities will not be supported unless:

- a. it can be demonstrated that the space or facility is surplus to requirement against the local planning authority's standards for that location, and the proposed loss will not result in a likely shortfall during the plan period; or
- b. replacement for the space or facilities lost is made available, of at least equivalent quantity and quality, and in a suitable location to meet the needs of users of the existing space or facility.

Any replacement provision should take account of the needs of the wider community and the current standards of open space and sports facility provision adopted by the local planning authority.

Where necessary to the acceptability of the development, housing, office, retail and other commercial and mixed development should provide open space including play areas, formal sport/recreation areas, amenity areas and where appropriate, indoor sports facilities or to provide land and a financial contribution towards the cost and maintenance of existing or new facilities, as appropriate. These facilities will be secured through the use of conditions and/or planning obligations.

Clubhouses, pavilions, car parking and ancillary facilities should be of a high standard of design and internal layout. The location of such facilities should be well related and sensitive to the topography, character and uses of the surrounding area, particularly when located in or close to residential areas.

Development proposals for floodlighting should be designed and located in a way which respect the amenities of residential properties in the immediate locality of the application site.

**Relevant Suffolk Coastal Local Plan Policies:**  
Policy SCLP8.2: Open Space



**9.5** Several issues were identified in the responses to the questionnaires with regard to facilities provided for play and recreation. Currently the parish has a number of play spaces which are maintained to a high standard by the Parish Council. There are numerous park benches located across the parish and more recently picnic benches have been added in a couple of locations. The Parish Council is mindful of inclusivity and as such play equipment, picnic benches and pathways are being developed to enable persons of all abilities to enjoy the outdoor world in the parish.

**9.6** It was recognised from responses that the Parish Council should address the provision of facilities for older teenagers, in particular, a kick-about facility in the northern part of the parish.

#### **Community Aspiration 7 - Older Children "Kick-about" Facility**

The Parish Council will work with local landowners and sports clubs to identify a suitable space in the north of the parish for a "kick-about" facility for older children.

#### **Community Aspiration 8 - Older Teenagers Play Facilities**

The Parish Council will seek to provide climbing/play facilities for older teenagers.

**9.7** A constant "thorn" for any community are the issues of anti-social behaviour, litter and dog waste. Fortunately, incidents of anti-social behaviour in the parish are rare. The Parish Council has a good working relationship with the Police, mostly through direct contact with the match funded PCSO. By sharing information and maintaining an eye on the community many potential problems are dealt with before they become unwieldy.

**9.8** General Litter and Dog Waste are rarely off the agenda! The Parish Council has installed increasing numbers of bins both for litter and dog waste. Installed and paid for by the Parish Council the bins are emptied by the district council's operator, East Suffolk Norse.

#### **Community Aspiration 9 - Litter**

Through continued dialogue with parishioners the Parish Council will look to identify further locations which may be enhanced by the provision of Litter Bins and / or Dog Waste Bins.





## 10. HIGHWAYS AND TRAVEL



**10.1** Neighbourhood plans have little power to introduce highway improvements as most schemes will not require planning permission. Improvements are therefore reliant on the County Council's Highways Department for investment in projects or improvements required as part of the mitigation of the impact of development proposals. With that in mind, we have put together a package of aspirations for highways and transport improvements across the parish that will be pursued further during the lifetime of the Neighbourhood Plan.

**10.2** The essence of this section is to promote safer travel for all with particular emphasis on the non-car user. The vast majority of residents have access to a motor vehicle, and it is the first choice of travel for many as demonstrated in the 2011 Census when 71% of those in work travelled by car compared with 66% for the rest of the former Suffolk Coastal District.

**10.3** The Parish, due to its edge of Ipswich location, is generally well served by a range of sustainable travel opportunities, such as bus services, walking and cycling. The uptake of public transport continues to be challenging. Factors such as frequency of service, routes and fares all play their part. In particular, one theme identified in the Neighbourhood Plan

surveys was the idea of a transport hub at the Ipswich Hospital so that routes from different sections of the parish offered this as a focal point.

**10.4** Elsewhere in the parish, the village centre is served by Service No 59 which runs between Playford and the Town Centre, Bixley Estate is served by Service No 4, which goes to the Town Centre via Felixstowe Road.

### **Community Aspiration 10 - Public Transport Initiatives**

Work with relevant agencies to support, promote and develop use of public transport and accessibility for users, including the use of leaflets, newsletter articles etc to give details of bus routes/timetables/travel apps etc to promote non-car journeys.

**10.5** However, the car still dominates the area and, to a greater or lesser extent, has an impact of people's lives. The main artery road through the parish is the A1214 Woodbridge Road which plays a significant role in separating the north and south of the parish. It is a main bus route into Ipswich Town Centre as well as an important link into the Ipswich "ring road" that acts as a main distributor around the town.

- 10.6** A continued thread emerging from the community responses was the issue of numbers and speed of vehicles affecting many parts of the parish. It is recognised that certain roads, such as The Street and Playford Road in the north of the parish and Arundel Way in the south are often used as "rat-runs". One example was where covert speed detection equipment revealed that more than 50% of the traffic using Playford Road was travelling at 35 mph or above. As a consequence, funding was obtained to instal traffic calming measures in that area.
- 10.7** It would seem inevitable that traffic volumes will increase, particularly in the light of several proposed developments close to or within the parish boundary. The A1214 (Woodbridge Road) and Foxhall Road have seen a marked increase in traffic volumes associated with the continued development at the out-of-town retail and employment areas at Martlesham.
- 10.8** It is therefore, all the more important that measures are put in place to make Rushmere St Andrew as safe as possible for non-car users. For example, setting up a traffic calming scheme for the main road through the village; installing safe crossing points for pedestrians along Woodbridge Road (Rushmere St Andrew) and work with residents and the Police to free up public footways from parked vehicles and other obstructions.
- 10.9** Specifically with regard to speeding vehicles there are now a number of formats available. These include the use of Speed Indication Devices (SIDs), Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) speed detectors, Community Speedwatch, PCSOs and Police Speed Camera Detection Vans.

#### **Community Aspiration 11 – Rushmere Street Traffic Calming**

The Parish Council will work with all relevant agencies to achieve traffic calming and a 20 mph zone through The Street.

#### **Community Aspiration 12 - Speeding**

The Parish Council will work with all relevant agencies to address the issue of speeding vehicles. It is proposed to develop a number of locations as suitable sites to deploy SIDs and ANPR devices. Community Speedwatch will be supported, and the use of Police resources will be requested as appropriate.

- 10.10** The parish is well positioned to, in theory, provide safe cycle routes to link in with the wider network of Kesgrave and Ipswich. However, this is not the case and there are few dedicated cycle lanes in the parish. In order to further encourage non-car use there are emerging plans to expand safe-cycling routes in the parish and beyond. Both Suffolk County Council and East Suffolk Council continue to work on initiatives to promote safe-cycling.
- 10.11** Footways, paths alongside roads, are generally in good condition but there are locations where they are narrow and difficult to use for those with limited mobility. This is especially the case between The Limes Pond and St Andrew's Church. Dropped kerbs have been provided in more recent developments to assist with crossing the road but there is only one crossing point in the parish where pedestrians have a priority crossing (at the Woodbridge Road / Beech Road traffic lights).
- 10.12** Development should take all reasonable opportunities to promote the use of public and green transport, such as improving the cycle lane network and contributing towards community or commercial bus services to the village.

#### **Community Aspiration 13 – Encouraging Walking and Cycling**

Measures will be taken to make it safer for non-car users to use footways and public rights of way in the parish. The provision of additional safe-cycling routes will be supported in conjunction with other local authorities and the County Council will be lobbied to provide additional safe crossing points on Woodbridge Road (Rushmere St Andrew).



### Quiet Lanes

**10.13** The rural country lanes in the north of the parish are especially precious given the proximity of the urban area of Ipswich. They offer pedestrians (including school children), cyclists, horse riders and other non-motorised vehicle users an opportunity to use routes with little vehicular traffic safely for recreation and sustainable travel.

**10.14** The Parish Council has been working with the County Council to designate some of the narrower lanes which are popular with walkers, cyclists and horse-riders as "Quiet Lanes" to provide recognition that these lanes are used for non-motorised travel and that drivers should expect to consider the needs of walkers, cyclists, and horse riders. Quiet Lanes are minor rural roads, typically C or unclassified routes, which have been designated by local highway authorities to pay special attention to the needs of walkers, cyclists, horse riders and other vulnerable road users, and to offer protection from speeding traffic. Cars are not banned from Quiet Lanes but these lanes are signposted to help drivers to 'Expect and Respect' other non-motorised road users who may be sharing the road. Developments that generate significant levels of traffic that could result in average daily vehicle movements on a Quiet Lane in excess of 1,000 vehicles or 85th percentile speeds in excess of 35 mph could result in the designation being lost. Such development proposals would not be supported.

**10.15** Natural England recognise 'the importance of providing and maintaining a network of green infrastructure, including Public Rights of Way, quality greenspaces, quiet lanes, greenways and corridors, for an effective non-motorised transport network threading through urban areas and linking to more rural areas'.

**10.16** The Suffolk Green Access Strategy addresses access for walking and cycling on the wider highway network, including footways and quiet lanes. 'Green access is key to developing people's health and wellbeing. Inactivity is one of the top 10 causes of disease and disability in England and accounts for as many deaths as smoking'.



**10.17** The routes designated as Quiet Lanes are:

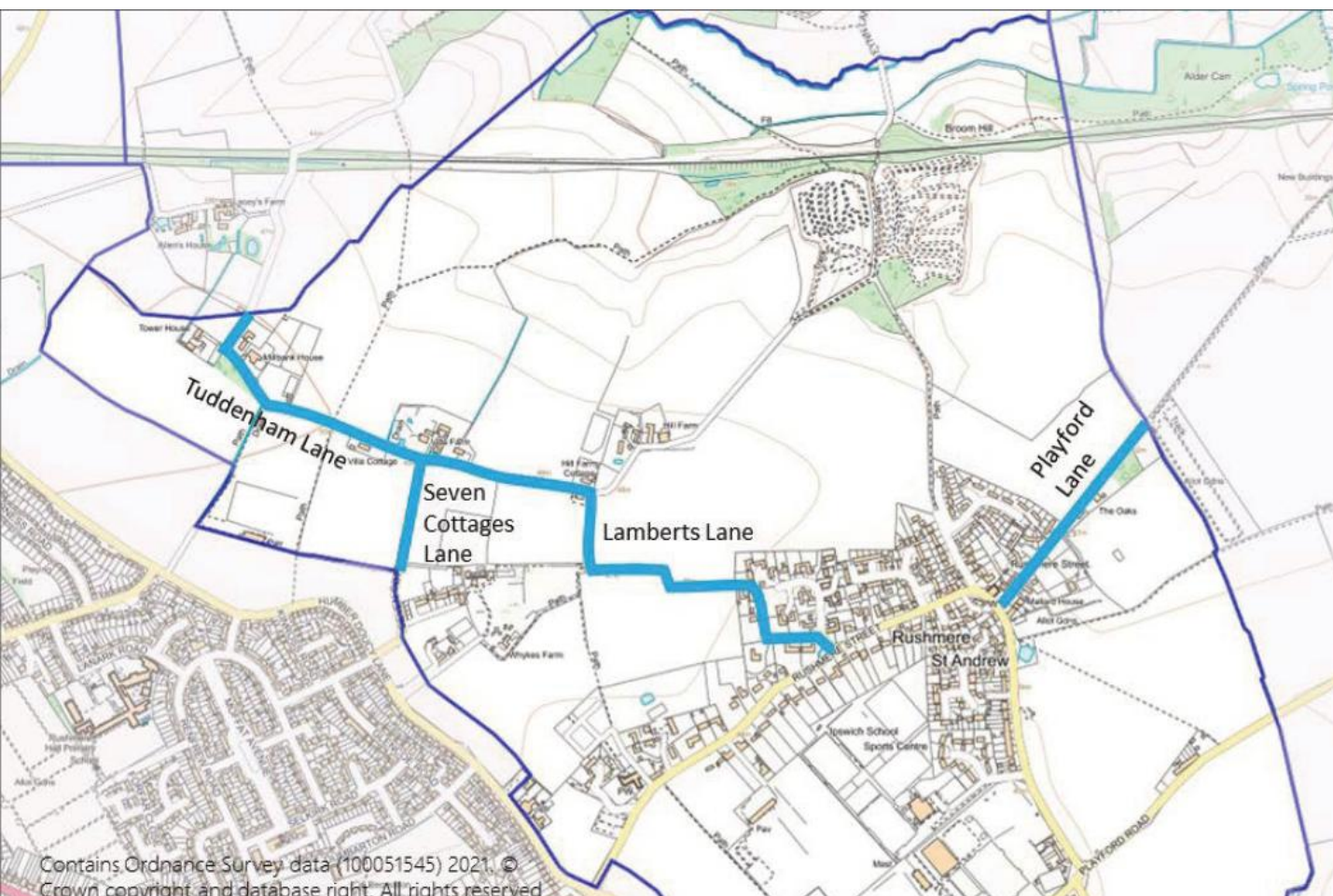
- Lamberts Lane
- Playford Lane
- Tuddenham Lane
- Seven Cottages Lane

The extent of these routes is illustrated on Map 5.

### Public Rights of Way

**10.18** Access to the local countryside contributes to the residents' health and well-being in terms of both mental and physical health. There is an extensive network of public rights of way across the parish, as illustrated on the Policies Map. The network is well used by walkers and, on bridleways, cyclists and horse riders. The paths are generally in good condition and waymarked but use of village roads such as the proposed Quiet Lanes, is sometimes necessary to complete a circular walk.

**10.19** Measures to improve and extend the existing network of public rights of way will be supported if their value as biodiversity corridors is recognised and protected and efforts are made to enhance biodiversity as part of the proposal. Policy RSA12 sets out the Plan's approach to this matter. The policy needs to be read within the wider context set by the development plan. It does not offer opportunities for development which would otherwise enhance footpath links to come forward where such a proposal would be in conflict with the provisions of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan and other policies in this Plan.'



Map 5 - Quiet Lanes

## POLICY RSA 12 - PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

Development proposals which improve and extend the existing network of public rights of way will be supported. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, such development proposals should take account of the existing value of the right of way concerned as a biodiversity corridor and where practicable incorporate measures to enhance biodiversity as part of the proposal.

## Community Aspiration 14 - Public Rights of Way Review

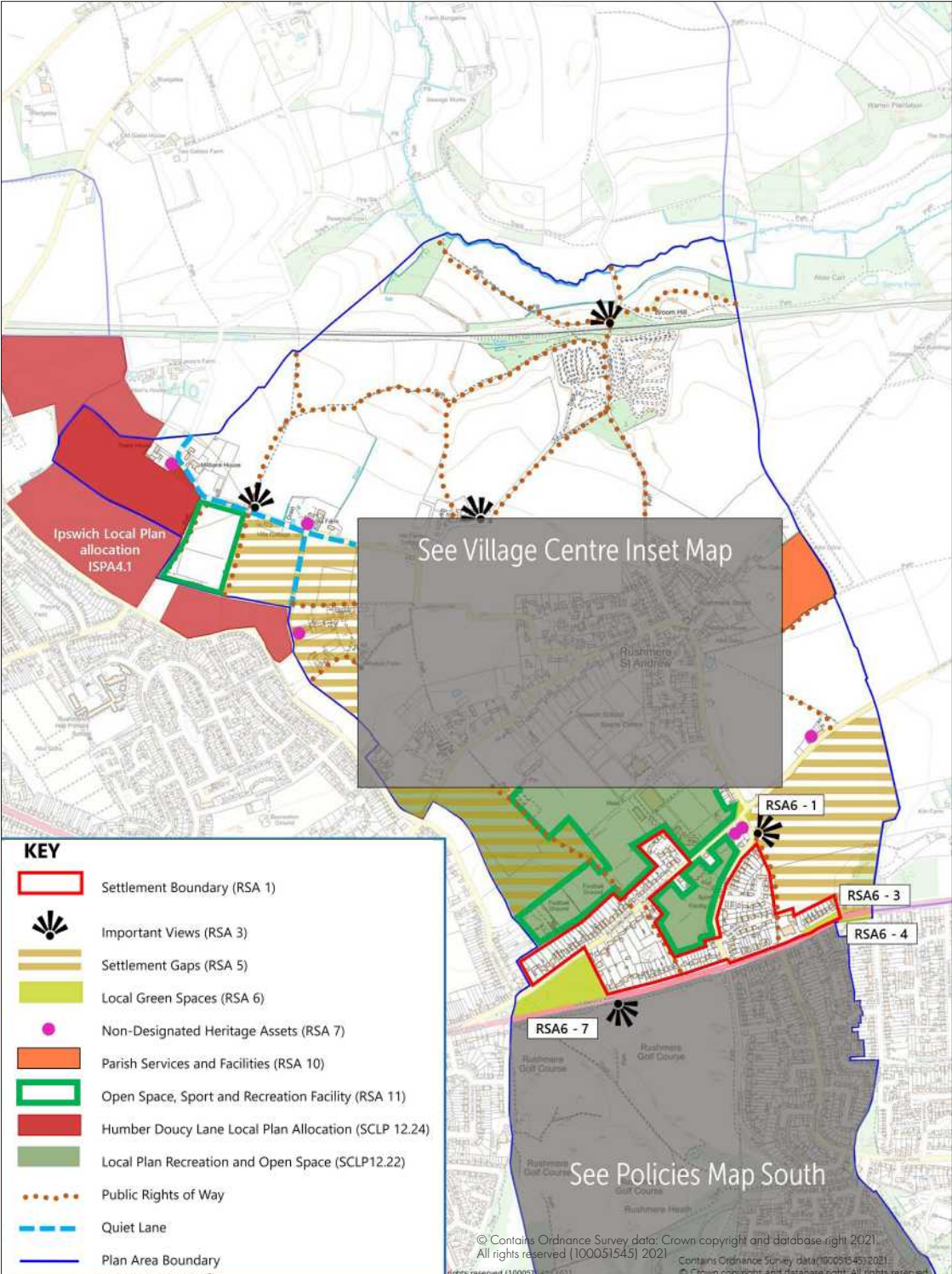
A comprehensive review of existing public rights of way/footpaths in the parish with particular emphasis to assess their year-round condition and accessibility for all users.

## Community Aspiration 15 - Public Rights of Way Accessibility

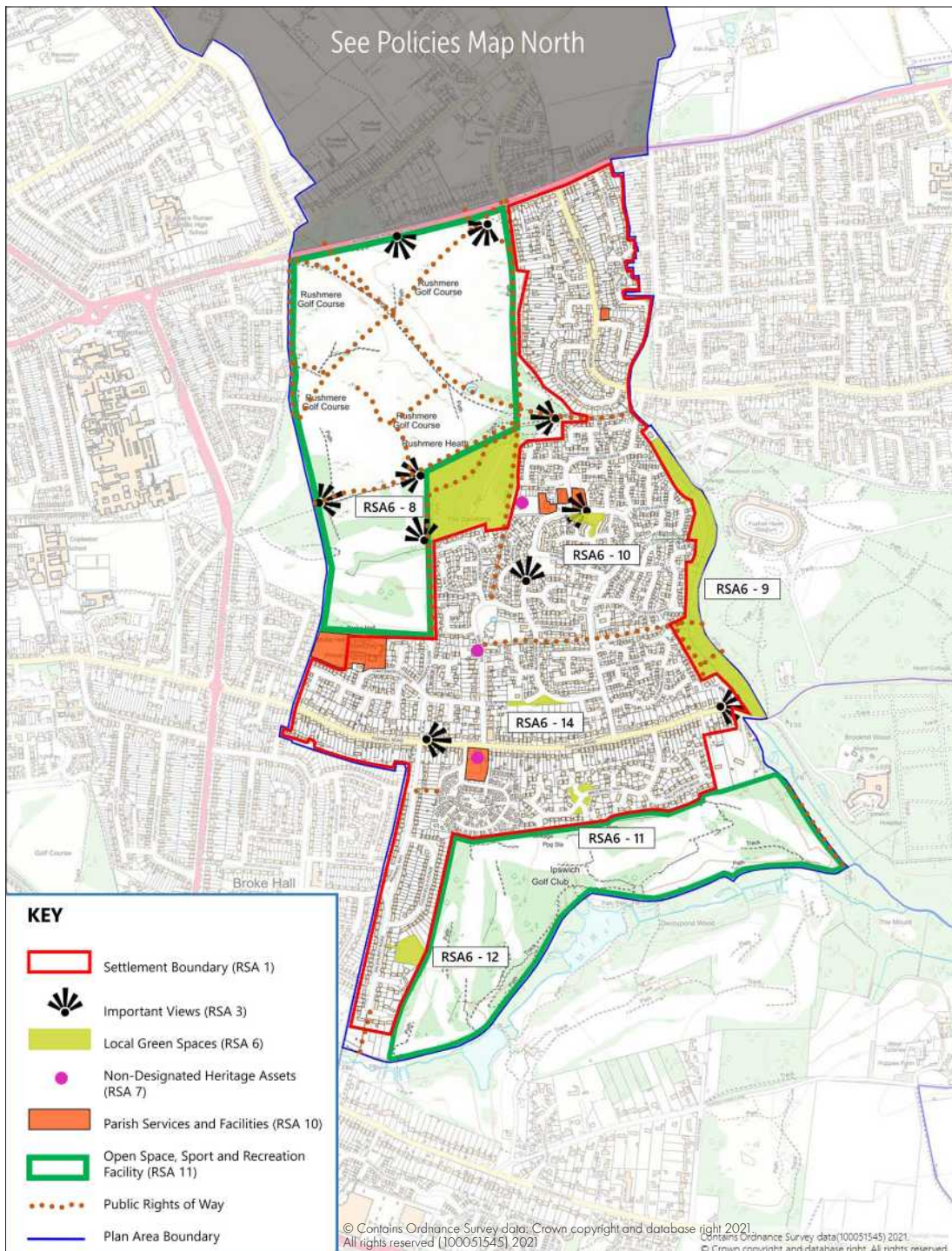
The Parish Council will promote the setting up of a group to look at the structure and accessibility of all footpaths/rights of way with including the potential to develop coded way-markers linked to maps, promotion leaflets, approximate journey times and "return-to-base" circular footpath routes.



# POLICIES MAP - NORTH

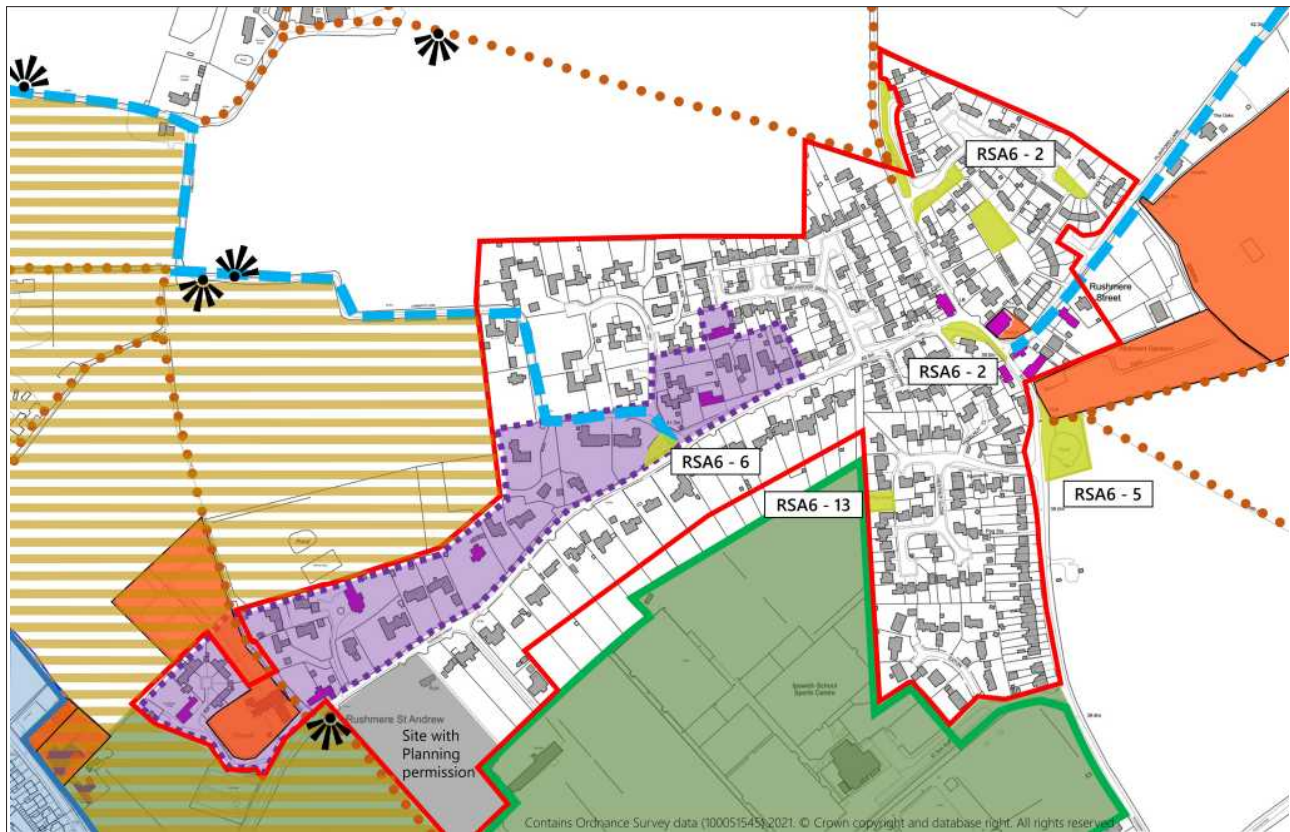


## POLICIES MAP - SOUTH





## THE STREET - INSET MAP



### KEY

- Settlement Boundary (RSA 1)
- Important Views (RSA 3)
- Settlement Gaps (RSA 5)
- Local Green Spaces (RSA 6)
- Non-designated Heritage Assets (RSA 7)
- Special Character Area (RSA 8)
- Parish Services and Facilities (RSA 10)
- Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facility (RSA 11)
- Local Plan Recreation and Open Space (SCLP12.22)
- Public Rights of Way (RSA 12)
- Quiet Lane

## APPENDIX 1 - THE STREET SPECIAL CHARACTER AREA





## APPENDIX 2 - DEVELOPMENT DESIGN CHECKLIST

As a first step, there are a number of design principles that should be present in any proposals. As general design guidelines, new development should:

- Respect the existing settlement pattern in order to preserve the character. Coalescence - development should be avoided;
- Integrate with existing paths, streets, circulation networks;
- Reinforce or enhance the established character of streets, greens and other spaces;
- Harmonise and enhance the existing settlement in terms of physical form, architecture and land use;
- Retain and incorporate important existing features into the development;
- Respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, roofline, height, form, and density;
- Enhance and reinforce the property boundary treatments;
- Adopt contextually appropriate materials and details;
- Provide adequate open space for the development in terms of both quantity and quality;
- Incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained features;
- Ensure all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space are well related to each other; and
- Aim for innovative design and eco-friendly buildings while respecting the architectural heritage and tradition of the area whilst also integrating them with future development.

### General questions to ask and issues to consider when presented with a development proposal

#### Street grid and layout

Does it favour accessibility and connectivity over cul-de-sac models? If not, why?

Do the new points of access and street layout have regard for all users of the development; in particular pedestrians, cyclists and those with disabilities?

What are the essential characteristics of the existing street pattern; are these reflected in the proposal?

How will the new design or extension integrate with the existing street arrangement?

Are the new points of access appropriate in terms of patterns of movement?

Do the points of access conform to the statutory technical requirements?

#### Local green spaces, views and character

What are the particular characteristics of this area which have been taken into account in the design; i.e. what are the landscape qualities of the area?

Does the proposal maintain or enhance any identified views or views in general?

How does the proposal affect the trees on or adjacent to the site?

Has the proposal been considered within its wider physical context?

Has the impact on the landscape quality of the area been taken into account?

In rural locations, has the impact of the development on the tranquillity of the area been fully considered?

How does the proposal affect the character of a rural location?

How does the proposal impact on existing views which are important to the area and how are these views incorporated in the design?

Can any new views be created?

Is there adequate amenity space for the development?

Does the new development respect and enhance existing amenity space?

Have opportunities for enhancing existing amenity spaces been explored?

Will any communal amenity space be created? If so, how this will be used by the new owners and how will it be managed?

### **Gateway and access features**

What is the arrival point, how is it designed?

Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing gaps between settlements?

Does the proposal affect or change the setting of a listed building or listed landscape?

Is the landscaping to be hard or soft?

### **Buildings layout and grouping**

What are the typical groupings of buildings?

How have the existing groupings been reflected in the proposal?

Are proposed groups of buildings offering variety and texture to the townscape?

What effect would the proposal have on the streetscape?

Does the proposal maintain the character of dwelling clusters stemming from the main road?

Does the proposal overlook any adjacent properties or gardens? How is this mitigated?

### **Building line and boundary treatment**

What are the characteristics of the building line?

How has the building line been respected in the proposals?

Has the appropriateness of the boundary treatments been considered in the context of the site?

### **Building heights and roofline**

What are the characteristics of the roofline?

Have the proposals paid careful attention to height, form, massing and scale?

If a higher than average building(s) is proposed, what would be the reason for making the development higher?

### **Household extensions**

Does the proposed design respect the character of the area and the immediate neighbourhood, and does it have an adverse impact on neighbouring properties in relation to privacy, overbearing or overshadowing impact?

Is the roof form of the extension appropriate to the original dwelling (considering angle of pitch)?

Do the proposed materials match those of the existing dwelling?

In case of side extensions, does it retain important gaps within the street scene and avoid a 'terracing effect'?

Are there any proposed dormer roof extensions set within the roof slope?

Does the proposed extension respond to the existing pattern of window and door openings?

Is the side extension set back from the front of the house?

### **Building materials and surface treatment**

What is the distinctive material in the area, if any?

Does the proposed material harmonise with the local materials?

Does the proposal use high-quality materials?

Have the details of the windows, doors, eaves and roof details been addressed in the context of the overall design?

Does the new proposed materials respect or enhance the existing area or adversely change its character?

### **Car parking solutions**

What parking solutions have been considered?

Are the car spaces located and arranged in a way that is not dominant or detrimental to the sense of place?

Has planting been considered to soften the presence of cars?

Does the proposed car parking compromise the amenity of adjoining properties?

Have the needs of wheelchair users been considered?

### **Architectural details and contemporary design**

If the proposal is within a Conservation Area, how are the characteristics reflected in the design?

Does the proposal harmonise with the adjacent properties? This means that it follows the height massing and general proportions of adjacent buildings and how it takes cues from materials and other physical characteristics.

Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing landscape features?

Has the local architectural character and precedent been demonstrated in the proposals?

If the proposal is a contemporary design, are the details and materials of a sufficiently high enough quality and does it relate specifically to the architectural characteristics and scale of the site?



## GLOSSARY

**Archaeological Interest** There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially may hold, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them.

**Biodiversity Networks** Linking of sites of biodiversity importance through biodiversity corridors or a series of individual sites.

**Community Facilities** Facilities and uses generally available to and used by the local community at large for the purposes of leisure, social interaction, health and well-being or learning. This will include, but not be confined to, community centres, public houses, sports venues, cultural buildings, places of worship, medical facilities, shops, post offices, libraries, schools and other training and educational facilities.

**Designated Heritage Asset** A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.

**Development Plan** The Development Plan for an area is a suite of Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan documents for a local planning authority area, setting out the policies and proposals for the development and use of land and buildings. It includes Minerals and Waste Local Plan documents prepared by the County Council. It is the starting point for the determination of planning applications.

**Green Infrastructure** A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.

**Heritage Assets** An overarching term that refers to buildings, parks and gardens, monuments and archaeological remains that are of historic or archaeological value.

**Non-designated Heritage Assets** A heritage asset that has not been included on any national list.

**Policies Map** An Ordnance Survey base map that provides a geographic expression of policies and proposals contained in a Local Plan.

**Setting of a Heritage Asset** The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.







# Rushmere St Andrew Neighbourhood Plan

2018-2036

## REFERENDUM PLAN

Rushmere St Andrew Parish Council

December 2022