

# WALKERN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

2017 - 2033



Plan

December 2016



<b>CONTENTS TABLE</b>	<b>Page</b>
Foreword	5
<b>Section 1: Introduction</b>	
Purpose	6
Submitting Body	6
Neighbourhood Plan Area	6
Planning Policy Context	7
Plan Period, Monitoring and Review	7
<b>Section 2: Process Summary</b>	
Planning Development Process	7
Community Engagement	9
Evidence Base Overview	9
<b>Section 3: Vision and Objectives</b>	
Our Vision	10
Planning Objectives	10
<b>Section 4: The Parish of Walkern</b>	
Location and main features	11
The History of Walkern	12
Walkern today	12
<b>Section 5: Neighbourhood Plan Policies</b>	
Context	15
Landscape	16
Conservation and Heritage	17
Biodiversity	19



<b>Section 5 continued</b>	<b>Page</b>
Green Infrastructure	21
Local Green Space	21
Soils and Agricultural Land	22
Environmental Quality	22
Housing and Development	23
Housing Land Supply	23
Land South of Froghall Lane	23
Housing Infill and Rural Homes	25
Housing Needs	27
Design of New Development	27
Employment and Business	28
Traffic and Transport	29
Roads and Traffic	30
Vehicle Parking	30
Sustainable Transport	30
Facilities and Services	31
Community and Recreational Facilities	31
Health and Wellbeing	33
Education	34
<b>Section 6: Implementation</b>	<b>34</b>



## **APPENDIX**

### **A Glossary**

### **B Summary of Policies**

- Policy 1 Sustainable Development
- Policy 2 Views, Vistas and Landscape Features
- Policy 3 Walkern Conservation Area and Heritage Assets
- Policy 4 Protected Open Space
- Policy 5 Designated Wildlife Sites
- Policy 6 Green Corridors
- Policy 7 Local Green Space
- Policy 8 Framework for Land South of Froghall Lane
- Policy 9 Housing Infill Sites
- Policy 10 Rural Homes
- Policy 11 Affordable Housing
- Policy 12 Design of New Development
- Policy 13 New Businesses
- Policy 14 Diversification of Farm Businesses
- Policy 15 New Infrastructure
- Policy 16 Cycle Path between Walkern and Stevenage
- Policy 17 Traffic Impact and Sustainable Transport Provision
- Policy 18 Assets of Community Value
- Policy 19 Community and Recreation Facilities
- Policy 20 Maintaining Existing Health Services

### **C Maps**

- C1 Proposals Map – Large scale
- C2 Proposals Map – Small scale
- C3 SLAA Sites – Walkern
- C4 SLAA Sites – Clay End
- C5 Flood Warning Area
- C6 Public Rights Of Way

### **D Views, Vistas and Landscape Features**

### **E Protected Green Spaces**

### **F Local Green Spaces**

### **G Designated Wildlife Sites**

### **Acknowledgements**



## FOREWORD

Walkern Parish comprises the village of Walkern and the two small hamlets of Bassus Green and Clay End. As in most areas of the South East of England we have seen population growth and development. Walkern has grown considerably over the last 60 years. We recognise that this is likely to continue up to 2033 (our Neighbourhood and District Plan period) and beyond.

The Localism Act, which came into being in November 2011, devolves greater powers to councils and neighbourhoods. Neighbourhood development plans come out of the Government's determination to ensure that local communities are closely involved in the decisions that affect them. The Walkern Neighbourhood Plan has been developed to establish a vision for the whole Parish and to help deliver the local community's wishes and needs for the plan period 2017 – 2033. The Neighbourhood Plan is a statutory document that will be incorporated into the District Planning Framework and must be used by East Herts Council to determine planning applications.

Our plan has been produced by local residents, with the support of the Parish Council, using the views of the residents of Walkern Parish. The Walkern Neighbourhood Plan Group has consulted and listened to the community and local organisations on a wide range of issues that will influence the wellbeing, sustainability and long-term preservation of our rural community. Every effort has been made to ensure that the views and policies contained in our Neighbourhood Plan reflect those of the majority of the Walkern Parish residents.

We have not limited this development plan to shaping just new housing development. The vision and objectives set out in this document broaden the plan to include social, economic and environmental issues such as transport, employment, education, flooding, landscape, heritage and wildlife.

By consulting with East Herts Council, our local Parish Council, the community and key stakeholders, we have ensured that the Neighbourhood Plan conforms to the objectives of the Localism Act 2011. This in turn sits alongside East Herts Council's own District Plan.

Michele Rist, Chair of Walkern Neighbourhood Plan Group



# 1. INTRODUCTION

## PURPOSE

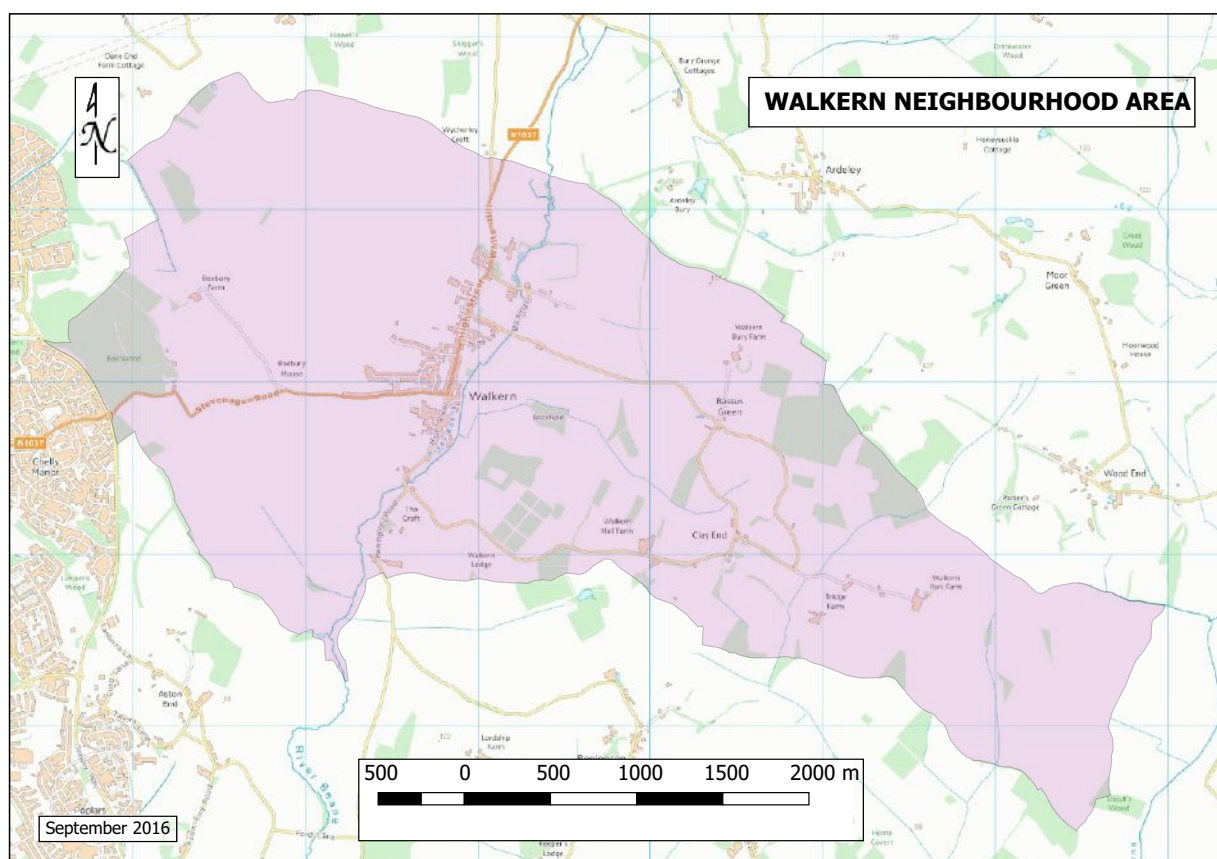
- 1.1 This plan has been written in response to the rights given to local communities through the Localism Act 2011 to shape development in their areas. It has been prepared in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and sets local policies to be used in determining planning applications.

## SUBMITTING BODY

- 1.2 Walkern Neighbourhood Planning Group on behalf of Walkern Parish Council (the qualifying body) has prepared the Walkern Neighbourhood Plan.

## NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AREA

- 1.3 The whole Parish of Walkern has been formally designated as a Neighbourhood Area through an application made under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (part 2 S6), and approved by East Herts District Council on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2015. The Neighbourhood Area is shown on the map below.





## PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 1.4 Walkern Parish is in the District of East Hertfordshire and the County of Hertfordshire. The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in parallel with the preparation of East Herts District Plan 2011–2033, which is undergoing its final consultation and will shortly be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for examination. The County Development Plan deals with waste and minerals. The current planning documents can be found on the East Herts Council and Hertfordshire County Council websites. The Neighbourhood Plan is in accordance with the strategic policies in the East Herts District Plan and does not deal with County Council planning matters.
- 1.5 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared with regard to both the Core Planning Principles and the 13 themes of delivering sustainable development in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Further details of how the Neighbourhood Plan accords with national planning guidance can be found in the Walkern Neighbourhood Plan Basic Conditions Statement.

## PLAN PERIOD, MONITORING AND REVIEW

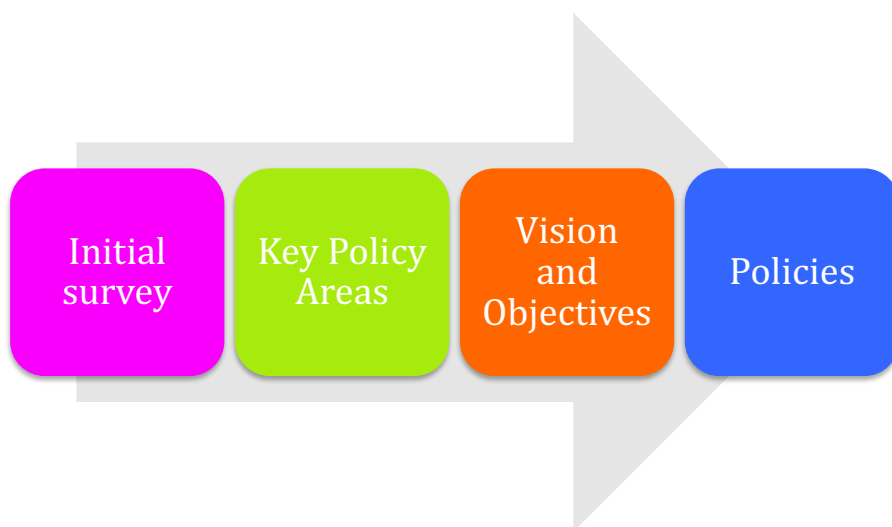
- 1.6 The Neighbourhood Plan will cover the period 2017–2033. The end date is in line with the East Herts District Plan. Walkern Parish Council will monitor the Neighbourhood Plan to determine its continued relevance and undertake a review in five years' time or when the East Herts District Plan is reviewed, whichever is the sooner.

## 2 PROCESS SUMMARY

### PLANNING DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

- 2.1 Walkern Parish Council resolved to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan in May 2014. A group of residents, the Walkern Neighbourhood Planning Group (WNPG), was formed to prepare the plan on behalf of the Parish Council. The process chart below shows how the preparation of the Plan progressed.

Process Chart for Preparation of Plan





- 2.2 An initial survey was undertaken to gather views about the Parish: the important characteristics of Walkern; housing; facilities; education; the environment; business; and transport.
- 2.3 An experienced neighbourhood planning consultant was appointed to guide the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan in January 2015.
- 2.4 In the absence of a Parish plan or design statement, the survey results formed the basis of the key policy areas for the Neighbourhood Plan. The key policy areas in the Neighbourhood Plan are:
- Environment (including environmental quality and heritage)
  - Housing and Development (including design)
  - Employment and Business (the local economy)
  - Traffic and Transport
  - Facilities and Services (including community and leisure).
- 2.5 In a workshop guided by the planning consultant a vision and a number of objectives were developed under each key policy area. Both were subject to consultation with the community. The final vision and objectives for the plan are set out in the next section.
- 2.6 A policy map was produced showing the policy options considered and this together with an index of the neighbourhood plan policies can be found in Appendix B.
- 2.7 The preparation of the potential development sites in the plan was delayed when a major site on Froghall Lane was refused outline planning permission and the applicant lodged an appeal against the decision. Following a public inquiry the appeal to build up to 85 new homes was granted. Walkern Parish Council came to an agreement with East Herts Council that the addition of up to 85 homes more than satisfied any requirement for the village of Walkern to accommodate further significant growth. As a result of this agreement Walkern Neighbourhood Plan does not identify any housing sites other Land South of Froghall Lane.
- 2.8 Many ideas and suggestions on how to improve the lives of people living and working in the Parish were collected during the plan preparation process. Those issues and suggestions that could not be achieved through the planning process have been captured in a Wish List which is attached as an Appendix in the Consultation Statement.



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 2.9 A Consultation Statement has been produced to accompany the neighbourhood plan. The statement outlines the process of community engagement, lists consultees, and describes the engagement techniques used and events held including reports of engagement events.
- 2.10 The Parish Council received regular reports on the progress achieved by the WNPG. The WNPG has kept residents informed of every stage of the neighbourhood planning process through a mix of traditional (e.g. Walkern Journal), online ([www.walkernneighbourhoodplan.com](http://www.walkernneighbourhoodplan.com)) and social media. It has held three interactive community consultation events at which key elements of the Plan were shared with local residents. Feedback gathered from the community at these events shaped subsequent iterations of the Plan, refining its objectives and strengthening its policies.
- 2.11 This pre-submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan will be subject to a six-week consultation exercise commencing the 9<sup>th</sup> January 2017 and will include an open day on the 14<sup>th</sup> January 2017 to answer any question the community has on the contents of the plan and the next steps in the process.



## EVIDENCE BASE OVERVIEW

- 2.12 Evidence to support the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan was gathered continuously throughout the preparation process. The analysis, objectives and policies in the plan have drawn on a wide variety of sources. These include:
- The evidence base for East Herts District Plan
  - Hertfordshire County Council
  - The Office for National Statistics: 2011 Census
  - Walkern History Society
  - Herts and Beds Wildlife Trust
  - Hertfordshire Biological Records Centre
  - The Environment Agency
  - The Community Development Association
  - Natural England
  - Local Service providers (the doctors surgery & the school)
  - The views of local residents, landowners and businesses from questionnaire responses, workshops, exhibitions and meetings.



- 2.13 More detailed information on the evidence base can be found in the Consultation Statement and in the Appendices and supporting documents accompanying the Neighbourhood Plan.

### 3 VISION AND OBJECTIVES

#### OUR VISION

- 3.1 Our vision is to help inform the decisions reached by East Herts District Council in all areas of development in the Parish of Walkern. It is to ensure the village grows gradually in order to preserve the character and the rural feel of the Parish. Future development must be sustainable based on the principle that better lives for residents now, do not mean worse lives for future generations. We believe that the planning system is about positive growth, making economic, environmental and social progress to enhance every aspect of the Parish of Walkern. Our vision statement is:

**The Walkern Neighbourhood Plan will shape the evolution of Walkern over the next 16 years by meeting the aspirations and needs of the local community. We are committed to preserving Walkern's historic character and strong rural identity by ensuring that development in the Parish is sustainable, protects valued natural features, strengthens a sense of community and enhances wellbeing of new and existing residents. We want to make sure Walkern Parish remains a great place to live.**

#### PLANNING OBJECTIVES

- 3.2 The objectives focused in on specific parts of the vision statement and provided the context for the development of the planning policies.
- 3.3 Two objectives were deleted following the planning decision to allow up to 85 homes to be built on Land South of Froghall Lane, because they were no longer relevant. These were to identify several small housing sites to satisfy the need for at least a 10% increase in new homes in Walkern village up to 2033, as required by the East Herts District Plan; and to locate and phase in new development to minimise the impact on the already limited road infrastructure in the village so traffic congestion is not exacerbated. The final list of objectives that were formed from our vision statement are to:
- a Ensure new development protects and enhances local landscape character, valued nature conservation sites and the rich biodiversity of the Parish
  - b Protect and enhance the village conservation area and its setting, and listed, and locally listed buildings
  - c Protect and enhance the Parish's open spaces and views for public access and informal recreational use
  - d Ensure the River Beane, a rare chalk stream that runs through Walkern Parish, is preserved and protected from over-abstraction



- e Enhance and improve the environmental quality of the Parish, minimising noise and air pollution
  - f Ensure the mix, size and type of new housing meets local needs, including a sufficient supply of affordable housing and preferential access to some new homes for people with a strong local connection
  - g Require new development to be of high quality design, built to a high sustainability standard and to be sympathetic to, and improve, the look and feel of the Parish
  - h Ensure the design and location of new developments are resilient to the effects of climate change and flooding
  - i Support existing businesses, creative industries and home working, and encourage new local employment opportunities for residents
  - j Preserve and enhance public transport services to and from the village for residents who do not have use of a car, and encourage walking and cycling
  - k Ensure that community facilities (e.g. school, GP surgery) enhance the health and wellbeing of local residents
  - l Ensure the village has indoor and outdoor recreational facilities that meet the needs of young children, teenagers and adults, and strengthen the sense of community.
  - m Give the Parish the opportunity to access Community Infrastructure Levy Funding to maintain and improve Parish facilities.
- 3.4 The last of these objectives was formed under the assumption that East Herts Council would, at some point, set a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Until such time as a CIL is set, this objective is still relevant to ensuring the best use of Section 106 funding from new development, New Homes Bonus and any other form of funding that can contribute towards the enhancement of the Parish. The Wish List attached as an Appendix to the Consultation Statement includes projects that have been identified, by the community, to enhance life in the Parish.

## **4 THE PARISH OF WALKERN**

### **LOCATION AND MAIN FEATURES**

- 4.1 Walkern Village lies a little over a mile to the east of Stevenage with the Parish boundary abutting the town at Box Wood. Apart from Walkern Village there are two small hamlets of Clay End and Bassus Green, located in the east of the Parish. The rural nature of the Parish is a stark contrast to the new town situated on its boundary.
- 4.2 The predominant natural feature of the Parish is the valley of the River Beane, a rare chalk stream that bisects the area, running north to south parallel to Walkern High Street.



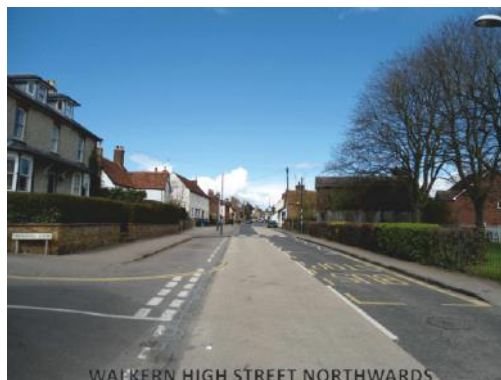
- 4.3 The area of the Parish is approximately 12,100 hectares with 1541 usual residents living in 621 households, at the last census (2011).

#### THE HISTORY OF WALKERN

- 4.4 Walkern is noted as the home of Jane Wenham, who in 1712 was the last woman in England to be convicted of witchcraft and condemned to death. It is also one of only 22 places in England with a direct link to the Magna Carta. The effigy of Baron William de Lanvalei, one of the Barons elected to enforce the law of the Magna Carta eight centuries ago, lies in St Mary's church.
- 4.5 The parish church of St Mary the Virgin is one of the oldest village churches in Hertfordshire, with a Saxon wall and rare chalk crucifix dating back to the mid-10th century. The village had several mills for grinding wheat with the original medieval mill first located near the church and then moved down stream to the southern end of the village and later rebuilt and converted to steam power. This continued in operation until the Second World War. To the west of the High Street is a rare octagonal dove house built around 1700. The High Street itself was not metalled until 1930 and streetlights were installed in 1938.
- 4.6 After the war in 1946 Walkern was self-sufficient as an agricultural village with 34 businesses providing the everyday needs of its residents. Trades included a shoe shop, general store, butcher, baker, greengrocer, tobacconist, rug maker, seamstress, coal merchant, wood yard, beekeeper, plus a brewery, four pubs, several churches and large farms employing many residents.

#### WALKERN TODAY

- 4.7 The village today still has a number of shops, including a convenience store/post office, a hair and beauty salon, a craft shop, a tearoom, two pubs, a garage and petrol station, a seasonal Christmas shop and an Art Gallery. Farms still operate but with very little staff. The Piggeries on Bennington Road and commercial units at Manor Farm on Dove House Lane accommodate small businesses but altogether, these provide very little employment and so most residents travel outside the village to work, or work from home.





- 4.8 Public transport in the village is poor and without a car, residents have to rely on a limited daytime bus service or taxis to reach Stevenage town and rail station. Coaches ferry children to and from the secondary school and college in Buntingford. On-street parking and traffic congestion is part of daily life in Walkern, particularly in the High Street and in the vicinity of the school. This is exacerbated by traffic including heavy lorries using the B1037 as a back route out of Stevenage.
- 4.9 Despite these issues, people like living in Walkern Parish and value the rural surroundings highly, according to the Neighbourhood Plan survey and feedback from consultation events. There is very little relocation out from the village and even then when moving, people try to stay within the Parish. House prices are high. A snap shot (November 2016) shows the smallest home available to buy being 3 bedrooms. Smaller homes rarely come up for sale but feature highly in the rental market.
- 4.10 The population of the Parish at the 2011 census was 1541 people living in 621 households. The population is aging, without options for downsizing. There are no sheltered or warden controlled schemes in the Parish and few bungalows, causing a housing stagnation in Walkern. The Neighbourhood Plan had tried to address these issues but without cooperation with developers and housing associations, the problem is difficult to solve. It is hoped that the significant new development on Froghall Lane will address some of these issues and provide affordable options to downsize for local people.
- 4.11 Whilst limited house building has taken place there has been no vision for the facilities and services in the village. Although many shop on the Internet, despite the poor broadband service, this could put the shop at risk leaving those with no Internet or private transport in an impossible situation. It is hoped that through the awareness raised, some of the issues for residents, through the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, will lead to solutions and improvements; either through the planning policies or the Action Plan that accompanies the main planning document.
- 4.12 Improvements have been made to the primary school, which offers pre-school places and a toddlers group and is better equipped and takes pupils from outside the village. The United Reform Church has been completely renovated including a new kitchen and now offers space for local groups and a weekly coffee morning. The Yew Tree pub offers Chinese cuisine, and the Walkern Sports and Community Centre is so well used for sports and regular group meetings that it is hard to book an event. Very little in the way of outdoor equipment is available for any age group apart from football pitches and the Neighbourhood Plan addresses this.



- 4.13 The findings of the Neighbourhood Plan consultation exercises are that not everything has to cost time and money and the commitment of volunteers comes free. However, grants through schemes such as Biffa and the Heritage Lottery Fund and funding from new developments (S106 and New Homes Bonus etc.) should be directed to where they are needed and benefit the greatest number of people. As a result of the Neighbourhood Plan exercise we have collated this evidence and produced an Action Plan to help improve the facilities and services in the Parish, in parallel to helping shape the built and natural environment through the plans policies.





## 5 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN POLICIES

### CONTEXT

- 5.1 This chapter sets out the planning policies for the Parish of Walkern for the period 2017–2033, which is aligned with the end of the plan period for the emerging East Herts District Plan. The planning policies, together with the reasoned justification for them, are set out below. The policies reflect the main issues, which were raised in consultation, and are arranged in the same order as the key objectives.
- 5.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as well as the adopted East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007 and the emerging East Herts District Plan provides the overall policy context for the Neighbourhood Plan. Regard has also been taken of National Planning Practice Guidance (introduced on-line by the Government since March 2014).
- 5.3 In these documents, particularly in paragraph 14 of the NPPF, there is a commitment to the principles of sustainable development. These were originally included in the UK Sustainable Development Strategy *Securing the Future* (2005). The five guiding principles of sustainable development are as follows:
- Living within the planet's environmental limits
  - Ensuring a strong, healthy, and just society
  - Achieving a sustainable economy
  - Promoting good governance
  - Using sound science reasonably.
- 5.4 At the heart of the NPPF, there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be a common theme, running through plan-making (including neighbourhood plans) and decisions taken on planning applications for development. These overall principles are reflected both in the East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007 and the emerging East Herts District Plan. The Walkern Neighbourhood Plan is strongly committed to these principles and to the delivery of sustainable development. In accordance with its stated objectives the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to protect and maintain the strong community, which binds the village together, whilst protecting and enhancing the environment of the Parish for the future. At the same time the plan supports the development of the economy and local facilities and services in ways that protect the overall character of the area.

#### **POLICY 1 Sustainable Development**

**Support will be given to development proposals which accord with the principles of sustainable development as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the (emerging draft) East Herts District Plan.**



## LANDSCAPE

- 5.5 From the responses to public consultation, it is clear that the countryside and landscape of the Parish of Walkern are greatly valued by the local community and by visitors to the area. The rural nature of the Parish is described in great detail in the East Hertfordshire Landscape Character Assessment, adopted by the district council in 2007 as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).



- 5.6 According to the SPD, the Parish of Walkern is located in two landscape character areas. The bulk of the area, including Walkern village is within Landscape Character Area No. 39, the Middle Beane Valley. The rest of the Parish is within Landscape Character Area No. 140, the Ardeley and Cottered Settled Plateau, with Walkern Hall at its southern extremity.
- 5.7 The former area No. 39 is described as “open farmland with small grouped woodlands, linked by hedges.” Characteristics include “medium to large-scale field patterns” and “strongly undulating slopes”, with “a remote character, despite proximity to Stevenage.” The low impact of built development and lack of land use change is an essential feature, which must be retained in the gap between Walkern and Stevenage to preserve the character and rural nature of the area.
- 5.8 Area No. 140 is described as an elevated plateau between the valley of the River Beane to the west and the more open arable plateau to the east. It is summarised as a “settled plateau landscape with a strong sense of historic continuity”, also a “tranquil and traditional landscape with few detractors.” This landscape is considered to be unusual in Hertfordshire.
- 5.9 The character assessments confirm the perceptions of local people about the landscape, particularly about the Beane Valley, and the open and tranquil nature of the countryside. In both landscape character areas, the SPD recommends that the landscape should be “conserved and strengthened.” The Parish Council supports this approach and the policies in the draft East Herts District Plan, which seek to conserve the rural landscape. In particular, Policy DES 1 of the District Plan seeks to protect the overall landscape character of East Hertfordshire, guided by the detailed assessments in the SPD.



- 5.10 Within the Parish, the relationship between the settlements and the surrounding rural landscape is particularly important. Walkern itself has a linear form, running along the valley of the River Beane. There is a strong visual perception of the village being surrounded by a combination of farmland and woodland, with many mature trees within and around the settlement. These elements are also important features of the hamlets of Clay End and Bassus Green, which are situated on the higher ground to the east of Walkern.
- 5.11 It is important that any new developments in the Parish are sympathetic to this local landscape character. The Neighbourhood Plan has identified a number of key views and vistas and landscape features, the protection of which is essential to maintain the overall setting and character of the Parish. These are shown on the Proposals Map (Appendix C1 & C2).

#### **POLICY 2 Views, Vistas and Landscape Features**

**All proposals for development must seek to protect and enhance the key views, vistas indicated on the Proposals Map (appendix C1 & C2). In particular:**

- **West from the northern end of the High Street opposite the United Reformed Church, across the paddock (View 1)**
- **Church End and the ford (View 2)**
- **Along the Beane from the bridge in Winters Lane (View 3)**
- **From Winters Lane towards Walkern Village (View 4)**
- **Over Walkern Village towards Stevenage (View 5)**
- **The River Beane Valley (Mill House) (View 6)**

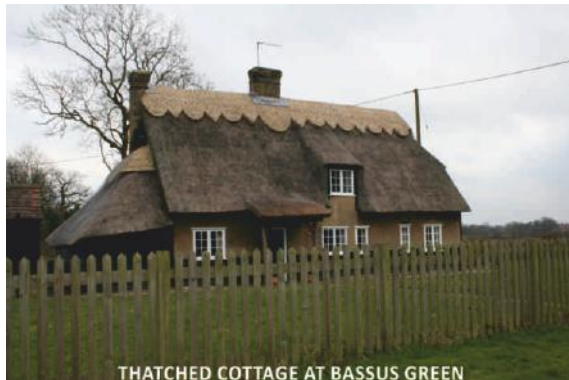
**The landscape of the River Beane valley and open countryside to the south and west of Walkern village should be protected from development that would impinge on the strategic gap between Walkern and Stevenage and which could cause harm to this landscape feature.**

#### **CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE**

- 5.12 From the consultation responses it is clear that the community places considerable value on the historic environment and built heritage of the Parish. Central to this concern is the Walkern Conservation Area, which covers the historic core of the village and its setting. Along the High Street, there are many listed buildings, dating from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, reflecting the vernacular architectural style of construction in this part of Hertfordshire. One of the most significant buildings is the church of St. Mary the Virgin, which is the oldest village church in the county. At the southern end of the village, at Church End, there is a ford on the River Beane, which is overlooked by the mediaeval Bridgefoot Farm.



- 5.13 To the east of the Parish, the hamlets also contain features of historic interest. Bassus Green is close to the remains of Walkern Castle, and is characterised by a small collection of pre-16<sup>th</sup> century thatched cottages and farm buildings. Clay End also has a mixture of historic cottages and farm structures. Both hamlets are reached by an ancient pattern of narrow country lanes and historic footpaths and bridleways, screened by hedgerows.



- 5.14 The Parish Council supports the aims of the draft East Herts District Plan, which seeks (Policy HA1) to protect the heritage assets of the District. The District Plan also contains a pledge, in Policy HA2, by the District Council to engage with local communities on the protection of non-designated heritage assets. With regard to Conservation Areas, the District Plan (Policy HA4) states that new development, alterations and extensions to existing buildings will be permitted where they preserve or enhance the established character of an area. Proposals outside a conservation area which affect its setting will be treated likewise.
- 5.15 The Parish Council supports Policy HA4, also Policy HA5 which seeks to control the design of shop fronts and Policy HA6 which concerns the regulation of advertisements in conservation areas. Development affecting listed buildings is covered in Policy HA7; this is especially supported in view of the many listed buildings in the Parish.

### **POLICY 3 Walkern Conservation Area and Heritage Assets**

**In accordance with the policies in the East Herts District Plan and the guidance in the Walkern Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Proposal 2016, the Walkern Conservation Area and its setting will be protected and enhanced.**

**Proposals for development which affect designated heritage assets in the Parish, including listed buildings and the two scheduled monuments (Box Wood and Walkern Bury Farm), will be conserved and enhanced.**

**Proposals for development which affect non-designated heritage assets will be permitted provided that they conserve or enhance the quality of the asset or its setting.**



- 5.16 Within the conservation area, there are a number of important open spaces, which contribute much to the overall character of the village. The most significant of these spaces are shown on the Proposals Map (Appendix C1 & C2). The importance of each space has been assessed (see Appendix F). These spaces have also been identified as Important Open Spaces in Chapter 5 – *Walkern Conversation Area, Character Appraisal and Management Proposal* published by East Herts Council. They need to be protected from the effects of development to protect and enhance the character of the conservation area.

#### **POLICY 4 Protected Open Space**

**Within the Walkern Conservation Area and its setting, the open spaces shown on the Proposals Map (Appendix C1 & C2) will be protected from development and enhanced. Sites allocated as Protected Open Space are:**

- The park on the High Street next to Walkern Stores, no 79 High Street (POS1)
- The children's play area in Aubries (POS2)
- The sports field at Walkern Sports and Community Centre (POS3)

**Following the completion of the development on land to the south of Froghall Lane the resulting green space shall be allocated as Protected Open Space to preserve it for the use of the community.**

- 5.17 Across the Parish, there are a number of potential sites of archaeological interest. A general policy on the protection of archaeological sites and assets is contained in the East Herts District Plan (Policy HA3). The policy requires a desk-based assessment of any proposal, which may affect a site of potential archaeological interest. There are a number of Areas of Archaeological Significance in the Parish, which are shown on the East Herts District Plan Proposals Map (Appendix C1 & C2).

#### **BIODIVERSITY**

- 5.18 The wider countryside of the Parish contains many features of significant value for wildlife and nature conservation, many of which were identified by local residents in consultation. Underground springs and wells from the chalk aquifer, and the River Beane, an important and rare chalk stream, and one of less than 200 remaining worldwide, provide a perfect habitat in which an abundance of flora grow and fauna, including slow worms, newts, and frogs are found. The woodlands, hedgerows, and the agricultural landscape of the Parish support a diversity of life forms, the survival of which has been assisted by conservation work. The local planning authority, in collaboration with the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, has also designated local Wildlife Sites.
- 5.19 During the preparation of this plan, members of the Neighbourhood Plan Group compiled a detailed inventory of plants, animals, birds, and insects, which could be found in the parish. The survey also listed the sites of nature conservation value, Ancient Woodland Inventory Sites, and the designated Wildlife Sites. Maintaining and improving the quality of wild-flower rich natural or semi-natural habitats including designated sites is an important priority for the *National Pollinator Strategy 2014* published by Department of Environment Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

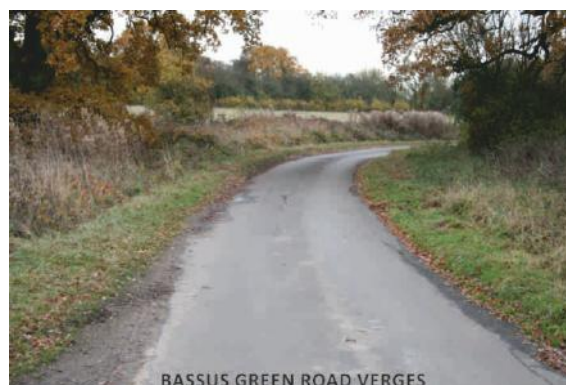


- 5.20 The draft East Herts District Plan recognises that nature conservation is an integral part of the planning system. Thus, the most important areas for biodiversity are identified on the draft District Plan Policies Map. Policy NE1 of the document affords protection to International, National and Locally Designated Nature Conservation Sites. Development will not be permitted unless there are reasons, which clearly outweigh the need to safeguard the nature conservation value of a site. The policy also includes provision for compensation or mitigation where development proposals are allowed. The Parish Council supports this approach.
- 5.21 The District Plan also acknowledges the importance of biodiversity and the need to protect species and plants and the diversity of habitats forming ecosystems. The Hertfordshire Biodiversity Action Plan (2006) identifies those species and habitats that are a priority for conservation, many of which are present in the Parish of Walkern. The need for conservation and the protection of habitats and species is expressed in Policy NE2 of the draft District Plan. Reference is made to the England Biodiversity List, which includes Species and Habitats of Principal Importance. Here development proposals will be permitted only where harm can be avoided. In the Parish of Walkern, there are a number of sites where species and habitats need to be protected.

#### **POLICY 5 Designated Wildlife Sites**

**In accordance with the Hertfordshire Biodiversity Action Plan, wildlife species and significant habitats including the River Beane will be protected. In particular the following designated wildlife sites, as shown on the Proposals Map (Appendix G), will be protected and managed:**

- **Box Wood**
- **Baron's Grove**
- **The Warren**
- **The Bushes**
- **St John's Wood**
- **Coble's Spring**
- **Bassus Green Road Verges**
- **Walman's Wood**





## GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

- 5.22 Both the NPPF and the draft District Plan introduce the concept of green infrastructure, described as “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.” East Hertfordshire Green Infrastructure Plan applies these principles to the district and provides an overview of its green infrastructure assets, and the opportunities to enhance and develop them. Policy NE3 of the draft District Plan seeks to protect and enhance the network of green infrastructure. One such asset is the valley of the River Beane, which is protected by the River Beane and Mimram River Catchment Management Plan. The value of the valley was emphasised by the local community in consultation on the neighbourhood plan.
- 5.23 The Neighbourhood Plan Group has consulted with the District Council and the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, and the Hertfordshire Biological Records Centre with a view to establishing green infrastructure networks within the Parish. As a result, a network of green corridors has been devised in and around the village of Walkern – this includes the valley of the River Beane. Green corridors have many benefits including making connections between wildlife sites and providing attractive walking routes, such as the established long distance footpath between Walkern and Hertford.

### **POLICY 6 Green Corridors**

**In accordance with the East Herts Green Infrastructure Plan, a network of Green Corridors, including the following will be protected, managed and enhanced:**

- **The strategic link along the River Beane valley**
- **The local link extending to the north and west of the end of Froghall Lane**
- **The network of small woodlands around Clay End**

## LOCAL GREEN SPACE

- 5.24 Some of the green spaces in Walkern village contribute to the character of the conservation area, represent important green infrastructure and are particularly valued by the local community. The NPPF (paragraphs 76 and 77) provides guidance on the criteria for designating Local Green Spaces. They must be local in character; close to the community they serve; and hold a special and particular local significance such as beauty, historical significance, recreational value, tranquillity or richness in wildlife. Appendix F outlines how each Local Green Space meets this criteria.
- 5.25 Local Green Spaces are protected from development in accordance with national policy for Green Belts.



## **POLICY 7 Local Green Space**

Those areas described in **Appendix F** of this plan are designated Local Green Space and identified on the Proposals Map (Appendix C1 & C2). New development will only be allowed within designated Local Green Spaces where very special circumstances can be demonstrated in accordance with Green Belt policy in the National Planning Policy Framework.



## **SOILS AND AGRICULTURAL LAND**

- 5.26 Despite the development pressures affecting the rural areas of Hertfordshire, farming remains the principal land use in the Parish of Walkern. The NPPF (paragraph 112) states that local planning authorities should take into account the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land. This is supported by the draft East Herts District Plan, which seeks to achieve the most effective use of land as a resource. Soil is identified as an important asset. In Walkern, the bulk of the land is designated under the national agricultural land classification (ALC) as Grades 2 or 3a. Wherever possible, this higher-grade land should be protected from development in the interests of the local farming infrastructure and its future viability.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

- 5.27 Many representations were raised during consultation about general environmental pollution, and the possible effects of further development. This issue is covered in the NPPF (paragraphs 123–125) and the draft East Herts District Plan (Chapter 24). The District Plan contains specific policies on contaminated land and land instability (Policy EQ1), noise pollution (Policy EQ2), light pollution (Policy EQ3), and air quality (Policy EQ4). In Walkern, there were particular concerns about the effects of traffic, causing noise and air pollution, and light pollution. Nevertheless, it is considered that these issues can be tackled under the District Plan policies, and in the consideration of individual planning applications. Further detailed advice on dealing with aspects of environmental quality is provided in the on-line National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG).



## HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT

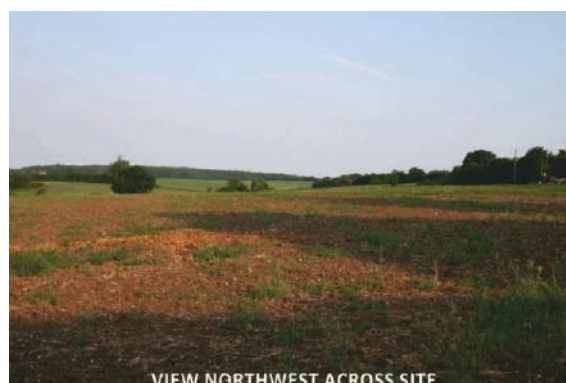
- 5.28 New housing development should reflect the vision and objectives in the plan and in particular, satisfy the need for new homes for residents in the Carish and at least meet current standards of sustainability, reflect the guidance in the WCACA & CAMP 2016 and be well designed to improve the look and feel of the area.

### HOUSING LAND SUPPLY

- 5.29 According to the results of public consultation and the Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) (see map of sites in Appendix C), very little land was considered suitable for development within the current village boundary. In order to allow for expansion of the village population, to support existing facilities and services and to offer affordable accommodation and lifetime homes for existing residents, a single site will be developed for housing on land south of Froghall Lane. The village boundary has been adjusted to provide a permanent and defensible limit to the further expansion of the settlement towards Stevenage. This is necessary to preserve the strategic gap between the two settlements. The new boundary is shown on the Proposals Map (Appendix C1 & C2).
- 5.30 Any further planning permissions for development within the village boundary should contribute to the gradual growth of the village over the plan period. The spatial distribution of development throughout the village will ease the pressure on traffic on the High Street and the impact on the disruption caused by construction in the tight confines of the village streets.

### LAND SOUTH OF FROGHALL LANE

- 5.31 The land south of Froghall Lane, west of Aubries and north of Moors Ley has a chequered planning history culminating in it receiving outline planning permission, on appeal, in February 2016. The site was outside but adjacent to the village boundary. The western extent of the development site is a clearly defined field boundary and the line of the amended village boundary as shown on the Proposals Map (Appendix C1 & C2).





- 5.32 In order to integrate this large (4 hectare) extension to the village it must reflect the character of its village location, be sensitive to the amenities of the established housing bordering the site on three sides, be easily navigable on foot encouraging residents to walk into the village and blend into the open countryside to the west. The layout and design of the scheme, including significant additional landscaping to create usable and manageable open space and buffers to soften the impact of the new development, will be critical to its success.
- 5.33 The Froghall Lane framework policy below has been influenced by the views expressed by residents during consultation on both the outline planning application and the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan. Recommendations contained in the appeal decision have also helped to shape the framework policy. A detailed design brief will be required as part of the reserved matters planning application for the site and it must incorporate the policies and principles in the neighbourhood plan in general and the framework policy for the site in particular.
- 5.34 The constraints contained in the framework policy include a footpath link running parallel to Froghall Lane both for residents of the new development and safe passage of walkers from the village using the narrow lane to access the footpaths and open countryside to the west. No new vehicular access should be permitted onto Froghall Lane, which is already too narrow for the existing homes on the northern side of the road. The new development must provide sufficient parking spaces for residents and visitors to ensure that no additional pressure is put on the congested streets of Moors Ley and Aubries.

#### **POLICY 8 Framework for Land South of Froghall Lane**

**The site has consent for: Up to 85 dwellings in accordance with the outline permission granted on appeal (APP/J1915/W/153127807). Within the site, there should be a significant green buffer around the built development with additional areas of public open space which will benefit the whole village**

**In addition all of the following will apply:**

- **No buildings or hard surfacing will be placed in the south-west corner of the site which is susceptible to surface water flooding.**
- **All existing trees and hedges will be retained and protected during construction.**
- **Contributions toward sustainable transport and education improvement will be made prior to the commencement of the development.**
- **40% of homes will be affordable with a mix of affordable rented or affordable home ownership in accordance with the identified local housing need.**
- **Affordable homes must include provision for older and vulnerable residents.**
- **Affordable homes must be indistinguishable from market homes and be integrated into and distributed throughout the site.**



## **POLICY 8 continued**

The development parameters for the site must incorporate all of the following principles:

- The design and massing of buildings and dwelling densities should relate sympathetically to the height (i.e. no more than 2 storeys) and density of existing dwellings on the sites boundaries.
- Access roads should be designed to prevent on-street parking. The design of all public open space should be welcoming, usable, overlooked and accompanied by a funded management plan.
- A well-designed sustainable urban drainage scheme will include storage for both natural run-off and run-off from the new development, and a management and maintenance plan to secure its long-term operation.
- Lower density development located towards the open countryside to the west of the site.
- A minimum 20m landscape buffer, delineated with a hedge planted with local native species, should be created along the entire western boundary of the site (in line with guidelines issued by the Wildlife Trusts). Public open space created on the development site should be retained and managed in perpetuity by a management company. This public open space will be designated Protected Open Space when the neighbourhood plan is reviewed.
- A landscaping scheme should safeguards views into and out of the site, in particular on the western boundary.
- The outlook and privacy of residents should be protected by provision of sufficient distance and landscaping between new and exiting properties and where appropriate, the gardens of new dwellings should back onto those of existing properties on Moors Ley and Aubries.
- New connections for pedestrians and cyclists to the existing street network via Aubries and including a new public right of way from Froghall Lane to Moors Ley, through the land between nos 68 and 70 Moors Ley.
- Any additional emergency access should be gated to avoid misuse.

## **HOUSING INFILL AND RURAL HOMES**

- 5.35 Except for the housing allocated on Land South of Froghall Lane, all other housing proposals should be for infill development within the Walkern boundary. The use of brownfield land will be encouraged. In accordance with the NPPF, gardens are not brownfield land and contribute to the character of the area. The design and character of new development should reflect that of successful infill schemes in Walkern such as Glebe View and Walchra Court. If a prescribed need is identified for rural homes, these should be directed to the smaller rural settlements.





#### **POLICY 9 Housing Infill Sites**

Brownfield sites suitable for small-scale infill development will be supported in preference to green field sites. Private gardens contribute to the character of the village and inappropriate development of garden land will be resisted. Design of infill developments should reflect the local vernacular style and character in accordance with Policy 12.

#### **POLICY 10 Rural Homes**

Outside the village boundary of Walkern, high quality conversions to residential use, of buildings of architectural merit will be welcomed. There will be a presumption against new homes, except where the development does not conflict with other policies in the plan and the following criteria are met:

- New housing development is in an area of the Parish where there is sustainable, safe and suitable access to local facilities.
- Important views and green gaps are maintained and enhanced.



## HOUSING NEEDS

- 5.36 The Parish Council has given careful consideration to the issue of local housing needs and a Housing Needs Survey was conducted by the Community Development Agency (CDA) to support this policy (awaiting results). It was evident from the consultations on this Plan that there were specific requirements for housing for local people, which is affordable and for bungalows or suitable housing for older people, so that they can remain in the village in later life. In the emerging East Herts District Plan, the type, tenure and mix of housing will be identified.

### **POLICY 11 Affordable Housing**

**In Walkern, there will be a mix of affordable housing types and tenures, which reflect current and future local housing needs and housing market assessments.**

## DESIGN OF NEW DEVELOPMENT

- 5.37 The design of new housing development should reflect local style and building materials and the traditional and historic character within Walkern Conservation Area. (Detailed guidance on design is contained in the Walkern Conservation Area Appraisal and Conservation Area Management Plan 2016)
- 5.38 85% of respondents to the Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire thought that all homes should have their own garages/parking. Acute parking problems occur in the evenings and at weekends when cars are parked on pavements forcing pedestrians to walk in the road and on the High Street blocking through traffic. New homes with small gardens were a popular choice of residents, rather than large gardens or communal garden space.

### **POLICY 12 Design of New Development in Walkern**

**The scale and design of all new development will reflect the character of Walkern and its historic Conservation Area as detailed in the Walkern Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan 2016. In particular, the following guidelines will apply:**

- **Building materials should be aesthetically pleasing and characteristic of traditional village properties**
- **New buildings should respect neighbouring roof profiles and pitches, the characteristic spacing between buildings, historic building lines, and the overall density of development in the village**
- **Detailing should be in line with traditional design features**
- **Infill development should not obscure views of the surrounding countryside nor should it significantly reduce the garden areas, which are intrinsic to the settings of existing residences**
- **Sufficient off-road parking should be provided for each new home**
- **Provision for brick structures to hide refuse bins should be made within the curtilage of each new home**



## **POLICY 12 continued**

- **All homes should have their own modest garden space, characteristic of village living**
- **Boundaries, particularly to front gardens, should preferably be marked with hedges of appropriate native species**
- **Redevelopment, extensions, or alterations to historic farmsteads, residential properties or agricultural buildings in Walkern Parish should be sensitive to their distinctive character, materials and form.**
- **Modern, innovative design will be welcomed provided that the above criteria are met**
- **Homes should achieve zero run-off of surface water to avoid further risk of flooding**
- **Homes should be as energy efficient as practically possible**
- **Street lighting should be sensitively designed to reflect the rural nature of the parish and minimise impact on bats and other nocturnal wildlife.**

## **EMPLOYMENT AND BUSINESS**

- 5.39 The NPPF supports sustainable economic growth; local planning authorities are required to plan proactively to meet the development needs of businesses. In paragraph 28, the NPPF states specifically that planning policies should support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity. Thus, local and neighbourhood plans should support the growth and expansion of business in rural areas, and support the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based businesses. Support is also given to rural tourism and leisure developments, as well as the retention and development of local services and community facilities. This approach is mirrored in the draft East Herts District Plan (Policy ED2) which encourages development, subject to set criteria.
- 5.40 The parish of Walkern consists mainly of agricultural land, with a number of working farms. Yet, according to the 2011 Census only eight people were working in agriculture, just over 1% of the working population of 816. Few residents actually work in the parish – the main centres for employment are Stevenage, Stansted Airport, Hertford, Cambridge, and Greater London.
- 5.41 Within the parish, the main employers are the school and a number of small businesses, some of which operate from units at Walkern Hall Farm and the Piggeries. A growing number of people now work at home (82 in 2011). Feedback from the Open Day (April 2015) showed support for local existing businesses, creative industries and home-working, and encouragement for new employment opportunities for local residents. This support is reflected in the following policies.



#### **POLICY 13 New Businesses**

**New businesses and employment will be permitted, provided that new or expanded enterprises are of a scale and type appropriate to the rural setting of Walkern and its Conservation Area and comply with other policies in this plan. For example, further development of Manor Farm could be supported provided the main vehicular access is directly off the B1307.**

#### **POLICY 14 Diversification of Farm Businesses**

**Proposals for the diversification of farm businesses will be supported provided that:**

- **The development supports the viability of the existing farm holding;**
- and**
- **The development is ancillary to the agricultural business.**

- 5.42 Walkern is poorly served by access to electronic communications, including high-speed broadband and mobile telephone networks. Development of new technology has generated changes in working patterns, enabling businesses and individuals to work in more flexible ways, including working from home. Support for better quality communications infrastructure is set out in the NPPF (paragraphs 42–46) and in the draft East Herts District Plan. It is also an objective of this Neighbourhood Plan.

#### **POLICY 15 New Infrastructure**

**Support will be given to the installation of new infrastructure including high-speed broadband and telecommunications networks and renewable energy provision provided that:**

- **Infrastructure is fully integrated into the design of future development proposals; and**
- **Where new masts or structures are required, they should be sympathetic to their surroundings.**

#### **TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT**

- 5.43 The B1037 is the only classified road running eastwards out of Stevenage. When reaching Walkern village it turns sharply left and becomes Walkern High Street. The level of traffic at peak times caused by commuters into and out of Stevenage through the narrow High Street causes acute traffic congestion. Parking in the High Street and side roads near the school exacerbates this problem.



## ROADS AND TRAFFIC

- 5.44 Responses of residents to public consultation expressed serious concerns about increased traffic through the village including traffic noise, pollution, pedestrian safety, and the impact of HGVs ignoring the weight limit restriction.



## VEHICLE PARKING

- 5.45 Car ownership is high in Walkern with 66% of households owning 2 or more cars compared with an average of 46.5% for East Herts as a whole (Source: 2011 Census).
- 5.46 Residents parking and cars parked to use the services in the High Street contribute to the congestion problem. Any additional houses in the High Street must provide off-street parking to ensure that this problem does not worsen. Opportunities to provide parking for residents and visitors to the village off the High Street will be sought.

## SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

- 5.47 Public transport facilities are particularly poor considering that there is a main-line railway station with fast trains to London only 8 km away in Stevenage; the bus service does not run frequently enough to be suitable for commuting.
- 5.48 Footpaths are narrow and in some instances non-existent. New developments should be integrated into the village through adequate footpath and cycle links to village facilities.
- 5.49 Safe outdoor exercise improves health and wellbeing. The roads in Walkern are narrow with long stretches of cars parked on the roadside and rural roads are winding and dangerous for cyclists. The local community supports the long-held aspiration for a new cycle and footpath link to Stevenage. Funding for this path will be made available through the development of the site to the south of Froghall Lane.



#### **Policy 16 Cycle Path between Walkern and Stevenage**

The provision of a new cycle path and shared footpath between Walkern and Stevenage should be constructed, adjacent to but not within the highway boundary of Stevenage Road, in accordance with the Stevenage to Walkern Multi-use Path Feasibility Study, March 2009, prepared by Groundwork Hertfordshire for Hertfordshire County Council.

The cycle path should be constructed before the occupation of new homes on Land South of Froghall Lane.

#### **POLICY 17 Traffic Impact and Sustainable Transport Provision**

All proposals for development in the village must assess the potential impact of increased traffic on pedestrians, cyclists, road safety, parking and congestion.

Measures to mitigate these impacts should be agreed with the Highway Authority. In particular, further expansion of the school would need to include mitigation for any impact of additional traffic congestion and school-related parking at peak times.

Proposals to increase off-street car-parking provision and relieve traffic congestion in Walkern will be supported in principle as long as they comply with other policies in this plan.

Development proposals should help to maintain or improve public transport provision to Stevenage and throughout the parish of Walkern. Other proposals to increase the use of sustainable transport such as off-street charging points for electric cars will be supported.

### **FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

- 5.50 Walkern is a lively community, which possesses a range of public facilities and services. From the responses to public consultation, it is evident that these are highly valued by the local community. Support for the safeguarding of key community assets is embodied in a number of neighbourhood plan objectives.

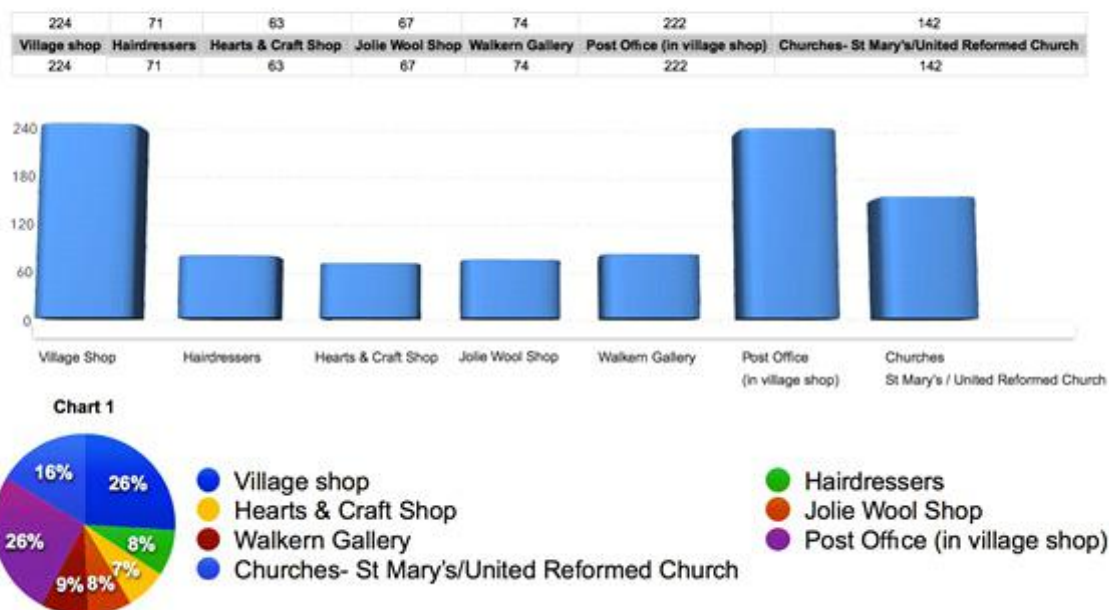
### **COMMUNITY AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES**

- 5.51 The key community and recreational facilities are shown on the Proposals Map (Appendix C1 & C2). These are the United Reform church (ACV1), the two public houses in the High Street (ACV2 & ACV3) and the village shop/post office (ACV4). The Walkern Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire highlighted that the village shop, pubs and churches were the most used community facilities (see chart below). The parish council has stated its intention to apply to East Herts Council for the designation of these sites and buildings as Assets of Community Value.



## Section 4 Parish Facilities - Question 2 - Part 1

Q2 - Which of the following amenities do you use



Data taken from WNPG Questionnaire 2014

### POLICY 18 Assets of Community Value

All assets of Community Value, designated by East Herts District Council, will be retained unless they are:

- No-longer needed
- Bought by the community to ensure the retention of the facilities in perpetuity or,
- Replaced by better facilities as part of a development proposal.

- 5.52 Outdoor sports and leisure facilities are important features in the village of Walkern. These include the recreation ground in the centre of the village, a small children's play area at the Aubries, and a sports field (with two football pitches and a cricket pitch). In consultation, the community stated that play facilities for young children were inadequate and required improvement. The central recreational ground was under-used probably due to the poor condition of the play equipment. It was felt that the village lacked a clearly defined focal point.
- 5.53 There was strong support for the regeneration of the recreation ground, which would include a new and improved play area and a central meeting place for the village to enjoy. Many residents expressed an interest in extending the range of sports and leisure facilities, especially at the Sports Field. In the future, there may be scope for the use of the contributions from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), which would be generated by new developments in the Parish.



## **POLICY 19 Community and Recreation Facilities**

**Existing community and recreation facilities must be retained, protected and enhanced. Loss of facilities will only be acceptable where alternative provision is of a scale and standard equivalent to, or superior to, the existing facilities. These must be provided within the Parish.**



## **HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

- 5.54 Main hospital facilities and health clinics are located in Stevenage. For more local needs, a GP surgery is provided in Walkern four times a week at 80 High Street. This is a much-valued asset, especially for elderly patients, families with young children, and those without personal transport. There is also an informal prescription delivery service offered by the village shop.
- 5.55 The surgery is held in privately owned premises, which is leased to the Health Trust. Should this property be sold, the surgery facility could be lost to the local community.
- 5.56 The Parish Council supports the continued provision of the surgery in Walkern. Any development proposals, which would have a negative impact on health provision in the parish, should show how that impact could be addressed. If the premises at 80 High Street were to be lost, alternative accommodation for the surgery should be provided locally in an equally accessible location.

## **POLICY 20 Maintaining Existing Health Services**

**The existing GP surgery should be retained, enhanced, or its loss mitigated by the provision of new facilities to be secured before the closure of the existing surgery. New facilities will be supported provided that the proposals are located in an equally accessible location for the majority of residents in the parish and provide adequate car parking so as not to exacerbate parking or congestion problems in Walkern.**



## **EDUCATION**

- 5.57 Secondary and further education facilities are located in Stevenage, and Edwinstree School and Ward Freeman College Buntingford, although some students travel further afield. Primary education is provided locally by Hertfordshire County Council at the Walkern Primary School, located on the High Street. The school has recently been extended to cope with anticipated increase in demand, but any significant increase in housing numbers would require further expansion. The site is tightly constrained by residential development and the River Beane. Traffic associated with the school is heavy, and causes considerable congestion on the High Street and nearby side roads at peak times.
- 5.58 Walkern Pre-School is a popular community asset, and has some capacity to take more children. The parish council fully supports the current and future provision for primary and pre-school education in Walkern. It will liaise with the County Council to ensure that facilities continue to serve the needs of the local community in the future.

## **6 IMPLEMENTATION**

- 6.1 The Neighbourhood Plan will be delivered and implemented over a 16-year period and while providing a direction for change through its vision and objectives, its policies will guide the development of Walkern Parish and the protection of those assets most appreciated by the community. The policies may be amended at intervals in order to remain in line with the District Plan.
- 6.2 In addition to the policies, the Wish List appended to the Consultation Statement will channel resources and volunteer activity into improving leisure facilities for parish residents, reducing the impact of traffic on the village and making the village more accessible.



## Appendix A Glossary

Term	Definition
<b>Affordable Housing</b>	Housing made available, based on the evidence of need, to people who are unable to afford housing at market prices. Affordable housing includes Social, rented and shared ownership housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market, and that specifically excludes low cost market housing.
<b>Air Quality Management</b>	An area where air pollution is likely to exceed National Air Quality Objectives under the Environment Act (1995), particularly due to road traffic emissions. The area is subject to a programme of assessing air quality against national targets and the development of remedial measures to improve air quality.
<b>Ancient Woodland</b>	Woodland known to have existed continuously since 1600 or before in England.
<b>Brownfield Site</b>	Land that has been previously developed on.
<b>Community Asset</b>	The introduction of the Localism Act 2011 provided a new right for residents to nominate certain local and public or privately owned buildings or land for recognition as being an asset of community value. This is called 'Community Right to Bid'. Each nominated asset will be considered by the Council to see whether it meets the criteria for acceptance.
<b>Community Infrastructure Levy</b>	CIL – Funds raised from developers undertaking new building projects in local authority areas. It can be used for new or safer road schemes, flood defences, schools, hospitals and other health or social care facilities, park improvements, green spaces and leisure centres.
<b>Conservation Area</b>	An area designated under Section 69 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as being of 'special architectural or historical interest', the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance
<b>Construction Management Plan</b>	A plan detailing how construction will be managed in order to ensure the effects of construction on residents and businesses are kept to a minimum.
<b>Developer Contributions (or 106 Contributions)</b>	Contributions required under a Section 106 agreement from developers to be set aside for future works and services directly related to the development and focused on site-specific mitigation of the impact of development.
<b>Development Plan</b>	Statutory Plans, including Local or District Plans and Neighbourhood Development Plans which are used to determine planning applications.
<b>Flood Plain</b>	An area of land liable to flood from a watercourse, defined by the Environment Agency.



<b>Green Infrastructure</b>	A network of green spaces and other features, such as parks, open spaces, woodlands, playing fields, allotments and gardens providing a range of quality-of-life benefits for the local community.
<b>Green Corridor</b>	A wildlife corridor, habitat corridor, or green corridor is an area of habitat connecting wildlife populations separated by human activities or structures (such as roads, development or logging).
<b>Housing Associations</b>	Independent, not-for-profit organisations that work with councils to offer flats and houses to local people on the Housing Register.
<b>Infrastructure</b>	Basic services necessary for development to take place, for example roads, electricity, sewerage, water, education and health facilities.
<b>Lifetime Homes</b>	The 'Lifetime Homes' standards seek to make homes more flexible, convenient, safe, adaptable and accessible than most new homes, as defined in the EHDC Affordable Housing and Lifetime Homes Supplementary Planning Document.
<b>Listed Buildings</b>	Any building or structure which is included in the list of 'buildings of special architectural or historic interest' as defined in the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
<b>Local Referendum</b>	A direct vote in which electors in the Neighbourhood Area (or larger area If recommended by the Independent Examiner) will be asked to either Accept or reject the Neighbourhood Development Plan.
<b>Major Development</b>	<p>A development defined as major development in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 i.e. development involving anyone or more of the following:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a). the winning and working of minerals or the use of land for mineral-working deposits;</li> <li>(b) waste developments;</li> <li>(c) the provisions of dwelling houses where <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) the number of dwelling houses to be provided is 10 or more; or</li> <li>(ii) the development is to be carried out on a site having an area of 0.5 hectares or more and it is not known whether the development falls within sub-paragraph (c) (i)</li> </ul> </li> <li>(d) the provision of a building or buildings where the floor space to be created by the development is 1,000<sup>2</sup> metres or more; or</li> <li>(e) development carried out on a site having an area of 1 hectare or more.</li> </ul>
<b>Mitigation</b>	Measures taken to lessen the force or intensity of the effects of a development.
<b>Modal Shift</b>	The trend that sees more journeys made by a sustainable form of transport, usually away from cars and towards walking, cycling or public transport.
<b>National Planning Policy Framework</b>	Sets out national policy and how this is expected to be applied.



<b>Neighbourhood Area</b>	Area to which a proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan or Neighbourhood Development Order will relate.
<b>Neighbourhood Plan</b>	A local plan prepared by a parish council and community representatives for a particular neighbourhood area, which includes land use topics. If accepted by an Independent Examiner and passed by a simple majority at referendum, the plan carries equal weight to other adopted local plans.
<b>Objective</b>	An aim or a goal to assist in achieving the overall vision for the area.
<b>Open Space</b>	All open space of public value including land, river, canals, and lakes which offer important opportunities for recreation and can act as a visual amenity.
<b>Sequential and Exception Test Locations</b>	The methodology recommended by the National Planning Policy Framework to ensure that new developments are sited in the most appropriate locations
<b>Shared Equity Housing</b>	Shared equity is where more than one party has an interest in the value of the home, with the aim of reducing the cost of occupancy, e.g. an equity load arrangement or a shared ownership lease.
<b>Shared Space</b>	Shared space is a design approach that seeks to change the way streets operate by reducing the dominance and speed of the motor vehicles. No particular class of usage within the space has priority over any other when moving around and responsibility for safe and free movements is shared by all.
<b>Sheltered Housing</b>	Housing which is purpose built or converted exclusively for sale to elderly people with a package of estate management services and which consists of grouped, self-contained accommodation usually with communal facilities and normally with a warden.
<b>Significant Development</b>	<p>A development of a scale sufficient to trigger the requirement for a Transport Assessment in accordance with <i>Roads in Hertfordshire: Highways Design Guide 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition</i> i.e.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residential development in excess of 80 units</li> <li>Non-food retail development or more than 1,500<sup>2</sup>m Gross Floor Area (GFA)</li> <li>Class B1 Business of 2500<sup>2</sup>m GFA (use class B8) or more</li> <li>Class B2 General industrial of more than 4,000<sup>2</sup>m GFA</li> <li>Warehousing (use class B8) of more than 5,000<sup>2</sup>m GFA</li> </ul>
<b>Social Housing</b>	Subsidised housing for rent allocated on the basis of need.



<b>Supplementary Planning Document</b>	Documents which add further detail to the policies in the Local District Plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development of specific sites or a particular issue.
<b>Supported Housing</b>	As for 'Sheltered Housing', but designed for those with a physical or learning disability rather than just the elderly.
<b>Sustainable Communities</b>	Places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment, and contribute to a high quality of life.
<b>Sustainable Development</b>	Development that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
<b>Vision</b>	A series of statements describing how an area would like to be at some time in the future.



## Policy Map Identifying Options and Evidence

This table shows how the key objectives of the plan have been translated into planning policies. The first policy in the plan POLICY 1 Sustainable Development relates to the achievement of all of the objectives and is the thread that links the policies together. The process involved looking at options on how it was best to achieve what the objectives were intended to do and the evidence that the policies were needed.

	Key Objective	What the policies intended to do	Policy Options/Notes	Policies that achieve the Key Objectives	Evidence that the policies are needed
a	Ensure new development protects and enhances local landscape character, valued nature conservation sites and the rich biodiversity of the Parish.	Protect landscape character, views, nature conservation sites and biodiversity on development sites	Policies to protect nature conservation sites and biodiversity including Green Corridors	POLICY 5 Designated Wildlife Sites POLICY 6 Green Corridors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information received from the Wildlife Trust</li> <li>Importance of local landscape identified in Walkern Neighbourhood Plan Survey (survey)</li> </ul>
b	Protect and enhance the village conservation area and its setting, and listed and locally listed buildings.	Identify specific heritage assets and control development that would have a detrimental effect	Policy highlighting character of village and specifically the conservation area.	POLICY 3 Walkern Conservation Area and Heritage Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development's that impact negatively on the conservation area identified in Conservation Area Appraisal</li> <li>Photographic evidence</li> </ul>
c	Protect and enhance the Parish's open spaces and views for public access and informal recreational use.	Protect existing important green spaces and views from development	Policies on Local Green Space/ Protected Open Space/ Protected Views	POLICY 2 Views, Vistas and Landscape Features POLICY 4 Protected Open Space POLICY 7 Local Green Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Threat posed by proposals to building below the ridge line in the Beane Valley east of Stevenage</li> <li>Importance of open space identified in the survey</li> </ul>
d	Ensure the River Beane, a rare chalk stream that runs through Walkern, is preserved and protected from over-abstraction	Protect species, opportunities to increase flow, reduce pollution	This will only have an influence over development in the Parish/ protect landscape feature	POLICY 2 Views, Vistas and Landscape Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project to enhance the chalk stream</li> <li>Landscape Character Assessment</li> <li>Importance of the river to Walkern residents identified in the survey</li> </ul>
e	Enhance and improve the environmental quality of the Parish, minimizing noise and air pollution.	Limit impact on or improve environmental quality	Specific policy or include as criteria in other policies	POLICY 12 Design of New Development POLICY 17 Traffic Impact & Sustainable Transport Provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Traffic congestion in the village (photographic)</li> </ul>
f	Ensure the mix, size and type of new housing meets local needs, including a sufficient supply of affordable housing and preferential access to some new homes for people with a strong local connection.	Influence the type of new housing built to meet local needs including retirement provision	A criteria based policy is more succinct than a separate policy for each aspect	POLICY 8 Framework for Land South of Froghall Lane POLICY 9 Housing Infill Sites POLICY 11 Affordable Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Results of the Housing Needs Survey conducted by the Community Development Foundation</li> <li>Aspirations of local residents identified in the survey</li> </ul>



	Key Objective	What are policies intended to do?	Policy Options/Notes	Policies that achieve the Key Objectives	Evidence that the policies are needed
g	Require new development to be of high quality design, built to a high sustainability standard and to be sympathetic to, and improve, the look and feel of the parish.	Design to reflect/enhance local vernacular, characteristics of conservation area etc and to be high quality	Difficult to define high quality/ what is local vernacular? Use Conservation Appraisal and criteria based policy	POLICY 10 Rural Homes POLICY 12 Design of New Development in Walkern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aspiration of local farmers to diversify</li> <li>Lack of suitable space for expansion in the village</li> </ul>
h	Ensure the design and location of new developments are resilient to the effects of climate change and flooding.	Siting and design of new development to be environmentally sustainable	Criterion in a general housing policy or a specific policy on its own	POLICY 8 Framework for Land South of Froghall Lane POLICY 12 Design of New Development in Walkern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence of properties being flooded more regularly (photographic)</li> </ul>
i	Support existing businesses, creative industries and home working, and encourage new local employment opportunities for residents.	Increase local employment opportunities Improve infrastructure for home working and new employment opportunities	New site allocation policy or redevelopment of an employment use to maintain or increase jobs, encourage and support new infrastructure	POLICY 13 New Businesses POLICY 14 Diversification of Farm Businesses POLICY 15 New Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited opportunity to provide new employment premises or sites</li> <li>Traffic congestion at peak times due to commuting to work because of lack of local employment opportunities</li> <li>Poor Broadband speeds</li> </ul>
j	Preserve and enhance public transport services to and from the village for residents who do not have use of a car, and encourage walking and cycling.	Protect existing and enhance use of sustainable modes of transport	Criteria in design policy to take account of high car ownership /Cycle link to Stevenage to be funded by new development	POLICY 16 Cycle Path between Walkern & Stevenage POLICY 17 Traffic Impact & Sustainable Transport Provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Results of consultation exercise on draft policies revealed support for cycle path</li> <li>Poor existing bus service – evidenced by timetable</li> </ul>
k	Ensure that community facilities (eg school, GP surgery) enhance the health and wellbeing of local residents.	Protect existing community facilities and health care facilities	List important facilities as Assets of Community Value and ensure GP's surgery remains in the village	POLICY 18 Assets of Community Value POLICY 20 Maintaining Existing Health Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Popularity of the village shop</li> <li>Changes of ownership of village pubs</li> <li>Reliance of less mobile on local doctors surgery</li> <li>Increasing use of the URC hall</li> </ul>
l	Ensure the village has indoor and outdoor recreational facilities that meet the needs of young children, teenagers and adults, and strengthen the sense of community.	Match leisure facilities to local needs.	Protect and enhance existing facilities or ensure they are replaced in the village if lost through development	POLICY 19 Community and Recreation Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current facilities are well used (evidenced through calendar)</li> <li>Lack of variety of facilities identified by residents in the survey</li> </ul>
m	Give the Parish the opportunity to access Community Infrastructure Levy Funding to improve Parish facilities.	Direct CIL payments to parish priorities such as Community Facilities	Put all ideas which do not constitute planning policy issues into a Wish List	Wish List (appended to the Consultation Statement)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comments appended to the survey</li> <li>Comments received at consultation open days</li> </ul>



<b>Key Objective</b>	<b>What are policies intended to do?</b>	<b>Policy Options/Notes</b>	<b>Policies that achieve the Key Objectives</b>	<b>Evidence that the policies are needed</b>
Deleted	Identify several small housing sites to satisfy the need for new homes in Walkern up to 2031, as required by the East Herts District Plan.	Allocate sites to meet EH plan requirements	A site specific policy for each site allocation including a map and summary of assessment – need overridden by land south of Froghall Lane receiving permission on appeal	N/A
Deleted	Locate and phase new development to minimise the impact on the already limited road infrastructure in the village so traffic congestion is not exacerbated.	Stagger development over the period of the plan and distribute development around the village	Difficult to achieving phasing Site allocations can be phased – but not possible on a single site	N/A
Deleted	Promote existing community groups and encourage the formation of new groups to support community cohesion.	Promote wellbeing	Not a land use policy – added to Wish List	N/A

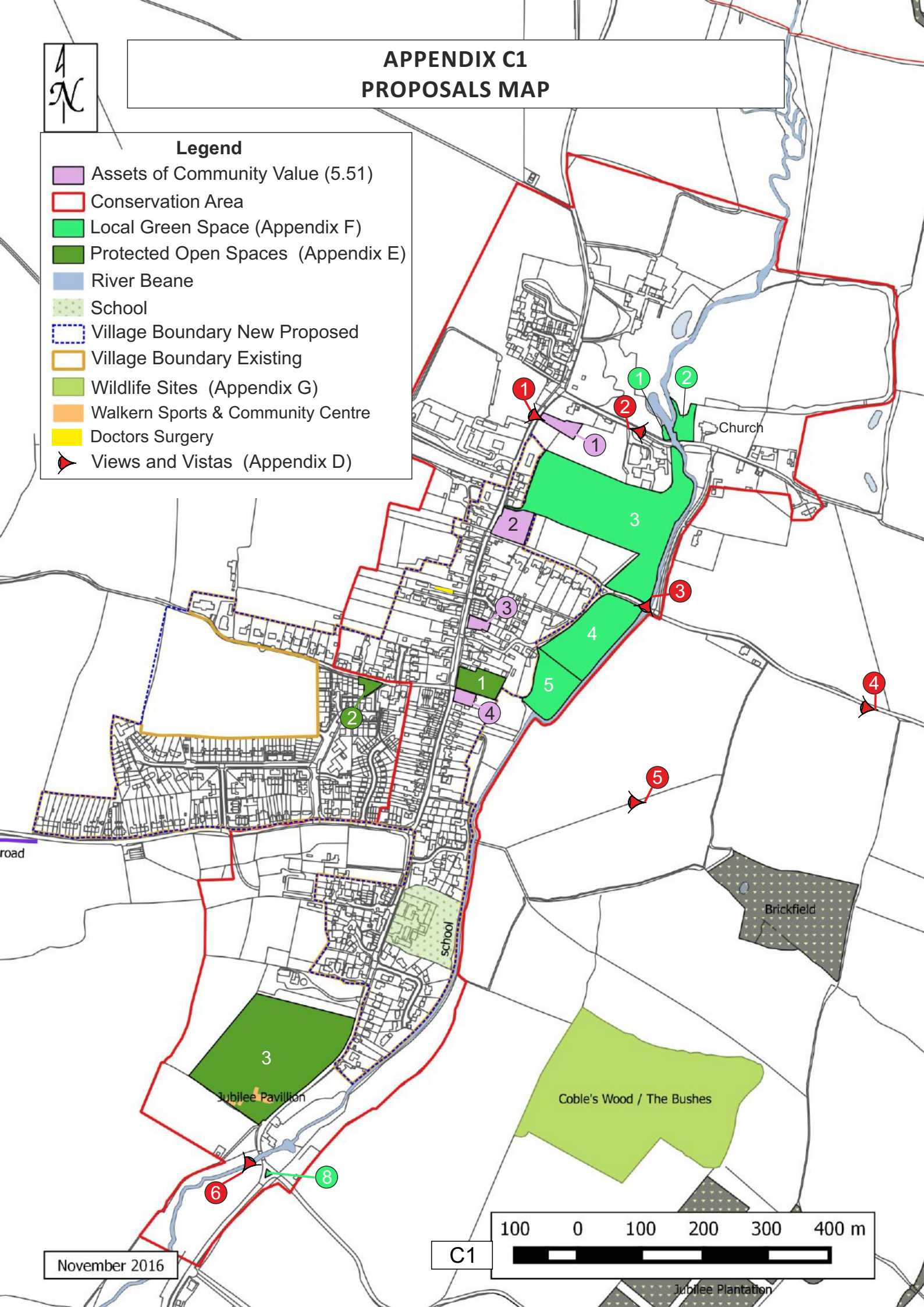


# APPENDIX C1 PROPOSALS MAP



## Legend

- Assets of Community Value (5.51)
- Conservation Area
- Local Green Space (Appendix F)
- Protected Open Spaces (Appendix E)
- River Beane
- School
- Village Boundary New Proposed
- Village Boundary Existing
- Wildlife Sites (Appendix G)
- Walkern Sports & Community Centre
- Doctors Surgery
- Views and Vistas (Appendix D)



November 2016

C1

100 0 100 200 300 400 m

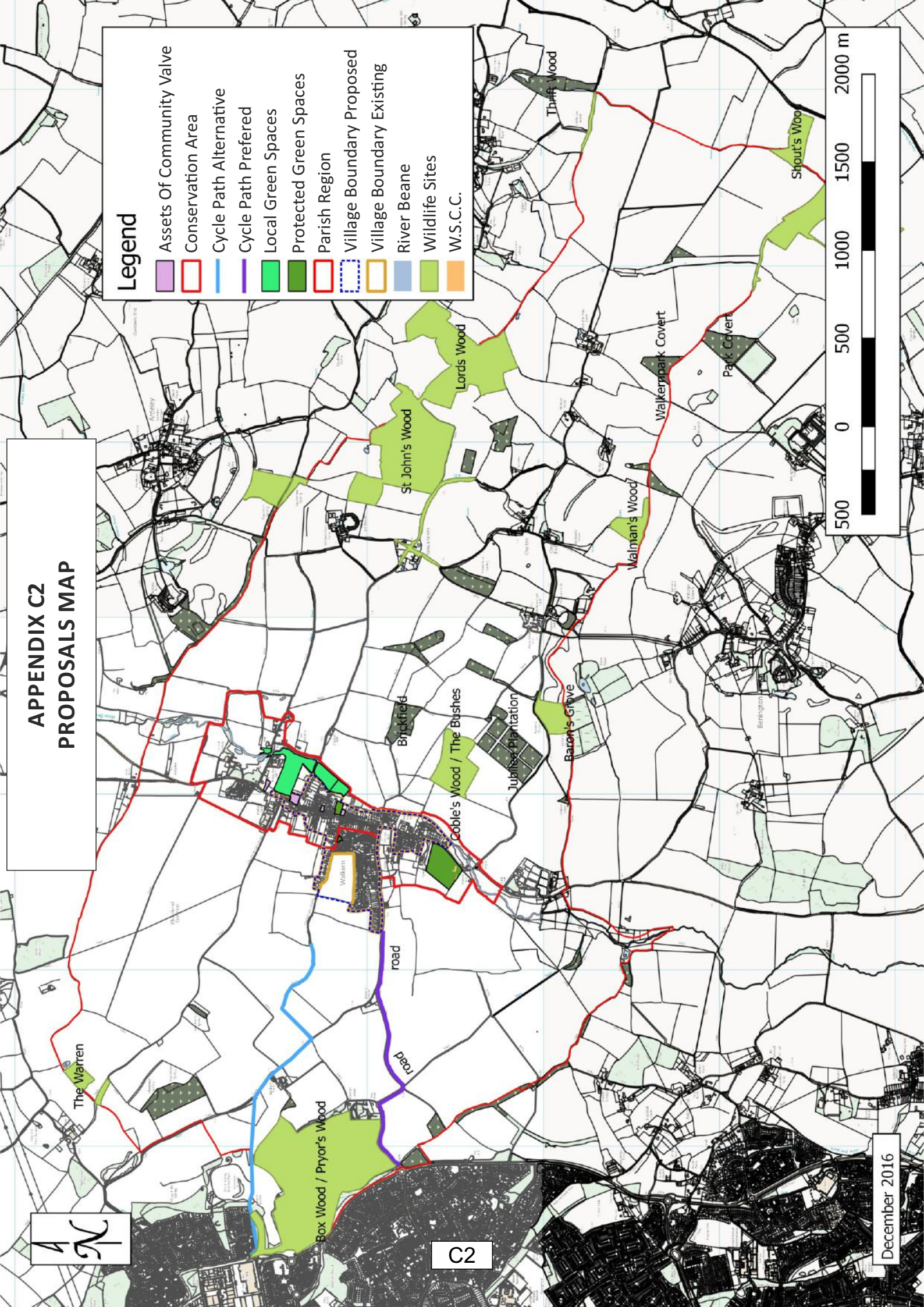
Jubilee Plantation



# APPENDIX C2 PROPOSALS MAP

## Legend

- Assets Of Community Valve
- Conservation Area
- Cycle Path Alternative
- Cycle Path Preferred
- Local Green Spaces
- Protected Green Spaces
- Parish Region
- Village Boundary Proposed
- Village Boundary Existing
- River Beane
- Wildlife Sites
- W.S.C.C.

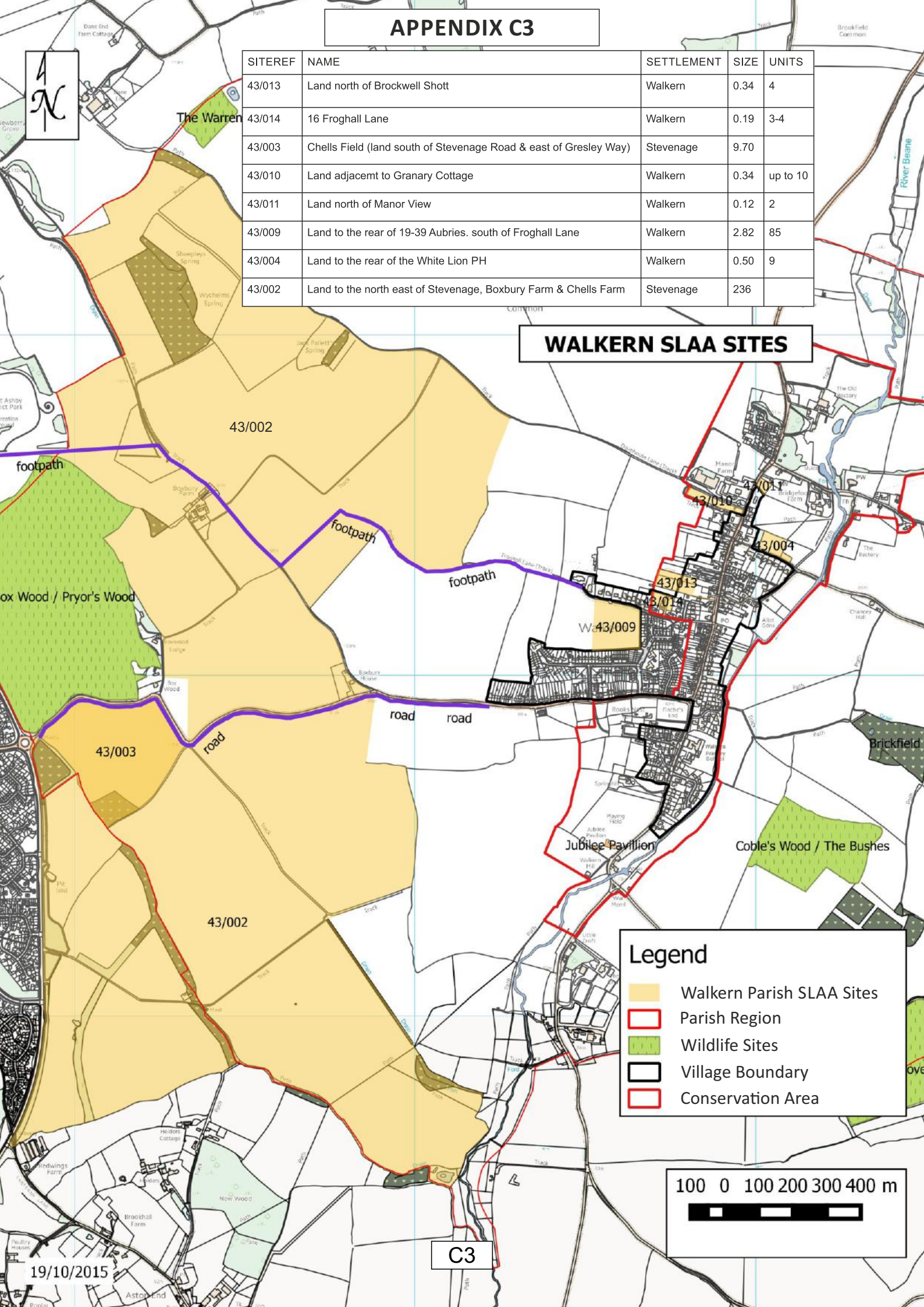




# APPENDIX C3

SITEREF	NAME	SETTLEMENT	SIZE	UNITS
43/013	Land north of Brockwell Shott	Walkern	0.34	4
43/014	16 Froghall Lane	Walkern	0.19	3-4
43/003	Chells Field (land south of Stevenage Road & east of Gresley Way)	Stevenage	9.70	
43/010	Land adjacent to Granary Cottage	Walkern	0.34	up to 10
43/011	Land north of Manor View	Walkern	0.12	2
43/009	Land to the rear of 19-39 Aubries. south of Froghall Lane	Walkern	2.82	85
43/004	Land to the rear of the White Lion PH	Walkern	0.50	9
43/002	Land to the north east of Stevenage, Boxbury Farm & Chells Farm	Stevenage	236	

## WALKERN SLAA SITES



## Legend

- Walkern Parish SLAA Sites
- Parish Region
- Wildlife Sites
- Village Boundary
- Conservation Area

100 0 100 200 300 400 m



C3

19/10/2015



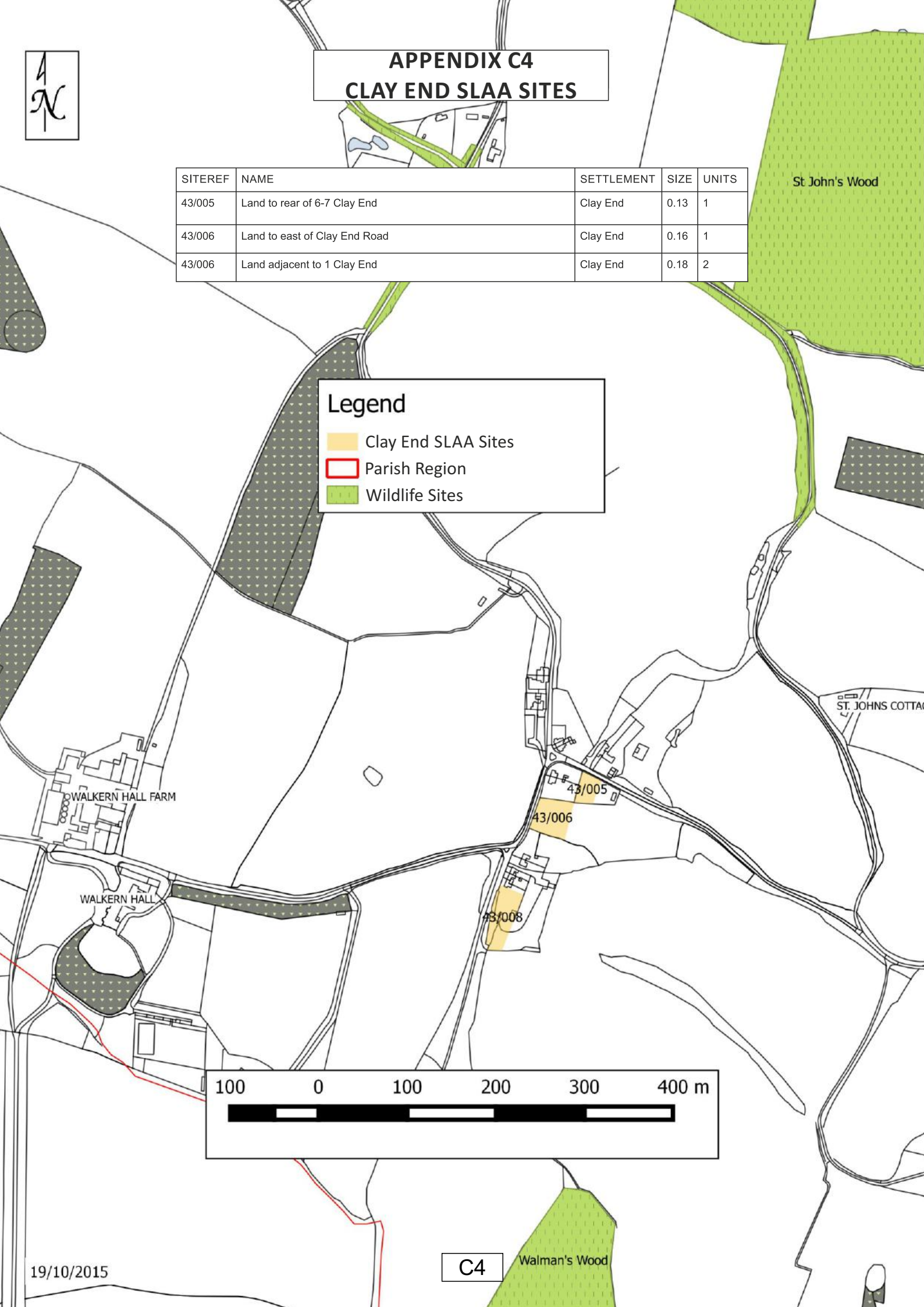


## APPENDIX C4 CLAY END SLAA SITES

SITEREF	NAME	SETTLEMENT	SIZE	UNITS
43/005	Land to rear of 6-7 Clay End	Clay End	0.13	1
43/006	Land to east of Clay End Road	Clay End	0.16	1
43/006	Land adjacent to 1 Clay End	Clay End	0.18	2

### Legend




- Clay End SLAA Sites
- Parish Region
- Wildlife Sites

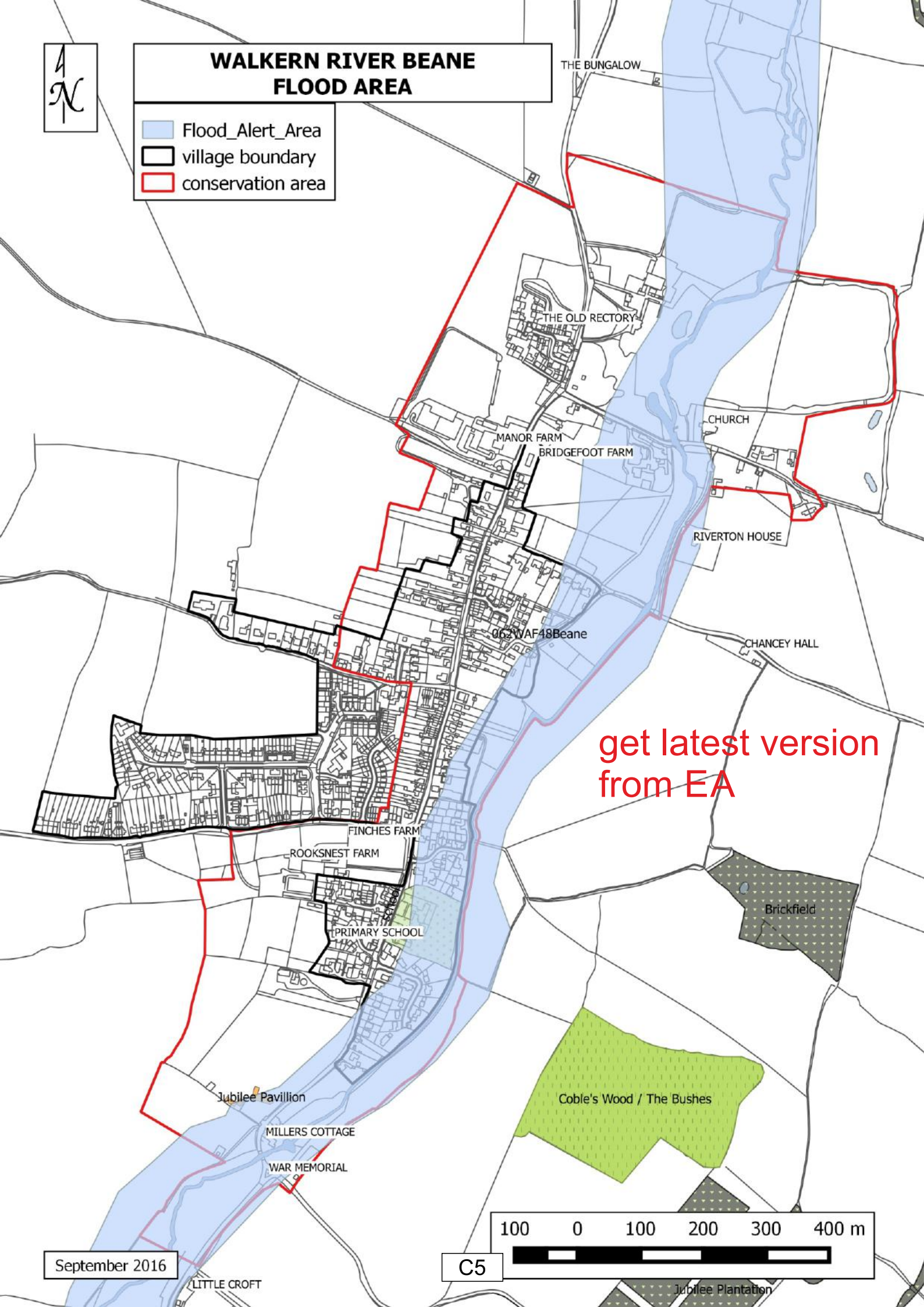






# WALKERN RIVER BEANE FLOOD AREA

-  Flood\_Alert\_Area
-  village boundary
-  conservation area



get latest version  
from EA

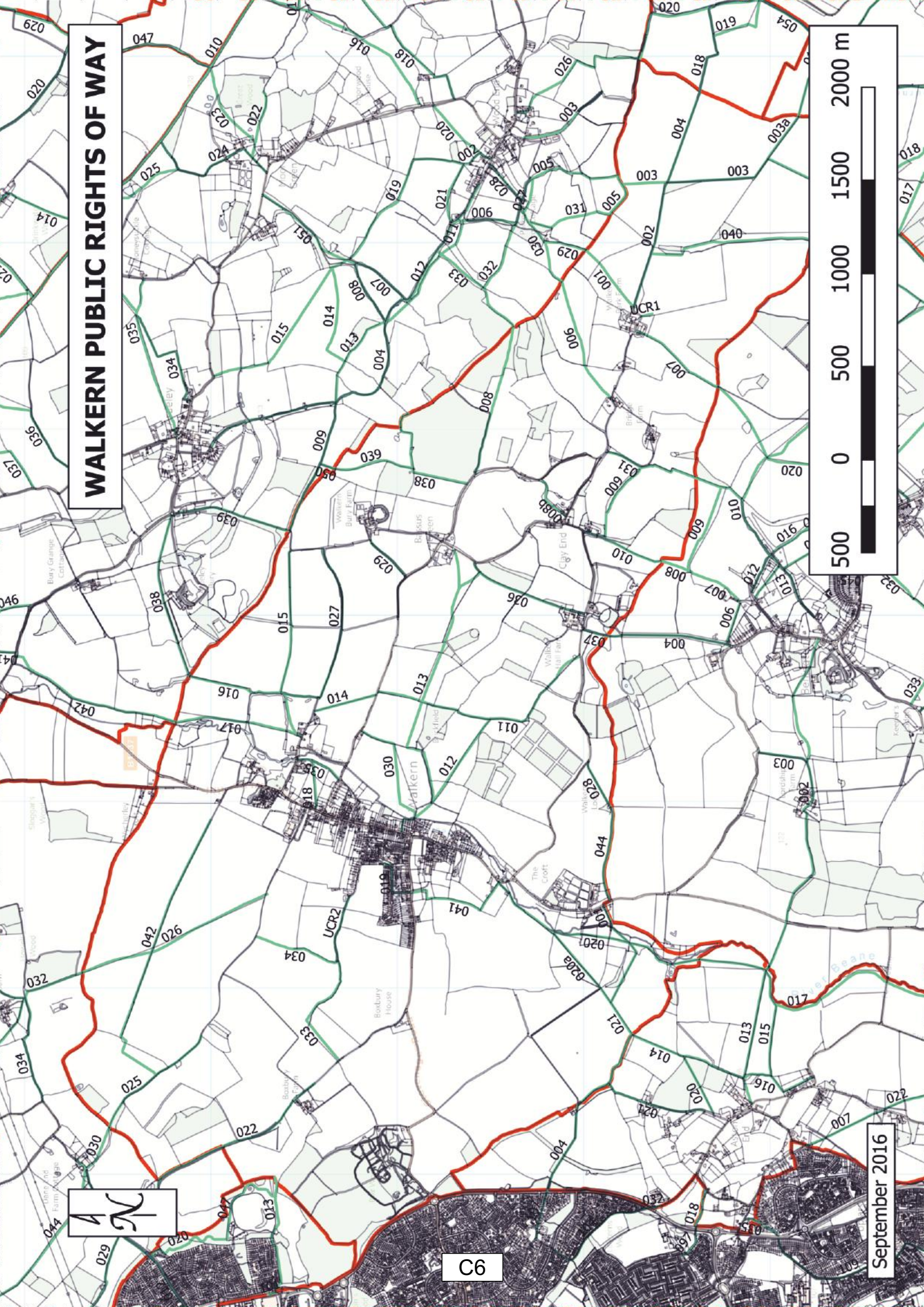
September 2016

C5

100 0 100 200 300 400 m



# WALKERN PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY





APPENDIX D1  
VIEWS, VISTAS and LANDSCAPE FEATURES



View 1.View Eastwards from URC



View 2. View westwards towards the River Beane



APPENDIX D2  
VIEWS, VISTAS and LANDSCAPE FEATURES







View 5. View westwards from footpath 030



View 6. Walkern Mill on the river Beane



## APPENDIX E1

Protected Green Space Reference	Protected Green Space name and address	
1	Recreation Ground High Street	
Owner     Walkern Parish		
Criteria and reason for protection		Comment
1. Is the Open Space local in character?		Yes
2. Is the Open Space in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves?		Yes
3. Is the Open Space demonstrably special or does it hold a particular local significance for one or more of the following reasons?		Yes
a. Are there significant views into or across the site?		Yes
b. Does the site afford significant views out into the countryside?		Yes
c. Does the site have special historic significance?		No
d. Does the site have recreational value?		Yes
e. Is the site particularly tranquil?		Yes
f. Is the site rich in wildlife?		Yes
g. What evidence is there to demonstrate that the site is special to local people, e.g. local comments, photographs or survey results?		It is a safe, fenced site in the centre of the village with play equipment for younger children. There are plans to update the whole site including the equipment. This includes more seating and planting of native species to attract wildlife.
Summary	The area is of special value located in the centre of the village but requires updating. Views to the rear look over unspoilt farmland and the River Beane. The area is peaceful and tranquil. There is an abundance of wildlife.	



E1



## APPENDIX E2

Protected Green Space Reference	Protected Green Space name and address	
2	Play Area Aubries	
Owner Walkern Parish		
Criteria and reason for protection		Comment
1. Is the Open Space local in character?		Yes
2. Is the Open Space in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves?		Yes
3. Is the Open Space demonstrably special or does it hold a particular local significance for one or more of the following reasons?		Yes
a. Are there significant views into or across the site?		Yes
b. Does the site afford significant views out into the countryside?		Yes
c. Does the site have special historic significance?		No
d. Does the site have recreational value?		Yes
e. Is the site particularly tranquil?		Yes
f. Is the site rich in wildlife?		Yes
g. What evidence is there to demonstrate that the site is special to local people, e.g. local comments, photographs or survey results?		It is a small safe, unfenced site within Aubries with play equipment for younger children.
Summary	The area is of special value located in Aubries just off Froghall Lane.	



E2



## APPENDIX E3

Protected Green Space Reference	Protected GreenSpace name and address	
3	Sports Field High Street	
Owner Walkern Parish		
Criteria and reason for protection		Comment
1. Is the Open Space local in character?		Yes
2. Is the Open Space in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves?		Yes
3. Is the Open Space demonstrably special or does it hold a particular local significance for one or more of the following reasons?		Yes
a. Are there significant views into or across the site?		Yes
b. Does the site afford significant views out into the countryside?		Yes
c. Does the site have special historic significance?		No
d. Does the site have recreational value?		Yes
e. Is the site particularly tranquil?		Yes
f. Is the site rich in wildlife?		Yes
g. What evidence is there to demonstrate that the site is special to local people, e.g. local comments, photographs or survey results?		It is the main sports and social club field. The annual village fair is held here, football is played here every weekend during the season. Cricket is played during the summer. It is used during the school holidays by young people attending clubs and workshops, and during term time the youth club uses the field. Residents of Walkern use the field for picnics, walking, dog walking, exercising or to sit quietly and enjoy the surrounding farmland and wildlife
Summary	It is a valuable asset for the village as it is a large field that includes a purpose-built Sports and social venue available to all the village. The surrounding boundaries and hedgerows are abundant with wildlife such as, pheasants, partridges, rooks, crows, greenfinches, robins, blackbirds, wagtails, blue tits, great tits, owls, ducks, foxes, rabbits, badgers, muntjacs, pigeons, doves, geese, hedgehogs, rats and mice.	





## APPENDIX F1 & F2

Local Green Space Reference	Local Green Space name and address	
1 & 2	Land either side of the River Beane at the Ford Church End	
Owner Dyson		
Criteria and reason for protection		Comment
1. Is the Green Space local in character?		Yes
2. Is the Green Space in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves?		Yes
3. Is the Green Space demonstrably special or does it hold a particular local significance for one or more of the following reasons?		Yes
a. Are there significant views into or across the site?		No
b. Does the site afford significant views out into the countryside?		No
c. Does the site have special historic significance?		No
d. Does the site have recreational value?		Yes
e. Is the site particularly tranquil?		No
f. Is the site rich in wildlife?		Yes
g. What evidence is there to demonstrate that the site is special to local people, e.g. local comments, photographs or survey results?		Site 01 is a small piece of land adjacent to the River Beane on its western bank and contains a rookery. Site 02 lies between the river’s eastern bank and St Mary’s church. The church has an historic churchyard. There are views over farmland to the north. Both sites have an abundance of wildlife. They add an air of tranquillity to the whole area
Summary	These sites are within the river Beane flood plain and are not suitable for development. These are green sites and contribute to the overall rural nature of this area of the village and are popular with a wide range of people.	



F1



## APPENDIX F2

Local Green Space Reference		Local Green Space name and address	
3		Meadow adjacent to the River Beane between Church End and Winters Lane	
Owner     Cordell +			
Criteria and reason for protection		Comment	
1. Is the Green Space local in character?		Yes	
2. Is the Green Space in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves?		Yes	
3. Is the Green Space demonstrably special or does it hold a particular local significance for one or more of the following reasons?		Yes	
a. Are there significant views into or across the site?		Yes	
b. Does the site afford significant views out into the countryside?		Yes	
c. Does the site have special historic significance?		Yes	
d. Does the site have recreational value?		Yes	
e. Is the site particularly tranquil?		Yes	
f. Is the site rich in wildlife?		Yes	
g. What evidence is there to demonstrate that the site is special to local people, e.g. local comments, photographs or survey results?		This is a privately owned meadow crossed by two well used footpaths (No 18 & 35). It has boundaries to the River Beane, Church End and the rear of the properties on the High Street. There are mature trees and hedgerows and a Grade 2* listed farmhouse adjacent.	
Summary	This site sits in the river Beane flood plain and would be unsuitable for development. There is an abundance of wildlife including a rookery		





## APPENDIX F3

Local Green Space Reference	Local Green Space name and address	
<b>4</b>	<b>Field Adjacent to Allotments Totts Lane</b>	
<b>Owner</b> Cordell +		
Criteria and reason for protection	Comment	
1. Is the Green Space local in character?	Yes	
2. Is the Green Space in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves?	Yes	
3. Is the Green Space demonstrably special or does it hold a particular local significance for one or more of the following reasons?	Yes	
a. Are there significant views into or across the site?	Yes	
b. Does the site afford significant views out into the countryside?	Yes	
c. Does the site have special historic significance?	Yes	
d. Does the site have recreational value?	Yes	
e. Is the site particularly tranquil?	Yes	
f. Is the site rich in wildlife?	Yes	
g. What evidence is there to demonstrate that the site is special to local people, e.g. local comments, photographs or survey results?	<p>This site is charity land administered by the Parish Council and is currently leased for horse grazing. It is a tranquil area bounded by allotments (Gs05), River Beane and a meadow (Gs03). There is an abundance of wildlife. The site is in the River Beane flood plain and unsuitable for development.</p>	
<b>Summary</b>	<p>This paddock is currently leased for grazing and is adjacent to Totts Lane, a popular route for walkers and cyclists. It is owned by the Parish.</p>	





## APPENDIX F4

Local Green Space Reference	Local Green Space name and address	
5	Allotments Totts Lane	
Owner     Walkern Parish		
Criteria and reason for protection		Comment
1. Is the Green Space local in character?		Yes
2. Is the Green Space in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves?		Yes
3. Is the Green Space demonstrably special or does it hold a particular local significance for one or more of the following reasons?		Yes
a. Are there significant views into or across the site?		Yes
b. Does the site afford significant views out into the countryside?		Yes
c. Does the site have special historic significance?		Yes
d. Does the site have recreational value?		Yes
e. Is the site particularly tranquil?		Yes
f. Is the site rich in wildlife?		Yes
g. What evidence is there to demonstrate that the site is special to local people, e.g. local comments, photographs or survey results?		The site has been owned by the Parish for many years and once housed a tennis club and a bowls club that were spread over this site and the adjacent field (GS 04). The site is special to people as the allotments are in demand and well tended. The site runs alongside the River Beane and is surrounded by farmland. A recent occupier of the house at the entrance to the allotments has trapped and listed over 600 different species of moths in his garden. This list has been noted by the environmental office in St Albans. It lies in the River Beane flood plain and is not suitable for development.
Summary	Administered by the Parish Council for the village, it is a desirable asset for the community.	





## APPENDIX F6

Local Green Space Reference	Local Green Space name and address	
<b>6</b>	<b>War Memorial</b> <b>Bennington Road</b>	
<b>Owner</b> Walkern Parish		
<b>Criteria and reason for protection</b>	<b>Comment</b>	
1. Is the Green Space local in character?	Yes	
2. Is the Green Space in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves?	Yes	
3. Is the Green Space demonstrably special or does it hold a particular local significance for one or more of the following reasons?	Yes	
a. Are there significant views into or across the site?	Yes	
b. Does the site afford significant views out into the countryside?	No	
c. Does the site have special historic significance?	Yes	
d. Does the site have recreational value?	No	
e. Is the site particularly tranquil?	No	
f. Is the site rich in wildlife?	No	
g. What evidence is there to demonstrate that the site is special to local people, e.g. local comments, photographs or survey results?	The memorial is kept clean and tidy throughout the year. A memorial service is held on Remembrance Sunday that is well attended when the names of the fallen are read out and wreaths are laid.	
<b>Summary</b>	This is a true village asset and one that is well maintained. It marks the entrance to Walkern and is a site that the village is proud of.	





## DESIGNATED WILDLIFE SITES

Data supplied by Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust

### Wildlife Site Inventory East Herts

#### **22/006 Pryor's Wood/Box Wood/Lob's Hole Spring TL270263 see GIS1997 layer**

Ancient Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) coppice with Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*) standards woodland plus some Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*). Wild Cherry (*Prunus avium*) and Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*). The wood has been extensively cleared and replanted with Larch (*Larix decidua*) Corsican Pine (*Pinus nigra*), Douglas Fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), Western Red Cedar (*Thuja plicata*) and Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*). Pryor's Wood is the nature reserve consisting of mostly old secondary woodland grown up on the site of the past 150 years. It is dominated by Pedunculate Oak with Silver Birch (*Betula pendula*), Wild Cherry (*Prunus avium*), Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and some Hazel (*Corylus avellana*). There is an area of ancient Hornbeam coppice. A diverse assemblage of flowering plant species have been recorded including the local species Green Hellebore (*Helleborus viridis*) and Violet Hellebore (*Epipactis purpurata*). Pryor's Wood contains many woodland indicator species including Wood Anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*), Yellow Arthragal (*Lamium galeobdolon*), Primrose, Great Wood-rush (*Luzula sylvatica*) has been recorded here. Other records include the nationally notable beetle *Platycis minutus* and the local White-Letter Hairstreak (*Satyrium w-album*). Auna is particularly rich with numerous breeding species including past records for Hawfinch (*Coccothraustes coccothraustes*) and Wood Warbler (*Phylloscopus sibilatrix*). 17 species of mammal have been recorded including the Hazel Dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*). At the eastern edge of Box Wood, within Rough Ground, is a disused chalk pit. Other earthworks within the site add further habitat diversity. Wildlife Site criteria: Ancient Woodland inventory site, woodland indicators.

#### **22/047 The Warren (N.E. of Stevenage) TL273277 see GIS 1997 layer**

Ancient semi-natural Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) coppice woodland with Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*) and Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) standards. The understorey supports Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and Elder (*Sambucus nigra*) with Hazel (*Corylus avellana*) and the ground flora contains woodland indicators, mainly Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), with Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.) and Common Nettle (*Urtica dioica*). Wildlife Site criteria: Ancient Woodland with a semi-natural canopy and field evidence suggesting an ancient origin; shown on Bryant 1822): > 1 ha

#### **22/049 Coble's Spring and The Bushes TL292255 see GIS 1997 Layer**

Woodland divided into three compartments by rides, which partly support species-rich neutral grass. Coble's Spring in the east is an ancient woodland site and is mainly composed of planted Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) with some Scots Pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) and European Larch (*Larix decidua*). The ground flora supports ancient woodland indicators including Dog's Vetches in the west is divided into a northern section of secondary broadleaf woodland and a southern section of mainly of dense scrub with a large clearing. The broadleaved woodland is predominantly secondary Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus*



robur) with a dense sub-canopy of Elder (*Sambucus nigra*) and Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and a ground flora dominated by Dog's Mercury. The grassy ride is the best area and supports herb-rich flora. The wood is used by protected species. Wildlife Site criteria: Part Ancient Woodland (Coble's Spring) with restorable elements of its previous semi-natural character including some semi-natural canopy, shown on Bryant (1822) part old secondary woodland with a semi-natural canopy and varied structure.

**23/002 Bassus Green Road Verges TL304257 see GIS 1997 Layer**

Broad grassy road verges comprising species-rich neutral grassland with damp areas, ditches, old hedges and scrub. The sward supports grassland indicator species including Lady's Smock (*Cardamine pratensis*), Meadow Vetching (*Lathyrus pratensis*), Common Knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*), Cowslip (*Primula veris*), Meadow Buttercup (*Ranunculus acris*) and Common Sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*). The nationally rare Scarlet Malachite beetle (*Malachius aneus*) has been recorded.

Wildlife Site criteria: Grassland indicators: species.

**23/003 St.Johns Wood and Lords Wood TL10256 see GIS 1997 Layer**

Ancient semi-natural Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*), Hornbeam (*Carpinus betula*) woodland with mature Hornbeam coppice and frequent Pedunculate Oak standards. There are also Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) standards and Hazel (*Corylus avellana*) coppice along with some Birch (*Betula* spp.) and Field Maple (*Acer campestre*). The wood also comprises some secondary scrub woodland and areas which have been replanted. The ground flora is diverse, with records for numerous woodland indicators, including several ferns (*Dryopteris* spp.) Violets (*Viola* spp.) and Sedges (*Carex* spp.) Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), Yellow Pimpernel (*Lysimachia nemorum*), Wood Sorrel (*Oxalis acetosella*), Wood Anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*), Primrose (*Primula vulgaris*) and Violet Helleborine (*Epipactis purpurata*), an uncommon plant in Hertfordshire. There are numerous records for birds, including Nightingales (*Luscinia megarhynchos*), for the Hazel Dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*) and Harvest Mouse (*Micromys minutus*), Historically the site was well known for its diversity of butterfly species. External and internal woodbanks, numerous small ditches and marshy/damp rides and habitat diversity. Wildlife Site criteria: Ancient Woodland Inventory site: Woodland indicators : species

**23/004 Squitmore Spring and Plantation TL307265 see GIS 1997 Layer**

Ancient semi-natural Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*) Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) woodland with Hazel (*Corylus avellana*) coppice plus some old secondary plantation of Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*). A green lane cuts through the southern section of the wood. The wood supports a moderately diverse ground flora with woodland indicators such as Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), Wood Millet (*Millium effusum*), Dog's Mercury (*Mercurialis perennis*) and Primrose (*Primula vulgaris*). Site with a protected mammal species record. Wildlife Site criteria: Ancient Woodland Inventory site: Woodland indicators.

**30/015 Baron's Grove TL294249 see GIS 1997 Layer**

Part ancient semi-natural Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*) Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) and Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) woodland, (Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*)). Mixed plantation to the south. Two small



ponds recorded in the north of the wood near the boundary. The northern margin is bordered by a Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) hedge. A ditch and drassy ride mark the southern edge of the ancient woodland area, following a parish boundary. The ground flora in the northern part of the wood is dominated by Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) and Dog's Mercury (*Mercurialis perennis*). Wildlife Site criteria: Ancient Woodland Inventory site: Woodland indicators.**30/027**

**Walkern Road Verge TL284227 see GIs 1997 Layer**

Road verges on chalk overlain by varying depths of Boulder Clay, which supports a rich mixture of shrubs, herbs and invertebrates reflecting the calcareous nature of the soil. The high calcareous bank below High Wood, along the eastern verge, is part of an ancient line of scrub along an old lynchet. The shrubs on the Boulder Clay here include Field Maple (*Acer campestre*), Hazel (*Corylus avellana*), Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*) and Wayfaring tree (*Viburnum lantana*). On the western verge there is a line of Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*) standards. The flora on the verges near the wood include Wild Marjoram (*Origanum vulgare*), Wild basil (*Clinopodium vulgare*), Basil Thyme (*Clinopodium acinos*), Rock rose (*Helianthemum nummularium*), Small Scabious (*Scabiosa columbaria*) and Large Thyme (*Thymus pulegioides*). To the south the eastern verge becomes a narrow grass bank with a varied chalk flora including Large Thyme, Wild Marjoram, Greater Knapweed (*Centaurea scabiosa*), Knapweed Broomrape (*Orobancha elatior*) and other chalk downland species. The adjacent field margins support several species of poppy and cornfield weeds such as Sharp-fruited Corn-Salad (*Valerianella dentata*). The road banks support many calcareous-loving species of snails including the Round-mouthed Snail (*Pomatias elegans*) which here is at the northern edge of the range in the British Isles. Wildlife Site criteria: Grassland Indicators: species-rich hedge and scrub.

**31/009 Walman's Wood TL306245 see GIS 1997 Layer**

Ancient semi-natural Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*) Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) woodland with old and more recent Hornbeam coppice and a few Pedunculate Oak standards, Larch (*Larix* sp.) and Oak (*Quercus* sp.) plantation in southern part of the wood. The ground flora supports woodland indicators, mainly Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) with some Primrose (*Primula vulgaris*), Wood Millet (*Millet effusum*), wood sedges and much Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.) Ancient Woodland Site criteria: Ancient Woodland Inventory site: woodland indicators.



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The Neighbourhood Planning Group would like to thank the following people and organisations for their invaluable help in producing this plan.

Chris Birt – disseminating acts to put into final analysis

Heidi Broady – Parish Clerk

Ray Carter – landowner

Paul and Anne Collis – ornithological knowledge in and around Walkern Parish

David de Boinville – landowner

Graphix – printers

Hertfordshire Mercury – printing articles & photographs

Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust – wildlife data & mapping data

John Hill – Historical evidence in and around Walkern Parish

Gerri Hudson – photographic evidence of slow worms and newts in and around Froghall site

Derek Jackson – historical knowledge of Walkern

Steve Jenner – former chair of WPC

Peter Lincoln – landowner

Stephen Lowe – loaning of display boards

Ordnance Survey – mapping data

Paradigm Housing – Housing Association

John Pearson – detailed collection of moth species within Parish

Mae Standing – pledge tree

John Stinchcombe – details of trees in Froghall area and around Walkern

Dan Taylor – photos

URC church – meeting hall

Jacqueline Veater – professional assistant to the PC and WNPG

The late Brian Wakeley – landowner

James Wakeley – landowner

Walkern Action – enabling communication with the village

Walkern History Society – historic information and use of Walkern History Boards

Walkern Journal – printing information and communication with the village

Walkern Parish Council – notice board availability for communication

Walkern Stores – posters and collecting box for questionnaire

Mrs Robin Warner-Smith – landowner

Mr And Mrs Wilson – landowner

Chris Windebank – Logo, Banner and Badges