



# NORTHLEACH

## State of the Parish Report

By Northleach with Eastington Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Approved by the Steering Group on 07 October 2014
Approved by the Town Council on 22 October 2014

October 2014



## Contents

Purpose of the Report .....	4
Introduction.....	4
Neighbourhood Plans .....	4
Neighbourhood Development Orders & Community Right to Build .....	5
Strategic Environmental / Habitat Regulations Assessments .....	5
Background.....	6
Neighbourhood Area .....	6
Why Should Northleach Produce a Neighbourhood Plan? .....	7
How the Plan Will be Prepared.....	7
Work to Date.....	8
Parish Profile.....	9
History .....	9
Modern Development.....	10
Services .....	10
Transport .....	11
Conservation & Heritage Assets.....	11
Environment & Biodiversity .....	11
Significant Locations around Northleach .....	12
Developments in the Pipeline .....	13
Selected Statistics .....	14
Community Views on Planning Issues.....	16
Survey Distribution & Response.....	16
Numerical Results .....	17
Views & Green Spaces .....	23
Improvements to Northleach .....	24
The Planning Context.....	26
National Planning Policy Framework .....	26

Cotswold District Local Plan 2001 – 2011 .....	26
Cotswold District emerging Local Plan .....	28
Infrastructure Delivery Plan.....	29
Community Infrastructure Levy .....	29
Other Strategies, Plans & Studies .....	30
Cotswolds AONB Management Plan.....	30
Landscape Character Assessments.....	31
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment June 2014 .....	31
Role and Function Study July 2012.....	32
Housing Needs Survey October 2013.....	33
Northleach Town Design Statement.....	33
Issues for the NENP .....	34
Site Allocations .....	34
Phasing of Development.....	34
Affordable Housing.....	34
Conservation & Environment.....	34
Sustainability & Employment.....	35
Traffic and Parking.....	35
Infrastructure.....	35
Summary.....	36
Annex A: Schedule of Evidence.....	37
Annex B: Site Assessments (SHLAA and SELAA) .....	38
 Map 1: Northleach All Sites – potential housing sites plus sites built or with permission .....	 41

## Purpose of the Report

Northleach with Eastington Town Council is the qualifying body leading the preparation of the Northleach with Eastington Neighbourhood Plan (NENP), a document that will describe how the community wishes their local area to develop over the period between now and 2031.

The purpose of this report is to summarise the evidence base and the context within which the NENP will be prepared. In doing so, the report will provide the community with the starting point for formulating the policies in the draft NENP.

The plan is being prepared in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012, the Localism Act 2011, the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the European Directive 2001/42 on Strategic Environmental Assessment.

## Introduction

### Neighbourhood Plans

The 2011 Localism Act gave communities new powers to influence local planning policy through the process of neighbourhood planning. The NENP will be amongst the first Neighbourhood Plans prepared in England since the 2011 Localism Act.

The National Planning Policy Framework states:

*“Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and deliver the sustainable development they need. Parishes ... can use neighbourhood planning to set planning policies through neighbourhood plans to determine decisions on planning applications; and grant planning permission through Neighbourhood Development Orders and Community Right to Build Orders for specific development which complies with the order (para.183).*

*Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure that they get the right types of development for their community. The ambition of the neighbourhood should be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area. Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. (para.184).*

*Outside these strategic elements, neighbourhood plans will be able to shape and direct sustainable development in their area. Once a neighbourhood plan has demonstrated its general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and is brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in the Local Plan for that neighbourhood, where they are in conflict. Local planning authorities should avoid duplicating planning processes for non-strategic policies where a neighbourhood plan is in preparation (para.185)“.*

## **Neighbourhood Development Orders & Community Right to Build**

The Localism Act 2011 also enables local communities to make orders that grant advance planning permission for specified types of development (such as a change of uses from retail to a business use in the town centre, for example). This would make it easier and quicker for such development to go ahead in the future.

A Community Right to Build Order, which is a more specific type of Neighbourhood Development Order, could grant consent for a specific development proposal in the parish promoted by the Town Council, such as a local housing scheme in the parish.

Although not essential, it is expected that the process of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan will provide an opportunity for the Town Council to propose, consult on and make an Order in accordance with the regulations.

In both cases, the Orders can only be made by the District Council as local planning authority once the NENP has been completed and formally adopted.

## **Strategic Environmental / Habitat Regulations Assessments**

The local planning authority requires the NENP to be subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) under EU Directive 2001/42. This requires that the plan assesses the environmental effects of its policies and proposals during its preparation against a series of sustainability objectives.

The SEA process therefore runs in parallel with the preparation of the NENP, beginning with a Scoping Report to set out the proposed sustainability objectives and evidence base on which the NENP and SEA will be based. The SEA Scoping Report will be published for consultation with the statutory authorities alongside the State of the Parish Report. A draft SEA report will accompany the publication of the Pre-Submission and a final SEA will accompany the Submission versions of the NENP.

In addition, showing how the plan “contributes to the achievement of sustainable development” is one of the “basic conditions” of the 1990 Act and therefore a requirement of the NENP. As such, the NENP will help to achieve sustainable development by ensuring that its policies and proposals will meet the needs of people living and working in the parish, while at the same time helping to ensure that any adverse environmental impact is minimised.

The ongoing consideration of the sustainability objectives of the plan will enable alternative options for those policies and proposals to be compared and evaluated. The proposed scope of the SEA of the NENP will be submitted alongside, but separate to the State of the Parish Report.

According to the Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report May 2013 produced to inform the emerging Cotswold District Local Plan, the NENP does not need to undertake a HRA as the parish is more than 15km away from any European designated sites of ecological value, such as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), or Ramsar sites.

## Background

In October 2013, Northleach with Eastington Town Council resolved to start preparing a Neighbourhood Plan. This followed several discussions with a local major landowner who wished to explore development opportunities in the area with the Town Council. Instead it was agreed by a majority that the Town Council would embark upon a Neighbourhood Plan as a democratic way to secure the best outcome for the parish.

At the Town Council meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2013 it was:

- Resolved that the parish boundary would form the boundary for the NENP.
- Resolved to obtain quotations for the provision of consultancy services to support the preparation of the NENP.
- Resolved to seek grant funding to assist with the preparation of the NENP.
- Resolved to set up a Steering Group to guide the preparation of the plan.
- Resolved to approve Terms of Reference for the Steering Group

## Neighbourhood Area

In February 2014 Cotswold District Council (CDC) designated a Neighbourhood Area for the whole of the parish of Northleach with Eastington for the purpose of preparing the NENP.

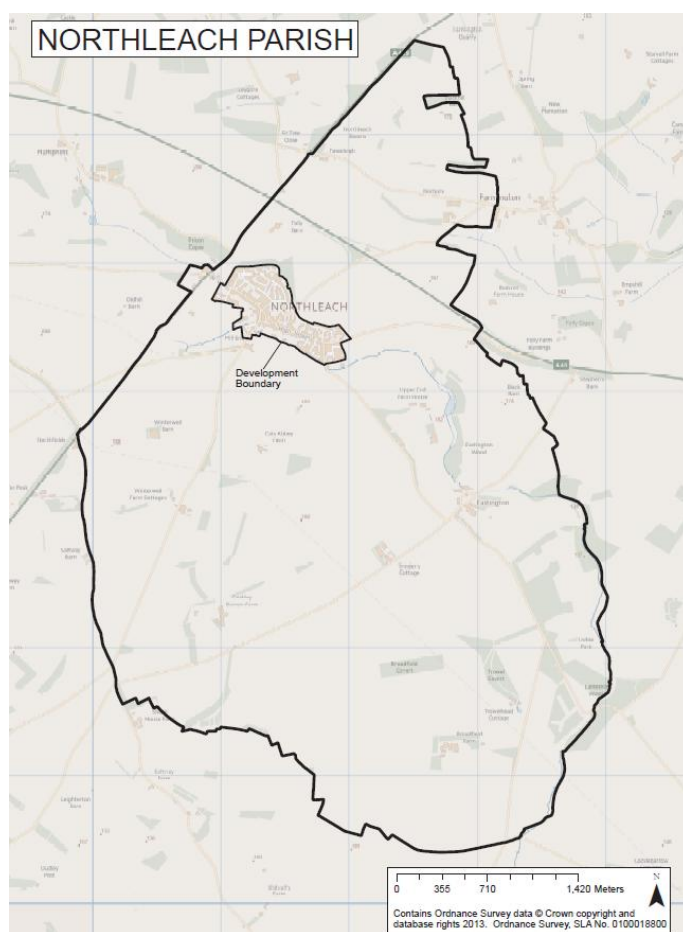


Figure 1: Northleach with Eastington Parish.



## Why Should Northleach Produce a Neighbourhood Plan?

Northleach residents are aware that more planning applications will come forward in the future. Indeed, following a decade of virtually no new development in the town, several planning applications have been lodged recently that could have significant impact on the town and its infrastructure.

Residents want local issues to be on the agenda. The issue of providing housing needs to be considered alongside local business and employment and general infrastructure needs (education, leisure, drainage, parking and highways) as well as heritage impact and protected spaces. All of these aspects should be considered to ensure that Northleach continues to thrive as a working town with a well-balanced community.

The NENP will allow local residents to have more influence on planning matters. The NENP will be developed in ongoing consultation with the local community, taking into account their needs and wishes. Residents will have to vote in favour of the plan before it can become an official part of local planning policy.

## How the Plan Will be Prepared

The process comprises three main stages (outputs):

- **State of the Parish Report** (this report) – summarises the evidence on which the neighbourhood plan will be based. Community engagement is important for building the evidence base; and forms a key part of the report.
- **Pre-submission NENP** – this report will contain an outline of the vision, objectives, policies and proposals, which will then be open for a statutory six-week public consultation period. The pre-submission plan must be publicised to local residents and businesses, significant landowners, and consulting bodies whose interests may be affected by the plan.
- **Submission NENP** – this report will take into account the representations received on the draft plan during the public consultation period and will amend as necessary its content, ready for submission to the local planning authority.

If approved by the local planning authority, the NENP will then be subject to an independent examination. Any recommendations made by the examiner must be considered by the Town Council and local planning authority and the plan amended as necessary before proceeding to the next stage – a local referendum.

If supported by a majority vote at the referendum, the NENP will be adopted by the local planning authority as planning policy for the parish. Once the plan or order has been formally adopted and brought into legal effect, decision-makers will be legally obliged to take what it says into account when considering planning applications and other proposals for development in the neighbourhood area.

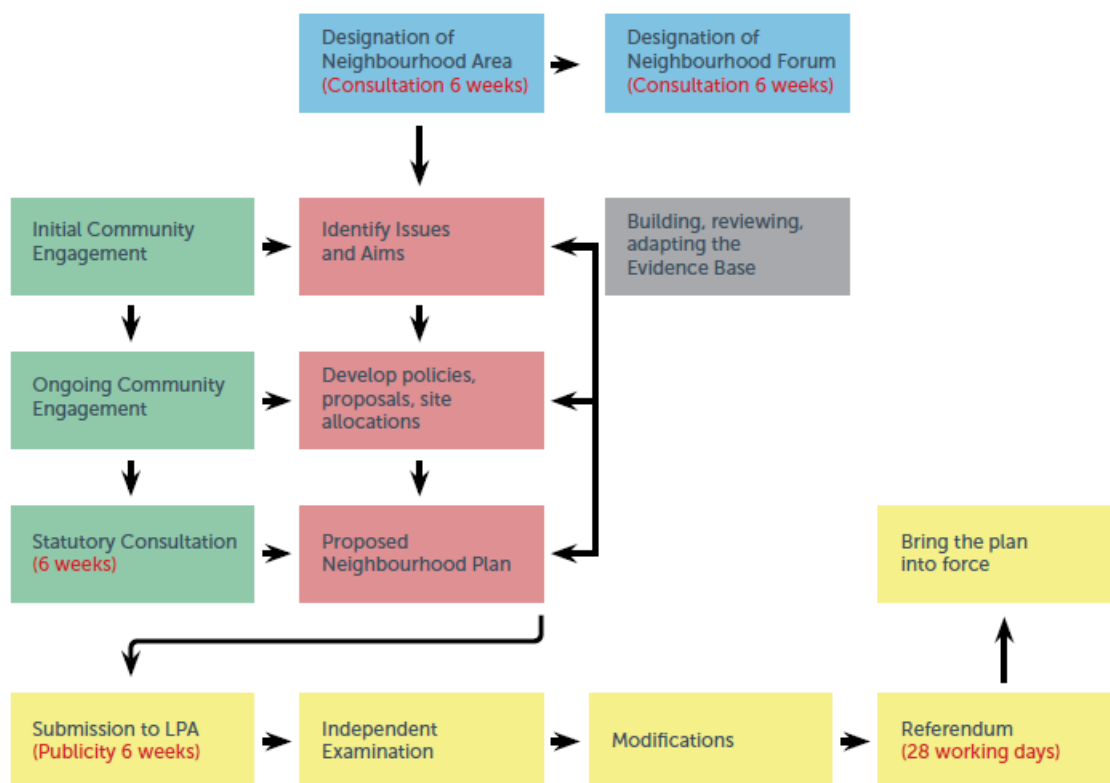


Figure 2: The process of developing a neighbourhood plan (Source: Locality).

## Work to Date

The Town Council and Steering Group have carried out the following related activities:

- Northleach Town Plan adopted 2011
- Neighbourhood Development Statement adopted 2011
- Feedback to CDC Local Plan July 2013
- Feedback to CDC Infrastructure Delivery Plan July 2013
- Northleach Housing Needs Survey October 2013
- Resolved to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan October 2013
- Neighbourhood area submitted to CDC November 2013
- Steering Group established November 2013
- Initial public meeting on NENP in November 2013
- Public consultation and feedback to CDC on SHLAA Site Assessment March 2014
- Community Engagement Strategy May 2014
- Neighbourhood Plan Drop-in days x 4 in June/July 2014
- Primary school “build your town” exercise on 4 July 2014
- Neighbourhood Plan Survey August 2014
- SEA Scoping Report September 2014



## Parish Profile

The civil parish of Northleach with Eastington covers the market town of Northleach, situated on the junction of the A40 and A429, and the village of Eastington, approximately 1.5 miles to the south-east of the town centre.

The parish is situated in the centre of Cotswold District and in the heart of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), a nationally important landscape.

Northleach is the smallest market town in the district, with about 755 dwellings. However, due to its relatively distant location from other service centres, Northleach is an important hub for the villages within its sparsely-populated rural catchment area.

## History

Northleach was established as a market town in the 13th Century when it rose to prominence as a centre for the wool trade.

The town was laid out on a simple plan based on a main street running along the valley formed by the River Leach and a triangular market place on the south side of the street by the church.



The new medieval town attracted residents by offering a period of free rent in return for house building on “burgage” plots, consisting of a long, narrow strip of land with a narrow street frontage. In the intervening centuries, burgage plots have been subdivided or amalgamated, but they still remain a prominent feature in the layout of the town.

The town was also a common stop on the coaching route from London to Gloucester until the mid 19th Century, and at one time supported numerous coaching inns. Only a few of these remain today.

## **Modern Development**

The earliest modern additions to the town were in the form of council housing in the 1930s, when four houses were built on the Eastington road and 10 houses at Farmington Rise.

Another small council estate was created on the opposite side of the Farmington road in the early 1950s. That was the beginning of the Walton estate, which would eventually cover the entire hillside behind the old burgage plots north of West End.

In the 1960s flats and bungalows for elderly people were added to the Walton Estate, while Walton House was converted to flats, and bungalows were built on part of its grounds. A block of retirement flats called Fortey House opened at the Walton Estate in 1967 (now demolished and awaiting redevelopment).

Private development was deterred by the level of traffic in town and discouraged by the planning authority until the opening of the bypass in 1984. Soon afterwards, a substantial private estate was built on the hillside adjoining the Walton estate (Taylor Road), a smaller development on the opposite hillside (Shepherds Way), and in the south-east (Crail View).

In the 1990s, new houses were built at the east end of the town, including an estate on the site of Nostle Farm, north of East End, and another opposite on the site of the former Westwoods Grammar School. This was the last major residential development to take place in the town.

## **Services**

Northleach with Eastington has the following facilities:

- Primary school, playgroup and childrens' centre
- Doctors surgery, nursing home, funeral undertakers
- Church with church rooms
- Retained community fire brigade
- Community centre and community hall
- Hotel, two pubs, two cafés, wine bar and take away
- Post Office, general store, butchers, bakery / grocers, chemist and hairdressers
- Weekly Charter Market and annual Charter Fair (last Saturday in June)
- Tourist attractions include Mechanical Music Museum, Dolls House shop, and Escape to the Cotswold visitor centre housing the Rural Life Collection. There are public toilets.
- Playing field and sports pavilion supporting various adult and junior sports teams – cricket and football – with tennis courts and equipped play area on adjacent meadow
- Two small industrial estates and Ferrari garage
- Local tradespeople including plumbers, electricians, joiners, and builders
- Repair garage, business and industrial estate at Far Peak (just outside the parish)

Since the opening of the bypass in 1984, however, the town has lost not only its petrol station, but also its secondary school, hospital and bank.

## **Transport**

The parish is serviced by two major “A” roads, the Fosse Way A429 at the east of town and the A40 to the north, which give good access to the motorways and onwards.

Local bus services, some commercial, some subsidised, provide connections to other centres. There are bus services to Cheltenham, Moreton-in-Marsh, Cirencester and Kemble. There are infrequent bus services to Witney and on to Oxford.

Bus 801 between Cheltenham and Moreton-in-Marsh is a nominal hourly service, but in practice this provides six buses a day since not all buses stop in Northleach. There are no early morning (before 7am) or late buses (after 7pm) serving the town.

There are no local rail stations, the nearest are at Kemble (14 miles) for Reading and London, Charlbury (18 miles) for Oxford, and Cheltenham (15 miles) for Bristol and Birmingham.

## **Conservation & Heritage Assets**

The centre of Northleach town is covered by a Conservation Area which recognises the importance of the earlier buildings and burgage plots.

The impressive Church, built with the proceeds of the wool trade, is Grade I listed. A number of the monuments in the surrounding churchyard are also listed.

Some parkland at Lodge Park, a National-Trust-owned Grade I Hunting Lodge and Gardens, lies in the southern part of the parish, although the Lodge itself is in the parish of Sherborne.

There are a further 93 Grade II or II\* listed buildings, walls or monuments in the parish, the majority on the main thoroughfare from East End to West End via the High Street and Market Place. Some of the more significant buildings are The Old Prison (formerly Northleach House of Correction) at the crossroads with the A429, Dover House (formerly the Great House) on the junction with Farmington Road, and Northleach Hospital on East End.

There are also two Scheduled Ancient Monuments in the north of the parish at Norbury Hillfort.

The list of 97 heritage assets is included in the Northleach Town Design Statement. Not all buildings of heritage quality in the town have a listing.

## **Environment & Biodiversity**

There are no protected sites in the parish of international importance or European designation (e.g. Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation).

On a national level, the AONB washes over the whole of the parish.

However, there are no other nationally protected sites e.g. National Nature Reserves or Sites of Special Scientific Interest, and no Special Landscape Areas as defined by the local authority.

The countryside outside the built-up area comprises mainly grassland and arable fields. The majority of this land is being managed under Environmental Stewardship schemes, and much of it is entered in the organic strand of the scheme. This land provides habitat for a variety of farmland birds, protected species under the U.K. Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP).

The parish contains areas of deciduous woodland identified as a BAP priority habitat, including a small strip of woodland immediately north of the town.

### **Significant Locations around Northleach**

#### *Market Place*

- The original Market Place has long since lost its market cross and market house but other permanent structures remain, which divide it into two areas: now called The Market Place and The Green.
- The Market Place and adjoining Green contain the majority of the shops and services.
- Parking is limited. Recent surveys show that the Market Place often has only one or two spaces available during the day and sometimes none at all, with cars circling looking for a spot. Although some park for only a few minutes to use local shops, some park all day or even for many days at a time restricting the availability of “quick stop” spaces.
- There is no provision for tourist coaches with the result that coaches sometimes stop for an hour or more on the bus stops.
- The bus shelter now faces in the wrong direction and is largely redundant; buses stop on the north side going west and by the phone box going east. (But it does house the WCs.)
- A weekly market is held in the Market Place on Wednesdays, which puts additional pressure on parking.
- New housing, further from the centre, will encourage more people to drive to the Market Place to access the local services. But if there is no parking, businesses will not reap the rewards of that expansion.
- Some buildings are uncared for and in need of repair. The old lock up at the Post Office is supported by an unsightly breeze block pillar.
- A feasibility study by Cotswold District Council costing £15k was carried out in 1998 to propose a new configuration for the Market Place. This project was never completed.

#### *Church*

- Located just off the Market Place, the Church of St Peter and St Paul, as noted, is Grade I listed, and has been described as “the Cathedral of the Cotswolds”.
- There are long-distance views of the church from all around.
- The church has no readily accessible parking which creates congestion when there are large events with up to 400 people attending.
- There is no easy access for those less able to walk to reach the church itself or the cemetery. Visitors park in the narrow streets of Mill End because they cannot find parking elsewhere.

### *School*

- The primary school and playgroup are situated to the south east of the town next to the playing field and a small car park.
- Northleach Primary School was built on its present site in 1874 on land given by the church. It has seen significant extensions in the last 10 years with a new hall and three new classrooms, and has limited room for expansion on its current site.
- The school has doubled in size in the last 20 years, and now has 182 pupils. The present accommodation (although not the site itself) is at capacity, and any new families to the town cannot be guaranteed primary school places.
- Northleach Playgroup provides funded early education for 2.5–4 year olds. The playgroup moved into a purpose-built facility on the school site in 2011. This setting has space for a maximum of 24 children at any one time, and is at 100% capacity.
- The small car park is not adequate for the school use. A survey shows that nearly 60 cars wish to use the 18 available spaces twice a day in term time. This also creates serious congestion and parking problems on nearby roads, especially Mill End.

### *Employment Areas*

- The main light industrial area is Old Coalyard Farm Industrial Estate at the west of town.
- Behind this are the Ferrari workshops which sit within a residential area. The owner has expressed a need to move in order to expand but wishes to stay in Northleach.
- A 1960s building on West End houses both the Fire Station and disused Ambulance Station.
- There have been suggestions to move both the Fire Station and Ferrari garage to new units to the east end of town near the sewage works with access to the A40.
- The Cotswold Conservation Board is headquartered in the Old Prison, where they run a visitors centre and have further plans for expansion.
- Further industrial area lies outside the town boundary on the road to Farmington and just outside the parish boundary at Far Peak.

### **Developments in the Pipeline**

- The Sly Trust is building 6 affordable homes at Wheelwrights, West End, which are expected to be finished in Autumn 2014.
- Buildings on The Green are being changed to residential use (business premises at the Old Bakery have been turned into 2 dwellings, outbuildings at Tudor House have permission to be converted into 3 dwellings).
- Bromford Housing Association owns land to the north of Northleach where they have planning permission to build 22 new affordable homes on the site of a former elderly people's apartment block (Fortey House), which has already been demolished.
- Outline planning permission has been granted for up to 9 homes, 4 of these to be affordable, at Chequers on West End.
- Gloucestershire County Council is preparing land at Bassett Road for sale. They plan to sell the land with outline permission for up to 40 houses.

## Selected Statistics

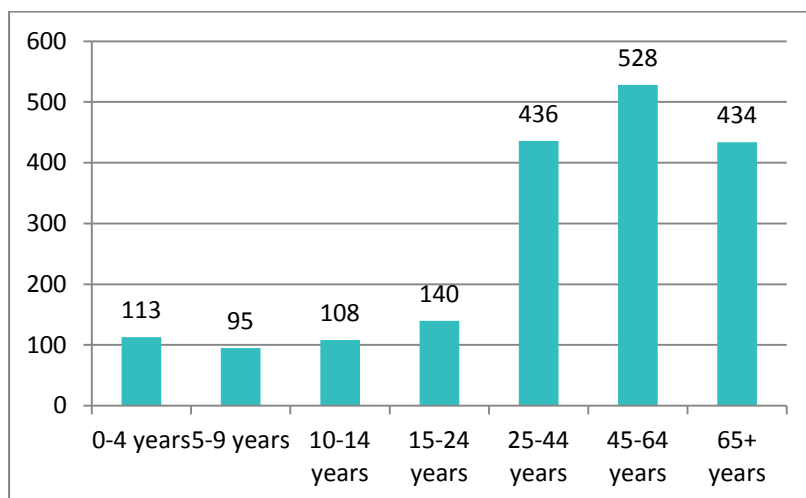
The following statistics have been drawn from Census 2011 Data. Note that the Census Output Area for Northleach Ward includes the parish of Northleach with Eastington plus the adjoining tiny parish of Hampnett west of the Fosse Way (pop. 53 in 1991).

Hampnett contains about 35 dwellings; there are approx. 35 dwellings in the village of Eastington and a further 30 farmhouses and cottages in outlying parts of the parish; therefore about 755 dwellings in the town of Northleach itself. (Information from the Electoral Register)

All Residents (Northleach Ward) :	1,854	Residents in households:	1,804
Number of dwellings:	855	Residents in communal living:	50
Number of households:	787	Ward Area (hectares):	2,196
Average household size:	2.30	Ward pop. density (people / ha):	0.80

## Demographics

The population of the Ward grew 32% between 1991 and 2001 as the new estates were built, but since then has been in gradual decline, falling from 1,923 to 1,854 between 2001 and 2011.



## Economic Status of Residents

Of the 1854 usual residents of the ward, 1305 were aged between 16 and 74.

Out of these, 910 residents (**69.7%**) were economically active in the week before the Census i.e. either working or actively looking for work. This is less than the District average (**71.9%**).

- 485 were employed full-time (37.16%)
- 196 were employed part-time, 30 hours per week or less (15.02%)
- 207 were self-employed (15.86%)
- 37 were unemployed (2.84%)
- 26 were full-time students (1.99%)

Of the 395 residents who were economically inactive:

- 239 were retired (18.31%) – compared to a District average of 16.2%.
- 33 were students (including full-time students) (2.53%)
- 46 were looking after home or family (3.52%)
- 27 were long-term sick or disabled (2.07%)

### Occupations

Of the 910 residents who were economically active in the week before the Census:

- 129 were managers, directors and senior officials (14.17%)
- 168 were in professional occupations (18.46%)
- 116 were associate professional and technical occupations (12.74%)
- 95 were in administrative and secretarial occupations (10.43%)
- 124 were in skilled trade occupations (13.62%)
- 86 were in caring, leisure and other service occupations (9.45%)
- 51 were in sales and customer service occupations (5.60%)
- 50 were process, plant and machine operatives (5.49%)
- 91 were in elementary occupations (10%)

The main industries of employment for residents of the Ward were the retail and services sectors. Of 910 residents in employment, 140 (**15.4%**) were employed in wholesale and retail trades (inc. motor vehicle sales); while 104 (**11.4%**) were employed in health and social work.

### Travel to work

Of the 910 residents aged 16 to 74 in employment in the week before the Census:

- 601 drive a car or van to work
- 51 were passengers in a car or van
- 101 work mainly at or from home
- 106 travel to work on foot and 6 by bicycle
- 22 travel to work by bus, minibus or coach
- 10 travel to work by train

Overall, **71.6%** go to work in a car or van compared to **46.9%** for the district as a whole.

### Car ownership

Of the 787 households in the ward:

- 96 had no cars or vans in household
- 319 had one car or van in household
- 281 had 2 cars or vans in household
- 63 had 3 cars or vans in household
- 28 had 4 or more cars or vans

Across all categories the car or van availability was 1187.

**11.3%** of all households owned three or more cars or vans.



## Community Views on Planning Issues

As part of the consultation process for the NENP, a survey was carried out to gather quantitative information on the central planning issues in the parish. This survey was distributed to all households in the parish in July 2014.

A summary of the key findings follows. The full results are available separately.

### Survey Distribution & Response

About 820 paper copies of the surveys were delivered, the majority by hand.

The survey could also be completed online via SurveyMonkey, which was restricted to one response per computer.

Residents were invited to complete the survey as an individual and to request further copies for other members of their household but with hindsight this may not have been clear. Some respondents plainly indicated that their single survey response represented the views of two people, while others may have submitted a household response, but not indicated this.

Over 300 responses were received. Of these, 60 were received via the Internet.

On a household basis, this represents a response rate of **38.1%** (313 out of 820 households), which is phenomenal. On a population basis, this represents a response rate of **22.2%** (313 out of 1409 adults age 16+ in the parish). The real response rate must lie somewhere between.

The vast majority of the respondents (**98.4%**) currently live in the parish (**Q1**). We also received responses from two people who lived in nearby villages but work in the parish, one second-home owner from Nottingham, and two from Australia – from people who had previously lived in Northleach, and still owned property in the town.

Most respondents are long-term residents of the parish: **81.8%** said they have lived in the parish for at least five years, and **62.9%** for at least 10 years.

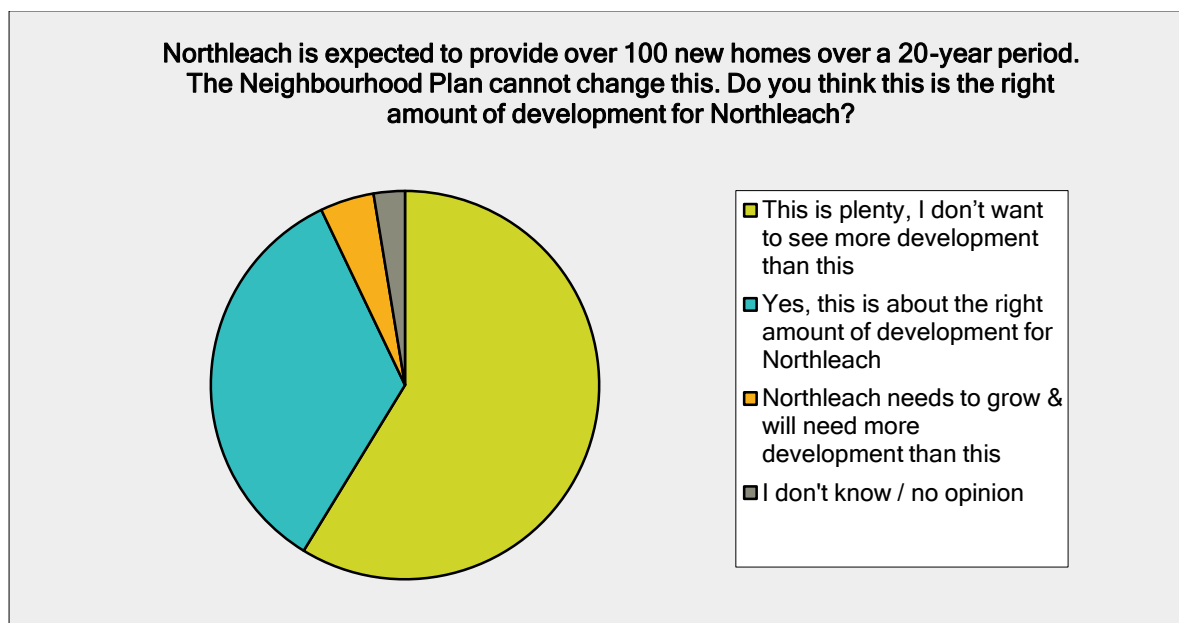
Classification data was collected to help us assess whether the survey had reached people from all backgrounds. All but 20 respondents completed this section.

There was a high response rate from retired people (**44.7%** of those who answered the question compared to 18.3% in the 2011 Census), and a lower-than-expected response rate from full-time employed persons (**27.3%** compared to **37.1%** in the 2011 Census).

The youngest two age groups were under-represented: 16-25 years (**2.3%** of those who answered the question compared to 6.58% in the 2011 Census) and 26-35 years (**5.1%** compared to **23.5%** in the 2011 Census).

The survey results that follow are reported as a percentage of those who answered the question. Response rates to individual questions generally exceeded 90%.

## Numerical Results



The answer to **Q2** was abundantly clear: There is no mandate for more development over and above what has already been proposed. Only **5.9%** think Northleach needs more development than the 100 homes proposed, while **34.2%** think this is the right amount of development for the town. In fact, over half (**56.8%**) think this is plenty, and said they would not like to see more.

Concerns include the physical constraints on development land, the loss of rural character and landscape, lack of local employment and jobs, the loss of the close-knit community feel if the town grows too quickly, and worries that the infrastructure will not cope, especially schools, the overloaded sewage system and the busy main road.

Representative comments include:

*"100 homes will fit well into the current physical shape of the town and hopefully existing businesses will thrive on the additional support from new residents."*

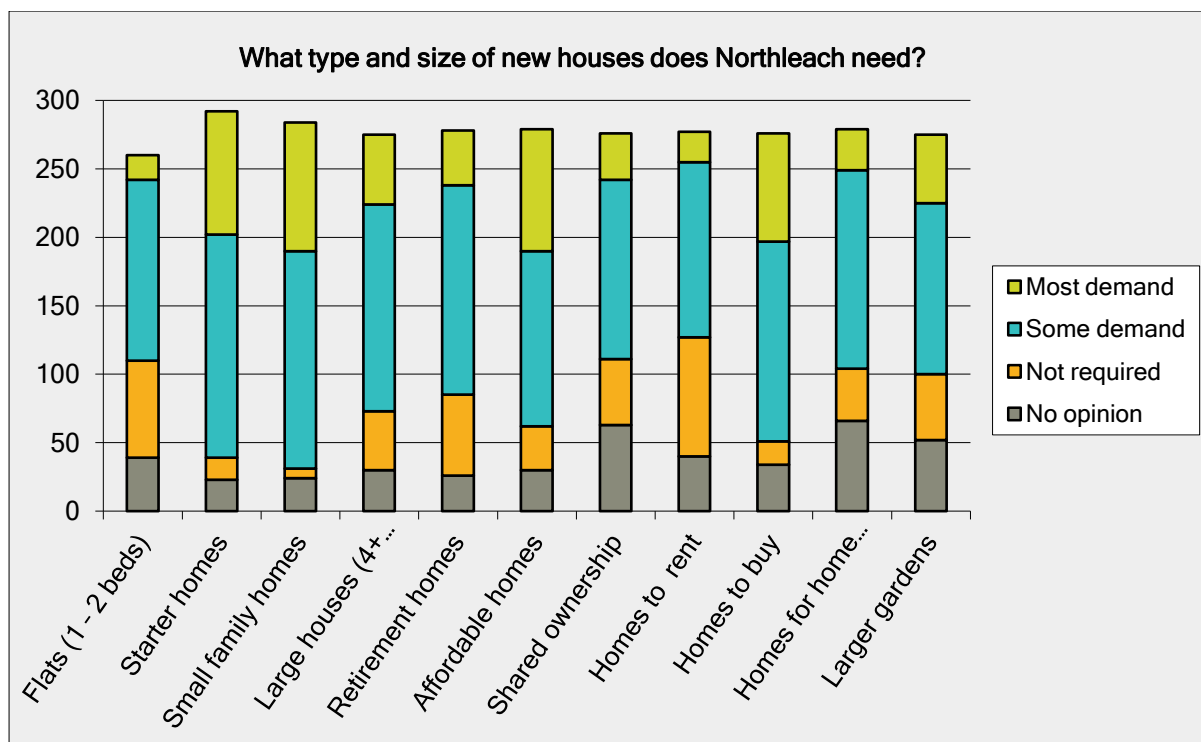
*"Up to this number is both physically possible and socially necessary. More houses would over develop what is a small town where the physical constraints of the valley in which it is set have determined the linear form of the historic settlement. The other key parameter for sustainable development is employment, or the absence of suitable sites or expanding businesses. Northleach cannot become just a dormitory town for other areas."*

*"The limited infrastructure in the town; a zone with the risks of more flooding; plus the major problem more cars will cause; can the already hard pushed amenities cope?"*

*"Although technically a town, Northleach has the v. friendly feel of a village. Geographically it fits into the valley where it was originally founded perfectly – too much stretching will destroy the rural backdrop as well as the town centre due to increase in vehicles."*

**Q3** asked how and when these new homes should be built. The majority of respondents (**89.7%**) agree or strongly agree that development should be phased evenly across the 20 years. The majority (**87.1%**) agree or strongly agree that they would like to see small groups of houses spread across multiple sites.

When asked what type and size of houses would be appropriate in Northleach (**Q4**) there was a spread of opinion.



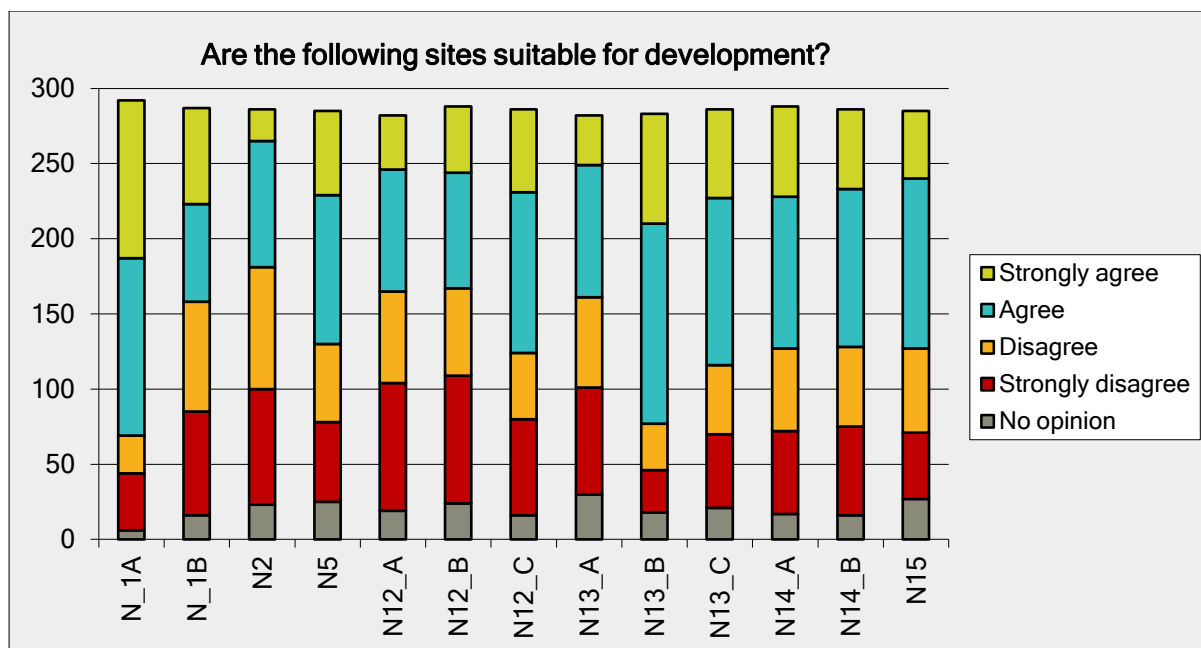
In terms of tenure, respondents thought there would be most demand for homes to buy on the open market: **81.5%** thought there would be at least some demand. **77.8%** of respondents thought there would be at least some need for affordable homes. In contrast **31.4%** of respondents thought there would be no demand for rented accommodation (open market).

In terms of house size, respondents thought there would be most demand for starter homes and small 3-bedroom family homes: **86.6%** said there would be at least some demand for starter homes, and **89.0%** said there would be at least some demand for small family homes.

Q4 also asked whether there was demand for homes suitable for home working, and found that **62.5%** of respondents thought there is at least some demand.

Nearly two-thirds of respondents (**63.6%**) also thought there is some or more demand for larger gardens for family properties.

**Q5** asked where new housing development should go, with respondents being asked about the suitability of specific sites from the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). A list of sites in the SHLAA is available at Annex B.



The most popular site was N1\_A, which is the field off Bassett Road. **76.1%** of respondents agree or strongly agree that it is suitable for development. Only **13%** strongly disagree.

The least favoured site for development is N2, Land opposite Northleach Primary School. **55.2%** of respondents think the site is unsuitable. Only **7.3%** strongly agree that it is suitable.

**Q6** asked how new homes would impact on services and infrastructure.

Superfast broadband was the infrastructure need most commonly identified as a current need. **80.8%** of residents think this is something we need now, even without new development. The local telephone exchange only supports ADSL Max with download speeds up to 8Mbps.

Parking was also clearly identified as a current issue with **73.4%** of respondents saying we need more now, even without new development. Many of the old properties do not have any off-road parking, and there is limited parking in the town centre for visitors.

Road capacity was the third most commonly identified infrastructure need: **43.5%** of respondents said we need more now, and a further **33.4%** said we will need more with new development. There are known problems with traffic flow along the main road.

Better utility services were requested now by **41.7%** of respondents. A further **46.2%** think more utilities will be required to support new development. There is no mains gas in the town and reports of problems with the foul drainage system are common.

Finally, bus services were identified as a significant current need with **37.1%** of respondents saying that we needed more bus services now. A further **42.2%** said new development would mean an increase in demand for bus services.

Respondents were generally happy with the current level of provision for shops and services; however, **55.5%** felt new development would increase the need for local shops, and **41.1%** felt that new development would increase demand for pubs, cafes and restaurants.

Education and health service provision will also need to increase as a result of new development. Although only **14.4%** of respondents felt we needed more health services now, **55.8%** said more health services would be required to support new development. **57.5%** of respondents said we would need more primary school provision to support new development, and **44.4%** said we would need more nursery/pre-school provision.

**29.6%** of respondents said that there was a current need for after-school and holiday care for children, while a further **35.1%** of respondents said that such a need would arise as a result of new development. In fact there is no after-school/holiday provision, and the nursery in Bourton on the Water closed recently. Only **4.5%** of respondents saw no need for such provision. The rest (**30.9%**) had no opinion, possibly because they did not have a personal need.

Some need was identified for children's play areas (**29.9%** of respondents said we need more now, **44.4%** said we will need more with new development); sports facilities (**29.6%** said we need more now **38.8%** said we need more with new development); and allotments (**29.2%** said we need more now and **32.2%** said we will need more with new development).

Community Halls were not thought to be required: **71.6%** of respondents said we will not need any more of these, even with new development. The town is well served, with community facilities at the Cotswold Hall and the Westwoods Centre, and rooms to hire in the Old Prison.

Other infrastructure needs identified were:

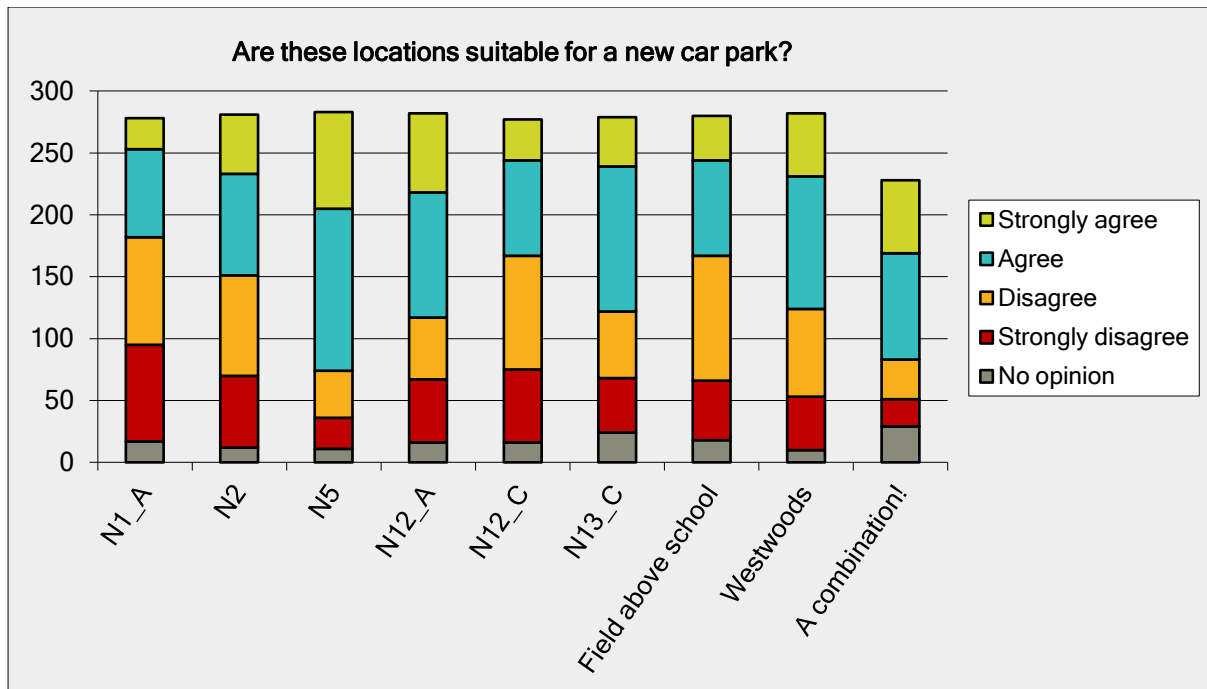
- Mobile coverage (12)
- Parking (5) – even though this was already covered by the question!
- Emergency services improvements (5)
- Mains gas (4)

Also suggested were bank cash point (2), pedestrian crossings (2), dentist (2), day centre for the elderly (1) sports centre (1), access to the A40 from the Farmington Road, and better footpath connections around the town (1).

**Q7** asked specifically about potential sites for a new car park.

The most popular choice of site was **N5**, Ambulance & Fire Station. **73.9%** of respondents thought the site would be suitable as a car park. In fact, the front of this site is already used as a pick-up/drop-off zone for coaches, and there is a car park to the rear, which is used with permission for events, although it is not currently available as a general public car park.

The second most popular choice of site for a car park was **N12\_A**, land to the rear of Antelope Paddock. **58.5%** of respondents thought it would be a suitable site for a car park, while **25.8%** of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with this choice.



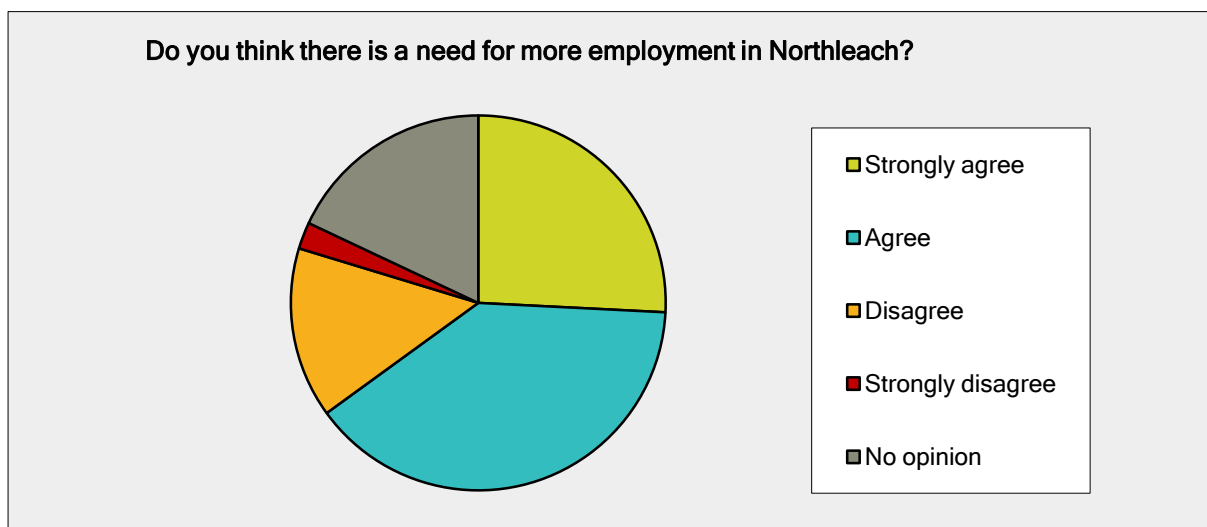
**N13\_C**, Land by Old Coalyard Farm also emerged as an option. More than half of respondents (**56.3%**) agreed or strongly agreed that this was a suitable location for a car park.

The least favoured site for a car park was **N1\_A**, land off Bassett Road. Just **8.9%** strongly agreed that this was a suitable location, while **59.3%** disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Nearly two thirds of respondents (**63.6%**) thought that more than one car park would be required to solve parking problems in the town.

Alternative locations suggested: Farmington Road at N15 and N17 (4); and the Old Prison (3).

**Q8** asked about employment.

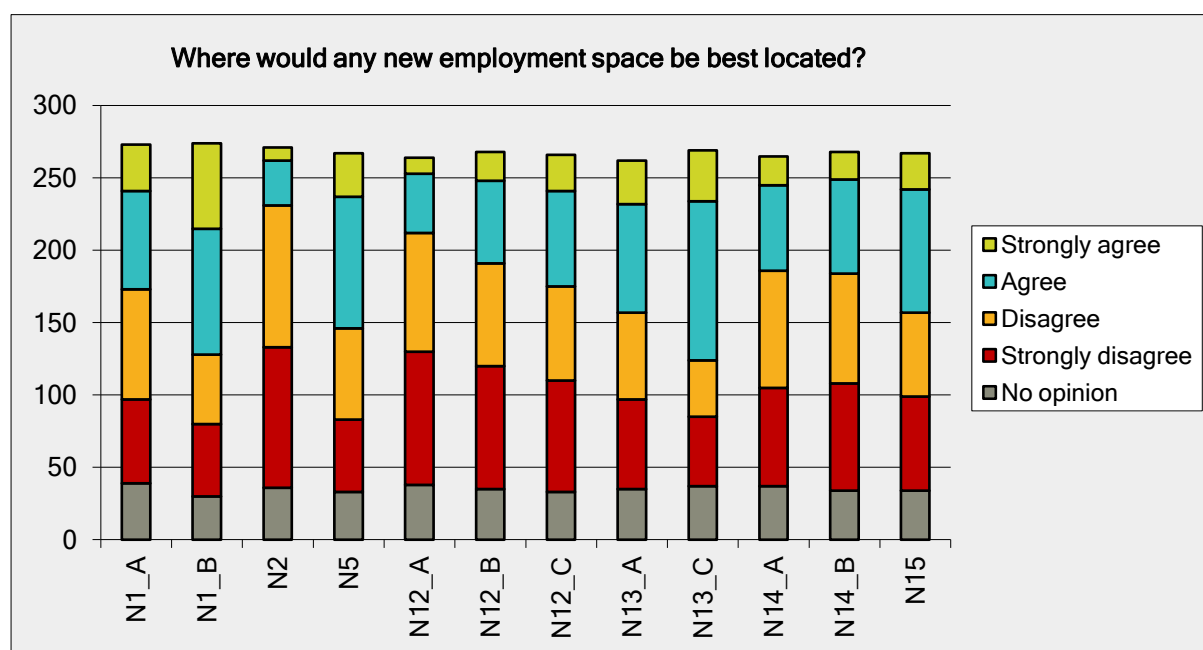


The majority of respondents (**65.0%**) think there is a need for more employment in Northleach. However, a significant number (**18.0%**) were unsure.

Nearly two thirds (**65.7%**) said there was at least some need for small employment buildings with up to 50 employees, while more than two thirds (**69.3%**) said that larger employment buildings with more than 50 employees were not required.

When asked what type of employment buildings are needed, three quarters of respondents (**75.5%**) identified at least some need for more shops and services, and few respondents (**12.8%**) disagreed.

**16.1%** of respondents said there was most need for an office business centre, while **41.0%** said there was some need. **15.6%** of respondents said workshops and storage were most needed, while **43.8%** said there was some need.



In terms of where such employment space might be located, there were only a couple of options where more than half of respondents considered the location to be suitable.

One of these was N13\_C, which is next to the existing light industrial areas at Old Coalyard Farm and the Ferrari garage (but also contains the Jubilee Row lime trees). **53.9%** of respondents agree or strongly agree that it is suitable.

The other option was N1\_B, the field near the sewage treatment plant (also frames the eastern approach to the town). **53.1%** of respondents agree or strongly agree with this choice.

The least favoured location for employment land was N2. **71.9%** of respondents disagree or strongly disagree that it is suitable. N12\_A, which lies behind Antelope Paddock, was also not considered suitable as employment land by **65.9%** of respondents.

Other suggested locations for employment land included the Fosseway near Loving's garage and Far Peak (which are just outside the parish boundary); Mustoes Yard off Farmington Road, redundant farm buildings outside the town or Swindon!



## Views & Green Spaces

We asked which views and green spaces should be protected (Q11).

The church was the commonly given as an answer (80 mentions in 251 responses). Respondents said the both the church and its immediate surroundings – including the cemetery, Church Farm field and glebe field – should be protected from inappropriate development, as well as long views of the church from further afield. The church provides an “iconic” first view of the town on approaching from roads or fields.

Also mentioned as worthy of protection were:

- Skyline views from all around
- Views on approach to the town from the east and west
- Playing field and meadows (26)
- The river Leach all along its length, including upstream and downstream of the town
- Fields south of the river up to Helen’s ditch
- Woodlands above Fortey Road (11)
- Buildings in the historic core of the town.

Some typical comments:

*“All the views around the east end ... as this is beautiful ancient countryside, still with signs of an old ford through the river. It is such a valuable asset to all the residents who can walk out into this very English landscape and enjoy the wildlife e.g. egrets on the river, plovers, skylarks. It makes a gorgeous entrance to the town.”*

*“I like that the town can't be seen from the A40, it protects the view of the Cotswolds as well as that of the town. I also like the woodlands that we have, it would be a shame to lose these patches of woodland since we have so many nesting birds - and I love that Red Kites have moved in!”*

*“...we should be focussing on smaller in filling developments rather than spoiling the wonderful countryside that surrounds this town. The road out of the town east towards Oxford has the most beautiful undulating hills, spectacular sunrises and it's lovely to watch the animals grazing”*

*“The skyline on north and south fringes of the town should not be punctuated by development creeping over the horizon”.*

*“We should preserve the feeling of an old market town set as a jewel in surrounding countryside.”*

*“As Northleach develops so views will be lost and new ones arise but what is more important is the type, architecture and material used in developments to keep the area an AONB.”*

## Improvements to Northleach

**Q12** asked what respondents what parts of Northleach were most in need of improvement.

The most common theme in the responses was traffic and parking, particularly on West End (parking had 65 mentions in 242 responses; traffic flow had 30 mentions). For example:

*"Parking along the main road causes a lot of disruption to the flow of traffic. If they have to close the A40 bypass e.g. accident, it would be grid lock."*

*"Parking facilities are dire at present and urgently needs attention, particularly in the East End (on the corner) and by the Wheatsheaf where drivers take no heed of the double yellow lines – it would be very difficult to get an emergency vehicle through sometimes."*

Another commonly identified location in need of improvement was The Market Place (55 mentions). Respondents commented that it "needs to be smartened up", "all looking rather rundown", "needs a face lift", and that "there is little for a tourist to buy or do."

The amount of concrete and tarmac, was lamented, "restore green to a green", said one respondent. The distribution of the survey coincided with the installation of a fake "green" in the Market Place for the filming of a drama series – some residents said they wanted it to stay!

Respondents gave quite detailed comments about the Market Place:

*"Market Place: A disgrace and indicative of no local pride; poorly maintained, litter, rough cut grass, awful tubs of flowers, awful crocus in spring. Bench needs painting. Area outside Cotswold Stores filthy and flower tubs a further disgrace."*

*"Market place needs re-working to remove as much modern clutter, poor design and traffic as possible. Short term parking with longer term facilities elsewhere would allow improved layout, introduction of outdoor space for local business and greenery."*

The fire and ambulance station building was also singled out as being in need of improvement. It was described by one respondent as a "cubist accident" that is "wholly out of keeping with the AONB and unsympathetic to the town and view of the church".

Other areas in need of improvement were:

- dilapidated buildings, notably Dover House on the junction with Farmington Road (26)
- the childrens' playground (25)
- sewage/foul drainage system/flooding (23)
- the derelict tennis courts next to Westwoods Surgery (15)
- run-down streets around Fortey Road/Mays Crescent (10)
- the Post Office (6)
- the sports pavilion (3)

Residents were invited to leave any additional comments and some are worth repeating.

On the lack of local employment:

*"My chief concern about the building of more housing is the lack of employment in Northleach & the poor public transport early and late in the day. I am aware that there are unemployed members of the community wanting to work, unable to afford a car and unable to take work which involves 'unsociable' hours because of transport problems."*

The valley location and avoiding ribbon development:

*"Parking in the town centre is inadequate and roadside parking along the main route through the town is a constant obstruction to the flow of traffic. Making the town LONGER by building beyond Bassett Road and Nostle road will compound this issue because people will use their cars to come into town. Making the town BROADER by building at the back of existing housing might encourage people to WALK the shorter distance into town (and the shorter distance to the school)."*

On unimaginative suburban building styles:

*"I hope we can avoid – developments on however large or small a site – of 'identikit' houses that we see, for example, in the new development off the Burford Road in Cirencester – imitation Cotswold stone, very small windows etc. Let's try for some variety – different sizes of genuine stone, some stucco, large windows, some large gardens and good landscaping. Such more imaginative developments might help to shed Northleach's reputation as the Cinderella of the Cotswolds."*

Observations on high house prices and second homes:

*"Northleach is a beautiful Cotswold town but is fast becoming a town snapped up by rich people, many buying houses for second homes, thus pushing property prices sky high. The poor families who have lived here for generations are being pushed out due to these high prices and changing the community spirit. It's not fair... we (wanting to get on the property ladder) don't stand a chance!"*

Wild card proposals:

*"I think it would be a good idea to create a road from Bettenson Rise (next to the fire station) through to Northleach Primary School, with a car park at the rear of the church with housing off this road. This will help to reduce the amount of vehicles travelling through the centre of Northleach..."*

## **The Planning Context**

The Parish is part of Cotswold District and Gloucestershire County. Each of these administrations has policies and proposals that will have a significant influence over the strategy and detailed content of the NENP. The planning policy framework of the local planning authority is the most significant of these.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published by the Government in 2012 is also an important guide in the preparation of local plans and neighbourhood plans. At examination, the submitted NENP must show that it is consistent with the policies and intent of the NPPF.

### **National Planning Policy Framework**

The NPPF contains a number of key policy principles that will shape the NENP:

- Helping achieve economic growth (20)
- Small scale rural economic development (25)
- Supporting a prosperous rural economy (28)
- Minimising journey lengths (37)
- Boosting the supply of housing (47)
- Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes (50)
- Rural affordable housing and exception sites (54)
- The vitality of rural communities (55)
- The quality of development (58)
- Promoting healthy communities (69)
- The use of community right to build orders (71)
- The designation of Local Green Spaces (76/77)
- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment (109-116)
- Conserving and enhancing the historic environment (126-141)

The principles above are those of most relevance to the NENP but other principles in the framework will have some bearing on the preparation of the NENP in due course.

### **Cotswold District Local Plan 2001 – 2011**

The NENP must be deemed to be in conformity with the local development framework. This currently comprises the saved policies of the Cotswold District Local Plan 2001 – 2011, which was adopted in 2006. The emerging Local Plan will replace the saved policies once completed.

The NENP is being prepared in anticipation of the adoption of the emerging Local Plan, but focuses on being in conformity with the relevant saved policies of the 2001 – 2011 Plan.

The NENP is not obliged to address all the saved policies and where it chooses not to then the Cotswold District Local Plan will be used to consider planning applications.

Key saved policies found on the inset proposals map of Northleach are:

- **Policy 7** Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (hatching)
- **Policy 15** Conservation Area (green)
- **Policy 18** Development within the Development Boundaries of Principal Settlements (red)
- **Policy 19** Development Outside Development Boundaries (red, outside)
- **Policy 25** Vitality and Viability of Settlements (blue)

Other policies that may be of strategic significance to the NENP include:

- **Policy 21** Affordable Housing (also see Supplementary Planning Document)
- **Policy 24** Employment Uses
- **Policy 26** Tourism
- **Policy 32** Community Facilities
- **Policy 33** Playing Fields, Sports Facilities and Allotments
- **Policy 38** Accessibility to and within New Development
- **Policy 39** Parking Provision
- **Policy 42** Cotswold District Design Code

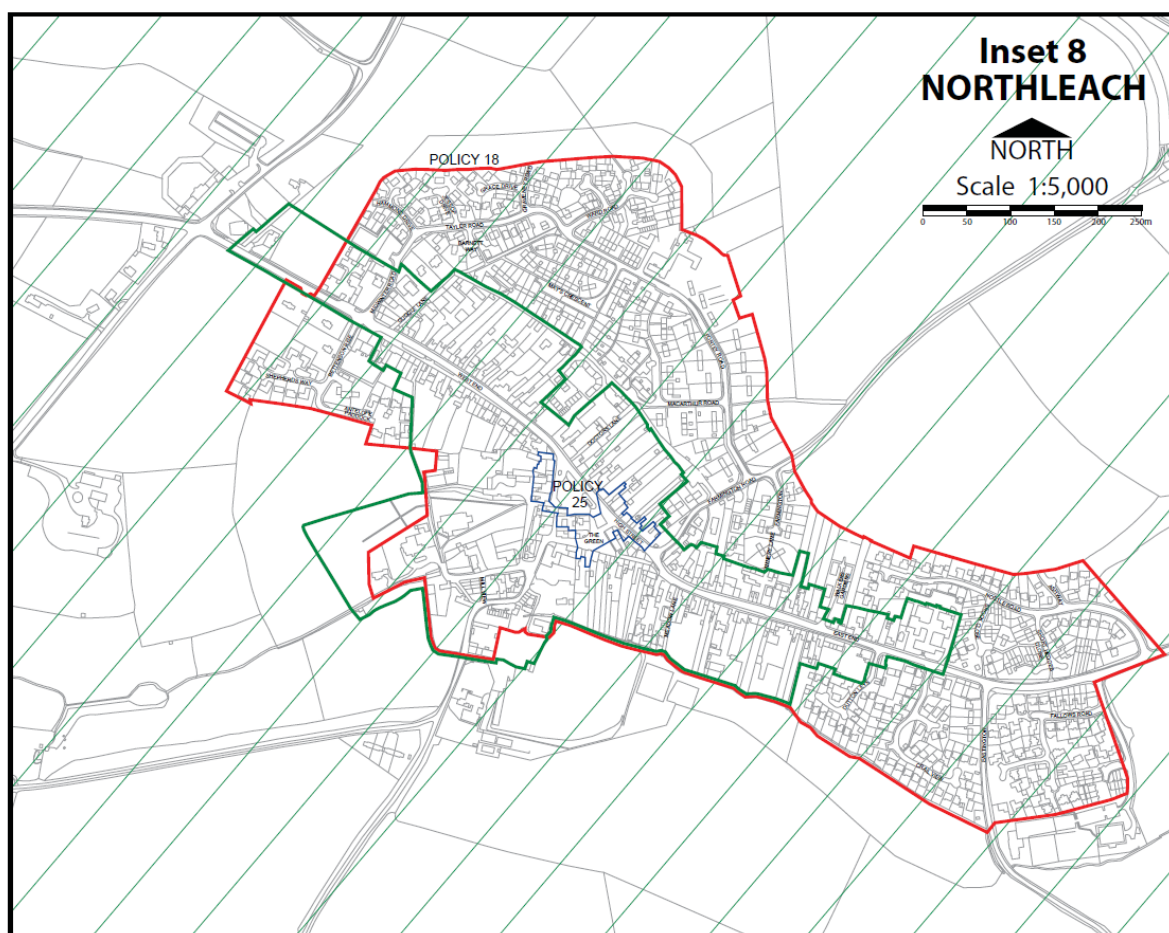


Figure 3: PLAN B: 2001 CDLP Proposals Map – Northleach

### Cotswold District emerging Local Plan

Cotswold District is preparing a new Local Plan to cover the period 2011 – 2031. Public consultation on the pre-submission version of the next Local Plan is expected to take place in Winter 2014, with the final plan ready for inspection at the end of 2015.

As part of work on the new Local Plan, Cotswold District has analysed the settlement hierarchy and the district housing requirement, using this information to propose the spatial distribution of housing. Northleach was identified as one of nine “principal settlements” where housing development is considered appropriate, and given an allocation of 130 new homes.

The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) is used to inform the potential for development land in Northleach. Although the SHLAA indicated significantly more housing could potentially be delivered, the town’s sensitive setting was an important factor leading to a more modest level of growth being proposed. See Annex B for details.

In the Local Plan Consultation Paper: Preferred Development Strategy May 2013, the proposed strategy for Northleach is therefore as follows:

#### **PROPOSED STRATEGY FOR NORTHLEACH**

1. By 2031, Northleach will have strengthened its position as a local service and employment centre both for the town and neighbouring villages.
2. An overall total of up to 130 dwellings is proposed for Northleach over the period April 2011 to April 2031, including housing built to date and outstanding permissions. This will help to address the currently modest need for affordable housing in the Northleach area.
3. Opportunities for home-working should be incorporated in the design of any new housing developments.
4. Opportunities will be sought to accommodate existing businesses seeking to expand in Northleach.
5. A suitable site for the development of small-scale workspace, will be identified through the Local Plan process.
6. In the meantime, small-scale development for employment uses will be permitted in appropriate locations, subject to high standards of design that respect the built environment and setting of the town in the AONB.
7. The existing employment uses at Old Coalyard Farm Industrial Estate and the Old Brewery will be protected.
8. While it is clearly a commercial matter whether or not a bank chooses to re-establish in Northleach, any proposed improvements to banking services is supported, in principle.
9. Opportunities to maintain and improve the position of Northleach as a ‘Local Centre’ in the District’s retail hierarchy will be promoted. General policies should be applied to: improve the retail offer; protect the town centres’ vitality and viability; improve the streetscape; promote traffic management improvements; and support and promote markets.
10. Opportunities should be taken to improve transport links with the surrounding villages.
11. The release of suitable land for allotments is supported, in principle.
12. The following tourism initiatives are supported in principle:
  - the development of the new discovery centre at the Old Prison;
  - improvements to the Market Place; and
  - the establishment of a small visitors’ car park.

## Infrastructure Delivery Plan

Cotswold District Council is preparing an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) and has evaluated the infrastructure requirements that will be required to support the levels of housing and employment growth proposed in the emerging Cotswold District Local Plan.

The current version is the IDP Interim Report (May 2013). Further versions of the IDP will be prepared to accompany each stage of the Local Plan as more information becomes available.

The report notes that Northleach with Eastington Town Plan, adopted in July 2011, includes an action plan setting out actions and responsibilities for delivery. It cites objectives and actions of relevance to infrastructure that have not yet been completed, which include:

- **Flood Risk** – The capacity of the existing drain/sewer system at Northleach has been questioned and therefore a detailed understanding of drainage capacity and potential implications of new development is required.
- **Transport** - Provide a pedestrian crossing in the vicinity of Doctor's Lane; designated passing places (east and west end); improved bus services; repositioned bus stops; provision of car parks; and upgrade of footpaths.
- **Sports facilities** – Increase sports facilities – provision of a multi-gym area [*sic.*] is recorded as being in progress. [The proposal is for a multi-use games area for kick-about/ball sports].

The IDP Interim Report also identified the following main infrastructure matters for Northleach:

- **Gas infrastructure** – Northleach falls outside the Wales & West Utilities supply area and further enquiries are to be made to check supply can be readily provided for new development.
- **Playing pitches and outdoor sports** – There is documented to be considerable support for the provision of a multi-use games area in the village. [Based on survey/report in 2008].
- **Transport** – the County Council has identified a proposal to improve the frequency of the bus service linking Northleach with Cirencester and Kemble rail station.

The report noted that “No specific issues were identified that would have significant implications for the phasing of development.”

## Community Infrastructure Levy

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) enables local planning authorities to raise funds from developers, when undertaking new projects in their area, in order to fund infrastructure that is needed as a result of development. The Levy will complement the Local Plan and will replace some, but not all, elements of the S106 (planning obligation) agreement mechanism.

The CIL is a tariff based approach, set out in a Charging Schedule, which indicates how much developers would be expected to contribute towards infrastructure. The IDP provides the basis for the local planning authority to develop such a schedule. Cotswold District has said it expects to present the Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule later in 2014.



## Other Strategies, Plans & Studies

There are a number of other strategies, plans and studies that may influence the NENP.

### Cotswolds AONB Management Plan

As Northleach with Eastington lies wholly within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), the NENP will need to take into account the Management Plan for the area.

The Cotswolds AONB Management Plan 2008 – 2013 has been endorsed by CDC as a material consideration for strategic planning and decision making.

The following policy provides guidance and criteria for development within the AONB:

**Policy DTP1:** All local plan documents, neighbourhood planning and planning decision-making processes should have regard to the statutory AONB Management Plan... as well as the following criteria in determining the acceptability of a proposed development in the Cotswold AONB. Development should:

- be compatible with the distinctive character of the location as described by the relevant landscape character assessment, strategy and guidelines
- incorporate designs and landscaping consistent with the above, respecting the local settlement pattern and building style
- be designed to respect local building styles and materials
- incorporate appropriate sustainability elements and designs
- have regard to the impact on tranquillity, including dark skies
- not have an adverse impact on local community amenities and services as well as access to these - protect, and where possible enhance, landscape and biodiversity
- be in accordance with a more sustainable pattern of development, reducing dependence on car travel

**Policy DTP2:** Only development meeting these criteria, which supports the local economy, improves access to local services and increases the opportunity for people to live and work in their community will be promoted in Local Plans, unless required for some clearly identified national interest.

Position statements on various topics complement the Management Plan, including one on Housing and Development, which has a statement of particular relevance to Northleach:

*"Within the market towns and larger settlements a balance needs to be maintained between growth of employment and growth in total housing (market and affordable combined). In towns where that balance has not been achieved and there is a high proportion of out-commuting, there should be greater restraint on new open market housing and additional encouragement for employment."*

## Landscape Character Assessments

The Cotswold Conservation Board has published Landscape Strategy and Guidelines for the whole of the Cotswolds AONB.

The parish of Northleach with Eastington is located within the area 10C Upper/Middle Leach Valley. This is identified as having the local character of LCA10: High Wold Dip-Slope Valley. For this type of landscape, the report makes the following specific recommendations on expansion of riverside development in Northleach.

- Conserve floodplain habitats.
- Ensure that new development does not adversely affect settlement character and form.
- Ensure new built development on the fringes of the floodplain is visually integrated with the rural landscape setting and does not interrupt the setting of existing villages or views along the valley.

## Strategic Flood Risk Assessment June 2014

Cotswold District Council updated the flood risk assessment in June 2014.

Northleach with Eastington has been identified as one of several parishes in the district that is vulnerable to local flooding.

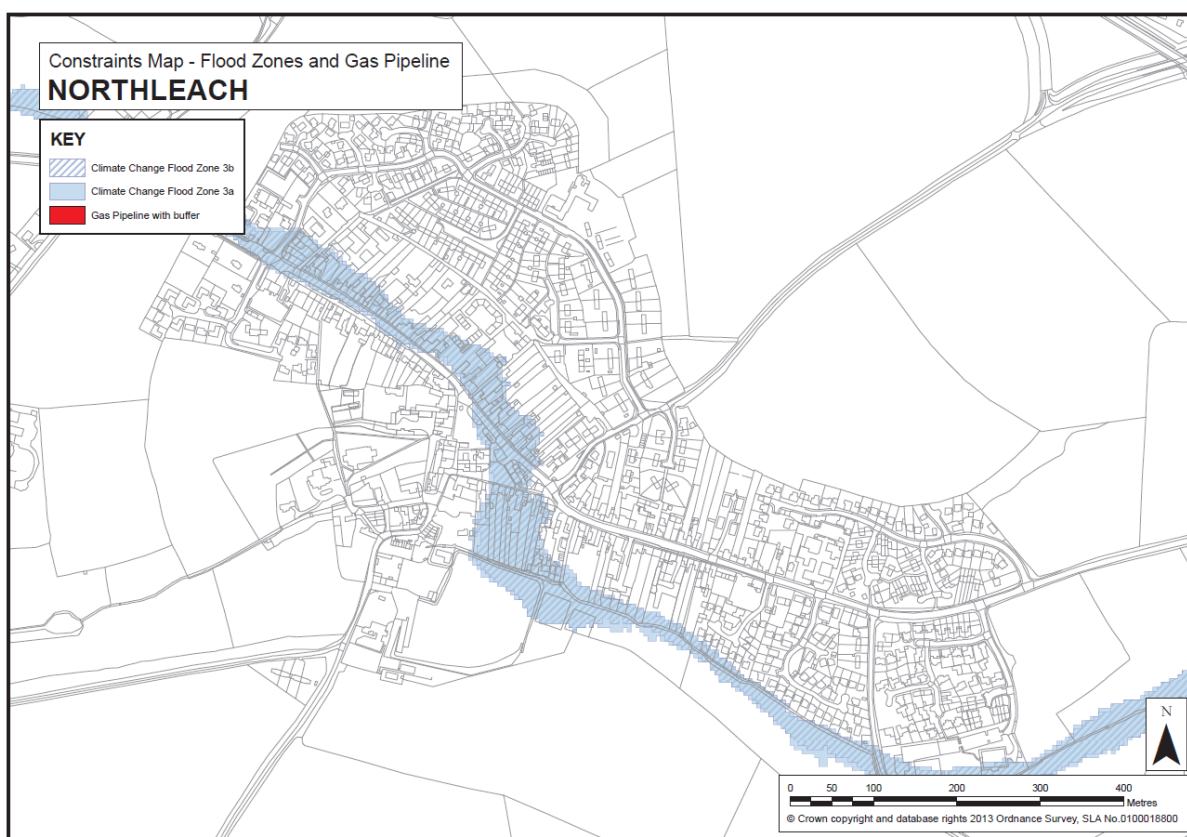


Figure 4: Northleach Constraints Map

The source of the Leach is a series of springs below the village of Hampnett. From Northleach, the river continues down the valley to Eastington to reach the Thames after 18 miles. The river is joined in Northleach by a tributary, rising on the hillside to the south-west at the Wellings.

The report identifies a culvert under the Old Prison and West End. Culverts may frequently increase flood risk, both due to blockages, either of the culvert itself or trash screens, or where they are hydraulically inadequate due to under-capacity or condition. Repairs to this culvert were carried out in 2013 where it passes under West End. It is noted that the culvert is still blocked under the Old Prison, which causes water to back up in the fields above.

Areas near the Leach and culvert are classified as flood zones 3a and 3b. Zone 3a comprises land with a 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of river flooding. Zone 3b is the “functional flood plain”, defined as “land where water has to flow or be stored in times of flood”.

Flooding has occurred along the route of the culvert as far as Market Square – it flows overland and comes out of the manholes when surcharged. In July 2007 an estimated 15 -20 properties in Northleach were flooded by local watercourses and rapid surface water runoff.

The location of the stream from the Wellings is not noted on the constraints map, even though it was the source of flooding to several properties in and around Mill End in 2007. Local knowledge also informs us that surface water run-off – a series of springs in fields to the north above Ward Road and Nostle Road – is also a potential cause of flooding during heavy rain.

### **Role and Function Study July 2012**

This study analysed the role of employment, retail and community facilities, and travel for settlements in Cotswold District. It was used to inform and develop CDC’s settlement strategy to ensure that settlement plans “reflects existing roles and functions and builds upon them to achieve more sustainable settlements”.

In terms of existing employment, Northleach was found to have a very limited role relative to the other settlements in the District. It accounts for only 1% of the total jobs in the District. The main employment areas are at Coalyard Farm and the Old Brewery.

Northleach scored lower than average on certain sustainability measures. Northleach has a low employment density ratio of 0.4. This means that the area has more workers than jobs. A higher proportion of jobs to workers is desirable to ensure that the employment needs and skills of the population are met and to reduce the need for out-commuting.

It was also found that Northleach has a self containment level, in terms of travel to work journeys, of just under 37%, which is below average. This indicates that more people than average travel out of the Ward to work. The top destination for out-commuting was Cheltenham followed by Cirencester and Bourton-on-the-Water.

The potential for change was assessed. The employment role in Northleach could increase as the area has a higher proportion of jobs in growth employment sector; however, it is also in danger of decreasing as it has an imbalance in terms of more workers than jobs. The economically active population is declining which could undermine the economy in the future.

Northleach fulfils a “local centre” role in the District, with a range of small shops. In 2012, it had 13 retail units, with four being convenience stores. However, two units are currently vacant and the report concludes: “the community service function of Northleach is vulnerable. Therefore decisions need to be taken ... on whether to, and how best to, maintain and possibly increase the existing employment role and support the community service function of Northleach.”

### **Housing Needs Survey October 2013**

Northleach with Eastington Town Council engaged the services of the Rural Housing Enabler employed by Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC) to carry out a local Housing Needs Survey to investigate and establish the affordable housing needs of people who live in or have close ties to the parish. The results were published in October 2013.

There was a response rate of 27% with 228 completed replies out of 855 surveys.

30 households self-identified themselves in need of moving to more suitable housing in the parish. 16 of those 30 respondents were regarded as having financial means to afford suitable housing in the private sector. The survey further analysed the remaining 14 respondents in need of affordable housing.

Of the 14 households in need of affordable housing, 9 respondents indicated a need to move within 2 years, one respondent between 2 to 5 years, and 4 respondents in more than 5 years. The most common reason given for the need to move home was the need to set up independent home (6 respondents) or to move to larger accommodation (3 respondents).

However, only four of the 14 respondents in need of affordable housing indicated they were on the District Council’s housing register (Gloucestershire Homeseeker). Reasons why they were not on the housing register included “no point”, “not looking just yet”, “living with parents”, “saving up the deposit” and “waiting for [x] property to become available”.

The report assessed the existing affordable housing stock in the parish. Northleach with Eastington parish currently has a total of 112 affordable dwellings for rent and 1 shared ownership property belonging to Bromford Housing (Fosseway Living), and a further 11 properties under re-sale covenant (equity share) belonging to Cotswold District Council.

The report also noted that incomes in Cotswold District are lower than the U.K. average while house prices are higher. The affordability gap is the highest outside London.

### **Northleach Town Design Statement**

In May 2014 Northleach with Eastington Town Council resolved to prepare a Design Statement in conjunction with its Neighbourhood Plan to inform the approach to be taken in undertaking any future development and in the protection of the existing heritage and landscape.

The report examines the qualities of the local architecture, heritage assets, and surrounding countryside, and then considers how best to preserve the special characteristics of the area.

A complete list of heritage assets is included in the report. An initial draft is available.

## Issues for the NENP

A number of issues for the parish have been identified from the Town Plan, Local Plan evidence base, and community consultation. They are summarised here:

### Site Allocations

- 15 potential development sites were originally identified in the SHLAA.
- The update to the SHLAA in July 2014 narrows this down to four.
- Using the four sites in the 2014 SHLAA will result in large blocks of development, which the local community has said it does not want.
- The sites concentrate new development at East End, furthest away from local services.
- The NENP will examine alternative site allocation strategies and/or consider criteria for housing development

### Phasing of Development

- If development is approved on the land at Bassett Road, about three-quarters of the 20-year housing allocation will be built within the first five years of the plan period. This considerable “front end loading” is a threat to the town and its infrastructure.
- The Neighbourhood Plan survey identified strong support for phasing of development.
- What are the mechanisms for delivering this?
- Can phasing be linked to the provision of infrastructure?

### Affordable Housing

- The Housing Needs Survey October 2013 identifies 14 people in the parish or connected with the parish that have a current or future need for affordable housing
- In July 2014, there were 19 people on the Homeseeker housing register (the waiting list for the whole of Gloucestershire) who had put Northleach as their first choice of place to live. Of these, only three are in the gold or silver categories, indicating more urgent need.
- Two developments already underway in the town will provide 100% affordable housing: 6 at Wheelwrights and 22 affordable homes at Fortey Road. Other developments are expected to provide 50% affordable housing, creating 4 more affordable homes at Chequers (out of 9 proposed) and 20 (out of 40) proposed at Bassett Road.
- Viewing the affordable housing provision of sites in isolation from each other risks creating an oversupply of affordable housing that cannot be filled by local need.
- Once current developments are complete, 33 new affordable homes will have been created out of the 130 new homes required. Therefore, no new development need provide more than 33% affordable housing for the town to meet its commitment of 50% overall.

### Conservation & Environment

- The town lies in an AONB and new development should not be allowed to detract from the rural setting of the town and surrounding countryside.

- Density of development is an important consideration, especially on the settlement edge.
- How can we ensure that development is sympathetic in style and layout with the historic built environment and avoid solid blocks of uniform urban-style development?
- Development near the river corridor and floodplain needs to be managed appropriately.
- Gardens are becoming ever smaller; they should be appropriate to the size of property.
- Not all properties of heritage quality have a listing. The NENP has the opportunity to protect any such properties identified in a future Local Heritage List.

### **Sustainability & Employment**

- Northleach is an important local service centre, but the number of retail units is in decline and it is considered vulnerable.
- The number of jobs in the parish is low compared to the number of residents.
- Employment space has declined in recent years with loss of business premises at the Old Brewery and Old Bakery.
- The Ferrari garage would like to move to a larger site within Northleach.
- Employment opportunities need to be provided in tandem with housing.
- Home working and start-up businesses should be encouraged.
- Public transport improvements are needed to provide access to jobs further afield.

### **Traffic and Parking**

- How can we ameliorate the effect of additional traffic from new development?
- Sufficient parking spaces should be provided on new developments to prevent additional overspill parking on the already crowded main street.
- Can land be found to provide much-needed car parking for visitors close to the town centre, or for parking near the school?

### **Infrastructure**

- The main drainage and sewage system (which is a combined system) is grossly overloaded.
- The main sewer is 6 inches wide built in 1951 for 700 people with only 20% spare capacity. The current population is near 2000 and at least 75% of the population feeds into the old sewers on the existing pipes which is double its design capacity.
- Piecemeal developments which are in progress (Chequers, Wheelwrights, Fortey House) may not be thought on their own to cause concern. But, they will not generate enough S106 infrastructure support to sort out the capacity issues. There needs to be a mechanism to ensure that small developments, which over time add substantial load, result in appropriate capacity upgrades.
- Developers are responsible for improving drainage directly associated with their developments, but will not have an impact on the bigger issue of the main sewer.
- Education and nursery provision must also be provided to support new development.
- Other infrastructure issues include better broadband and mobile network coverage
- How can infrastructure be delivered in a timely manner alongside development?

## Summary

The preceding analysis of the parish and the planning context has highlighted a series of actual or perceived advantages or “strengths” and disadvantages or “weaknesses”. These present a combination of opportunities and challenges for the NENP to address, given there is likely to be a direct influence of land use in planning and development decisions.

<p><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong sense of community</li> <li>• Beautiful rural setting in the AONB</li> <li>• Heritage assets and conservation area</li> <li>• Good local services, e.g. doctor, primary school, village halls, Post Office and shops</li> <li>• Transport hub with good road links</li> <li>• Generally low levels of crime and anti-social behaviour.</li> <li>• High quality, recent data as basis to develop policies for the NENP</li> <li>• Majority of land owned by a charitable organisation that wants to work with the local community for mutual benefit</li> </ul>	<p><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of local employment</li> <li>• Employment sites and businesses are being lost, converted to residential</li> <li>• High reliance on cars for commuting and to access social activities</li> <li>• Historic buildings lack off-street parking</li> <li>• Only one main road through the town</li> <li>• Physical constraints of valley location</li> <li>• Outdated foul drainage system designed when town half its current size</li> <li>• Dependent on a few key individuals to prepare the NENP</li> <li>• Plan risks ignoring issues outside town in other parts of the parish e.g. Eastington</li> </ul>
<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater control over selection of development sites in the local area</li> <li>• Identify and protect green spaces and views of local importance</li> <li>• Improvements to the appearance of the settlement edges with development of high quality and character</li> <li>• Redevelopment of under-used sites and derelict buildings</li> <li>• To gain more shops and services on back of more development</li> <li>• Provision of car parks, near town centre for visitors and for the school</li> <li>• Provision of homes for local people in line with identified needs</li> <li>• Identify opportunities for new employment and business premises, e.g. at The Old Prison</li> <li>• Enhancements to the Market Place</li> </ul>	<p><b>THREATS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of small town identity</li> <li>• Loss of landscape and visual character</li> <li>• High house prices, local people and young families can't afford to live here</li> <li>• Overprovision of social housing due to lack of holistic view of all sites</li> <li>• Infrastructure (roads, public transport, health and education, utilities and drainage, sports and leisure) may not be adequate to support future development</li> <li>• Piecemeal development will not generate adequate developer contributions to local infrastructure</li> <li>• Increased run-off from new developments increases flood risk</li> <li>• If Neighbourhood Plan not completed, or not approved at referendum, then Cotswold District Council decides what happens in our parish!</li> </ul>



## Annex A: Schedule of Evidence

Northleach Town Plan (adopted 2011)

[www.northleach.gov.uk/your-town-council/project-groups/town-plan/](http://www.northleach.gov.uk/your-town-council/project-groups/town-plan/)

Neighbourhood Development Statement (2011)

UK Census 2011:

[www.ukcensusdata.com/northleach-e05004328#sthash.HbNvEnr9.dpuf](http://www.ukcensusdata.com/northleach-e05004328#sthash.HbNvEnr9.dpuf)

Northleach Housing Needs Report (2013)

[www.northleach.gov.uk/2013/11/northleach-housing-needs-report/](http://www.northleach.gov.uk/2013/11/northleach-housing-needs-report/)

Community Profile Northleach (2013)

Neighbourhood Plan Engagement Strategy (June 2014)

[www.northleach.gov.uk/ndp](http://www.northleach.gov.uk/ndp)

Northleach Neighbourhood Plan Survey (2014) – results included in this document

Draft Northleach Town Design Statement (in progress)

[www.northleach.gov.uk/your-town-council/neighbourhood-plan/town-design-statement/](http://www.northleach.gov.uk/your-town-council/neighbourhood-plan/town-design-statement/)

Cotswolds AONB Management Plan (2013 – 2018)

[http://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/management\\_plan/index.html](http://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/management_plan/index.html)

Cotswolds AONB Position Statements

[www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/?page=position](http://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/?page=position)

Landscape Character Assessment & Guidelines

[www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/landscape\\_character\\_assessment/cotswoldslandscape.htm](http://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/landscape_character_assessment/cotswoldslandscape.htm)

Cotswold District Local Plan 2001 – 2011

[www.cotswold.gov.uk/residents/planning-building/planning-policy/local-plan-2001-2011/](http://www.cotswold.gov.uk/residents/planning-building/planning-policy/local-plan-2001-2011/)

Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (April 2007)

[www.cotswold.gov.uk/housing-strategies\\_policies-documents/affordable-housing-sdp/](http://www.cotswold.gov.uk/housing-strategies_policies-documents/affordable-housing-sdp/)

Cotswold Design Code

[www.cotswold.gov.uk/media/241227/The-Cotswold-Design-Code.pdf](http://www.cotswold.gov.uk/media/241227/The-Cotswold-Design-Code.pdf)

Cotswold District Local Plan 2011 – 2031 evidence base:

[www.cotswold.gov.uk/planning-policy/evidence-base-and-monitoring/](http://www.cotswold.gov.uk/planning-policy/evidence-base-and-monitoring/)

Role and Function of Settlements Study (July 2012)

[http://consult.cotswold.gov.uk/portal/fp/roleandfunction/role\\_and\\_function\\_study](http://consult.cotswold.gov.uk/portal/fp/roleandfunction/role_and_function_study)

Cotswold District Council Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan (May 2013)

[http://consult.cotswold.gov.uk/portal/fp/infrastructure\\_delivery\\_plan/](http://consult.cotswold.gov.uk/portal/fp/infrastructure_delivery_plan/)

Local Plan Consultation Paper: Preferred Development Strategy (May 2013)

[http://consult.cotswold.gov.uk/portal/fp/local\\_plan\\_2011-2031/development\\_strategy](http://consult.cotswold.gov.uk/portal/fp/local_plan_2011-2031/development_strategy)

SHLAA Review 2014 (includes SELAA)

[http://consult.cotswold.gov.uk/portal/fp/shlaa\\_2/shlaa\\_2014/shlaa\\_2014](http://consult.cotswold.gov.uk/portal/fp/shlaa_2/shlaa_2014/shlaa_2014)

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) June 2014

[www.cotswold.gov.uk/media/981073/2013s7238-Cotswold-SFRA-Final-Report-Jun-2014-.pdf](http://www.cotswold.gov.uk/media/981073/2013s7238-Cotswold-SFRA-Final-Report-Jun-2014-.pdf)  
and [www.cotswold.gov.uk/media/...Cotswold-SFRA-Final-Report-Appendices-Jun-2014-.pdf](http://www.cotswold.gov.uk/media/...Cotswold-SFRA-Final-Report-Appendices-Jun-2014-.pdf)

## Annex B: Site Assessments (SHLAA and SELAA)

The tables below list the sites in the parish in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) Review 2014 which was produced to support the emerging Cotswold District Local Plan. Potential economic land availability was included in the review.

The second table includes the all sites that have since been removed from the SHLAA and gives the reasons for their removal. All sites will therefore be considered further by the NENP, whether they have assessed as being suitable for housing development or not.

The third table includes an assessment of potential economic land availability.

**Table 1: Housing Site Assessments**

Site Code	Site Description	Comments in SHLAA 2014
N_1A	Land off Bassett Road 1.79 ha 31 dwellings	Limited low density development of high design quality could improve the settlement edge. Site would need a landscape buffer. Bassett Road only has development on one side and would provide good access. Potential for a gateway scheme. However, the sewerage treatment works is a problem (it's only 140mtrs away) and produces continuous noise and frequent foul smells.
N8	Fortey House 0.51 22 dwellings	Vacant site adjacent to residential area. Good redevelopment potential. Existing buildings already demolished. The copse/wooded area to the immediate north has an ecological value. Planning application pending consideration for "Construction of 22 affordable dwellings, associated access road, car parking and landscaping" (14/00104/FUL)
N_13B	Land north-west of Hammond Drive & Midwinter Road 0.16 5 dwellings	This availability of this land is dependent on the existing business relocating. However, the existing business wishes to expand and the greenfield land to west is a highly sensitive part of AONB and is unsuitable. There is a reasonable prospect that this land will become available for residential redevelopment if a suitable alternative premises can be found.
N_14B	Land adjoining East End & Nostle Road 2.73 ha 17 dwellings	Suitable for 'rounding off' settlement line. A modest new development along Nostle Road could improve the appearance of the eastern approach into Northleach, creating better gateway into town. Development on higher parts of the site and past the extent of the eastern boundary of N_1A may be unsuitable due to the impact on the landscape.

**Table 2: Housing Land Assessment – Reasons for removal from SHLAA**

<b>Site Code</b>	<b>Site Description</b>	<b>Reason for being removed from Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)</b>
N_1B	Land off Bassett Road	Unsuitable - Site has a prominent position within the AONB and the gateway into Northleach. Flooding issues exclude southern 5th of site and it is probable that a significant area to the east will be within the sewage works cordon sanitaire. Other constraints include: Grade 3 agricultural land (detailed survey required).
N_2	Land opposite Northleach C of E Primary School	Unsuitable - Site occupies prominent and visible position in the AONB and impacts on the setting of the town.
N_5A	Ambulance Station	Site does not meet 5 dwelling minimum threshold. Redevelopment would improve this location. Site is available and not in use. Opportunity for combined scheme with part of N_5B if fire station became available, subject to appropriate design. Constraints include: AONB; potential sewage infrastructure capacity; Flood Zone 3a and 3b (SFRA Level 1) run in a strip across the northern boundary; within setting of Conservation Area to north.
N_5B	Fire Station	Not available and still in use. Potential for part of site to come forward for housing without the need to close the fire station. Alternatively, the whole of the site may become available in future. Redevelopment could improve this location and a joint scheme with N_5A might be an option, subject to appropriate design. Other constraints include: potential sewage infrastructure capacity; AONB; Flood Zone 3a and 3b (SFRA Level 1) run along northern boundary; setting of Conservation Area on north and east boundaries; TPO on east boundary.
N_12A	Land south-west of Bettenson Rise	Unsuitable - Highly sensitive site within the AONB and development would detract from the setting of important listed buildings. Grade 3 agricultural land (detailed survey required).
N_12B	Land to rear of Shepherds Way & West End	Unsuitable - Highly sensitive site within the AONB and development would detract from the setting of important listed buildings. Grade 3 agricultural land (detailed survey required).
N_12C	Land south of West End & east of A429	Unsuitable - highly sensitive location within the AONB and there is a need to retain the historic separation between the town and the Fosse Way. Buffer is key to the setting of the town and a number of listed buildings, including the church and the old prison. Land rises up from the road making the site visually prominent. Other constraints include: High ground water risk; Grade 3 agricultural land (detailed survey required).

N_13A	Land between A429 & West End	Unsuitable - highly sensitive location within the AONB and there is a need to retain the historic separation between the town and the Fosse Way. Other constraints include: setting of Conservation Area.
N_13C	Land north of West End	Unsuitable - highly sensitive location within the AONB and there is a need to retain the historic separation between the town and the Fosse Way. Breaks new ground away from the development line. Southern half of site (adjacent to road) in Flood Zone 3b (SFRA Level 1).
N_14A	Land to rear of Nostle Road	Unsuitable - site sits on top of a hill and is highly visible within the AONB. Development would have a damaging impact on the landscape. Other constraints include: filled quarry / landfill buffer zone; Grade 3 agricultural land (detailed survey required); Water Treatment Facilities 800m buffer; topography.
N_15	Land at Farmington & rear of Fortey Road	Unsuitable - site is heavily wooded, has steep topography, and its development would be an intrusion into the AONB.

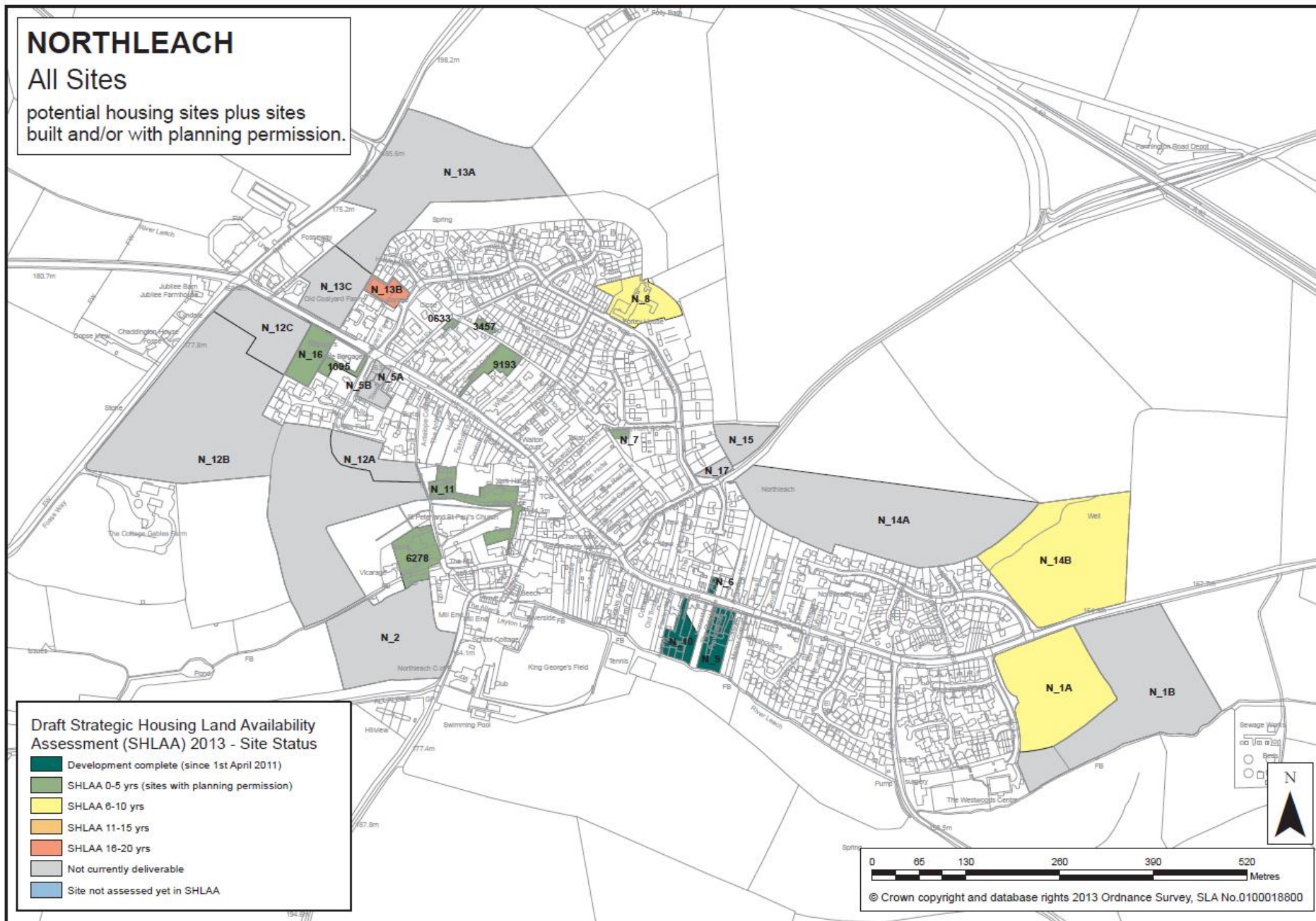
**Table 3: Economic Land Assessment**

Site Code	Site Description	Comments in SHLAA 2014
NOR_E3B (N_1A)	Land off Bassett Road 0.25 ha (whole site is 1.79)	Proposed: mixed use. Flat site with pre-formed access. Adjacent to settlement boundary. Suitable for development with some small-scale employment uses. Deliverability 6-10 yrs.
NOR_E1 (N_13C)	Land at West End	Half of site closest to road is in Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 2 Flood Zone 3b and Conservation Area. Remaining area is elevated and in highly sensitive location in the AONB. Site acts as a buffer between Northleach and the Fosse Way and is important in the landscape setting of the town's western gateway.
NOR_E2	Land via Bettenson Rise	Unsuitable - land-locked site in setting of Northleach Church, a listed building. Highly sensitive site within the AONB.
NOR_E3B (N_1B)	Land off Bassett Road	Unsuitable - Site has a prominent position within the AONB and the gateway into Northleach. Southern fifth of site is within Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 2 Flood Zone 3b. It is also probable that a significant area to the east will be within the sewage works cordon sanitaire. Other constraints include: Grade 3 agricultural land (detailed survey required).

# NORTHLEACH

## All Sites

potential housing sites plus sites built and/or with planning permission.



### Draft Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) 2013 - Site Status

- Development complete (since 1st April 2011)
- SHLAA 0-5 yrs (sites with planning permission)
- SHLAA 6-10 yrs
- SHLAA 11-15 yrs
- SHLAA 16-20 yrs
- Not currently deliverable
- Site not assessed yet in SHLAA

0 85 130 260 390 520 Metres

© Crown copyright and database rights 2013 Ordnance Survey, SLA No.0100018800