



Northleach with Eastington Neighbourhood Plan 2016-2031

Pre-Submission Plan



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January 2018

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Consultation Details

If you have any comments to make on this Plan, please do so by **5pm on Monday, 12 March 2018** in the following ways:

By email to Northleach with Eastington Town Council at:

clerk@northleach.gov.uk

Or in writing directly to Town Clerk:

Northleach Town Council Office
The Weswoods Centre
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Northleach
Gloucestershire
GL54 3QJ

The Town Council website contains all the necessary background information on the Neighbourhood Plan. Its web address is:

www.northleach.gov.uk

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Foreword

Northleach is the smallest of the Cotswold district's market towns, but one with a rich history which belies its size. Established in the 1200's, it grew to become an internationally recognised wool trading town. The wealth this brought flowed into the church and other old buildings that we enjoy in the town today. With the decline of the wool trade, so the town declined, but re-established itself as an important stopping point for the coaching trade in the nineteenth century. With the growth of traffic and as the route of the old A40 trunk road it became saturated with traffic, eventually relieved with the opening of the bypass in the 1980's. Thereafter, the town saw considerable expansion with the development of a number of new housing estates such that it, together with its primary school, has nearly doubled in size since the 1980's.

Northleach now faces the same pressures as other areas in the district, particularly for more housing. Earlier development, and that yet to come over the next 20 years or so has not and is unlikely to address the town's infrastructure needs or the wishes of local people as to where development should take place. This plan seeks to ensure that the town gets the development it wants where it wants it and to protect the town's setting in the AONB.

The plan seeks to ensure that future development is of high quality, evenly spread across the town, in small pockets, space for improved car parking, space for the school, nursery and recreational provision and to protect local employment. It also seeks to provide for green space and a green ring around the town. In so doing, the plan seeks to address the issues identified as being the most important during the consultation carried out across the town since the Autumn of 2013.

The Town Council is committed to fulfilling these aims and wishes to acknowledge the time and effort put in by all members of the Steering Group since its inception in developing this future vision for Northleach and the parish at large.

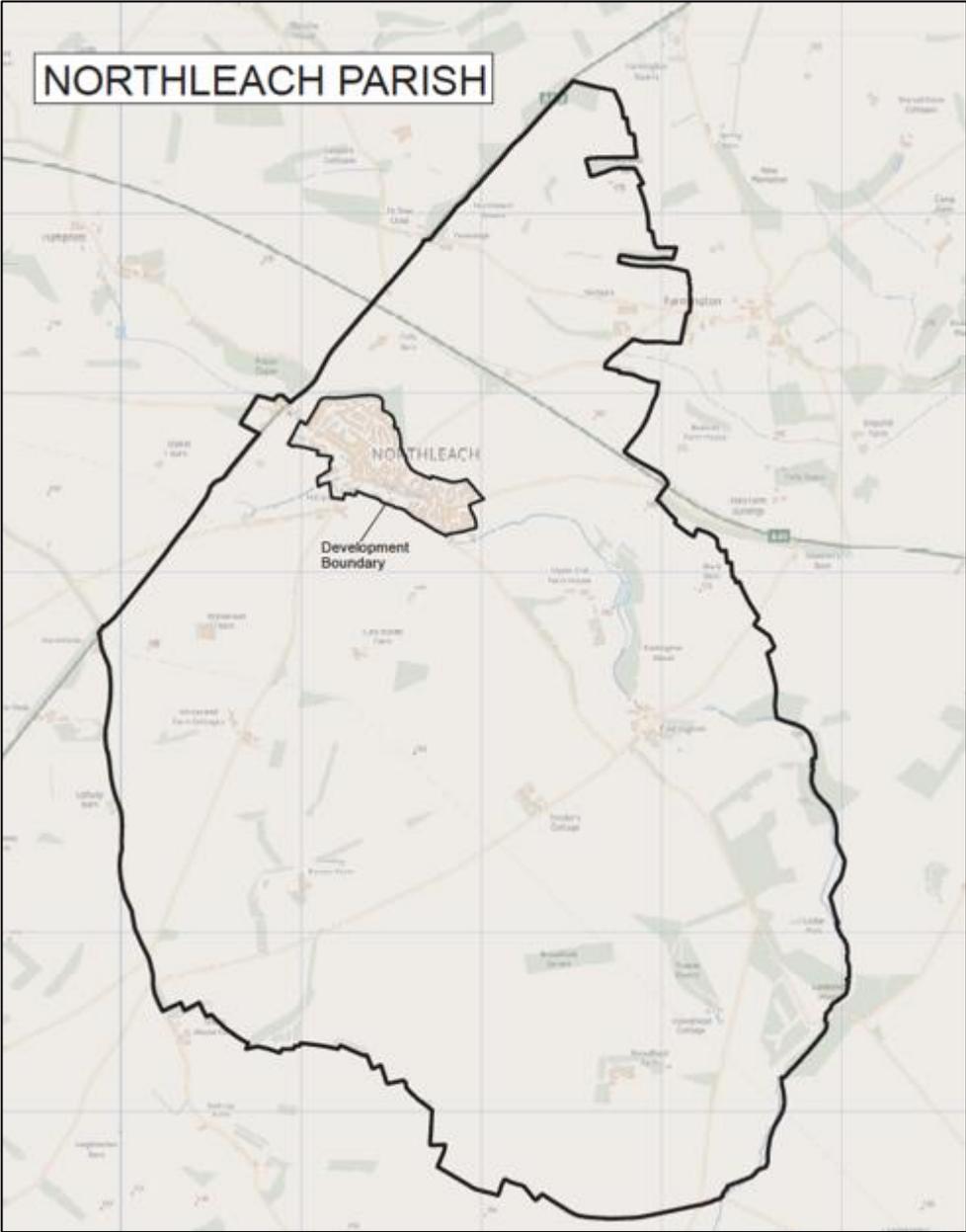
The Northleach with Eastington Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

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1. Introduction and Background

1.1 Northleach with Eastington Town Council has prepared a Neighbourhood Plan for the area designated in February 2014 by the local planning authority, Cotswold District Council, under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 and of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The designated area is shown in Plan A below.



Plan A: The Designated Northleach Parish Neighbourhood Area

1.2 The purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to make planning policies that can be used to determine planning applications in the area in the period from April 2016 to

March 2031. Its policies aim to protect the special character of the town and the wider parish and encourage development proposals for the benefit of the local community.

1.3 Neighbourhood Plans provide local communities with the chance to shape the future development of their areas. Once approved at a referendum, the Neighbourhood Plan becomes a statutory part of the development plan for the area and will carry significant weight in how planning applications are decided. Neighbourhood plans can therefore only contain land use planning policies that can be used for this purpose. This often means that there are more important issues of interest to the local community that cannot be addressed in a Neighbourhood Plan if they are not directly related to planning.

1.4 Although there is considerable scope for the local community to decide on its planning policies, Neighbourhood plans must meet some 'basic conditions'. In order to do so, the plan must be able to answer each of the following questions in the affirmative:

- Is the Plan consistent with the national planning policy?
- Is the Plan consistent with local planning policy?
- Does the Plan promote the principles of sustainable development?
- Has the process of making of the Plan met the requirements of the European environmental standards?

1.5 In addition, the Town Council must be able to show that it has properly consulted local people and other relevant organisations during the process of making its Neighbourhood Plan and has followed the 2012 Neighbourhood Planning Regulations.

1.6 These requirements will be tested by an independent examiner once the Neighbourhood Plan is finalised. If satisfied, the examiner will recommend to the District Council that the Plan goes to referendum of the local electorate. If a simple majority of the turnout votes for the Plan then it becomes adopted as formal planning policy for the area.

The Pre Submission Plan

1.7 The Pre Submission Plan is the opportunity for the Town Council to formally consult local people, landowners and other public and private bodies on the proposed policies of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Town Council has examined how existing national and local planning policies affect the area and it has already sought some local community opinions on local planning issues that the Neighbourhood Plan might help address.

1.8 The contents of this Plan are therefore presented to obtain the views of the local community and other organisations on its proposed vision, objectives and land use

policies. The final version of the Plan will take into account representations received on this version.

Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment)

1.9 The District Council requires that a strategic environmental assessment (SEA) of the Plan is undertaken in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans & Programmes Regulations 2004. The Town Council has determined that this will be done within the broader scope of a Sustainability Appraisal (SA/SEA) to enable the social and economic effects of the NENP to be understood alongside its environmental effects.

1.10 The Town Council has consulted with the statutory bodies and it has established the following framework of environmental, social and economic objectives for this assessment:

1. To improve access to services and leisure/cultural facilities (including play, recreation in open spaces, parks and the countryside)
 - Will the Plan enable existing facilities to be protected and new ones created?

2. To preserve and enhance the quality of built environment and heritage of the town
 - Will the Plan sustain and enhance the significance of designated heritage assets?
 - Will the Plan sustain and enhance the significance of non-designated heritage assets?

3. Ensure that the natural environment surrounding the town is conserved and enhanced, biodiversity is improved and designated habitats are protected
 - Does the Plan justify the exceptional circumstances for development in the Cotswold AONB?
 - Will the Plan deliver a net biodiversity gain?
 - Will the Plan avoid development in a designated habitat site?

4. To improve the vitality and viability of the town as a local service centre
 - Will the Plan enable existing town centre retailers and other services to thrive?
 - Will the Plan enable new town centre floorspace and/or uses?

1.11 A Draft Sustainability Appraisal report has been prepared with its initial assessment conclusions and this is being consulted on alongside this document.

The Next Steps

1.12 Once the consultation exercise is complete, the Town Council will review the comments made and prepare a final version of the Plan, known as the 'Submission Plan'. This will be submitted to the District Council to arrange for its independent examination and then the referendum.

2. The Neighbourhood Area

Introduction

2.1 The 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 of the town centre. The parish lies in Cotswold District in the county of Gloucestershire.

2.2 Northleach is the smallest market town in Cotswold District, with a population in the 2011 Census of approximately 1,800. Although the population increased 32% between 1981 and 1991 to nearly 1,900, it has since declined although the amount of housing has continued to grow, there now being more than twice as many properties as in the mid-1970's. There are approximately 855 households, which equates to an average 2.1 persons per household compared to approximately 2.5 for Gloucestershire as a whole.

History & Development

2.3 Northleach was established as a market town in the 13th Century and historically was a centre for the wool trade and common stop on the coaching route from London to Gloucester until the mid- 19th Century. The centre of Northleach Town is covered by a conservation area which recognises the importance of the earlier buildings and burgage plots.

2.4 The Town has developed along the valley formed by the River Leach. The Market Place has been improved over the centuries and this, together with continued, small scale but valued, commercial development, has led to a modest growth in the town's tourist trade. Northleach is the home of the Cotswold Conservation Board who manage the local AONB.

2.5 Changes in the layout of Northleach have occurred in phases. Since the early 1980s, when the A40 bypass was opened, the town has lost its secondary school, hospital and bank. The last major residential development took place in the early 1990's. More recently, the Sly Trust has built 6 affordable homes at Wheelwrights, West End. Bromford Housing Association has built 24 affordable homes at Fortey Road and 9 homes are under construction on the former Chequers single residential plot at West End together with a further 40 homes at Bassett Road on part of the former grammar school site.

Local Features and Infrastructure

2.6 The town has the following facilities:

- doctors surgery, primary school, playgroup, nursing home, retained fire brigade, church with church rooms,
- children's outdoor pool, 2 play areas, 2 tennis courts, a playing field, various adult and junior sports teams – cricket / tennis/ skittles / football, sports pavilion,
- café, 2 pubs, 1 wine bar, 1 hotel, 1 community centre, 1 community hall,
- post office, chemist, hairdressers, take away, bakery and fruit shop, small supermarket and butchers, funeral undertakers and 2 small industrial estates.

- mechanical museum, Escape to the Cotswold visitor centre, dolls house shop, weekly market, Ferrari garage and local repair garage (just outside of Northleach) outreach vet (Stow vets provide 5 daily sessions of 1-2.5 hours) public toilets and allotments
- local tradespeople including plumbers, electricians, joiners, and builders

Education

2.7 The primary school and playgroup are situated to the south east of the town next to the playing field and a small car park. The primary school has doubled in numbers in the last 20 years due to previous housing developments. In the mid 1990's the school had 100 pupils and following housing developments of over 200 houses the school is frequently at its capacity of 175. The September 2012 intake had 29 children with 24 from Northleach and 5 from satellite areas. The September 2013 intake had 17 of the 25 children from Northleach the rest being from satellite settlements. The school is full at 175 pupils and there is no guarantee that anyone moving into the area can get in. Several families have been forced to appeal for places over the last few years. Whilst trying to plan for a balanced community the capacity of the school needs to be considered. The implications are that any new families to Northleach cannot be guaranteed school places in Northleach. Children would be forced to attend other schools outside of Northleach.

2.8 In terms of provision for children in Northleach there is no formal nursery provision. The previous nursery moved to Bourton and along with the Guiting nursery closure this has put immense pressure on local families needing this type of childcare. The Northleach Playgroup is not an educational facility but supports 2.5 – 5 year olds and is monitored by Ofsted. The last Ofsted report (December 2014) records 34 children on the roll. The facility is however limited to 24 children at any one time and is at 100% capacity. It does not operate outside term-time and does not address local current or future needs.

Industrial Areas

2.9 The main industrial areas are Coalyard Estate at the West of town with some light industrial units. Behind this are the Ferrari workshops which sit within a residential area. The latter has expressed a need to move in order to expand and stay in Northleach but it is now understood that the owner plans to continue to operate from the site. A further industrial area lies outside the town boundary on the road to Farmington. However, there are relatively few jobs in the town resulting in the vast majority of its working population commuting to other towns.

The Town Centre

2.10 The main thoroughfare through town from west to east contains the majority of the listed buildings (Northleach has 96) and parking and passing is problematic. The survey undertaken for the State of the Parish Report highlighted that people would like to see an increase in parking more than anything else.

2.11 The main drainage and sewage system (which is a combined system) follows this route and is grossly overloaded. The Cotswold District Infrastructure Delivery Plan states that, "the capacity of combined sewage and drainage systems is a particular concern that needs to be addressed regardless of whether new development is brought forward". The Town Council are aware that the piecemeal developments that are in progress may not be thought, on their own, to cause concern. But, individually they will not generate enough S106 infrastructure support to deal with 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.

2.12 The central Market Place and adjoining Green have changed little over the last 700 years and contain the majority of the shops and services. A feasibility study by CDC was done to propose a new configuration for the space. This project was never completed. An aspiration of this plan is to address this need.

3 Planning Policy Context

3.1 The Parish lies within the Cotswold District Council area in the County of Gloucestershire.

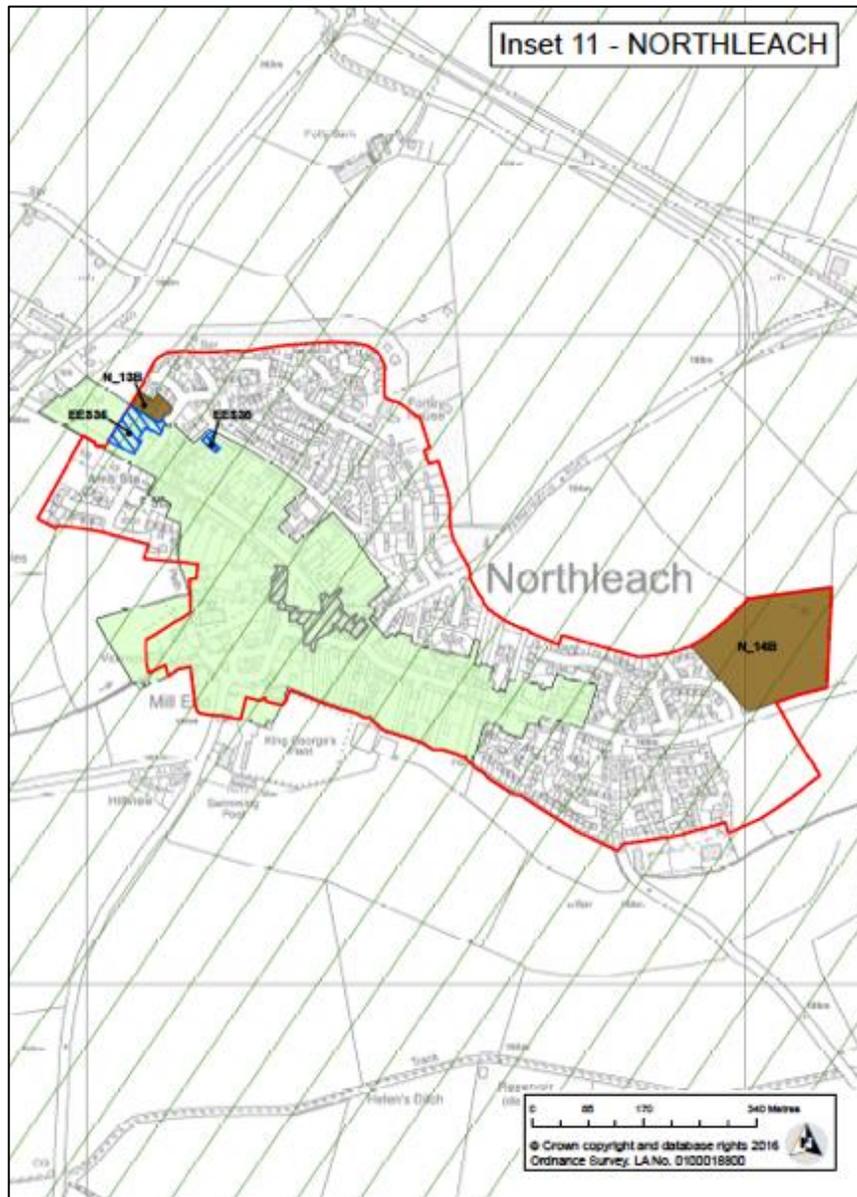
3.2 At the national level, the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) published by the Government in 2012 is an important guide in the preparation of local plans and neighbourhood plans. The NENP must demonstrate that it is consistent with the provisions of the NPPF. The following paragraphs of the NPPF are especially relevant to the NPNP:

- Supporting a prosperous rural economy (§28)
- Securing good design (§58 etc)
- Promoting healthy communities and education (§70 etc)
- Protecting local green spaces (§76 etc)
- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment (§109 etc)
- Conserving and enhancing the historic environment (§126 etc)

3.3 The District Council has planning policies that have helped shape the strategy and policies of the Neighbourhood Plan, which must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan. The new Cotswold District Local Plan, which covers the period 2011-2031, has been submitted to the Secretary of State for examination, with its adoption expected in 2018.

3.4 Policy S12 of the Local Plan covers the town of Northleach. It allocates two housing development sites described as: “Land north west of Hammond Drive and Midwinter Road (for 5 dwellings)”; and “Land adjoining East End and Nostle Road (17 dwellings)”. (The first of these sites is incorrectly described in the emerging Local Plan, though clear from the relevant policy map. The description should read “Land south of Hammond Drive and north-west of Midwinter Road.) However, it is now uncertain that the Midwinter Road site, an operational employment use, will be made available in the plan period; hence, neither the Local Plan nor the Neighbourhood Plan make provision for replacement employment land in the town.

3.5 The policy also seeks to protect the existing employment sites at Old Coalyard Farm Industrial Estate and at the Old Brewery. It supports tourism initiatives in principle, including 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. It proposes that once contributions to delivery of infrastructure required in the Mid Cotswolds Sub Area (in its Policy SA2) have been made, development proposals will, subject to viability, be expected to help deliver or make appropriate contributions towards suitable land for allotments.



Plan B: Cotswold District Local Plan Strategy: Northleach Extract

3.7 The Local Plan contains other policies to support the Local Plan's development strategy, including the following that are of most relevance to Northleach:

- Policy DS2: Development Boundaries – to update the current defined development boundaries with the same intent;
- Policies DS1 and SA2: Development Strategy - Northleach remains a defined Principal Settlement in the Mid-Cotswold Sub Area of the District and is allocated 22 new homes but no additional employment land or retail floorspace
- Policy EC5: Rural Diversification – encouraging appropriate schemes at existing farms, estates and land-based businesses

- Policies EC7 & EC8: Town Centres and Uses – defining Northleach as a ‘Local Centre’ to encourage the provision of new local shops and to manage the mix of retail and other uses
- Policy EC10: Tourism – supporting new tourism development in specific circumstances
- Policy D1: Design – requiring proposals to have regard to the new Cotswold Design Code
- Policies EN1 and EN3: Landscape and the Cotswold AONB – including managing development in the AONB
- Policy EN5: Trees, Hedgerows & Woodlands – defining them as natural assets for conserving and enhancing
- Policy EN8: Conservation Areas – managing development affecting Conservation Areas and their settings, including Northleach, and the conversion of Listed Buildings and locally listed buildings (though CDC does not maintain a list of the latter)
- Policy EN12: Local Green Spaces – designating spaces in line with the NPPF
- Policy INF2: Social & Community Infrastructure – providing for new facilities and protecting existing facilities
- Policy INF4: Highway Safety – requiring schemes to ensure they will meet a series of standards by way of their location and access
- Policy INF5: Parking Provision – providing for new public car parks

3.8 In general, the Local Plan continues the strategy for the town of recent years. No significant change has been planned for since 2001 and none is proposed in the coming decade or so. The combination of the town's relatively isolated location within the AONB and its special heritage interest is considered to mean the town cannot sustain any significant growth in its population, jobs or services. Hence, its housing proposals are modest and there is no special focus on employment generation or new retail.

4 Community Views on Planning Issues

4.1 The Town Council has consulted with the local community during the course of the Plan preparation process, and its contents reflect the results of these consultations, which have included meetings, open days and community surveys.

4.2 A survey was distributed to all households in the parish in July 2014. 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. Over 300 responses were received. On a household basis, this represents a response rate of 38% (313 out of 820 households), which provides a sound basis for shaping the Plan. Most respondents are long-term residents of the parish: 82% said they have lived in the parish for at least five years, and 63% for at least 10 years.

4.3 A summary of the key findings follows.

- There is no mandate for more development over and above what has already been proposed. Only 6% think Northleach needs more development than the 100 homes then proposed, while 34% think this is the right amount of development for the town. In fact, over half (57%) 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.
- Superfast broadband was the infrastructure need most commonly identified as a current need. 81% of residents think this is something we need now, even without new development. In large measure, the capacity for superfast broadband has now been delivered.
- Parking was also clearly identified as a current issue with 73% 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: 44% of respondents said we need more now, and a further 33% 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 42% of respondents. A further 46% 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 such that Thames Water have now committed to undertake biannual maintenance of the system to help alleviate the problems.

- bus services were identified as a significant current need with 37% of respondents saying that we needed more bus services now. A further 42% 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, 56% felt new development would increase the need for local shops, and 41% felt that new development would increase demand for pubs, cafes and restaurants.
- 58% of respondents said we would need more primary school provision to support new development, and 44% said we would need more nursery/pre-school provision.
- In terms of 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 and the Market Place. 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!

4.4 Since these issues were identified the Town Council has identified sites it considers suitable for school expansion and public parking with the support of the owners and engaged in lengthy discussions with the District Council over these over the last year. Improvements to parking in West End have also been facilitated with the rearrangement of the positioning of the yellow lines controlling parking. This has assisted traffic flow but cannot alleviate the need for increased parking facilities. The Council has also acquired the Hamilton meadow, adjoining the King George V playing field and secured significant funding towards improving the play area there. A commitment from Thames Water to ensure more regular maintenance of the existing mixed foul and surface water system has also been secured.

5 Vision, Objectives & Land Use Policies

Vision

5.1 The vision for Northleach Parish in 2030 is:

“Northleach has become a thriving market town providing a wider range of services for its local community and the wider rural area. Its population has grown as the housing needs of local people have been met and working age people have been drawn to live and work here. There are more jobs as new business units and town centre shops have started up and are sustained by local and tourist trade. The growth of the town has not been met to the cost of its special historic character. There have been a number of small housing schemes on the edge of the town that have been set within a new ‘green ring’ of footpaths, parkland, plan areas and woodland that now surrounds the town”.

Objectives

5.2 To achieve this vision, it has been decided that the Plan will focus on a small number of key objectives, as follows:

- Sustain the significance of the town's heritage assets and its AONB location by planning for development that is sympathetic to the scale, topography and character of the town and its beautiful landscape setting
- Strengthen the vitality and viability of the town centre by protecting the range of its retail and other commercial activities and by managing public car parking more successfully
- Improve the attractiveness of the town to tourists and visitors by improving existing facilities and infrastructure
- Sustain the effectiveness of the town's community facilities to continue to serve the town and its surrounding settlements

Monitoring & Review Policies

5.3 The Neighbourhood Plan will be monitored by Cotswold District Council and the Town Council using data collected in planning monitoring reports. The objectives will form the core of the monitoring activity but other data collected and reported at a parish level relevant to the Plan may also be included. It is expected that the Plan will be formally reviewed on a five-year cycle or to coincide with the development and review of the development plan if this cycle is different.

Land Use Planning Policies

5.4 Land use policies are used to determine planning applications made for development proposals. They can establish the principles for retaining or changing the use of land in settlements and in the countryside. They can also set out the conditions against which development proposals will be judged in terms of their design, access etc.

5.5 The purpose of these policies is either to encourage planning applications to be made for things the local community wants to see happen or to discourage applications for developments that they do not want to happen. Policies must be clearly written so they can be easily applied when considering planning applications.

5.6 The Plan deliberately avoids repeating existing national or local planning policies. The proposed policies therefore focus on a relatively small number of key development issues in the area. For all other planning matters, the national and local policies of other planning documents – the National Planning Policy Framework and the Local Plan – will continue to be used. In particular, the Plan assumes that the proposals of the new Local Plan will be adopted in early 2018, namely the allocation of housing land at East End, so it does not itself make these proposals.

5.7 Set out below are the proposed policies of the Plan. Each policy has a number and title and the policy itself is written in bold italics for ease of reference. There is also a short statement explaining the intention of the policy and any other relevant background information. At the end of this document is the Policies Map – where a policy refers to a specific site or area then it is shown on the Map.

Policy NE1: Public Car Park

The Neighbourhood Plan allocates land for a public parking at West End, as shown on the Policies Map, to comprise at least 30 spaces with access from West End. The loss of mature trees in the highway and within the site boundary frontage must be kept to a minimum and there shall be no buildings erected as ancillary to the car park operation. All hardstanding areas should be made of permeable surfaces as far as possible.

5.8 This policy allocates land for the construction of a new public car park on available land off West End, in pursuit of an aim of Policy S12 of the Local Plan and in accordance with the location principles set out in Policy INF5. The technical evidence to support the policy is contained within the Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessments Report, which explains how the proposals have considered, their heritage and AONB landscape context. It requires the use of permeable hardstanding surfaces, as far as this is possible, as a means of mitigating the effects of flooding events (as it lies in Flood Zone 3).

5.9 The proposal has been assessed as contributing to the sustainable development of the town over the next decade or so. The town has long wanted a new public car park to provide spaces for coaches and cars. This will not only meet the growing demand from visitors to the town (the economic benefit of which has become increasingly

important in recent years as other jobs have been lost), but it will also enable improvements to be made to Market Place (see Policy NE5).

5.10 The land is considered to be an important visual gap between the town edge and the A429 and so the policy requires that there are no buildings erected as part of the car park. It is also important that access is achieved with the minimum loss of the mature trees in the highway and within the site boundary, in line with Local Plan Policy EN5. The land has been made available for development and the landowner has indicated support for the provisions of this policy.

Policy NE2: Primary School Expansion

The Neighbourhood Plan allocates land for the expansion of the Primary School and pre-school provision at Town Row, as shown on the Policies Map. Proposals will be supported, provided:

- i. Vehicular access is located in the north-west corner of the site and a means of access is retained along the northern boundary of the site for agricultural vehicles;***
- ii. The height, scale, massing, orientation and roof design of any education buildings minimise their visual impact on the open landscape setting to the east and south of the site and on the setting to the Northleach Conservation Area to the north of the site;***
- iii. The layout of buildings and spaces makes provision for a north-south pedestrian access through the site to connect with the access with the main school buildings; and***
- iv. The landscape scheme comprises a new landscape buffer on the southern and western site boundaries.***

5.11 This policy allocates a small area of available farm land immediately adjoining the primary school to enable the school to expand in respect of new buildings and of providing additional off-road car parking spaces, in line with the principles of policies INF2, INF4 and INF5 of the Local Plan.

5.12 The school is popular and serves a wider rural population than the town alone. Its location on the southern edge of the town, and on a tight lane (Town Row), means that on-road car parking is an increasing congestion, amenity and safety problem. The school buildings may also need to be extended to continue to meet modern standards, though there is no urgency. The Town Council wishes to take this opportunity to plan for the longer term success of the school and facilitate the possibility of improved nursery provision to provide for working parents.

5.13 Given the location of the land outside the current development boundary, a detailed landscape evaluation of the policy has been undertaken. It shows that a successful scheme will require some ground works to make a level site suited for new school buildings, outdoor play space and additional car parking spaces for school staff and parent visitors. The policy therefore requires that the scheme is designed to

minimise its visual impact on the AONB and on the setting to the Conservation Area through the careful positioning and scale of the buildings. The landowner has made the land available for this purpose, provided access is retained through the site for agricultural vehicles, and so the policy makes such a requirement.

Policy NE3: Northleach Conservation Area

Proposals for new buildings within the Northleach Conservation Area, as shown on the Policies Map, or to its setting, should sustain and enhance its special heritage significance and should have specific regard to the following principles:

- ***Reflecting prevailing construction materials, building lines and building heights and forms in the immediate area;***
- ***Minimising the use of external signage and lighting;***
- ***Maintaining views to the Church of St. Peter & St. Paul;***
- ***Maintaining the special interest of key views to the town centre along West End and East End; and***
- ***Maintaining the special interest of glimpse views from within the Conservation Area to the surrounding landscape.***

Proposals for alterations or extensions to existing buildings within the Conservation Area should have full regard to the need for the materials to respect the heritage of the buildings and locality, using for example the appropriate Cotswold stone, correctly laid and mortared, appropriate doors and window frames and roofing materials. Reconstituted stone and synthetic materials should be avoided.

5.14 This policy establishes a number of key design principles for new buildings and alterations to existing buildings in the Northleach Conservation Area and its setting, which extends some distance to the west and east of the older parts of the town.

5.15 In the absence of an adopted Conservation Area Appraisal, the principles are derived from the new Design Statement prepared to support the NENP and which is available as a separate report in the evidence base. As such, it complements policies EN11 (in respect of managing development within the Northleach Conservation Area) and D1 (in applying the Cotswold District Design Code) of the Local Plan in refining those general principles specifically to Northleach.

Policy NE4: General Design Principles

The scale, density, massing, height, landscape design, layout and materials of all development proposals located outside the Northleach Conservation Area, including alterations to existing buildings, will be required to reflect the character and scale of the

surrounding buildings and to have full regard to the significance of the setting of the Conservation Area.

Development proposals will be expected to demonstrate they accord with the following principles:

- i. Development should not obscure or compromise key views of the surrounding landscape or important buildings, for example, the view of the church.**
- ii. Gardens essential to the settings of houses and cottages should not be used for new buildings.**
- iii. Burgage plots should wherever possible be retained intact and where that is not possible evidence of their existence should be apparent**
- iv. Developments should be of moderate density, and those adjacent to open country should provide a graduation into the surrounding countryside.**
- v. Materials should be sympathetic to the natural environment and built heritage. Natural materials should be used wherever possible and as a matter of course on public facing aspects.**
- vi. Lighting should wherever possible avoid light pollution**
- vii. Wherever possible, easy pedestrian access should be incorporated into any new development**
- viii. Green links should be maintained and new links encouraged**
- ix. Proposals should fully assess and manage the impact of additional vehicles on any development**
- x. Orientation of buildings should be managed so as to absorb development into the ANOB landscape**
- xi. Soft landscape edges to the surrounding countryside should be maintained**

5.16 This policy establishes a series of key design principles for land within the Development Boundary of Northleach but outside the Conservation Area. The principles are derived from the new Design Statement prepared to support the NENP and which is available as a separate report in the evidence base. As such, it complements policies EN11 (in respect of managing development within the setting of the Northleach Conservation Area) and D1 (in applying the Cotswold District Design Code) of the Local Plan in refining those general principles specifically to Northleach.

Policy NE5: Town Centre

Proposals for improvements to, or for the extension of, established retail (A1), café/restaurant (A3) and drinking establishment (A4) uses in the defined Town Centre

Boundary will be encouraged, provided they will cause no substantial harm to designated heritage assets.

The loss of an established retail (A1), café/restaurant (A3) or drinking establishment (A4) use to another use will be resisted, unless it can be demonstrated that:

- i. the property has been continually, actively and effectively marketed for at least 12 months and that the use is no longer of commercial interest;**
- ii. the location is no longer competitive for its established use, nor for any other retail (A1), café/restaurant (A3) or drinking establishment (A4) purpose; and**
- iii. the premises are incapable of suitable improvement or extension to provide a viable commercial unit by way of policy constraints and/or of financial viability.**

Proposals for the improvements of the Market Square will be supported for:

- Restructuring the public car parking spaces in the defined area to create a new public space in conjunction with the provision of a replacement public car park in Policy NL1**
- Relocating the public toilet block**
- Reconfiguring the bus stop**

5.17 This policy complements Local Plan Policies EC7 and EC8, which define Northleach as a Local Centre and its Town Centre boundary, and which set out how retail and other 'town centre' uses will be managed.

5.18 Northleach Town Centre has fallen in the retail hierarchy of the District over the last 30 years and now relies on a small number of commercial uses, primarily in Market Square to sustain its function as a Local Centre. Those uses – of retail, café/restaurant and drinking establishment – provide a minimum critical mass to meet the needs of the local community and visitors. Any further loss of those uses to other non-commercial uses will undermine the remaining viability and vitality of the Town Centre, harming its sustainability and its economic base as a tourism attraction.

5.19 The policy therefore firstly encourages improvements to the existing retail, café/restaurant and pub uses in the Town Centre. All of the Town Centre lies within the Northleach Conservation Area and many premises are Listed Buildings. The heritage policy constraints of the development plan will limit the ability of owners to optimise the commercial viability of their premises. The policy rules out support for any proposal that will cause substantial harm to a Listed Building or the Conservation Area, as that cannot be justified by any public benefit. However, where the proposal will lead to less than substantial harm, the policy requires that the public benefit of securing the optimum use of the premises and thus retaining its commercial use in the Town Centre will outweigh that harm. In doing so, the policy refines Local Plan Policy EN10 on Designated Heritage Assets, as provided for by §134 of the NPPF.

5.20 Secondly, the policy will work alongside Local Plan Policy EC8 to build and sustain the success of the town centre by resisting the loss of existing retail, café/restaurant and pub uses. Although permitted development rights have been extended in recent years,

some do not apply in Conservation Areas or to Listed Buildings. The policy repeats the Local Plan Policy EC8 requirement for a sustained marketing effort to be undertaken to retain a use before its loss can be justified. But, given the critical importance of retaining commercial uses in the Town Centre, the policy goes further in requiring owners to show that the location is no longer competitive for its established use, or any other retail, café/restaurant or pub use, and that the premises cannot be modified in a viable way, without causing substantial harm to a designated heritage asset.

5.21 Finally, the policy identifies a series of improvements to the Market Square to attract further footfall and investment into the Town Centre. It assumes that Policy NL1 will be successfully implemented to create opportunities to reconfigure the Square as an attractive and functional public space, rather than simply a car park.

Policy NE6: Tourism Development

Development proposals that will contribute to improving the appeal of Northleach as a tourist destination will be supported, provided they maintain the scenic beauty of the Cotswold AONB and the special significance of the town's heritage assets.

Proposals to expand the Old Prison site on A429 Fosse Way for tourism and employment uses will be supported, provided it can be demonstrated that they have paid full regard to the very special significance of this Grade II* listed heritage asset. Specifically, proposals must avoid any alterations to the interior of the remaining buildings that formed the prison and any development that compromises the integrity of the former prison grounds and the rear exercise ground.

5.22 This policy is intended to promote tourism development in the town to create new jobs for local people and to help retain its local shops and services. Its support extends to the improvement of existing tourism facilities – including hotels and restaurants – and to the creation of new bed and breakfast accommodation or the provision of a new hotel within the settlement boundary. As such, it complements Policy EC11 of the Local Plan on tourism development.

5.23 More specifically, the policy encourages further tourism and employment development at the Old Prison on Fosse Way. The buildings, formerly the Northleach House of Correction dating from 1792, are a rare surviving example of its type and are therefore listed Grade II*. The listing description also notes the special significance of the interior arrangement of rooms and their fixtures and fittings, as well as the setting of the former prison grounds and rear exercise yard. Although altered, they accommodate a successful Cotswolds Discovery Centre and the offices of the AONB team. The site is considered to have the potential to accommodate additional tourism and employment uses, provided they do not undermine its special heritage asset value to the town and to the wider Cotswolds area.

Policy NE7: Local Green Spaces

The Neighbourhood Plan designates Local Green Spaces in the following locations, as showing on the Policies Map:

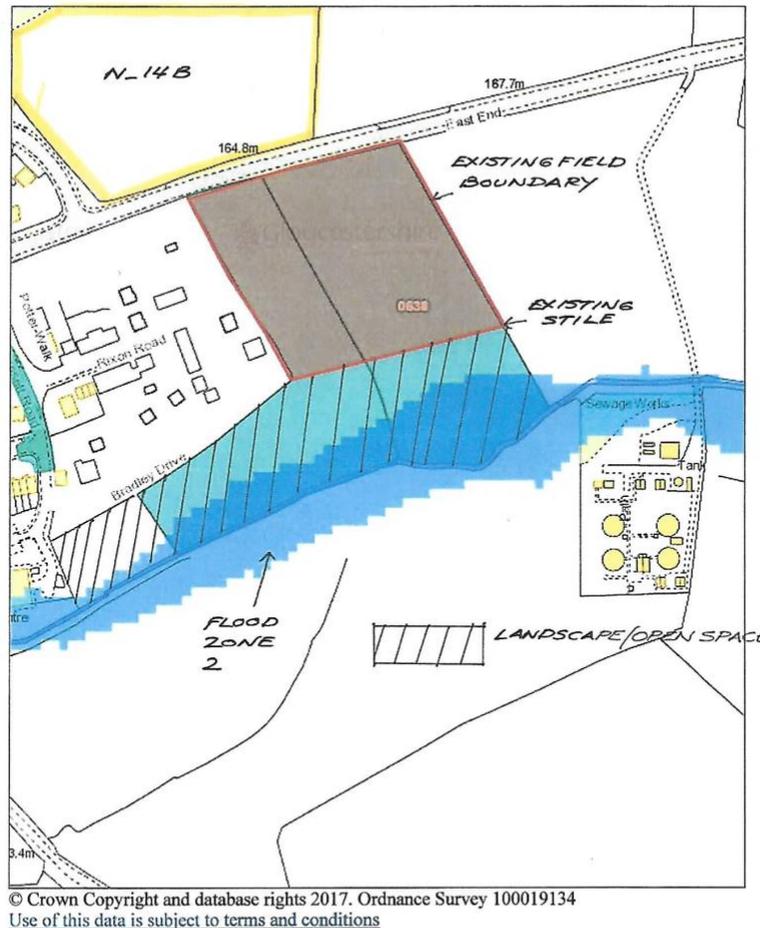
- i. Land off East End**
- ii. Land off Farmington Road**
- iii. The Meadows & King George V Playing Field**

Proposals for development that will undermine the permanent open character of a Local Green Space will be resisted unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated.

5.24 This policy supplements Local Plan Policy EN12 by designating three Local Green Spaces in accordance with §76 and §77 of the NPPF by way of their special open character and importance to the local community. The effect of designation is to give the land the equivalent protection as the Green Belt in terms of preventing development that will undermine its essential open character.

5.25 Each site adjoins the town's boundary and therefore are in close proximity to the local community. In the context of Northleach, none is considered to form an extensive tract of land.

5.26 The Land off East End is considered special as it forms an important gateway into the town from the east with significant valley views and an existing public path through part (see Plan C below). It is popular with walkers and well used. It has the potential to assist in creating a link with the Town Council meadow land and adjacent playing field, offering the possibility of a route through the town from East to West away from the main road.



Plan C: Land off East End (hatched)

5.27 The Land off Farmington Road is considered special as it is similarly popular with local walkers and has some landscape and biodiversity interest (see Plan D below). It also connects with other local formal and informal footpaths which again offers the possibility of incorporating this swathe of land into a green ring around the town.

5.28 Discussions have taken place with each of the relevant landowners and both are supportive of such a green ring. Maps indicating the areas in question appear below.

5.29 Agreement will need to be reached in due course with the owner of the land off East End (Gloucestershire County Council) as to the routing of the existing footpath (which crosses from the north-west corner of the brown land to the stile marked on the south-east corner) if the brown land is in future seen to have the potential for any development in the next plan period.

5.30 Cotswold District Council is the owner of the woodland off Farmington Road, and save for the area edged red is content in principle for this land to be allocated as green space and, or transferred to the Town Council.

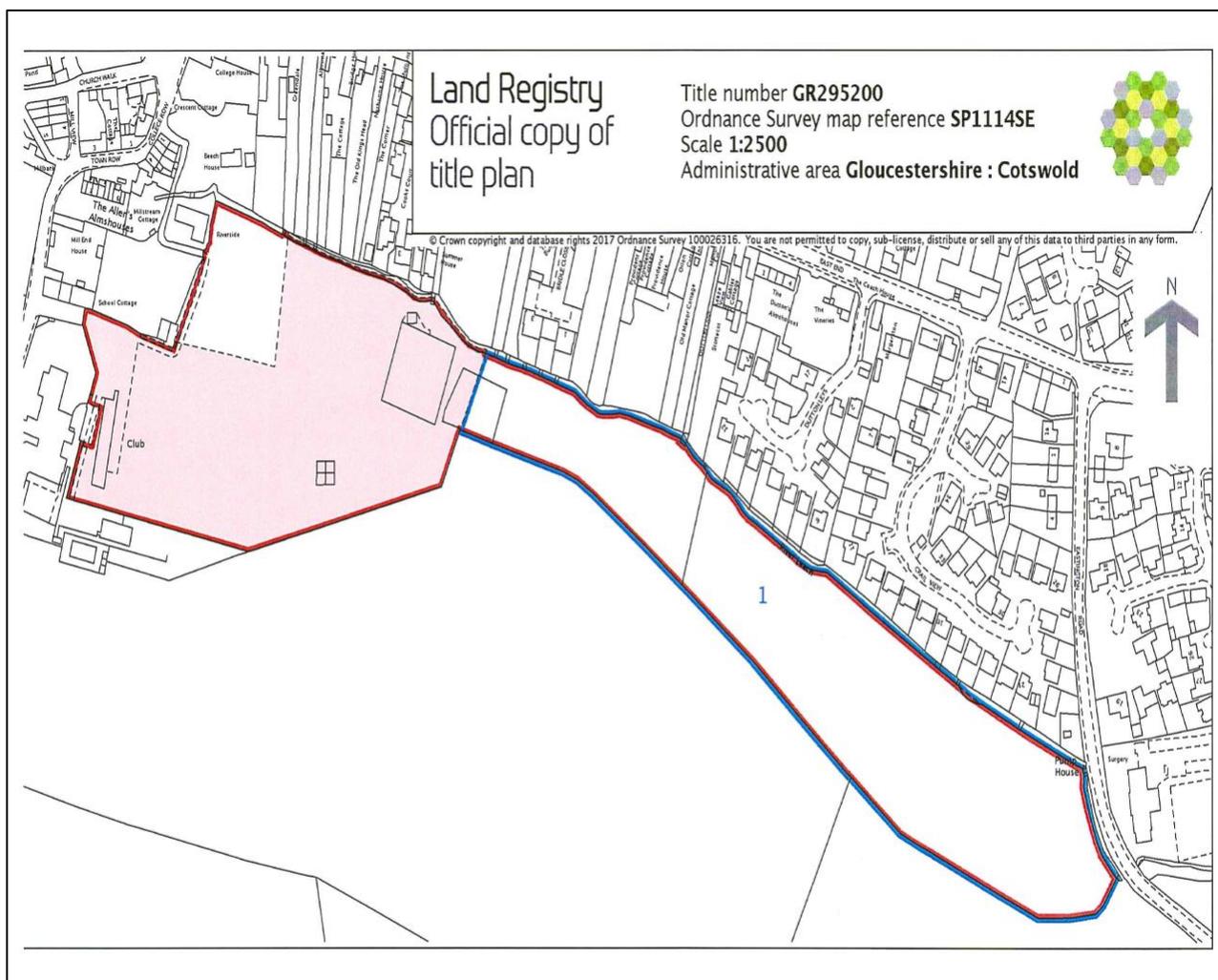


Plan D: Land off Farmington Road

5.31 The Town Council also owns the land is situated along the river valley and comprising the Wills and Hamilton Meadows and the King George V Playing Field. All of this land is well used by the local community for walking and sporting activities and is of particular historic importance having been given by local benefactors.

5.32 The playing field comprises land purchased from Lord Sherborne in 1928, later supplemented by an additional parcel of land as a gift to the town. Ten years later, in 1939, Mr W J Castle gave another parcel of land for the same purpose and the whole is now vested in the Town Council as trustee of what is now known as the King George V Playing Field. Over the years the ground has been drained and the playing field surface developed to provide adult and junior's football pitches, a cricket square and store, two tennis courts, a tennis club hut, a children's play area, a car park and a Pavilion.

5.33 The meadowland was gifted to Fields in Trust by the local landowning Wills family in 2006. Ownership of the same was transferred to the Town Council in 2017, under the condition that the land would be protected through a deed of dedication to ensure that it is forever to be used for recreational purposes.



5.34 All of this land is considered special for its beauty, recreational value and historic significance. It adjoins the town's development boundary and is protected by its Fields in Trust status. All of it runs through the river valley and is an important part of the valley corridor. It is not however an extensive tract of land. The meadowland provides a natural habitat for wildlife along the river and in the meadow itself, and has well established footpaths running through it. The playing field is well used for sport, for school activities and for the town's annual Charter Fair which celebrates the granting of its Royal Charter in 1227.

5.35 The land also forms part of an important walking route through the town without the need to utilise the main road, all the way from the car park by the school to the bridge at Eastington Road. In addition, it already forms a significant part of the green space and green ring that this plan seeks to encourage and create. The Town Council has therefore resolved to designate all of this land as local green space and so ensure its protection for future generations.

6 Implementation

6.1 The Neighbourhood Plan will be implemented through a combination of Cotswold District Council's consideration and determination of planning applications for development in the town and wider parish, and through steering public and private investment into a series of infrastructure proposals contained in the plan.

Development Management

6.2 Most of the policies contained in the Plan will be delivered by landowners and developers. In preparing the Plan, care has been taken to ensure, as far as possible, that the policies are therefore achievable and carry the support of these stakeholders as well as the local community.

6.3 Whilst the District Council will be responsible for the development management decisions, the Town Council will use the Plan to frame its representations on submitted planning applications. It will also work with the District Council to monitor the progress of sites coming forward for development.

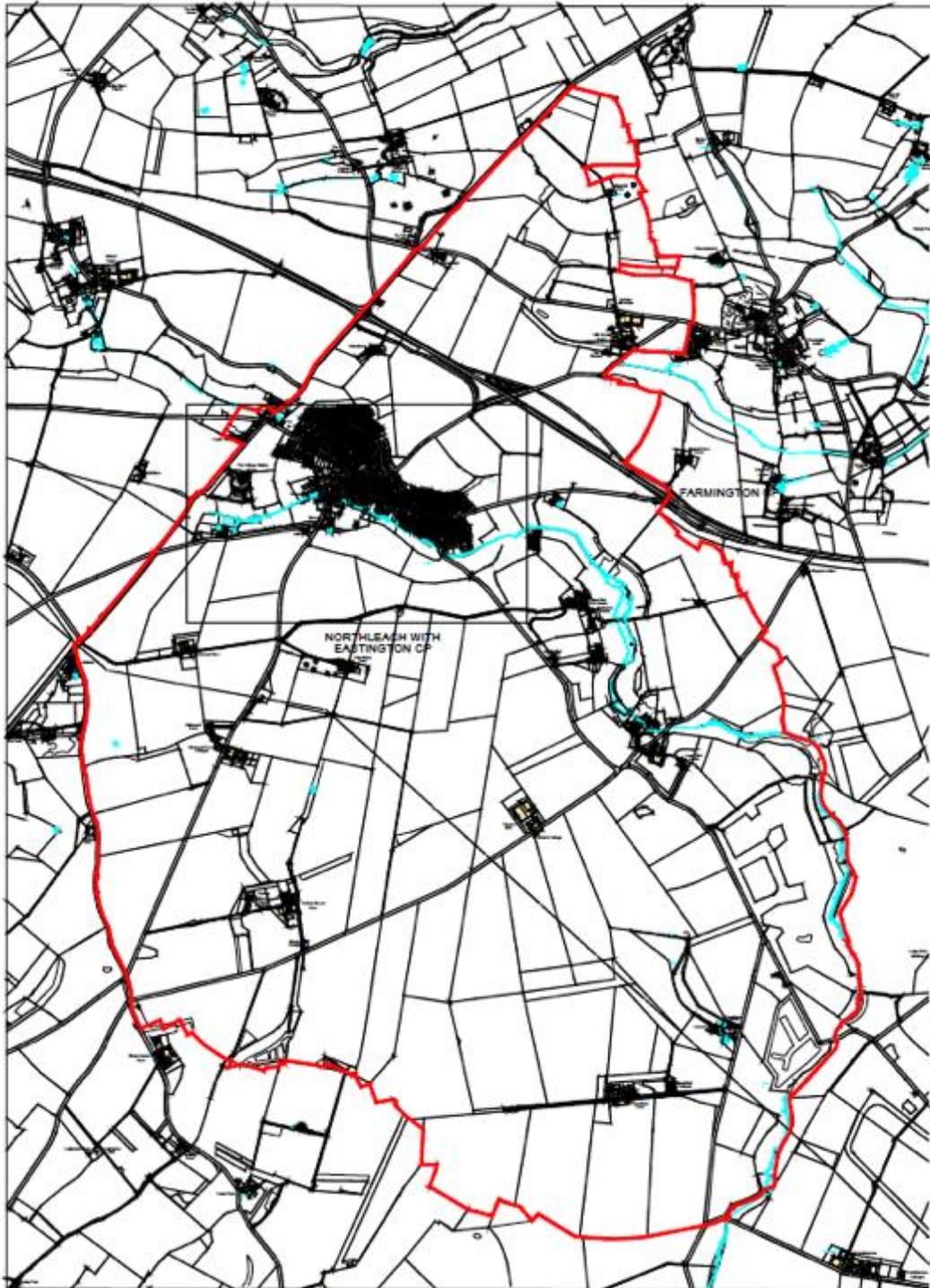
Infrastructure Projects

6.4 The Town Council proposes some or all of the following projects for investment of future Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding allocated by the District Council to the Town Council:

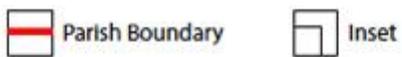
- Environmental improvements to Market Place
- New toilets and bus shelter in or close to Market Place
- Improvements to footpaths to connect the town with the surrounding landscape

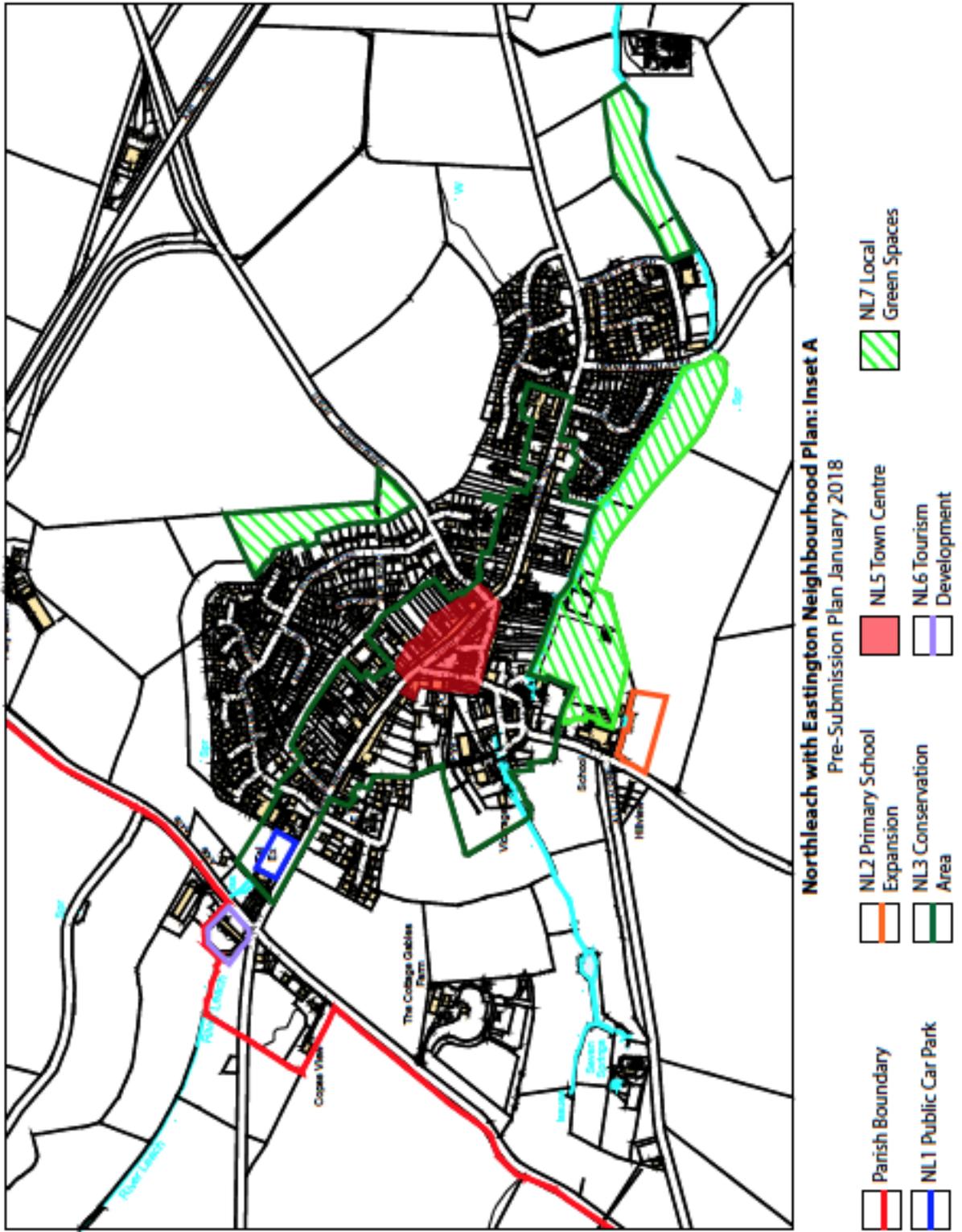
6.5 This series of local infrastructure projects will be prioritized for investment from Section 106 agreements and from the CIL. A minimum of 25% of the levy collected from development in the parish will be passed to the Town Council for investment in these and other relevant project proposals. This provides the local community with an indication of the priorities for investing the fund to improve local infrastructure as a result of new development.

Policies Map & Inset



Northleach with Eastington Neighbourhood Plan: Policy Map
Pre-Submission Plan January 2018





Evidence Base

Northleach Town Plan (2011) www.northleach.gov.uk/your-town-council/project-groups/town-plan/

UK Census 2011: www.ukcensusdata.com/northleach-e05004328#sthash.HbNvEnr9.dpuf

Northleach Housing Needs Report (2013) www.northleach.gov.uk/2013/11/northleach-housing-needs-report/

Community Profile Northleach (2013)

Neighbourhood Plan with Eastington Neighbourhood Plan Engagement Strategy (June 2014) www.northleach.gov.uk/ndp

Northleach with Eastington Neighbourhood Plan Survey (2014)

Northleach with Eastington State of the Parish Report (2014)

Northleach with Eastington Neighbourhood Plan: Draft Sustainability Appraisal (2016)

Northleach with Eastington Neighbourhood Plan: Design Statement (2016)
www.northleach.gov.uk/your-town-council/neighbourhood-plan/town-design-statement/

Northleach with Eastington Neighbourhood Plan: Site Assessment Report (2015)

Cotswolds AONB Management Plan (2013 – 2018)
http://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/management_plan/index.html

Cotswolds AONB Position Statements www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/?page=position

Landscape Character Assessment & Guidelines (2000)
www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/landscape_character_assessment/cotswoldlandscape.htm

Cotswold District Local Plan 2001 – 2011 (2006)
www.cotswold.gov.uk/residents/planning-building/planning-policy/local-plan-2001-2011/

Cotswold Local Plan 2011 – 2031: Planning Policies (Reg 18 Consultation November 2015)
http://consult.cotswold.gov.uk/portal/fp/local_plan_2011-2031/lpr18/reg18_planning_policies

Cotswold Local Plan 2011 – 2031: Draft Development Strategy & Site Allocations (Regulation 18 Consultation December 2014)
http://cotswold.objective.co.uk/portal/fp/local_plan_2011-2031/lpr18/local_plan_reg_18_consultation_development_strategy_and_site_allocations_january_2015?tab=lis

Cotswold District Local Plan 2011 – 2031 evidence base:

www.cotswold.gov.uk/planning-policy/evidence-base-and-monitoring/

Cotswold Local Plan 2011 – 2031: Interim Sustainability Appraisal (December 2014)

<http://www.cotswold.gov.uk/residents/planning-building/planning-policy/emerging-local-plan/evidence-base-and-monitoring/>

Cotswold Local Plan 2011 – 2031: Interim Sustainability Appraisal (November 2015)

<http://www.cotswold.gov.uk/residents/planning-building/planning-policy/emerging-local-plan/evidence-base-and-monitoring/>

Role and Function of Settlements Study (July 2012)

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/

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) June 2014

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

Cotswold Design Code www.cotswold.gov.uk/media/241227/The-Cotswold-Design-Code.pdf