

Stisted Parish Council



Stisted Neighbourhood Plan 2024-2033

Submission (Regulation 16) Consultation Version

Draft – for SEA/HRA screening

August 2024

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1 INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the plan

- 1.1 This document represents the Neighbourhood Plan for Stisted for the period 2024 to 2033. The Plan contains a vision for the future of Stisted and sets out clear planning policies to realise this vision.
- 1.2 The principal purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to guide development within the Stisted neighbourhood area. It also provides guidance to anyone wishing to submit a planning application for development within the parish. The process of producing a plan has sought to involve the community as widely as possible. The different topic areas are reflective of matters that are of considerable importance to Stisted, its residents, businesses and, community groups.
- 1.3 Some of the Neighbourhood Plan policies are general and apply throughout the Plan area, whilst others are site or area-specific and apply only to the appropriate areas illustrated on the relevant map. Nevertheless, in considering proposals for development, Braintree District Council will apply all relevant policies of the Plan. It is therefore, assumed that the Plan will be read as a whole, although some cross-referencing between Plan policies has been provided.
- 1.4 The process of producing the Neighbourhood Plan has identified a number of actions which have not been included in the policies' sections. This is because these are not specifically related to land use matters and therefore, sit outside the jurisdiction of a Neighbourhood Plan. These actions will be addressed by the Stisted Parish Council outside of the Neighbourhood Plan process.

Policy context

- 1.5 Once made, the Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the development plan for the area alongside the adopted Braintree District Local Plan (Section 1 and 2), Essex Minerals Local Plan (2014) and the Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan (2017). Policies within these Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plan should therefore, be considered collectively in the determination of development proposals in the area. It is a requirement that the Neighbourhood Plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan.
- 1.6 Essex County Council is the Minerals and Waste Authority for the Plan area and is responsible for the production of mineral and waste local plans. The Development Plan in Stisted therefore, also comprises the Essex Minerals Local Plan 2014 (MLP) and the Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan 2017 (WLP). These plans set out the policy framework within which minerals and waste planning applications are assessed. They also contain policies which safeguard known mineral bearing land from sterilisation, and existing, permitted and allocated mineral and waste infrastructure from proximal development which may compromise their operation.

- 1.7 Braintree District Council, as the local planning authority, designated the Stisted Neighbourhood Area in December 2017 to enable Stisted Parish Council to prepare the Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan has been prepared by the community through the Stisted Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.
- 1.8 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in accordance with the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (which were amended in 2015). The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has prepared the plan to establish a vision for the future of Stisted parish and to set out how that vision will be realised through planning and controlling land use and development change over the plan period.
- 1.9 The map in Figure 1.1 below shows the boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan area, which is the same as the administrative boundary of Stisted parish. Figure 1.2 shows the settlement boundary of Stisted village.

Figure 1.1: Stisted neighbourhood plan area

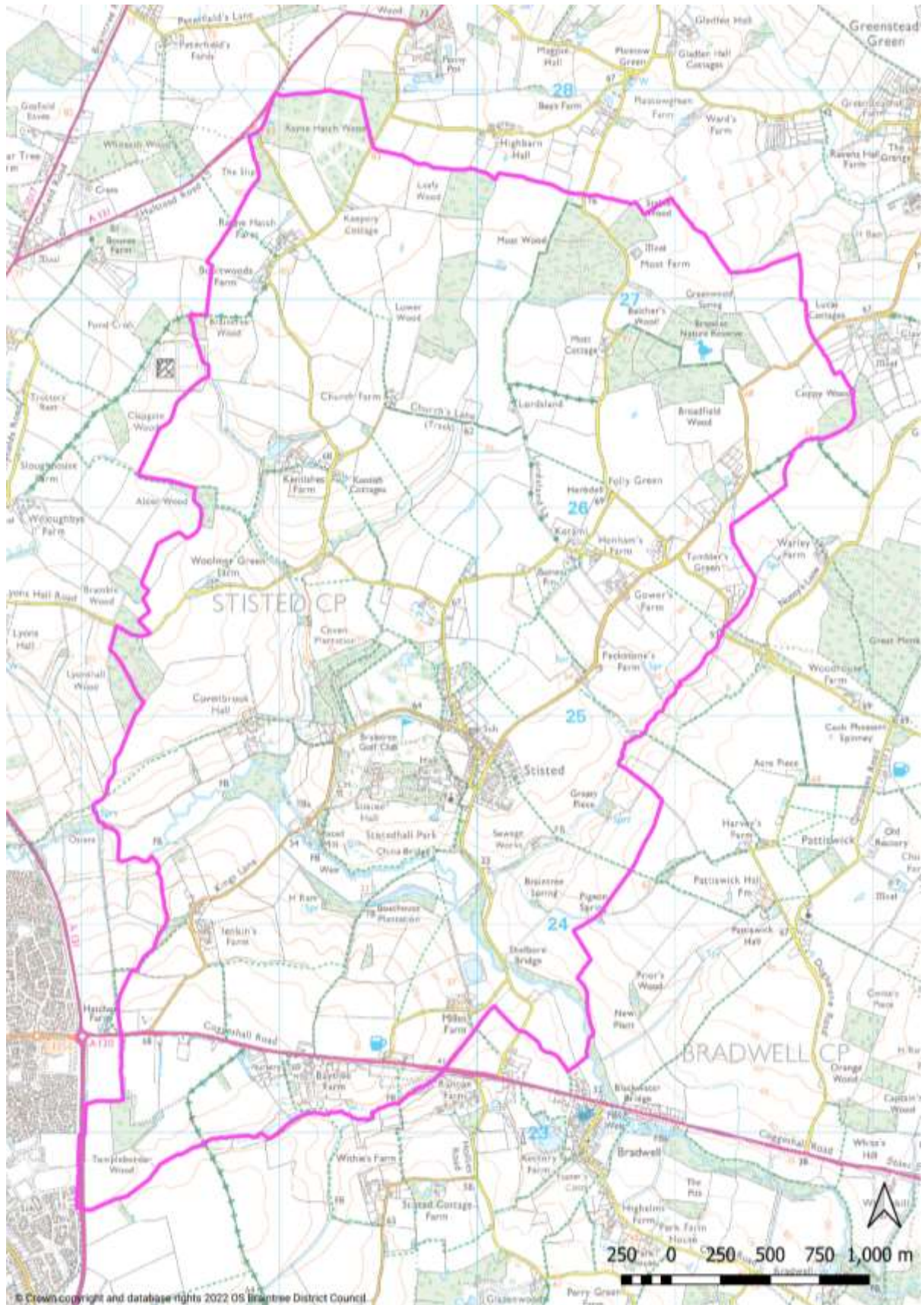


Figure 1.2: Settlement boundary of Stisted village



Monitoring and review of the Plan

- 1.10 Stisted Parish Council, as the responsible body, will be responsible for maintaining and periodically revisiting the Plan to ensure relevance and to also monitor delivery.
- 1.11 In order to provide a consistent framework for policies that make up the development plan, the period of the Neighbourhood Plan has been aligned with that of the Braintree Local Plan. As such, its end date is 2033. It is acknowledged that this means the plan period is relatively short, at 10 years. It is likely to be necessary to undertake an early review of the Neighbourhood Plan. This should align with the review of the Braintree Local Plan, once there is sufficient clarity relating to important strategic issues, in particular housing requirements. This is likely to be once a Submission Version (Regulation 19) version of the draft Plan has been published.
- 1.12 The Braintree Local Development Scheme was published in November 2023. This establishes the intention to commence the review of the Local Plan in 2024, with a view to completing it in 2027. No date is given for when a Regulation 19 Submission Version of the emerging Local Plan will be published but, this is likely to be around early 2026. Therefore, it is expected that the Neighbourhood Plan review could be required to commence at a similar time.

2 LOCAL CONTEXT

History of Stisted

- 2.1 The area within the current boundaries of the parish of Stisted has probably had some form of settlement for in excess of 2000 years supported by evidence of Neolithic and Early Bronze Age activity. The existence of a formal settlement now known as Stisted existed prior to the Norman Conquest. 'Stistede' is mentioned in two Anglo Saxon wills from 1046. In the Domesday Book of 1086, it is recorded that 'Stiesteda' comprised 13 villagers, 25 smallholders, four slaves, ploughland, woodland for 800 pigs, 27 acres of meadow and a mill.
- 2.2 At the time of the Domesday Book the lord of the manor was the Abbey of Christ Church, Canterbury, quite some distance away. The Church owned a good deal of the land at that time and for a long while after.
- 2.3 The oldest and most dominant building in Stisted village is the Parish Church All Saints (Grade I listed) which enjoys a commanding view of the River Blackwater valley. The earliest surviving part of All Saints Church is its north arcade, which was built about a century after the 1086 Domesday survey.
- 2.4 Stisted is home to a number of other historic buildings, some built in the middle of the 19th century by the then Squire of Stisted Hall, Onley Savill Onley, with their distinctive chimneys courtesy of Thomas Watts, a bricklayer with a creative eye. You will spot the squire's initials, OSO, on many of the houses he had built both inside and outside the village. There are other buildings which date back to medieval, Tudor and Georgian times.
- 2.5 It was a later squire of Stisted Hall, Cecil Sebag Montefiore, who was responsible for what went on in the centre of the village, The Montefiore Institute, where once there were public baths and a library, but is now residential, and home to the part time shop and post office and, a meeting room.
- 2.6 There is evidence to suggest that the population of Stisted has fluctuated over time with a peak in the early 1900s of around 1000 plus inhabitants. This would have led Stisted to be regarded as a town. A variety of retailers and trades people would have operated in the village at this time mainly serving the local rural population. This commercial activity would have tailed off over a period of time as the town of Braintree expanded and transport links improved. This coupled with a decline in rural employment led to the vast majority of working age residents commuting to the major towns of Essex and into London and its fringes.
- 2.7 Overall, the area around Stisted has been predominantly rural in character, with arable farming being the dominant activity from around 1700 in line with most of rural Essex.

Profile of the community today¹

Population

- 2.8 In 2021 there were 662 residents of the parish of Stisted, consisting of a large proportion of retirees and a slightly low proportion of children:
- 20.8% of the population are under 18, compared with 22.2% in Braintree district.
 - 23.5% of the population are 65 or older, compared with 16.6% in Braintree district.

Housing

- 2.9 Houses in Stisted are predominantly large and owned outright:
- 47.5% of houses are detached (the proportion in Braintree district is 28.6%)
 - 33.0% of houses have at least 4 bedrooms (the proportion in Braintree district is 24.8%)
 - Only 31.2% of houses have 1 or 2 bedrooms (the proportion in Braintree district is 35.5%)
 - 38.3% of houses are owned outright (in Braintree district the proportion is 30.5%).

Car ownership

- 2.10 Car ownership in Stisted is high:
- The average number of vehicles in each household in Stisted is 1.92, compared with 1.44 in Braintree district.
 - Only 7% of households do not have access to a car in Stisted, compared with 16.2% in Braintree district.

Economic activity

- 2.11 Economic activity is low in Stisted, mainly due to the high proportion of retirees:
- Of residents aged 16 to 74 in Stisted, 69.4% are economically active (the proportion in Braintree district is 73.8%)
 - Within economic inactivity, 19.5% of residents aged 16 to 74 are retired active (the proportion in Braintree district is 14.1%)

Environment and Landscape

- 2.12 Stisted parish residents appreciate the peaceful setting and access to the countryside it provides. The character of Stisted village itself and the local flora and fauna are important to many of the residents. Preserving and, where possible, improving these aspects of living in the parish while facing the pressure of speculative development is a huge challenge.

¹ Unless otherwise stated, all data comes from the 2021 Census

- 2.13 The community feels that the parish would benefit from more protected green space in order to preserve the rural landscape.
- 2.14 Since 1973, the parkland that surrounds Stisted Hall has been the home of Braintree Golf Club. Parts of the course directly borders the core village.

Heritage

- 2.15 The parish has 60 listed buildings and structures. The Parish Church of All Saints is grade I listed, dating back to the 12th century. There are a further three buildings that have grade II* listing. The remaining buildings are grade II listed.
- 2.16 The heritage of the parish is clear to see in the heart of the village and throughout the parish itself. However, many of its heritage assets are not protected through national listing.
- 2.17 The western side of the village and a large area to the west of the village is within a conservation area. This incorporates the older parts of the village and the buildings and grounds of Stisted Hall and south down to Stisted Mill.

Community Facilities

- 2.18 The village has a number of buildings that are used by the community, including the church, the Montefiore (containing the Post Office, village shop and a meeting room) and the village hall.
- 2.19 The village hall, built in the 1930s and in the care of a group of local trustees, is well used for a variety of activities such as dance and pilates. It has a small bar so is able to hold functions and is being improved so that it can hold more wedding receptions and parties.
- 2.20 The Montefiore Institute, located in the centre of Stisted, is an older building originating in the middle of the 19th century. This building is also in the care of a group of local trustees. In its time it has acted as a working man's bath house and reading rooms. Now it is used for meetings and presentation events, as well as hosting a volunteer-led, part-time post office and community shop. The upper floors of the building are let as living accommodation.
- 2.21 While the Montefiore and Village Hall are held in separate trusts, there is no such protection for the church. The main issue with this facility is providing enough custom for it to remain viable in the long term.
- 2.22 There are also the playing fields (known as The Croft), consisting of a football pitch, pavilion, childrens' play area, small basketball court and assault course. There are also areas being given over to nature and rewilding. This lies at the heart of the village and is popular with both locals and those from outside the parish. However, it would benefit from some investment; the football pitch is in poor condition and the childrens' play area would be safer if fenced off.
- 2.23 There are community allotments in the village which are managed by the Village Hall Trust and are well used.
- 2.24 In the village is the Stisted Academy which is a Church of England Voluntary Aided primary school with a register of 104 children split into 4 classes. The old 19th century school house is home to Fairways Day Nursery which is open weekdays for pre-school children.

- 2.25 There is no library in the village, the nearest being in Braintree or Coggeshall (open part-time hours). The nearest doctors, dentists' surgeries, vets practice and pharmacies are in Coggeshall and Braintree. There is one residential care home, based at Stisted Hall which is owned and run by the Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution.
- 2.26 The Stisted Historic Archive is housed in the Fairhead Room. It involves many local residents and it is an asset used beyond the Stisted parish boundaries.

Drainage

- 2.27 The parish frequently suffers from surface water flooding during inclement weather. Prolonged rainfall overwhelms the ditches along the roadsides throughout the parish causing large areas of standing water on the roads. The River Blackwater is prone to bursting its banks and flooding the area with varying severity. In some instances Water Lane, near the Shelborn Bridge is impassable when the River Blackwater bursts its banks and floods the adjacent water meadow making both the highway and footpaths impassable.
- 2.28 In the past there was a system of interlinked ponds in the village itself (some which are still present and in use on the golf course) that aided drainage. However, these have been filled and/or lost over time. It has been suggested by many longstanding local residents that the loss of these ponds has contributed to the surface water flooding that occurs in the village of Stisted itself.

Housing

- 2.29 There is no requirement in the Braintree Local Plan to provide sites for residential development. However, there is considered to be a local need for lower cost housing probably by way of an Affordable Rural Housing scheme.
- 2.30 Stisted parish does experience pressure from speculative development. What tends to be promoted are schemes of exclusively high cost, executive homes which are not what is required by the parish in order to maintain a healthy community. Proposed developments, by virtue of being in a small village, also tend to be insufficiently large to deliver facilities for the benefit of the wider community. In the opinion of local residents, such developments have not been sufficiently mindful of the environmental and sustainability issues faced by the parish.

Transport and Movement

- 2.31 The roads through the parish and those connecting residential areas are typical single track country lanes, lacking in footways, cycleways and lighting. Obviously, this has an impact on road safety for pedestrians and cyclists, especially with the current speed limit on most roads through the parish being set at the national speed limit.
- 2.32 Coupled with a lack of access to public transport from the village itself, residents have no choice but to make their way to the A120 or Braintree either via the public rights of way, by walking on the narrow roads, by cycling or they are forced to take their own car.

- 2.33 Up to 2022 there were two community bus services running which connected the village with destinations in Braintree, including Braintree Freeport Retail Village. Happily these services have been restarted. The only buses that run through the parish run along the A120 with a 30-minute service. The few bus stops are a mile away from the nuclear village and only accessible via grass footpaths (which are unusable during bad weather) or walking along a lane.
- 2.34 The parish roads are frequently used to avoid congestion on the A120 and A131 (which both border the parish), resulting in high volumes of fast moving and heavy traffic which is entirely unsuited to the local road network. Damage is caused to the carriageway due to the nature and volume of the traffic.
- 2.35 The parish is well served by its network of footpaths, bridleways and byways. Many radiate from the centre of the village and connect with the footpaths networks in neighbouring parishes. This gives many opportunities for walking as a leisure pursuit and dog walking. In general, the paths are in good condition due to the work of the Parish Footpath Officer. Many of those paths that head south from the village centre are bisected by the A120 with no safe way to cross. This road is a national highway and is subject to heavy use by HGVs either heading west to the M11 to access London or east to link with the A12 to head towards the Port of Felixstowe. There is one footpath that heads into Braintree to the west, however this is mainly a grass path so is unusable during poor weather and has no lighting.
- 2.36 Since the public rights of way form a vital link to public transport and provide access to the countryside, it is essential that these are maintained to a good standard.
- 2.37 There are no designated cycleways through the parish and there are currently no plans for this to change. The narrow and twisting roads and lanes that characterise the parish are not considered to be safe for cycling, particularly for younger children.

Economy

- 2.38 Although home to a number of successful businesses, there is no active local economy to speak of in the parish. In the centre of the village there is the Post Office and village shop, both of which limit opening to a few days each week. There is a garden centre with a restaurant/tea shop located on the A120 on the southern edge of the Parish, along with a restaurant.
- 2.39 There are not many opportunities for local employment in the parish. Existing businesses do not appear to be seeking to expand and when they do, most require skilled workers.
- 2.40 There is no retail space to house new businesses and no passing trade to encourage the development of such.

Main issues and challenges in Stisted

2.41 Based on community engagement at the outset of the development of the plan, the following strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were identified:

Strengths • Peaceful setting • Countryside access • Community spirit incl. Parish church • Local wildlife • Character of village • Green space • Safe environment • Heritage, including large conservation area • School • Community facilities • Footpath network • Variety of organisations • CANS environmental group • Listed buildings • Success in “Village of the Year” • Playing fields • Village Hall • Community bus scheme • Village activities e.g. litter picks	Weaknesses • Poor public transport links • Low priority for rollout of new services and improvements • Lack of amenities/services • Limited post office hours • Lack of retail space • No active local economy • Imbalance in housing stock • Condition of roads - use by HGVs • Access to A120 dangerous • Frequent rat running when A120 & A131 are blocked • Lack of local job opportunities • No safe footpath to bus stops • No cycle routes • Increased road flooding • Poor condition of ditches • Lack of protected green space • Street parking
Opportunities • Area for local retail • Protect and enhance heritage and conservation area • More affordable rural housing • More designated 'Green Space' • Forge stronger links with school, church, golf club and Stisted Hall • Cycle routes to Braintree • Improve footpath links to bus stops on A120 • Measures to relieve parking issues • Improved facilities and activities for teenagers and young adults • Provision of local health facilities • Set up a village welcome pack for new residents • Potential for local employment through farm diversification • Re-use of vacant buildings for employment-generating uses	Threats • Unchecked development within parish boundaries • Proposed incinerator at Rivenhall • Route for new A120 • Low priority for services, e.g. health facilities, lack of full broadband roll out, traffic calming measures • Increased house prices changing demographics as young people with village connections move away • Increased speculative development, ribbon development and division of garden plots creating more pressure on poor infrastructure. • Increased flooding - climate change • Impact of large developments external to the parish • Potential gravel extraction • Increased use by HGVs, due to sat nav directions, on crumbling roads

3 VISION AND OBJECTIVES

Vision for Stisted

- 3.1 The vision for Stisted parish over the period to 2033 is as follows:

Our vision of Stisted is one where the quality of life for all residents has been enhanced. Our landscape, environment and heritage has remained protected and has been balanced with sensitive development.

Neighbourhood Plan Objectives

- 3.2 The objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan as identified through engagement with the community are as follows:
- i. Objective 1: Ensure development is of the highest quality and retains the character that represents the best of Stisted.
 - ii. Objective 2: Ensure development reflects the highly sensitive rural environment in which it sits.
 - iii. Objective 3: Ensure development is low carbon and enables biodiversity to thrive.
 - iv. Objective 4: Protect spaces of value to the community.
 - v. Objective 5: Preserve and enhance the heritage of Stisted.
 - vi. Objective 6: Preserve and enhance access to the countryside.
 - vii. Objective 7: Address the housing needs of Stisted residents.

4 CHARACTER AND DESIGN

- 4.1 The character of the parish of Stisted is defined by two distinct aspects; its built form within the village, much of which is historic in nature, and the character of the surrounding rural landscape. We address each in turn.

Character and design in Stisted Village

- 4.2 Generally, there is a strong diversity in building form throughout Stisted village, creating a rich and diverse character of building. Many of the historic buildings and structures within Stisted feature notable demonstrations of building crafts, including elaborate brickwork, timber framing, and letter cutting, which creates a particular character to the townscape.
- 4.3 The Stisted Design Guide² was commissioned in order to provide a clear articulation of these design features with a view to ensuring that new development, in assembling high quality schemes, is informed by this.
- 4.4 Three distinct character areas have been identified within the village. This includes the historic core of the village (along the Street), the post-war housing development around Sarcel, and the legacy of ribbon development north of the village green along Rectory Road (see Figure 4.1).

² AR Urbanism (2021) *Stisted Design Guide*, for Stisted Parish Council

Figure 4.1: Stisted village character areas



Source: Stisted Design Guide

The Street Character Area

- 4.5 The oldest part of Stisted and forming the historic core of the village. It sits within the Conservation Area around the Street, from the Chicken Meadow by All Saint's Church up to the Village Green. Development is structured around the eastern boundary of Stisted Hall park land, and is characterised by:

- Landmark of All Saint's Church, set around visually important open space of the Chicken Meadow;
- Numerous heritage buildings, many of characteristic flint or half-timbering with ornamental chimneys representing the architectural legacy of Onley Savill-Onley;

- Traditional building forms, between 2 to 2.5 storeys tall including pitched roofs, dormer windows and jettying;
- Organic building line with a variety of approaches including back of pavement frontage, attractive front gardens, and set-backs;
- Most properties are served by unallocated street parking.

Sarcel Character Area

4.6 The Sarcel area was developed between 1930s and 1980s, along Back Lane. Sarcel represents a significant expansion of the village itself, almost doubling its former size. Key characteristics include:

- Detached and semi-detached buildings between 1 and 2 storeys set back from streets;
- Few common modern house designs that contrast with buildings in the adjacent historic core;
- Development presents a varied edge to surrounding landscape, mostly defined by back gardens, but with some rights of way and paths providing access to the countryside;
- Significant extensions and alterations to existing buildings have contributed to variation in the appearance of the character area;
- Lower density development with larger front gardens and significant landscaping have contribute to a sense of openness;
- While some properties have off-street dedicated parking, most are accommodated by unallocated street parking.

Rectory Road Character Area

4.7 The settlement along Rectory Road is fragmented and represents an incremental process of ribbon development over many years. This includes the subdivision and infill of larger housing plots and has been the subject of recent proposals for development. Key characteristics include:

- Mostly detached buildings set back from the road in private plots of varying size and shape;
- Weak adherence of buildings to a regular building line;
- Buildings range in size from 1-storey bungalows to larger executive homes;
- Edges to development from the road are softened by substantial green buffers and front gardens;
- Large back gardens provide green edges to surrounding landscape;
- Parking is accommodated on individual plots, off-street.

Housing design

4.8 Proposed building forms should reference the existing pattern of forms within Stisted, which feature predominantly rectangular plan forms with pitched roofs. Many of these are supplemented by a variety of projecting gables to provide more complex L- or T-shaped buildings.

4.9 Overhangs, projecting bays and gables are all characteristic features of Stisted and should be adopted within new development designs only where they play a deliberate role in articulating a varied street scene where consideration is given as to how they enclose space, terminate vistas or add variety.

4.10 Buildings heights within the Stisted are typically between 1 to 2 storeys (this varies by character area), and new developments should seek to follow the pattern relevant to its character area. Third storeys should be treated through the use of dormer windows serving proposed attics, as is the typical pattern within Stisted.

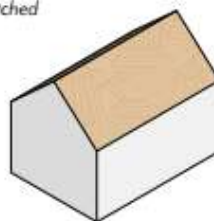
4.11 Roof shapes in Stisted tend to be of a few notable types: gable, hipped, mansard, and jerkin-head. Proposals within the village itself should respect and follow these traditional roof types in the interest of preserving and promoting the character of the parish.

4.12 Proposals for dormer windows should follow the pattern of historic buildings within Stisted where dormers tend to be gabled, and either set within the roof or walled.

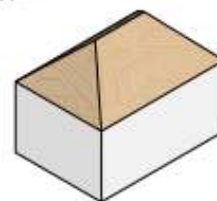
4.13 Boundaries between private, public and shared spaces should be clearly defined with appropriate thresholds that provide an appropriate level of overlooking in relation to the use of the space.

Typical Roof Types in Stisted

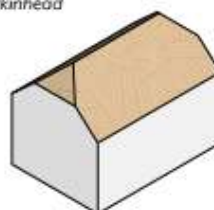
Pitched



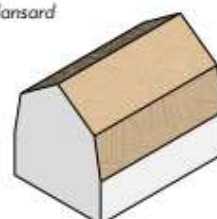
Hipped



Jerkinhead

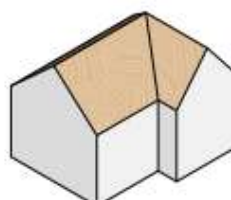


Mansard

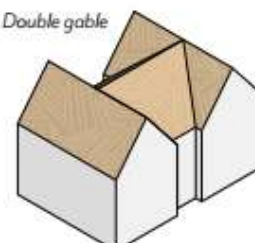


Typical Building Forms in Stisted

L-Shaped

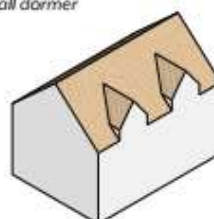


Double gable

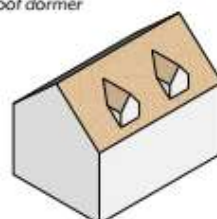


Typical Dormer Types in Stisted

Wall dormer



Roof dormer



- 4.14 The boundaries of private spaces should be softened by the use of landscaping, hedging and greenery where possible and in preference to wood panelling. Brick and flint boundary walls are common throughout Stisted and would be supported as an appropriate boundary treatment in new developments where greenery is not appropriate.
- 4.15 Where homes back onto open countryside, their boundaries should be softened by the use of hedgerows and landscaping to create a green transition to the surrounding landscape and reduce the visual impact of new buildings.
- 4.16 Ancillary buildings, including carports, pavilions and garden rooms should not dominate their principal buildings, and be of high-quality design that seeks to integrate with surrounding structures and character.
- 4.17 Extensions to existing buildings should be appropriate to their context, and never dominate the original building. Set-backs in the building facade, similar roof shape and pitches, and careful consideration of materials and details should be employed to create context-sensitive design that respects neighbouring properties.
- 4.18 Bin storage should be secure, discrete, and located with easy access to the street. Communal bin storage should be considered on larger sites as this avoids unsightly bins cluttering the streets on collection days.

Materials and details

- 4.19 Material choices for development should prioritise the use of traditional materials present in the local townscape, including brick, render, timber-framing, and flint.
- 4.20 Colour choice should pay attention to the local context, promoting the use of the natural colour of materials, and render colours that follow the predominant palette of 'off-white' shades present in the village.
- 4.21 Contemporary materials and features, used in a sensitive way that acknowledges the local and landscape context are welcome, as long as proposals do not inappropriately dominate nearby heritage or landscape assets or detract from the existing character of Stisted.
- 4.22 Half-timbering in West-Midlands regional style with ogee arches is a particular characteristic feature of Stisted, representing the architectural legacy of Onley Saville-Onley. To protect the integrity of this legacy, half-timbering should only be specified in new development if it represents the expression of a structural timber frame. False half-timbering would not be supported.
- 4.23 Elaborate brick chimneys are an additional architectural legacy of Stisted, originally built by local craftsman Thomas Watts. Proposals for new chimneys should respect the integrity of this legacy by avoiding large chimney stacks that dominate the local roof-line, while ensuring they follow the traditional brick material and construction.
- 4.24 Windows placement should be integral to and related to the built form of the building, with openings regular openings aligned to the axis of gables where possible;

- 4.25 The use of contemporary windows featuring large expanses of glass should not be supported within or adjacent to the conservation area, instead promoting more traditional windows forms as our present in the village including casement windows with traditional frames. However, this should reflect the need for windows to be energy efficient (see Policy STIS4).

POLICY STIS1: CHARACTER AND DESIGN

A. Development should demonstrate high quality design and layout which respects the local character of Stisted. Development within the specific Character Areas identified in the Stisted Design Guide should demonstrate how it has been informed by this guidance. This includes the development of public buildings.

B. In delivering high quality design, development proposals should demonstrate the appropriate use of design, layout, materials and features. The following principles should be considered as part of design proposals:

- a. Development should integrate with and enhance the form of its existing surroundings.**
- b. A range of densities, house types (where appropriate) and plot layouts should be used.**
- c. Building heights and rooflines should reflect the prevailing height of surrounding buildings unless it can be demonstrated that a taller building could complement or enhance the local character.**
- d. Building materials and details should be used in a sensitive way that respects the local context and should ensure they do not dominate nearby heritage or landscape assets.**

In all cases, development proposals are expected to be informed by the relevant guidance contained in the Stisted Design Guide.

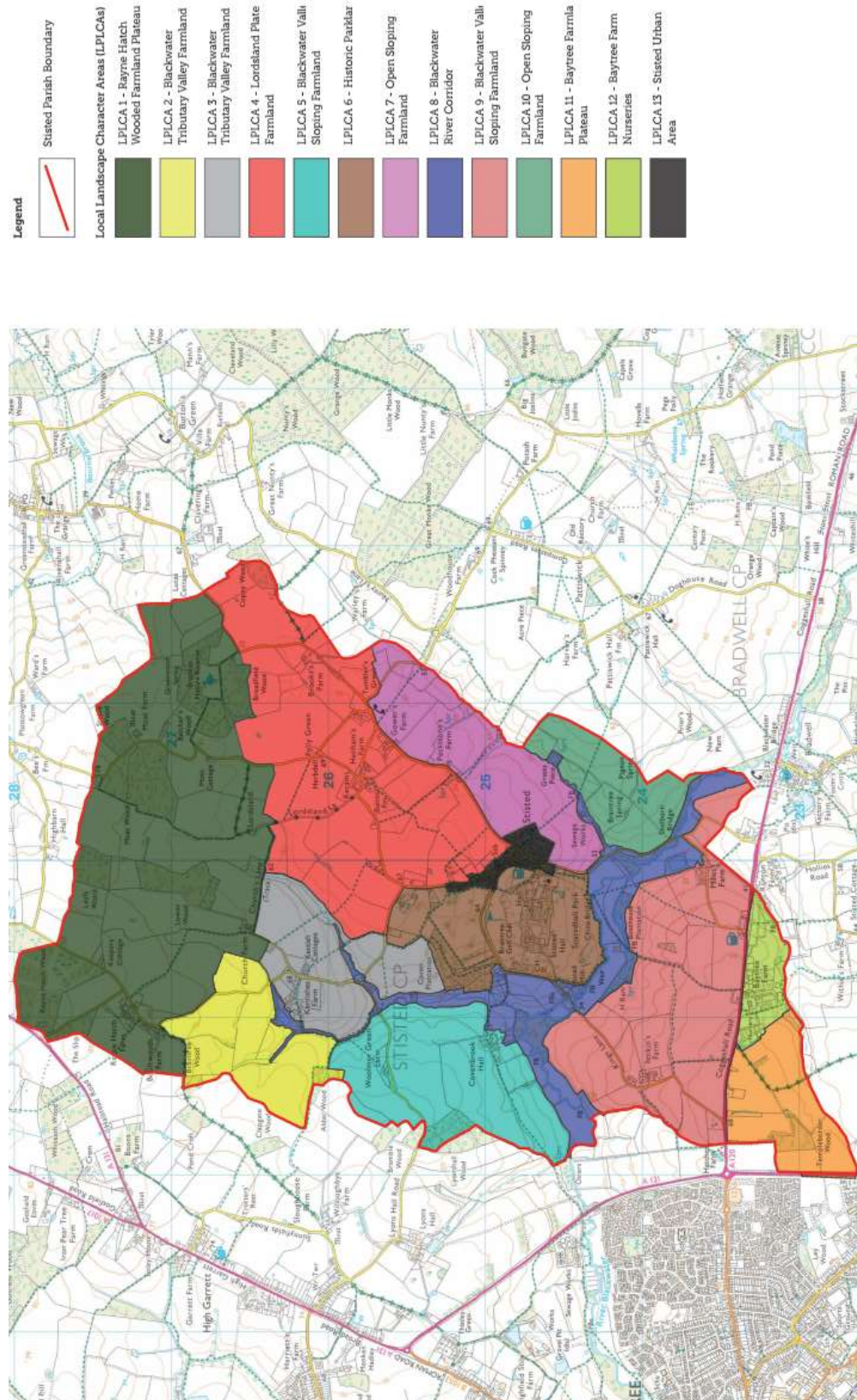
C. All major residential development proposals should include a proportionate statement and illustrations demonstrating how the principles and guidance in the Stisted Design Guide have been addressed.

Landscape character

- 4.26 The rural landscape of most of Stisted parish is highly valued by its residents and visitors. The Neighbourhood Plan has been informed by a Landscape Assessment Study³ which identified 13 local landscape character areas (LLCAs) in the parish (see Figure 4.2). Of these areas, everything north of the A120 (LCCAs 1-10) are in a highly sensitive landscape.

³ Liz Lake Associates (2020) *Stisted Landscape Assessment Study*, for Stisted Parish Council

Figure 4.2: Local landscape character areas



Source: Stisted Landscape Assessment Study

- 4.27 It is important that development protects the landscape setting of Stisted and is informed by the Landscape Assessment Study. In particular, development on the edge of the village, or that which is prominent in the landscape, should demonstrate what measures are proposed to adequately mitigate adverse impacts. This may be through comprehensive landscaping, the retention of mature trees and hedgerows and the design of the built environment. In addition, the landscape character of Stisted is informed by its network of lanes, byways and public rights of way. Development should ensure that these are retained and that their appropriate use is encouraged, including by pedestrians, horse riders and cyclists.

POLICY STIS2: LOCAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

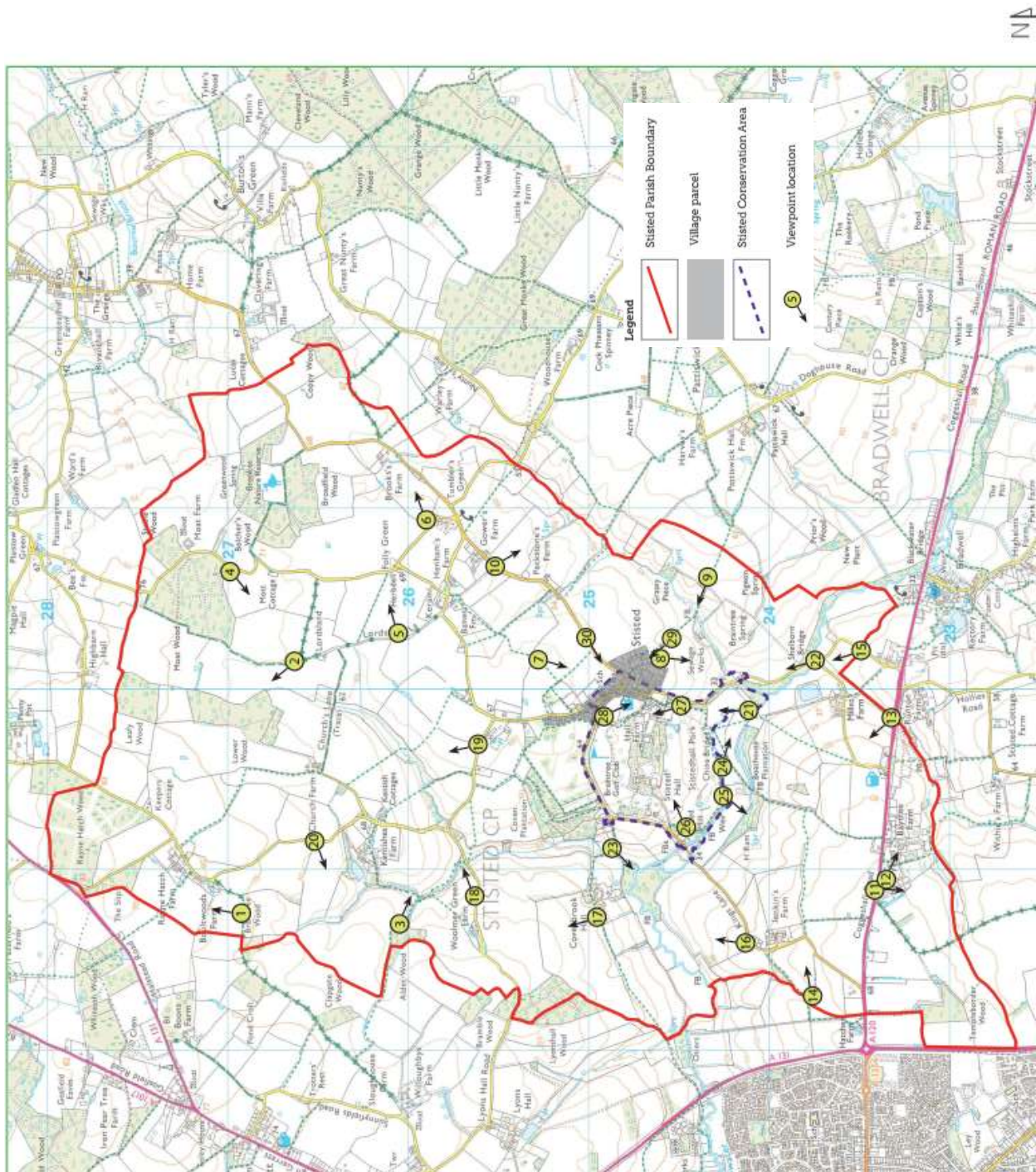
- A. Proposals for development should demonstrate how they have been informed by the special qualities and features in the Stisted Landscape Assessment Study 2020 or successor. In areas of high landscape sensitivity as identified in the Stisted Landscape Assessment Study, a landscape and visual impact appraisal will be required for all non-householder applications. This should demonstrate due regard to the particular sensitivities identified in the Landscape Character Assessment and seek ways to effectively mitigate against potential harm.**
- B. In particular, development proposals should demonstrate their location, scale, form, design and materials will protect and where practicable, enhance the following:**
- a. The special qualities and features of the area.**
 - b. The visual relationship and environment around Stisted village and its landscape settings.**
 - c. Distinctive landscape elements including but not limited to watercourses, commons, woodland trees, hedgerows and field boundaries, and their function as ecological corridors.**
 - d. Visually sensitive skylines (significant local views are specifically identified in Policy STIS3).**
 - e. The network of green infrastructure supporting health, wellbeing, and social interaction.**
- C. Proposals for development should secure the retention, preservation and appropriate restoration or enhancement of natural, historic, or manmade features across the Neighbourhood Area as identified in the Stisted Landscape Assessment Study and successor landscape evidence.**
- D. Proposals for development should ensure that development is sensitively and effectively integrated into the landscape in order to secure the enhancement of habitat and green corridors, connectivity to the surrounding green and blue infrastructure and Public Rights of Way network.**

- 4.28 Views of the landscape within Stisted parish are from a mixture of rural country roads and from footpaths along the boundaries of arable fields and woodland blocks, providing contrasting open and framed views. Views are generally a mixture of expansive arable farmland contained by boundary vegetation and/or woodland blocks; panoramic views across the valley of the River Blackwater towards the neighbouring parishes of Cressing and Bradwell; and more enclosed, channelled views within the valley of the River Blackwater where topography and vegetation restrict views. Wooded horizons are a common feature of this landscape.
- 4.29 The landscape contributes to the distinctive character and sense of place of Stisted, providing a valuable rural setting to the Stisted village and to Stisted Conservation Area (CA). The woodland blocks, in particular the ancient woodlands in the north of the parish, and scattered farmsteads are a feature of many views providing a varied skyline.
- 4.30 The visual context of the landscape within Stisted was analysed in the Stisted Landscape Assessment Study and a number of key views identified. These are shown in Figure 4.3.

POLICY STIS3: KEY LOCAL VIEWS

- A. The scale, form and design of development proposals should protect and, where practicable, enhance key local views as identified on the Policies Map. This process should be informed by the Stisted Landscape Assessment Study 2020.**
- B. Development proposals which would not have an unacceptable impact on an identified key local view will be supported.**

Figure 4.3: Key views



Source: Stisted Landscape Assessment Study (scale: 1:25,000 @ A3)

5 ENVIRONMENT

Sustainable design

- 5.1 The Climate Change Act 2008 committed the UK to an 80% reduction in CO₂ emissions by 2050. In June 2019, an announcement was made by Government to reduce this further to almost 100% by 2050. This will be a major task that will require everyone to be engaged, from households and communities, to businesses and local and national government.
- 5.2 In 2016, the residential sector alone accounted for over 16% of the UK's annual greenhouse gas emissions (source: Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy). The total emissions from all building types will therefore be much greater. Standards for ecologically sustainable homes and developments are established through Building Regulations and Braintree Local Plan Section 2 policies. Specifically, Policy LPP72 (Resource efficiency, energy generation and energy efficiency) requires new residential dwellings to include renewable and low carbon energy technology to provide at least a 19% improvement in energy performance over the requirements of the 2013 Building Regulations. However, in order for built development to make a meaningful contribution towards achieving net zero by 2050, development needs to go further. New development is therefore encouraged to exceed the requirements of Local Plan Section 2 Policy LPP72 or, at very least, to ensure that new properties are designed so that they are ready to receive the technologies that are crucial to minimising their energy use, e.g. underfloor heating to increase the effectiveness of heat pumps, orientated south to maximise the potential from solar panels if installed, etc.
- 5.3 Support is provided by the Essex Design Guide⁴ which focusses on how to design developments (of all scales and types) to meet the net zero carbon and energy standards, mitigate potential overheating risk and to address other inter-related sustainability issues.

POLICY STIS4: LOW ENERGY AND ENERGY EFFICIENT DESIGN

- A. Proposals for new development, including the construction of new buildings and the redevelopment and refurbishment of existing building stock, should demonstrate how the design of buildings and site layouts minimise consumption of energy, water, minerals, materials and other natural resources in order to provide resilience to the effects of climate change.**
- B. All developments should demonstrate how they have been designed to incorporate measures to adapt to climate change. The following measures should, where possible, be incorporated into development:**

⁴ <https://www.essexdesignguide.co.uk/>

- a) **Wherever possible, new buildings shall be orientated to maximise the opportunities for both natural heating and ventilation and reducing exposure to wind and other elements;**
- b) **Proposals involving both new and existing buildings shall demonstrate how they have been designed to maximise resistance and resilience to climate change for example by including measures such as solar shading, thermal mass, heating and ventilation of the building and appropriately coloured materials in areas exposed to direct sunlight, green and brown roofs, green walls, etc;**
- c) **Use of trees and other planting, where appropriate as part of a landscape scheme, to provide shading of amenity areas, buildings and streets and to help to connect habitat, designed with native plants that are carefully selected, managed and adaptable to meet the predicted changed climatic conditions; and**
- d) **Development should minimise surface water runoff to prevent off-site flooding through the design of a suitable multifunctional SuDS-based drainage system having regard to the Sustainable Drainage Systems Design Guide for Essex⁵, and where possible incorporate mitigation, resilience and maintenance measures for any increases in flood risk that may occur due to climate change.**

Wildlife-friendly design

- 5.4 The design of individual buildings and of neighbourhood scale green and open spaces, including private gardens, will help to ensure that existing habitats present in Stisted can thrive and a range of new habitats can be created. This is in line with the requirement of the Environment Act 2021 for all new development (excluding small householder proposals) to achieve net biodiversity gain of at least 10%.
- 5.5 Planting is an important aspect of development and habitat creation. Not only does a well-considered planting scheme provide high quality landscaping, it is a fundamental aspect of enhancing biodiversity that otherwise would be lost. Planting schemes should ensure that tree species should be carefully selected to be responsive to landscape and historic character and to suit the planting location⁶. Planting should not simply consist of trees but a range of shrubs and grasses too and should seek to include native species.

⁵ https://www.essexdesignguide.co.uk/pdf/SuDS_Design_Guide_2020.pdf

⁶ See 'Right Tree in the Right Place for a Resilient Future' by Forest Research - <https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/fthr/urban-tree-manual/>

5.6 Protecting species present in the area is also important. Examples of the simple solutions that well-thought out design can easily incorporate are:

- Integral bird and bat boxes under the eaves of the new houses, or artificial nests sited in places away from windows and doors, can create vital new roosting sites to support populations of birds and bats.
- Boundaries between dwellings can be made hedgehog friendly by including pre-cut holes for hedgehogs to more effectively move across neighbourhoods to forage.
- New planting schemes can support bees and other pollinators by including nectar-rich plants.



Bricks that allow birds to nest

Credit: actionforswifts.com



Hedgehog-friendly fencing

Credit: The Landscaper Magazine

5.7 Development is encouraged to be informed by the full list of considerations in Natural England's 'Green Infrastructure Framework 2023'⁷.

POLICY STIS5: WILDLIFE-FRIENDLY DEVELOPMENT

- A. All development proposals are required to deliver net biodiversity gains in addition to protecting existing habitats and species. Proposals to create or enhance existing green wildlife corridors are strongly encouraged.**
- B. In particular, the incorporation of design features into new development that encourages local wildlife to thrive, is strongly encouraged.**
- C. As part of its requirements to demonstrate net biodiversity gain, development should be designed to retain trees, shrubs and hedgerows of arboricultural, habitat and amenity value on-site and to conserve and enhance connectivity to the wider multifunctional green infrastructure networks. Where this is accompanied by new planting, this should consist of native species of trees, shrubs and grasses acting as stepping stones for wildlife.**

⁷ <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/GreenInfrastructure/Home.aspx>

Local green spaces

5.8 Under the NPPF, Neighbourhood Plans have the opportunity to designate Local Green Spaces which are of particular importance to them. This will afford protection from development other than in very special circumstances. Paragraph 106 of the NPPF says that the Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:

- in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

5.9 There are five spaces considered to meet the criteria (see Figure 5.1 for their location):

- i. Stisted Village Green
- ii. Chicken Meadow
- iii. The Croft Community Playing Fields
- iv. Stisted allotments
- v. Rolfe's Land

Figure 5.1: Local Green Spaces



Stisted Village Green



- 5.10 This is an important green space located immediately outside the primary school. As a result, it is regularly used by school children and their parents before and after school as a meeting point and for informal socialising.

Chicken Meadow



- 5.11 This space has had a range of uses over many years; currently it is a paddock for horses. Its location in the heart of the village has meant that it has had a range of different practical uses as the functions of day-to-day life in the village have changed. However, what has been consistent has been the important function it has played. Its location contributes to a feeling

of openness and connectedness to the countryside from the village. In particular it provides the setting for the Grade I listed Parish Church of All Saints as well as views across the valley.



- 5.12 The Chicken Meadow is designated as a visually important space in the Braintree Local Plan (Policy LPP50: Provision for Open Space, Sport and Recreation), meaning that it makes a significant contribution to the visual character of the area. Whilst this designation provides a level of protection, it is considered that designation as a local green space provides a greater level of protection for what is a very important space to the community in terms of its heritage and environment.

The Croft Community Playing Fields





- 5.13 This is the only playing field space in the village, providing for both formal and informal activities. The football pitch is currently unused by Stisted FC for matches as the facilities provided no longer meet the Football Association's minimum requirements., The hope is that this will be addressed in the future. The nearest alternative pitches are in Braintree, nearly three miles away. The basketball hoop and assault course provide for informal sporting activities and exercise. In addition, when there are local community events they are often held on the playing field – the Queen's Jubilee celebrations are an example. There are also parts of the space which are being given over to nature and rewilding.

Stisted allotments and community orchard





- 5.14 There are currently 54 plots for growing fruit and vegetables at the Stisted Allotments. The allotments are generally well used and much valued by local growers. Adjacent to this is the community orchard project and, a separate wildlife pond.

Rolfe's Land



- 5.15 This is a nature reserve managed by Essex Wildlife Trust. It includes a nature classroom that is used by the primary school. Deer, birds of prey and other wildlife can be seen regularly in this small wood. Access is provided via a public right of way although there is a footpath through the middle of the area where people can walk and immerse themselves in nature.

POLICY STIS6: LOCAL GREEN SPACES

- A. The following areas shown on the Policies Map are designated as Local Green Spaces:**
- i. Stisted Village Green**
 - ii. Chicken Meadow**
 - iii. The Croft Community Playing Fields**
 - iv. Stisted allotments and community orchard**
 - v. Rolfe's Land**
- B. Proposals for built development on these Local Green Spaces will not be permitted unless the proposal is for an ancillary feature, and it can be clearly demonstrated that it is required to support or enhance the role and function of the identified Local Green Space.**

6 COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS

- 6.1 Access into the countryside is considered by the community to be a highly valued features of living in a rural community such as Stisted. Access into the countryside provides a means of exercise, a perfect environment to walk dogs and a place to enhance general wellbeing. Without this, the community becomes reliant on use of the private car to access leisure opportunities elsewhere, which creates lots of short distance car trips that do not contribute positively to sustainability.
- 6.2 The NPPF states that ‘planning policies...should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks...’ (paragraph 104).
- 6.3 As shown in Figure 6.1, Stisted parish is relatively well served with Public Rights of Way (PROWs) which cross the parish. These should only be lost in very special circumstances, i.e. where the benefits to the community and nature clearly outweigh the impact of its loss.
- 6.4 Due to the nature of a majority of the roads in the parish, i.e. single track with a 60mph limit it could increase road safety to have all existing footpaths changed to bridleways or restricted byways to allow pedestrians, horse riders and cyclists to traverse the parish away from the ever increasing volumes of traffic through the parish.
- 6.5 The addition of a new route detailed in Figure 6.2 could facilitate a circular route that will help to improve walking and cycling in the parish. PROWs are protected and maintained by Essex County Council (ECC), as the Highway Authority, in order to ensure the general public has access to them. The Definitive Map is kept under continuous review and any modification to an existing or proposal for a new PROW is required to follow the process set out by ECC.

POLICY STIS7: ACCESS INTO THE COUNTRYSIDE

- A. Access to the countryside will be promoted through protection and maintenance of the existing Public Rights of Way (PROW) network (see Figure 6.1), its enhancement where possible (including the link identified in Figure 6.2 which, where possible, should also be capable of use by cyclists), provision of bridleways and the safety of users of rural roads and lanes.**
- B. Any development which leads to the loss or degradation of any PROW will only be permitted in very special circumstances. Proposals to divert PROWs or cycleways should provide clear and demonstrable benefits for the wider community. Where possible, development should provide new and enhanced PROWs by improving connectivity within and between the site and the wider surrounding area.**

C. Subject to compliance with other policies in the development plan, proposals to create a pedestrian route between Stisted and Braintree and to secure this as a PROW will be strongly encouraged.

Figure 6.1: Public Rights of Way

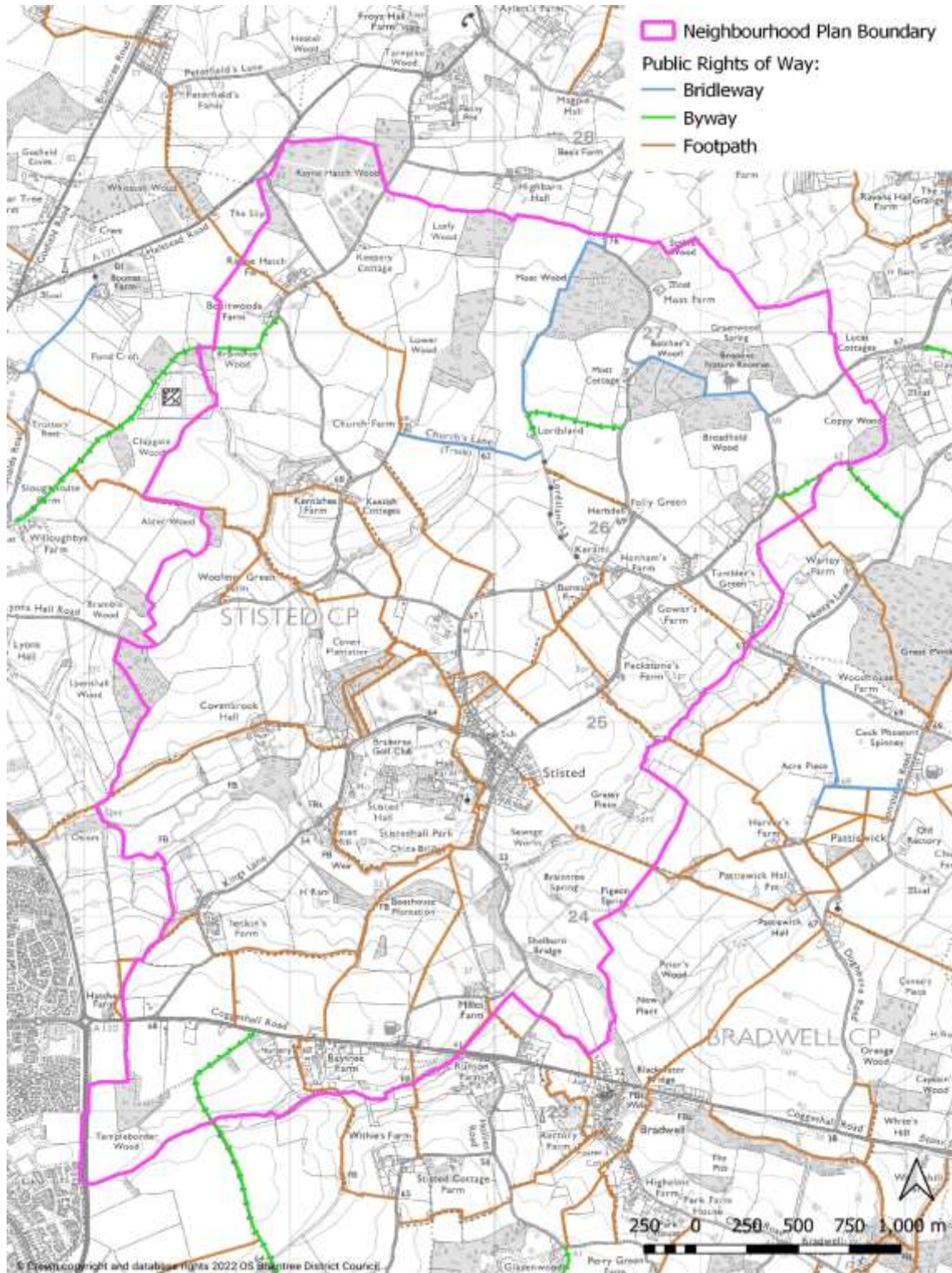
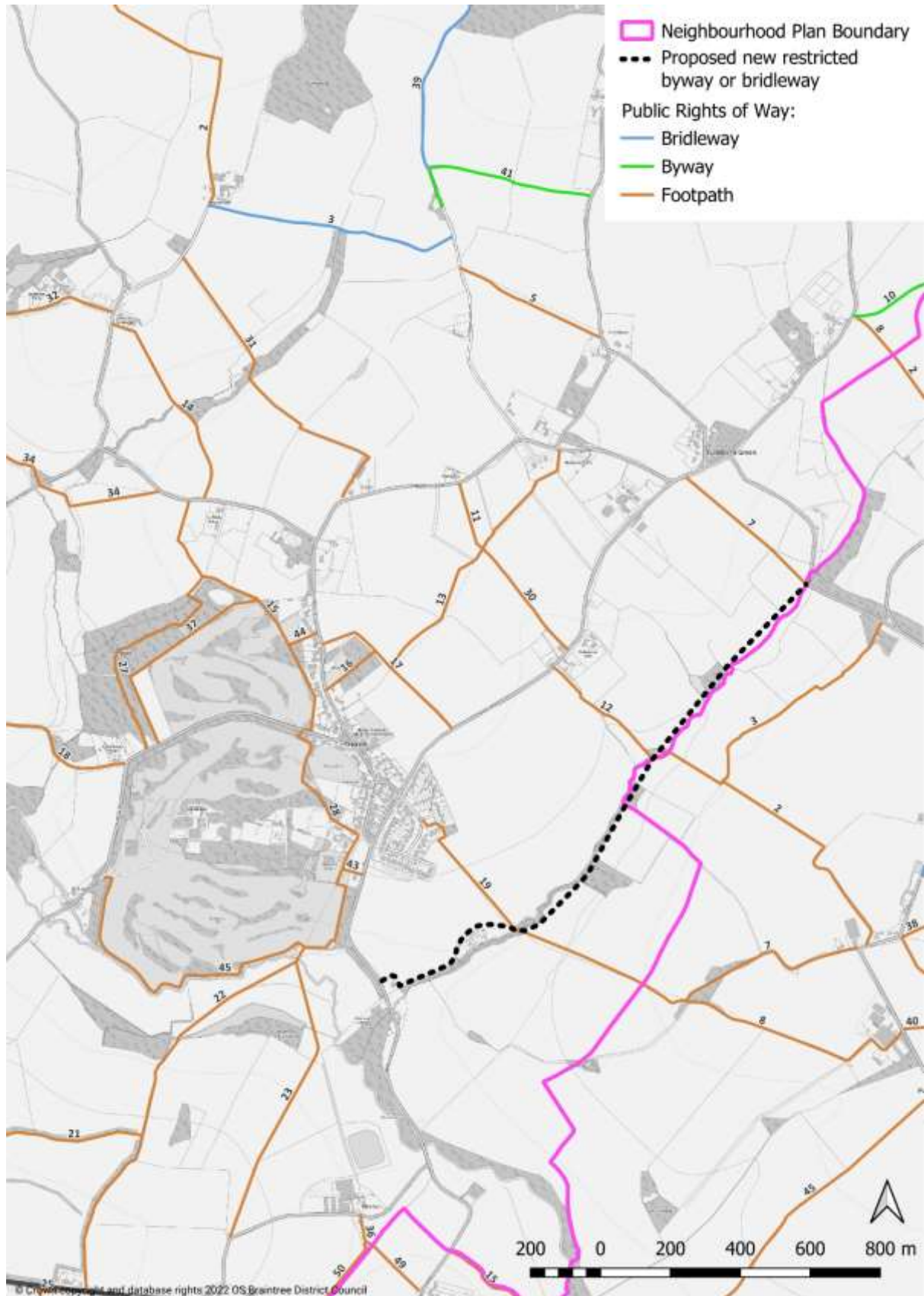


Figure 6.2: Proposed new walking and cycling route – near Stisted village



7 HERITAGE

- 7.1 As a community with a strong rural heritage, Stisted has a number of listed buildings and structures. In total it has 60 nationally listed buildings, of which All Saints Church is Grade I listed. It also has a Conservation Area, shown in Figure 7.1.

Figure 7.1: Stisted Conservation Area



- 7.2 There are two buildings/structures that, whilst not nationally listed, are considered to be of local heritage merit – the China Bridge and the Old School House.

China Bridge

- 7.3 China Bridge is located on the River Blackwater at the southern edge of the Golf Course an image of which is featured as an outline shape of the Stisted Village Sign located on the Green.
- 7.4 In Ron Parks' 'Historical Index' he refers to China Bridge as being part of the changes to Stisted Hall between 1822 and 1843. A map/plan dated 1839 of the Hall and park shows a bridge to already exist. The vaguely Chinese appearance was the result of the parapet walls that no longer exist. These were still intact in 1940 as shown in a painting owned by Nancy Duncombe and in early photographs in the Stisted Archive (shown below).



China Bridge (in about 1940)
Copied in 2003 by John Lloyd from a painting by "G.S.C." treasured by the late Nancy Duncombe.

- 7.5 The bridge forms part of the public footpath that runs between Stisted and Bradwell and has been a well-loved meeting place, particularly for youngsters, who also liked to swim and play in the Blackwater, but sadly, due to the neglect of the river it is no longer safe for swimming. There are villagers that have memories of tug of war contests taking place over the river next to the bridge, with the losing team being pulled into it.
- 7.6 China Bridge is one of the most photographed, drawn or painted structures in Stisted. It was also the location for the display of an extract from a long poem, Essex Clay, by Andrew Motion, the former Poet Laureate.
- 7.7 References to China Bridge are frequent in our locally recorded oral histories, as well as in published memoirs in the Stisted Archive.



The Old School House

- 7.8 Lilian Earle, in her memoir, 'Clover Hay', tells us about the building in 1872 of the present school, the Stisted Church of England Academy, by the Squire Onley Saville Onley. However, prior to the opening of this new school, the village children between 1836 and 1872 had their school lessons in the Old School House.



- 7.9 The Old School House is the small building by the church lych-gate, and was also referred to as the Stisted Academy. It was a Dame's School, where the Onley daughters taught the children for a fee of one penny a week. Later, a Mrs Houlton took over the teaching and lived not far away, in what is now called Houlton House, at the southern end of The Street. The Old School House, owned by the Church, has for a number of years been home to the Fairways Nursery, but prior to that has been let to printers, printmakers and the highly successful Brenda's Toys business led by Brenda Cheese.



- 7.10 The front of the building is faced with flints with intermittent brick and flint to the other sides of the building. The adjoining brick and flint wall runs north for about 40 metres along Church Walk until its junction with The Street and Hall Lane. The wall continues for further 30 metres south along Church Walk from the lych-gate until the entrance to the golf course.
- 7.11 Overall, the building sits well with its surroundings with the parish church and churchyard to the left as seen from the front, the brick and flint wall to the left and, Chicken Meadow opposite. The building has a number of carved initials, symbols and numbers in the external brickwork. These were often dates and initials carved by those working on the construction at the time but some remain obscure.

POLICY STIS8: NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

A. The following are identified as non-designated heritage assets:

- a. China Bridge
- b. The Old School House

B. Proposals for the re-use of Non-Designated Heritage Assets will be supported if they are compatible with the setting of the asset and use appropriate materials and designs in any construction work. New uses of a non-designated heritage assets must not cause unacceptable harm to its physical structure or setting.

C. In considering proposals which involve the loss or alteration of a non-designated heritage asset, consideration will be given to:

- i. Whether the asset is structurally unsound and beyond feasible and viable repair (for reasons other than deliberate damage or neglect); or
 - ii. The extent to which measures to sustain the existing use, or find an alternative use/user, have been investigated.
- D. Where a development proposal would result in the loss of, or harm to a non-designated heritage asset, a balanced judgement will be made as to the acceptability of the proposal having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Figure 7.2: Location of non-designated heritage assets



8 HOUSING

- 8.1 The ability to fulfil the housing needs of small rural communities is often challenging. In this regard, Stisted is no exception. The 2021 Census (see Section 2) showed that Stisted has proportionately low levels of small properties. Indeed, in 2021 there were only 32 social rented properties in the parish.
- 8.2 In 2020, a Housing Needs Survey⁸ was undertaken and, based on those households that engaged in the survey, there was a need for two affordable rented units (one 1-bed bungalow and one 3-bed unit).
- 8.3 In addition to this, data from Braintree District Council from July 2023⁹ identified 14 households registered for housing association homes with a current address in Stisted and the surrounding villages (Bradwell, Greenstead Green and Halstead Rural and Gosfield). Of these, two households were in priority Band A (the highest priority), one household in each of Bands B and C, with the remaining 10 households in Band D. Twelve of the 14 households were looking for either 1- or 2-bed properties (including both the households in the highest priority need).
- 8.4 The NPPF (para 82) states that, in rural areas, planning policies should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs. This includes rural exception sites that will provide affordable housing to meet identified local needs, and consider whether allowing some market housing on these sites would help to facilitate this. For the local community, one of the benefits of a rural exception site is that it can be held exclusively for those with existing family members or with an employment connection in the local area. Moreover, such affordable properties can be held for occupation by local people in perpetuity.
- 8.5 The evidence above demonstrates a small but significant need for affordable housing in Stisted. Stisted Parish Council has commenced a search for a suitable site for a rural exception scheme.
- 8.6 As the specific needs of people with a local connection to Stisted change over the plan period to 2033, it is considered important that opportunities for new residential development providing rural exception housing are taken. Any such proposals would need to satisfactorily address the wider policy matters in the plan, including design and views.
- 8.7 Proposals for the development of small-scale affordable housing schemes outside the settlement boundary, where housing would not normally be permitted by other policies, will be supported where there is a proven local need and provided that the housing:
- always remains affordable;
 - is for people in housing need that are unable to buy or rent properties in the village at open-market prices; and

⁸ RCCE (2020) *Stisted Housing Needs Survey*, for Stisted Parish Council

⁹ Braintree Housing Statnav (<https://www.braintree.gov.uk/housingstatnav/directory-record/251/stisted>)

- is offered to people with a demonstrated local connection such as through direct family connections or work.
- 8.8 Where there is no need, housing is then offered to those with a demonstrated need for affordable housing in neighbouring villages.
- 8.9 This should be achieved through a legal agreement attached to any planning consent. More guidance on local connections criteria is provided in the Braintree Choice Based Lettings Scheme.

POLICY STIS9: AFFORDABLE HOUSING ON RURAL EXCEPTION SITES

- A. Proposals for the development of small-scale affordable housing schemes on rural exception sites outside the settlement boundary, where housing would not normally be permitted by other policies, will be supported where there is a proven local need and provided that the housing:**
- a. remains affordable in perpetuity;**
 - b. is for people that are in housing need because they are unable to buy or rent properties in Stisted village at open-market prices;**
 - c. is offered, in the first instance, to people with a demonstrated local connection, as defined by the Braintree Choice Based Lettings Scheme. Where there is no local connection, a property should then be offered to those with a demonstrated need for affordable housing in neighbouring villages.**
- B. These restrictions should be delivered through a legal agreement attached to the planning consent for the housing. Applications for such development will be considered in relation to the appearance and character of the surrounding area, the potential impact on residential amenity and highway safety.**
- C. To be acceptable, proposals should demonstrate that a local need exists which cannot be met by applying normal planning policy for the provision of affordable homes in association with market housing. Any application for affordable housing in respect of this policy should be accompanied by a detailed needs assessment and the accommodation proposed should contribute to meeting this proven need.**
- D. In exceptional circumstances, a small number of market homes will be permitted where demonstrated that these are financially essential to facilitate the delivery of affordable units.**

9 NON-POLICY ACTIONS

- 9.1 Over the period since the Neighbourhood Plan was commenced in 2017, the community has identified a whole range of issues which are widely considered as requiring further discussion and possible action. However, many of these issues fall outside the scope and remit of Neighbourhood Plan planning policies and therefore cannot be directly addressed in the Plan. In order to ensure they are duly recorded they have been included in this additional section of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Environment and Landscape

Environment

- 9.2 To maintain the natural environment:
- Establish stronger links with Essex Wildlife Trust and highlight to parishioners the work they perform on the Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's), Rolfe's Land, and Brooks Nature Reserve and other sites throughout the parish (if there are any).
 - Establish stronger links with local businesses; farmers, logging enterprises and other businesses raising awareness of any schemes e.g. planting hedgerow , conservation efforts (headland) and to encourage practices that are sympathetic to the landscape, flora and fauna.
 - Establish stronger links with and between local community assets, i.e. Church, School, Village Hall, Nursery, Golf Club etc. so that any schemes are a cohesive and co-operative effort.
- 9.3 To maintain the rural tranquillity of the Parish:
- Investigate and apply for Quiet Lane designations.
 - Reduce local speed limits where appropriate.
 - Reroute HGV traffic around the village - conserving the three humpback bridges into the village in the process.
 - Investigate the introduction of traffic calming measures.

Biodiversity

- 9.4 To enhance the biodiversity of the parish:
- Establish a parish Wildlife Warden(s).
 - Continue to engage with rewilding and tree planting schemes run by Braintree District Council and Essex County Council.
 - Investigate other schemes and incentives run by NGO's for maintaining and encouraging biodiversity e.g. free trees from the Woodland Trust.

- Establish whether there are any areas within the parish that are a habitat for rare or unusual flora and fauna and set out to preserve these; e.g. wild orchids, crested newts etc.
- Establish schemes within the parish to encourage parishioners to rewild all or part of their gardens, feed birds and hedgehogs etc.
- Establish stronger links with and between local community assets, i.e. Church, School, Village Hall, Nursery, Golf Club etc. so that any schemes are a cohesive and co-operative effort.

Green Spaces

9.5 To conserve and enhance Visually Important Spaces and Local Green Spaces:

- Ensure we engage with BDC's Open Spaces Action plan.
- Reinststate the arboricultural character of Stisted village, as depicted in historic images, through the planting of indigenous tree species.

Heritage

- Highlight the associations of Stisted with artists and poets.
- Highlight the unique architectural heritage of Stisted and the patronage of Onley Saville Onley and Sebag-Montefiore.
- Register important local buildings and landmarks on BDC's local list.

Community Facilities

- Identify buildings and spaces that are of amenity value to the Parish and protect these by registering them as Assets of Community Value where possible.
- Ensure that open spaces are correctly registered as Visually Important Space, Green Space etc.
- Identify areas where pedestrian movement is restricted, seek to reduce or remove the restrictions and increase pedestrian safety through signage and traffic calming measures.
- Encourage ongoing engagement with the school, church, golf club, Montefiore, village hall.
- Look at Parish / community nurse schemes.

Drainage

- Identify areas where standing water is an issue, investigate and implement remedial works where required.
- Establish ditch clearing schedule.

- Investigate the local ponds that have been lost over time, their use and effect on issues with standing water and drainage.
- Investigate the loss of the arboricultural character of Stisted village and the reinstatement of indigenous trees in effort to reduce flooding in areas where flooding is an issue.

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