

Consultee Comments for Planning Application DC/25/1736/HYB

This prepared response to a planning application sets out the policies and guidance referred to, an application summary, planning history and the comments of the parish council and any grounds for objection.

The Parish Council has referenced the following where relevant:

- [National Planning Policy Framework \[NPPF\]](#)
- [West Suffolk Local Plan](#)
- [Wickhambrook Referendum Neighbourhood Plan](#) (published August 2025 – Yes vote at Referendum on 13.11.2025)

Application Summary – West Suffolk Council

Application No: [DC/25/1736/HYB](#)

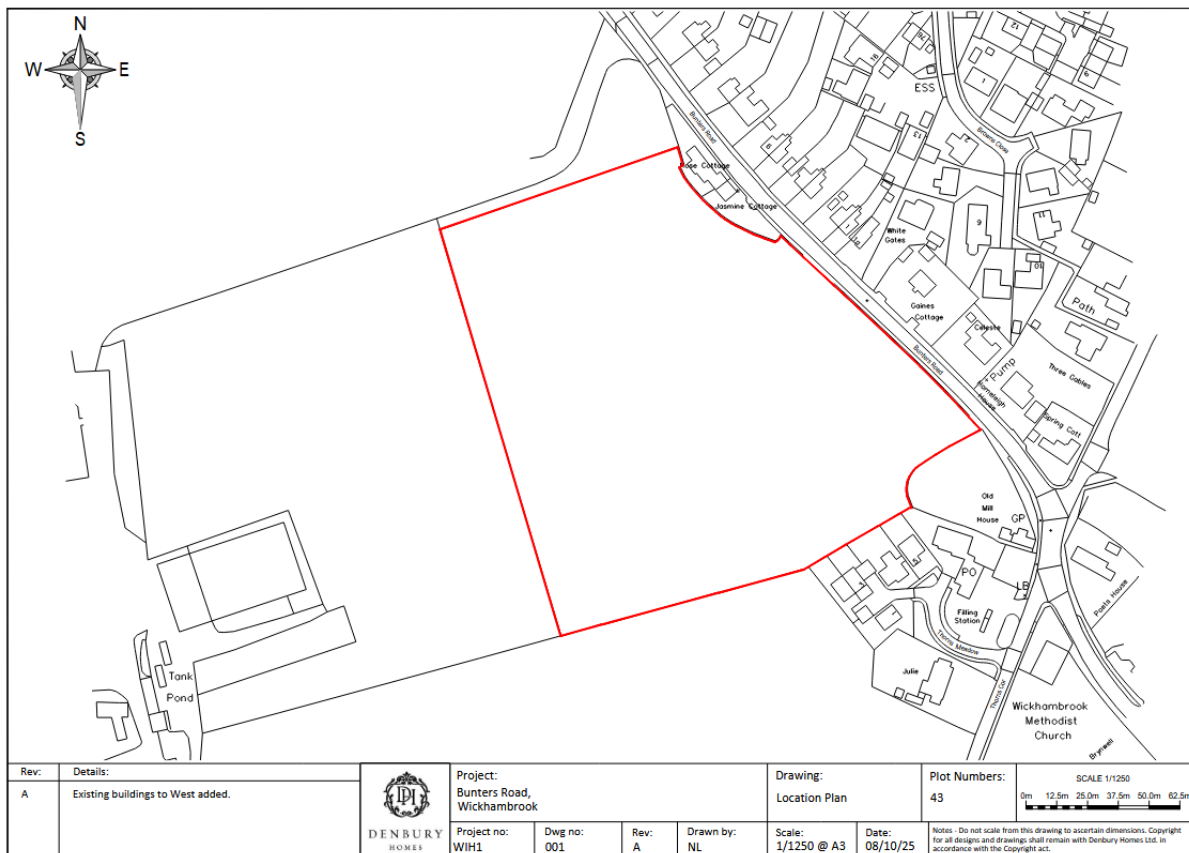
Location: Land Off Bunters Road Wickhambrook Suffolk

Proposal: Hybrid Planning application

- Planning application – 43 dwellings with access, roads, parking, garages, public open space and associated infrastructure
- Outline planning application (all matters reserved) for commercial use and associated parking (class E)

This is a new application for 43 dwellings with access, roads, parking, garages, public open space and associated infrastructure made by Mr Robert Eburne for Denbury Homes Ltd (the agent being Miss Rachael Morwood of Popham Planning Consultants)

The site (allocated by West Suffolk under its local plan as AP52) is located on Land West of Bunters Road, Wickhambrook, inside the published settlement area of [Wickhambrook \[RV3\]](#).



The following documents were submitted with the [application](#):

- [Arboricultural Impact Assessment](#)
- [Archaeological Evaluation](#)
- [Areas Plan](#)
- [Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool](#)
- BNG [Metric](#) and [Supporting Document](#)
- [Design and Access Statement](#)
- [Drainage Strategy](#)
- External Works [Details](#) and [Layout](#)
- Flood Risk Assessment (parts [1](#), [2](#) and [3](#))
- [Land Contamination Assessment Parts 1 - 11](#)
- [Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment](#)
- [Landscaping Strategy](#)
- [Location Plan](#)
- Materials [Brochure](#) and [Plan](#)
- [Planning Statement](#)
- [Preliminary Ecological Appraisal](#)
- [Proposed Site Plan](#)
- [Proposed Street Scene Elevations](#)
- [S106 Heads of Terms](#)
- [Site and Other Plans and Drawings](#)
- [SUDS Proforma](#)
- [Sustainability Statement](#)
- [Transport Assessment](#)

Planning History

No previous for this site.

Constraints - identified by West Suffolk are:

Name	Constraint Type
Consultee: Norwich International Airport Constraint: Statutory consultee for all wind turbine applications within 42.5 nautical miles of Norwich International Airport	Wind Turbine Norwich Airport
Consultee: Cambridge Airport Constraint: Advise of Any Developments	Cambridge Renewal Energy - All
Consultee: Natural England	SSSI Impact Risk Zones
Policy Reference: AP52	Not Available
Policy Reference: SP12	Not Available
Development Type: All wind farm / turbine development	Air Traffic Control Safeguarding WF
Description: Within 100m of a Suffolk County Council Historic Environment Record Consultee: Suffolk Archaeological Service	Archaeological Site (100m Buffer)
Location: Wickhambrook	Bat Roosts

Comments have been received from: none yet

There have been no submissions from neighbouring properties to date.

Matters for Consideration

The following matters are relevant and should be considered with respect to the application:

1. **Settlement Hierarchy and Identity:** The proposed site is within the published settlement boundary of Wickhambrook [RV3 – Housing Settlement Boundaries

Wickhambrook Referendum Neighbourhood Plan

The parish council should consider the application against the following statements and policies within the Referendum Neighbourhood Plan (which received a Yes vote at its Referendum on 13th November 2025 and will be “made” by West Suffolk Council on 16th December)

VISION

In 2040 Wickhambrook will remain a village that has retained its distinct structure of a number of small settlements within a high-quality rural landscape, where limited sustainable growth has taken place that meets the needs of the Parish and where essential infrastructure and services are retained and improved.

Objectives

Development Location

1. New development should minimise the loss of the best quality agricultural land and its impact on the natural and historic environment as well as being well related to the existing services and facilities in the village centre.

Housing

2. New housing development will reflect Wickhambrook’s status as a Local Service Centre within the “Settlement Hierarchy” of West Suffolk and provide a range of types, sizes, prices and tenures that meets the needs of all age groups and incomes.
3. New housing should be located where it is safely accessible by sustainable modes to the village’s services and facilities.
4. Homes should incorporate measures to ensure they are accessible for all needs, incorporate energy saving features and make use of sustainable approaches to building.

Employment and Local Economy

5. A range of employment opportunities in the Parish will be retained and supported where there will not be a detrimental impact on the environment, services and infrastructure.

Natural Environment

6. The rural character of the Parish will be protected and, where possible, enhanced.
7. Natural habitats will be protected and enhanced.

Built Environment and Design

8. Wickhambrook’s built heritage assets will be protected.
9. High-quality and eco-friendly development will reinforce the local character of the village.
10. New development will not have a detrimental impact on the quality of life of existing residents.

Services and Facilities

11. The level of services and facilities will be protected and improved.
12. The range of existing community facilities and services will be improved.

Highways and Travel

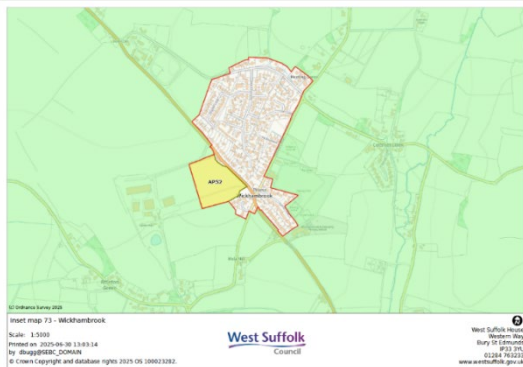
13. The capacity and safety of the road network to cope with new development will be ensured.
14. The improvement of bus services to nearby towns will be encouraged.
15. The Public Rights of Way network will be protected, maintained and improved

Policies within the Referendum Neighbourhood Plan relevant to this application are:

Development Location

Relevant paragraphs, policies etc. of Referendum Plan:

4.8	The Local Plan Housing Settlement Boundary is illustrated on Map 3 and the Policies Map. In accordance with the adopted planning policies for Wickhambrook, new development will be focused within the Housing Settlement Boundary. This approach will ensure that the largely undeveloped countryside in the remainder of the Neighbourhood Area will remain preserved and the distinct settlement form is maintained. The indication of the Housing Settlement Boundary in the Neighbourhood Plan cannot preclude future local plan documents reviewing the Boundary and amending it to reflect housing allocations in that plan.
4.9	Within the Housing Settlement Boundary there will remain a presumption in favour of development, but it is essential that any proposals have regard, as appropriate, to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the presence of heritage and natural assets; • the landscape setting of the village; • the capacity of services and infrastructure; and • the impact of development on designated habitats in the wider area. Policies elsewhere in the Neighbourhood Plan, as well as the Local Plan and the NPPF address such levels of detail.



Policy WHB1 – Spatial Strategy

In the period 2023 to 2041 the Neighbourhood Plan area will accommodate development commensurate with the village's designation as a Local Service Centre in the adopted Local Plan.

New development will be focused within the defined Housing Settlement Boundary, as identified on the Policies Map. Proposals for housing development on infill plots or for small groups on redeveloped plots within the Housing Settlement Boundary will be supported where they do not have a detrimental impact on residential amenity, the natural and historic environment, infrastructure and highways....

Consider:

- [Location Plan](#)

Housing

Relevant paragraphs, policies etc. of Referendum Plan:

5.11	<p>In order to inform the Parish Council's response to the Preferred Options Local Plan consultation, a focused consultation was held in April 2023 to consider two options as to how the Local Plan site might be developed. The consultation noted that any development on the site should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimise the impact on existing residents • Provide a mix of house sizes, including bungalows, that meet the needs of Wickhambrook • Preserve land along the southern edge of the site for informal open space and accommodating water run-off from the development. Allotments might also be possible in this area. • Retain and improve the trees and hedgerows around the site to reduce the impact of the development on the wider landscape • Provide opportunities for additional open space • Enable the safe crossing of pedestrians over Bunters Road • Minimise the impact of the commercial uses by reflecting a design that is typical of traditional low-rise Suffolk farmyards • Be heavily landscaped around the edges.
Land West of Bunters Road	
5.14	<p>The starting point for the consideration of this allocation is to consider how to minimise the impact of the development on existing residents, the landscape, historic buildings and local infrastructure. A separate Site Masterplan has been produced for the Neighbourhood Plan as part of the Government's neighbourhood planning support package and is available to view on the Neighbourhood Plan pages of the Parish Council's website. The site analysis in that document notes that the site "presents no obvious significant constraints to the development." It notes that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There are a number of hedgerows across the site and trees which provide an instant landscape structure within which the development should sit. These important landscape features should be retained and enhanced, ideally by being integrated into the open space component of the development. 2. The existing three access points are unlikely to serve the development due to the proximity of the junction (southern access), the adjacency to the existing dwellings (central access) and the dedicated agricultural machinery business served by the northern access. 3. There are some existing dwellings located on Bunters Road which will require buffering and screening, while there is only one listed building in close proximity located on the other side of Bunters Road. 4. The southern part of the site has been identified for a Sustainable Drainage infrastructure (SuDs) location, thus development would be restricted in that location.
5.15	<p>In addition, feedback from community engagement has identified a need for development to minimise impact on the setting of Gaines Cottage, opposite the site on Bunters Road, and long-distance views from Bunters Road.</p>
Development Principles	
5.16	<p>The following development principles shall be incorporated into the development of the site:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mixed-use element of the development should be within either Town and Country Planning Use Class E or Use Class F (see Appendix 1). • The mixed-use development should have a maximum gross floorspace of 450 square metres and where no single unit in Use Class E has a floorspace greater than 100 square metres unless for the provision of medical or health services. • Development must have regard to the presence of the Listed Building opposite the site on Bunters Road and respond positively to its setting. • Traffic calming shall be provided on Bunters Road to enable a safe pedestrian crossing point to provide safe links to services in the village including the primary school and GP Surgery. • Structural landscaping shall be retained and reinforced along all boundaries.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A landscape buffer shall be provided around Rose and Jasmine Cottage, west of Bunters Road. • A surface water drainage system (SuDs) in accordance with the standards of the Lead Local Flood Authority (Suffolk County Council) shall be provided to manage water run-off from the development and reduce flood risk on adjoining lower land. • Open space should be provided along the southern edge of the site to include the potential for allotments. • The opportunity to deliver the affordable housing requirement for the site through a Community Land Trust should be explored unless, at the time of the development, a Trust has not been established or would not be able to deliver the affordable housing.
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Site Development Framework

5.17 Figure 6 provides a Site Concept Drawing for how the site should be developed. Developers will be expected to have regard to the Site Concept Drawing in preparing proposals for the site as well as identifying how the principles will be delivered.



Figure 6 - Site Concept Drawing

5.18 Figure 6 identifies an area for mixed use development in accordance with Policy AP52 of the Local Plan. The exact mix and viability of uses has yet to be determined but, in accordance with the Development Principles set out in paragraph 5.16, the maximum gross floorspace shall be 450 square metres and no single unit in Use Class E shall have a floorspace greater than 100 square metres unless for the provision of medical or health services. Any proposals for Class E uses over 100 square metres, should be supported by relevant details on the relationship between their size and commercial viability/deliverability.

5.19 Use Class F - Local Community and Learning includes for the provision of "shops (mostly) selling essential goods, including food, where the shop's premises do not exceed 280 square metres and there is no other such facility within 1000 metres." Given that the Village Stores at Thorns Corner is currently open and operating, a proposal for a shop under this Use Class would not be supported at this time.

5.20 The mixed-use development should be low rise development, having an overall height no greater than 6 metres to ridge height. Car and service vehicle parking is located so as to minimise impact on residential amenity. The development also makes provision for secure cycle parking

5.21 The housing development makes provision for a mix of house sizes across all tenures, with a greater emphasis on two and three bedroomed dwellings to redress the imbalance of larger homes in the Parish. Bungalows should be provided in the area closest to Bunters Road in order to minimise impact on the Grade II Gaines Cottage and provide choice in the housing available

5.22 The vehicular access shall be solely from Bunters Road at a position to minimise light glare in residential properties on the eastern side of the road. Pedestrian and cycle links should provide safe and convenient links into and from the site to local facilities. Where practicable, pedestrian and cycle links should connect to the employment site to the west subject to any security issues being addressed.

5.23 Where it is both practicable and commercially viable to do so, structural landscaping should be planted before built development commences.

Policy WHB 2 - Land west of Bunter's Road

In addition to the details in Policy AP52 of the West Suffolk Local Plan, the development of land west of Bunters Road, Wickhambrook should:

- respond positively to the Concept Diagram (Figure 6), the Development Principles set out in this Plan, and the [Wickhambrook Site Masterplan](#) (2023);
- incorporate measures to manage traffic safety and speeds on Bunters Road including the provision of a safe crossing point to facilitate links to village facilities;
- incorporate housing proposals which provide a mix of sizes and types in accordance with the most up-to-date evidence on objectively-assessed housing needs. The amount of affordable housing provision should be in accordance with the relevant adopted Local Plan policy at the time of the planning application. Affordable homes should be designed so that they are indistinguishable from open market housing, are distributed around the site, and are not concentrated in any one area. The preferred method of delivery for the affordable housing is through a Community Land Trust; and
- be supported by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and a Heritage Impact Assessment.

Development proposals that include an element of self-build housing will be supported where they otherwise comply with this policy and with Policy AP52 of the West Suffolk Local Plan.

Consider:

- [Areas Plan](#)
- [Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment](#)
- [S106 Heads of Terms](#)
- [Site and Other Plans and Drawings](#)
- [Transport Assessment](#)

Affordable Housing

5.26 The allocation at Bunters Road will be required to include a proportion of affordable housing which could be 40% of the market housing if Policy LP20 of the Draft Local Plan is confirmed. The affordable housing would be available to those registered on "Home-Link", the choice based letting scheme for all affordable housing owned by councils and other registered providers in West Suffolk and Cambridgeshire. It would not provide a preference for those that have a need or family connection requiring them to live in Wickhambrook.

Housing Design Standards

5.31 The NPPF states that "Planning policies for housing should make use of the Government's optional technical standards for accessible and adaptable housing, where this would address an identified need for such properties." The March 2015 standards encourage provision of enough space in homes to ensure that they can be used flexibly by a range of residents. The standards also aim to ensure that sufficient storage can be integrated into dwelling units. It is emphasised that these standards, which are set out in Appendix 2, are expressed as minimum space standards

5.32 Externally, it is also important that homes meet modern day requirements for the storage of wheelie bins and cycles. Without sufficient and appropriate space reserved for these uses, the consequence can be added clutter and a deterrent in the use of cycles as a mode of travel.

5.33 Planning policies cannot influence the internal layout of dwellings but given the generally ageing population, new homes will be particularly welcomed where they meet the accessible homes standards currently set out in Part M of the Building Regulations. Part M defines three levels of housing accessibility:

- Category 1: Visitable dwellings – Part M4(1);
- Category 2: Accessible and adaptable dwellings – Part M4(2) and
- Category 3: Wheelchair user dwellings - Part M4(3).

5.35 Policy SP17 of the Local Plan requires all new homes to be built to Part M4(2) standard with around 13 percent of affordable homes to built to Part M4(3) standard, while encouraging market housing to be built to Part M4(3) standard.

Policy WHB 3 - Housing Design Standards

Proposals for new dwellings should achieve appropriate internal space through compliance with the latest Nationally Described Space Standards. Dwellings should also make adequate provision for the covered storage of all wheelie bins and cycles, in accordance with the adopted cycle parking standards as set out in the Suffolk Guidance for Parking document (2023) or any successor documents.

New dwellings that are designed to be adaptable in order to meet the needs of the increasingly aging population, without restricting the needs of younger families, will be supported.

Consider:

- [Design and Access Statement](#)
- [Planning Statement](#)
- [Site and Other Plans and Drawings](#)

Energy Efficient Homes

5.40 Local Plan Policy SP1 addresses matters relating to the climate and environment emergency and sustainable development. It contains a number of criteria against which development proposals will be considered.

Policy WHB 4 - Low Energy and Energy Efficient Housing Design

Wherever practicable, development proposals should incorporate current best practice in energy conservation. Such measures should be incorporated so that they are integral to the building design and its curtilage and minimise any impacts on the building or its surroundings. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals should demonstrate how they:

- a. maximise the benefits of solar gain in site layouts and orientation of buildings; and
- b. incorporate best practice in energy conservation and are designed to achieve maximum achievable energy efficiency; and
- c. avoid fossil fuel-based heating systems; and
- d. incorporate sustainable design and construction measures to improve energy and water efficiency including, where feasible, ground/air source heat pumps, solar panels and grey water recycling, rainwater and stormwater harvesting

Consider:

- [Sustainability Statement](#)

Employment and Local Economy

Relevant paragraphs, policies etc. of Referendum Plan:

6.6	<p>The creation of additional jobs in Wickhambrook will be supported where the proposal is compatible with the village’s designation as a Local Service Centre and where the jobs are local in nature and would not result in significant in-commuting from other settlements and would not have a detrimental impact on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the character of the area, • the local road network and the amenity of residents living near the site or on the access route to it, and • identified important views. <p>It is envisaged that employment premises on new sites would remain small in terms of the size of the premises and the number of people employed on the site. Major development on new employment sites would not be appropriate in the Parish as more sustainable locations exist in larger settlements such as Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill and Newmarket where local access by sustainable travel modes such as buses, walking and cycling can be readily achieved and the potential for detrimental impact on the landscape character of the area reduced</p>
<p>Policy WHB 6 - New Businesses and Employment Development</p> <p>Proposals for new, small scale business development will be supported where sites are located within the Housing Settlement Boundaries identified on the Policies Map and where they would not have an unacceptable impact on residential amenity, heritage assets and the highways network.</p> <p>...</p>	
<p>Note – this element is all matters reserved</p>	

Natural Environment

Relevant paragraphs, policies etc. of Referendum Plan:

7.5	<p>The Local Plan contains seven policies on the natural environment which are of relevance to the Neighbourhood Area, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy SP5 Green infrastructure • Policy SP6 Locally valued landscapes • Policy SP7 Landscape • Policy SP8 Biodiversity net gain and enhancements • Policy SP9 Protected sites, habitats and features • Policy LP12 Trees • Policy LP13 Protected species
<p>Wickhambrook’s Landscape</p>	
7.7	<p>The West Suffolk Landscape Appraisal provides strategic guidance for managing landscape change in the area. Summarised and as relevant to Wickhambrook, it recommends:</p> <p>Development of agricultural buildings and infrastructure Farmland habitat conservation Settlement development Green lanes</p>
<p>Policy WHB 7 - Protecting Wickhambrook’s Landscape Character</p> <p>Development proposals should respond positively to the landscape characteristics of the site and its vicinity as identified in the West Suffolk Landscape Assessment (2022). As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, and to ensure that they conserve the essential landscape, heritage and rural character of the Parish, development proposals should demonstrate how they have regard to, and conserve, or enhance, the landscape character and the setting of the Parish.</p>	
<p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and Access Statement • Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment • Landscaping Strategy 	

Habitats

7.9	Across the Parish the influence of trees and hedgerows plays a significant role in determining the character of the area. The combined effect of screening, providing natural habitats, and the wildlife corridors that these habitats create are vitally important within the Parish and the wider area and their retention and enhancement will be supported.
7.10	Currently the NPPF encourages net gains for biodiversity to be sought through planning policies and decisions. The 2021 Environment Act introduced a statutory requirement for all appropriate developments to deliver a minimum 10 per cent measurable net gain in biodiversity, measured by using a statutory metric and biodiversity statement to be submitted with planning applications. Strategic Policy SP8 of the Local Plan addresses the requirements for biodiversity net gain in relation to qualifying development proposals and it is not necessary to repeat the requirements in the Neighbourhood Plan.
7.11	There may be occasions where a new access to an otherwise acceptable development site would result in the loss of part of an existing hedgerow. Where this is necessary, a new hedgerow should be planted using native species of a local provenance at the rear of the visibility splay returns to minimise the loss of hedgerow and habitat and maintain the character of the area

Policy WHB 8 - Biodiversity and Habitats

Qualifying development proposals are required to achieve a measurable biodiversity net gain of at least 10 percent, calculated using the statutory biodiversity metric.

Wherever practicable, development proposals should protect, and avoid the loss of, or minimise harm to, trees, woodlands, hedgerows and other natural features such as ponds and watercourses. Where such losses or harm are unavoidable, and cannot be reduced through mitigation:

- i. the benefits of the development proposal must be demonstrated to clearly outweigh any impacts; and
- ii. suitable compensatory measures, that provide better replacement of the lost features will be required and contribute to the enhancement of biodiversity.

Any mitigation or compensatory measures should form an integral part of the design concept. In addition, the layout and design of the development proposal concerned should be landscape-led and appropriate in relation to its setting and context and have regard to its ongoing management. Where new access is created, or an existing access is widened and affects an existing hedgerow, a new hedgerow of native species shall be planted on the splay returns into the site to maintain the appearance and continuity of hedgerows in the immediate locality.

As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals should incorporate improvements to biodiversity which will secure a measurable net gain as part of the design through, for example,

- a) the creation of new natural habitats including ponds;
- b) the planting of additional native trees and hedgerows (reflecting the character of Wickhambrook's traditional trees and hedgerows);
- c) restoring and repairing fragmented wildlife networks, for example, including swift-boxes, bat boxes and holes in fences which allow access for hedgehogs

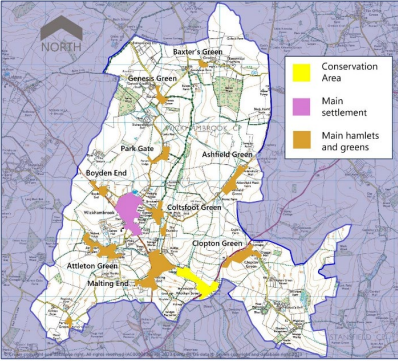
Consider:

- [Arboricultural Impact Assessment](#)
- [Biodiversity Metric Calculation Tool](#)
- BNG [Metric](#) and [Supporting Document](#)

Built Environment and Design

Relevant paragraphs, policies etc. of Referendum Plan:

8.3	The NPPF notes that heritage assets (see Glossary) “are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.” The NPPF also makes it clear, in paragraph 131, that ‘good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.’...
8.4	The Local Plan contains strategic Policy SP1 covering the climate and environment emergency and sustainable development, Policy SP2 Flood risk and sustainable drainage, Policy SP4 covering Design and Policy, SP30 covering the historic environment. In addition, the following policies are of specific relevance to the built environment and design: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy LP1 – Sustainable design and construction • Policy LP3 – Electric vehicle charging points in new developments • Policy LP4 – Reducing waste and the circular economy • Policy LP5 – Water quality and resources • Policy LP6 – Renewable and low carbon energy • Policy LP9 – Well-designed places • Policy LP35 – Listed buildings • Policy LP36 – Built non-designated heritage assets • Policy LP37 – Conservation areas
Built Heritage	
8.8	National and local plan policy is already in place and sufficient to deal with planning applications that affect designated heritage assets (listed buildings, the conservation area, scheduled monuments or archaeological records).
8.9	National planning practice guidance identifies that buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes can have a degree of heritage significance that merit consideration in planning decisions, but which do not meet the criteria for designating as heritage assets. Known as “non-designated heritage assets”, many local planning authorities identify and publish lists of these assets and the preparation of neighbourhood plans can also enable such assets to be identified. Such a list is not made publicly available by West Suffolk Council and the Neighbourhood Plan does not designate any such specific assets
<p>Policy WHB 10 - Buildings and Structures of Local Significance</p> <p>Development proposals should be designed to respect the integrity and appearance of Wickhambrook’s built heritage. Valued characteristics of the Parish, including buildings, structures, features and gardens of local significance, and the character and distinctiveness of the various greens, hamlets and neighbourhoods, should be protected.</p> <p>Proposals affecting buildings and structures of local significance will be considered in the context of their potential impact on their character and setting including their situation and location in both the immediate and wider contexts.</p> <p>Proposals for any works that would lead to the loss of or substantial harm to a local heritage asset or a building of local significance should be supported by an appropriate analysis of the significance of the asset together with an explanation of the wider public benefits of the proposal</p>	
<p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment • Proposed Site Plan • Proposed Street Scene Elevations 	
Development Design	
8.10	In 2022, as part of the Government’s neighbourhood planning support programme, AECOM were commissioned to prepare Design Guidance and Codes for the Neighbourhood Plan Area on behalf of the Parish Council. The document, published separately on the Neighbourhood Plan pages of the Parish Council’s website, provides guidance that seeks to inform the design of new development

	<p>in order to retain and protect the character and distinctiveness of Wickhambrook. The Design Guidance and Codes should be used alongside the National Model Design Codes published by the Government in July 2021, or any subsequent published national as well as district level guidance</p>
<p>8.11</p>	<p>The Design Guidance and Codes identified three distinct character areas, as illustrated on Map 6</p>  <p>Map 6 - Design Guidance Parish Character Areas</p>
<p>8.12</p>	<p>For each of the character area typologies, the existing and proposed characteristics are described...</p> <p>Main Settlement Area Existing characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is the most concentrated area of the village and location of local amenities including the doctors surgery and school. • Cul-de-sac development is the most prominent form of development in this area. • There is a consistent set-back building line with small to medium sized front gardens. • There is use of informal green spaces throughout the settlement and low lying vegetation and landscaping including green verges and hedges. • Bungalows are common in this area along with some semi-detached and council housing. • There is a mix of 1 to 2 storey houses. <p>Proposed characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the local material and colour palette in any new developments and avoid concentration of single typologies such as the bungalows in Nunnery Green. • Avoid proposing cul-de-sacs which reduced connectivity in the village. • The car parking issues can be benefited with a form of traffic management/enforcement and all proposed development should incorporated on plot parking to reduce on-street parking in this area. • Heights should be in keeping with Wickhambrook's character and existing buildings and should not exceed 2 storeys. • Design variety of architectural styles with various materials which all should be in keeping with Wickhambrook's character to avoid monotonous design appearance.
<p>8.13</p>	<p>The Design Guidance and Codes work in tandem with the Neighbourhood Plan to provide guidance on the built form, layout and sustainability of development, which must be designed and constructed to perform to increasingly low-carbon requirements set by central and local government. It also contains general design guidelines to which new development will be expected to have regard. These are reproduced below.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Integrate with existing paths, streets, circulation networks and patterns of activity; 2. Reinforce or enhance the established settlement character of streets, greens, and other spaces; 3. Harmonise and enhance existing settlement in terms of physical form, architecture and land use; 4. Relate well to local topography and landscape features, including prominent ridge lines and long-distance views; 5. Reflect, respect, and reinforce local architecture and historic distinctiveness; 6. Retain and incorporate important existing features into the development;

7. Respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing;
8. Adopt contextually appropriate materials and details;
9. Provide adequate open space for the development in terms of both quantity and quality;
10. Incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained features;
11. Ensure all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space are well related to each other;
12. Positively integrate energy efficient technologies;
13. Make sufficient provision for sustainable waste management (including facilities for kerbside collection, waste separation, and minimisation where appropriate) without adverse impact on the street scene, the local landscape or the amenities of neighbours;
14. Ensure that places are designed with management, maintenance and the upkeep of utilities in mind; and
15. Seek to implement passive environmental design principles by, firstly, considering how the site layout can optimise beneficial solar gain and reduce energy demands (e.g. insulation), before specification of energy efficient building services and finally incorporate renewable energy sources.

Policy WHB 11 - Development Design Considerations

Proposals for all new development should reflect the local characteristics and circumstances of the site by creating and contributing to a high quality, safe and sustainable environment. Planning applications should demonstrate how they satisfy the requirements of the Development Design Checklist in Appendix 4 of this Plan (See appendix A), as appropriate to the proposal. In addition, proposals will be supported where they:

- a) recognise and address the key architectural features, characteristics, landscape/building character, local distinctiveness and special qualities of the area and, where necessary, prepare a landscape character appraisal to demonstrate this;
- b) maintain the village's sense of place and/or local character, as identified in the Wickhambrook Design Guidance and Codes;
- c) do not involve the loss of gardens, important open, green or landscaped areas, which make a significant contribution to the character and appearance of that part of the village;
- d) taking mitigation measures into account, do not affect adversely and, where appropriate enhance:
 - i. any historic, architectural or archaeological heritage assets of the site and its surroundings;
 - ii. important landscape characteristics including trees and ancient hedgerows and other prominent topographical features;
 - iii. sites, habitats, species and features with biodiversity and ecological interest;
 - iv. the residential amenity of adjacent areas by reason of noise, smell, vibration, overlooking, overshadowing, loss of light, other pollution (including light pollution), or volume or type of vehicular activity generated;
- e) do not locate sensitive development where its users and nearby residents would be significantly and adversely affected by noise, smell, vibration, or other forms of pollution from existing sources, unless adequate and appropriate mitigation can be implemented;
- f) produce designs that respect the character, scale and density of the locality;
- g) include tree-lined streets unless in specific cases there are clear, justifiable and compelling reasons why this would be inappropriate and include trees elsewhere within developments where the opportunity arises;
- h) produce designs, in accordance with adopted standards, that maintain or enhance the safety of the highway network, ensuring that all residents' vehicle parking is provided within the plot and that spaces and garages meet the adopted minimum size standards;
- i) seek always to ensure permeability through new housing areas, connecting any new development into the heart of the existing settlement, in accordance with the Suffolk Design Streets Guide (or any successor documents);
- j) wherever possible ensure that development faces onto existing roads;

- k) do not result in water run-off that would add to or create surface water flooding by including, as necessary, water features such as ponds, wetlands and streams etc to collect run off to alleviate the possibility of flooding on lower lying land;
- l) where appropriate, make adequate provision for the covered storage of all wheelie bins and cycle storage in accordance with adopted cycle parking standards.

Consider:

- [Design and Access Statement](#)
- [Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment](#)
- [Landscaping Strategy](#)
- [Proposed Site Plan](#)
- [SUDS Proforma](#)
- [Transport Assessment](#)

Climate Change

8.16 Where energy use is necessary, then priority should be given to utilising the most sustainable sources. ... There may be occasions where schemes that do require planning permission could have a potential adverse impact on the character of the area and the amenity of nearby residents. The Neighbourhood Plan has limited powers to require developments to meet energy saving standards, especially in the construction of new homes. However, that does not stop the encouragement of the incorporation of measures in development that meet the energy hierarchy (in order of preference) of:

1. Minimising energy demand;
2. Maximising energy efficiency;
3. Utilising renewable energy;
4. Utilising low carbon energy; and
5. Utilising other energy sources

Policy WHB 12 - Sustainable Construction Practices

For all appropriate development, proposals that incorporate current best practice in energy conservation will be supported where such measures are designed to be integral to the building design and minimise any detrimental impact on the building or its surroundings. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals should demonstrate how they:

- a) maximise the benefits of solar gain in site layouts and orientation of buildings;
- b) incorporate best practice in energy conservation and are designed to achieve maximum achievable energy efficiency;
- c) avoid fossil fuel-based heating systems;
- d) incorporate current sustainable design and construction measures and renewable energy measures, such as, where feasible, ground/air source heat pumps, solar panels, thermal and PV systems; and
- e) make provision for grey water/rainwater, and/or surface water harvesting and recycling

Consider:

- External Works [Details](#) and [Layout](#)
- [Sustainability Statement](#)
- [Planning Statement](#)

Flooding and Sustainable Drainage

8.18 A number of roads are susceptible to surface water flooding, especially Nunnery Green, Attleton Green and Coltsfoot Green. It is essential that development proposals do not create new or exacerbate existing surface water flooding through creating surfaces where rainwater can run-off into the highway or neighbouring sites. New development will be required, where appropriate, to make provision for the attenuation and recycling of surface water and rainwater through Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) that might include on-site rainwater and stormwater harvesting and greywater recycling, and the management of run-off and water management in order to reduce the potential for making the situation worse.

Policy WHB 13 - Flooding and Sustainable Drainage

Proposals for new development, or the intensification of existing development, in Flood Zones 2 and 3 should be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment and will not be supported, unless the applicant has satisfied the safety requirements in the Flood Risk National Planning Policy Guidance (and any successor), and National Planning Policy Framework and the sequential test.

Proposals for all new development will be required to submit schemes appropriate to the scale of the proposal detailing how on-site surface water drainage and water resources will be managed so as not to cause or exacerbate surface water and fluvial flooding elsewhere.

Development will only be supported where it has an acceptably low risk of being affected by flooding when assessed through sequential testing against the most up-to-date (SFRA) maps. Environment Agency flood risk maps and the West Suffolk Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

Additionally, development should be safe for its lifetime and not increase flow rate compared to a greenfield scenario, and where possible reduce flood risk overall.

Protection of the surrounding watercourses is necessary to decrease the likelihood of increasing the flood risk of Wickhambrook in the future.

Proposals should, as appropriate, include the use of above-ground open Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). These could include:

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

Consider:

- Flood Risk Assessment (parts [1](#), [2](#) and [3](#))
- [Landscaping Strategy](#)
- [SUDS Proforma](#)

Light Pollution

8.19	Paragraph 186 (c) of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should "limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation". Artificial lighting of development, while increasing a sense of security, can also impact upon residential amenity, the character and appearance of an area (particularly rural locations) and the environment. Aspects such as poor design, location or the expulsion of unnecessarily high levels of light can also have a harmful impact.
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Policy WHB 14 - Dark skies

Wherever practicable, development proposals should not include external lighting. Any future outdoor lighting systems which are necessary to ensure that the development concerned is secure in terms of occupier and vehicle safety should restrict their impact on the environment, and minimise light pollution and adverse effects on wildlife. In addition, outdoor lighting systems should make use of low-level downward facing lighting and reduce the consumption of energy by promoting efficient outdoor lighting technologies, keeping the night-time skies dark and reducing glare and light pollution.

Consider:

- [Planning Statement](#)
- [Proposed Street Scene Elevations](#)

Services and Facilities

Relevant paragraphs, policies etc. of Referendum Plan:

9.3	Paragraph 88 of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should enable the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship. Further, paragraph 93 states that planning policies and decisions should guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs
9.4	The Local Plan includes the following policies in relation to village services and facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy LP19 Community facilities and services • Policy LP20 Leisure and cultural facilities • Policy LP21 Open space, sport, play and recreation facilities • Policy LP22 Allotments
9.8	Opportunities for participating in exercise are important to the health of residents and reducing pressures on the health service. The Neighbourhood Plan can play an important role in making sure that there are sufficient and adequate services in the village to meet the needs of current and future residents. The village playing field to the rear of the Village Hall provides a central facility for both formal and informal recreation. Adjoining, but separate from the playing field are the Bowls Club and tennis courts. As the population of the Parish grows, there may be a demand for further facilities, either an expansion of the existing or totally new provision. However, it is also important to safeguard what we already have and, in accordance with Policies LP20, LP21 and LP22 of the Local Plan, existing facilities will be protected from being lost unless there are demonstrable reasons for their loss.
<p>Policy WHB 16 - Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities Proposals for the provision, enhancement and/or expansion of amenity, sport or recreation open space or facilities will be supported subject to compliance with other Policies in the Development Plan...</p>	
<p>Community Action 5 - Allotments and Community Gardens The Parish Council will work with developers and parishioners to explore options for providing family allotments or community growing spaces in the village. Future provision for vegetable, fruit and flower growing and general gardening might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • spaces allocated to individuals and families • spaces gardened by community groups. In consultation with parishioners and in partnership with developers, the Parish Council may also decide to set aside spaces for community use as play areas, wildlife zones, enhanced landscapes and places for relaxation and leisure.</p>	

Highways and Travel

Relevant paragraphs, policies etc. of Referendum Plan:

10.1	Neighbourhood plans have little power to introduce highway improvements as most schemes will not require planning permission. Improvements are therefore reliant on Suffolk County Council, as the highways authority, for investment in projects or improvements required as part of the mitigation of the impact of development proposals
10.7	The NPPF seeks to promote sustainable transport through reducing the impacts of development on transport networks and promoting walking, cycling and public transport. At a local level, the Local Plan includes the following policies in relation to highways and travel: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy LP41 Active and sustainable travel • Policy LP42 Rights of way • Policy LP43 Transport assessments, transport statements and travel plans • Policy LP44 Parking standards
10.10	Although not a problem in Wickhambrook, it is important to take opportunities to improve air quality and mitigate any risk to human health due to man-made emissions such as nitrogen oxides and particulate matter. Development proposals should seek to encourage and facilitate active and sustainable travel to reduce vehicles on the road and therefore pollution and poor air quality, as well as improve mental and physical health.
10.11	Public rights of way provide opportunities for recreational walking, horse riding and cycling. Where feasible, improvements to the quality and extent of the public rights of way network will be supported where provided as part of development proposals
<p>Policy WHB 17 - Public Rights of Way Measures to improve and extend the existing network of public rights of way will be supported where their value as biodiversity corridors is safeguarded and any public right of way extension is fit for purpose. Where practicable, development proposals should incorporate measures to enhance biodiversity within the improved or extended public right of way.</p>	

Action:

Using the pro-forma template, consider where the planning application meets and/or departs from the Wickhambrook Neighbourhood Plan objectives, and identify where the planning application departs from the NP Policies identified above.

Street grid and layout:

- Does it favour accessibility and connectivity? If not, why?
- Do the new points of access and street layout have regard for all users of the development; in particular pedestrians, cyclists and those with disabilities?
- What are the essential characteristics of the existing street pattern; are these reflected in the proposal?
- How will the new design or extension integrate with the existing street arrangement?
- Are the new points of access appropriate in terms of patterns of movement?
- Do the points of access conform to the statutory technical requirements?

Local green spaces, views & character:

- What are the particular characteristics of this area which have been taken into account in the design; i.e. what are the landscape qualities of the area?
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance any identified views or views in general?
- How does the proposal affect the trees on or adjacent to the site?
- Can trees be used to provide natural shading from unwanted solar gain? i.e. deciduous trees can limit solar gains in summer, while maximising them in winter.
- Has the proposal been considered within its wider physical context?
- Has the impact on the landscape quality of the area been taken into account?
- In rural locations, has the impact of the development on the tranquillity of the area been fully considered?
- How does the proposal impact on existing views which are important to the area and how are these views incorporated in the design?
- How does the proposal impact on existing views which are important to the area and how are these views incorporated in the design?
- Can any new views be created?
- Is there adequate amenity space for the development?
- Does the new development respect and enhance existing amenity space?
- Have opportunities for enhancing existing amenity spaces been explored?
- Will any communal amenity space be created? If so, how will this be used by the new owners and how will it be managed?
- Is there opportunity to increase the local area biodiversity?
- Can green space be used for natural flood prevention eg permeable landscaping swales etc?
- Can water bodies be used to provide evaporative cooling?
- Is there space to consider a ground source heat pump array, either horizontal ground loop or borehole (if excavation is required)?

Gateway and access features:

- What is the arrival point, how is it designed?
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing gaps between settlements?
- Does the proposal affect or change the setting of a listed building or listed landscape?
- Is the landscaping to be hard or soft?

Buildings layout and grouping:

- What are the typical groupings of buildings?
- How have the existing groupings been reflected in the proposal?
- Are proposed groups of buildings offering variety and texture to the context of the village?
- What effect would the proposal have on the streetscape?
- Does the proposal maintain the character of dwelling clusters stemming from the main road?
- Does the proposal overlook any adjacent properties or gardens? How is this mitigated?
- Subject to topography and the clustering of existing buildings, are new buildings oriented to incorporate passive solar design principles?
- If any of the buildings were to be heated by an individual air source heat pump (ASHP), is there space to site it within the property boundary without infringing on noise and visual requirements?
- Can buildings with complementary energy profiles be clustered together such that a communal low carbon energy source could be used to supply multiple buildings that might require energy at different times of day or night to reduce peak loads? And/or
- can waste heat from one building be extracted to provide cooling to that building as well as heat to another building?

Building line and boundary treatment:

- What are the characteristics of the building line?
- How has the building line been respected in the proposals?
- Has the appropriateness of the boundary treatment been considered in the context of the site?

Building heights and roofline:

- What are the characteristics of the roofline?
- Have the proposals paid careful attention to height, form, massing and scale?
- If a higher than average building(s) is proposed, what would be the reason for making the development higher?
- Will the roof structure be capable of supporting a photovoltaic or solar thermal array either now or in the future?
- Will the inclusion of roof mounted renewable technologies be an issue from a visual or planning perspective? If so can they be screened from view being careful not to cause over shading?

Household extensions: - Not applicable

Building materials and surface treatment:

- What is the distinctive material in the area?
- Does the proposed material harmonise with the local materials?
- Does the proposal use high-quality materials?
- Have the details of the windows, doors, eaves and roof details been addressed in the context of the overall design?
- Does the new proposed materials respect or enhance the existing area or adversely change its character?
- Are recycled materials, or those with high recycled content proposed?
- Has the embodied carbon of the materials been considered and are there options which can reduce the embodied carbon of the design? For example, wood structures and concrete alternatives.
- Can the proposed materials be locally and/or responsibly sourced? E.g. FSC timber, or certified under BES 6001, ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems?

Car parking:

- What parking solutions have been considered?
- Are the car spaces located and arranged in a way that is not dominant or detrimental to the sense of place?
- Has planting been considered to soften the presence of cars?
- Does the proposed car parking compromise the amenity of adjoining properties?
- Have the needs of wheelchair users been considered?
- Can electric vehicle charging points be provided?
- Can secure cycle storage be provided at an individual building level or through a central/communal facility where appropriate?
- If covered car ports or cycle storage is included, can it incorporate roof mounted photovoltaic panels or a biodiverse roof in its design?

Architectural details and design:

- Does the proposal reflect the characteristics of the locality in its design?
- Does the proposal harmonise with the adjacent properties? This means that it follows the height massing and general proportions of adjacent buildings and how it takes cues from materials and other physical characteristics.
- Does the proposal maintain or enhance the existing landscape features?
- Has the local architectural character and precedent been demonstrated in the proposals?
- If the proposal is a contemporary design, are the details and materials of a sufficiently high enough quality and does it relate specifically to the architectural characteristics and scale of the site?
- Is it possible to incorporate passive environmental design features such as larger roof overhangs, deeper window reveals and/or external louvres/shutters to provide shading in hotter months?
- Can the building designs utilise thermal mass to minimise heat transfer and provide free cooling?
- Can any external structures such as balconies be fixed to the outside of the building, as opposed to cantilevering through the building fabric to reduce thermal bridge?

Planning Consultation Response Template

This template should be used as a guide to assist the parish council in reaching a decision on the following planning applications:

- Outline planning
- Full planning
- Variations of full planning applications

The template asks the parish council to consider the application in the context of its (draft) Neighbourhood Plan vision

In 2040 Wickhambrook will remain a village that has retained its distinct structure of a number of small settlements within a high-quality rural landscape, where limited sustainable growth has taken place that meets the needs of the Parish and where essential infrastructure and services are retained and improved.

objectives and policies.

The parish council should consider whether the proposed development, if delivered in accordance with the application, its supporting documents and statements would support or undermine the Wickhambrook Neighbourhood Plan.

For each of the fifteen objectives of the plan, set out in the table below, indicate whether, based on the information available, the proposed development, if delivered in accordance with the application, would support or undermine it (or indicate not applicable). Add in any comments supporting your findings (for example, reference the specific policies).

Planning Application Reference : DC/25/1477/FUL

WPC Meeting Date: 6 November 2025

Topic Areas	Objectives & Policies	Yes	No	N/A
Development Location	1 New development should minimise the loss of the best quality agricultural land and its impact on the natural and historic environment as well as being well related to the existing services and facilities in the village centre.			
	Policy WHB 1 – Spatial Strategy			
	Commentary:			
Housing	2 New housing development will reflect Wickhambrook's status as a Local Service Centre within the "Settlement Hierarchy" of West Suffolk and provide a range of types, sizes, prices and			

		tenures that meets the needs of all age groups and incomes.			
	3	New housing should be located where it is safely accessible by foot to the village's services and facilities.			
		Policy WHB 2 – Land west of Bunters Road			
		Commentary:			
	4	Homes should incorporate measures to ensure they are accessible for all needs, incorporate energy saving features and make use of sustainable approaches to building.			
		Policy WHB 3 – Housing Design Standards			
		Commentary:			
		Policy WHB 4 – Low Energy and Energy Efficient Housing Design			
	Commentary:				
Employment and Local Economy	5	A range of employment opportunities in the Parish will be retained and supported where there will not be a detrimental impact on the environment, services and infrastructure.			
		Policy WHB 5 - Employment Sites			
		Commentary:			
		Policy WHB 6 – New Businesses and Employment Development			
	Commentary:				
Natural Environment	6	The rural character of the Parish will be protected and, where possible, enhanced			
		Policy WHB 7 - Protecting Wickhambrook's Landscape Character			
		Commentary:			
		Policy WHB 8 - Biodiversity and Habitats			
	Commentary:				
	Policy WHB 9 - Local Green Spaces				
	Commentary:				
Built Environment & Design	8	Wickhambrook's built heritage assets will be protected.			
		Policy WHB 10 - Buildings and Structures of Local Significance			
		Commentary:			
		Policy WHB 11 - Development Design Considerations			
	Commentary:				
	Policy WHB 12 - Sustainable Construction Practices				
	Commentary:				

	10	New development will not have a detrimental impact on the quality of life of existing residents			
		Policy WHB 13 - Flooding and Sustainable Drainage			
		Commentary:			
		Policy WHB 14 - Dark skies			
Services and Facilities	11	The level of services and facilities will be protected and improved.			
		Policy WHB 15 - Community Facilities			
		Commentary:			
	12	The range of existing community facilities and services will be improved.			
		Policy WHB 16 - Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities			
		Commentary:			
Highways and Travel	13	The capacity and safety of the road network to cope with new development will be ensured.			
		Commentary:			
	14	The improvement of bus services to nearby towns will be encouraged.			
		Commentary:			
	15	The Public Rights of Way network will be protected, maintained and improved			
		Policy WHB 17 - Public Rights of Way			
Commentary:					

Taking into account the findings against each objective (and where relevant) policies, the parish council has determined to:

Make no Comment

Object to the Application

Support the Application

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)