



Draft Neighbourhood Plan for the former
Land Settlement Association Estate
at Great Abington
March 2017



Neighbourhood Plan

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1 Why a Neighbourhood Plan for the former Abington Land Settlement Estate (LSA)

The former LSA Neighbourhood Plan will set out planning policies for the LSA area. Once made, a neighbourhood plan carries the same legal weight as plans drawn up by your local council, South Cambridgeshire District Council. The planners must follow what is in the neighbourhood plan when making decisions about planning applications in the area.

The intention of the neighbourhood plan is to clarify and regularise the development which is permitted on the former LSA so that there are clear, consistent and transparent policies to control development.

This neighbourhood plan aims to provide policies for housing whilst preserving the special nature of the estate. This will help planning applicants to understand the limitations and predict the outcome of an application. It will also give clear guidance to both the Parish Council and the District Council when considering planning applications.

The plan will include:





- a) a policy which deals with extension or rebuilding of the original house on each holding
- b) a policy which deals with the creation of additional dwellings.

2 Purpose of this document and next steps

Discussions around planning issues for the LSA area have been ongoing for some time. The Great Abington Parish Council carried out some initial work during 2013/14 and received broad support for this from residents. Since then a Neighbourhood Plan area for the LSA area has been designated and the working group have held a number of working meetings and engaged the community alongside important statutory stakeholders such as South Cambs local planning authority and Historic England.

The Neighbourhood Plan working group have developed this draft plan in order to keep the community and our statutory stakeholders engaged in the plan making process. We invite your comment on the content of this draft plan (in particular the proposed planning policies and their supporting text found underneath them) as well as the Character Assessment we have prepared as a way of informing the policies in the plan.

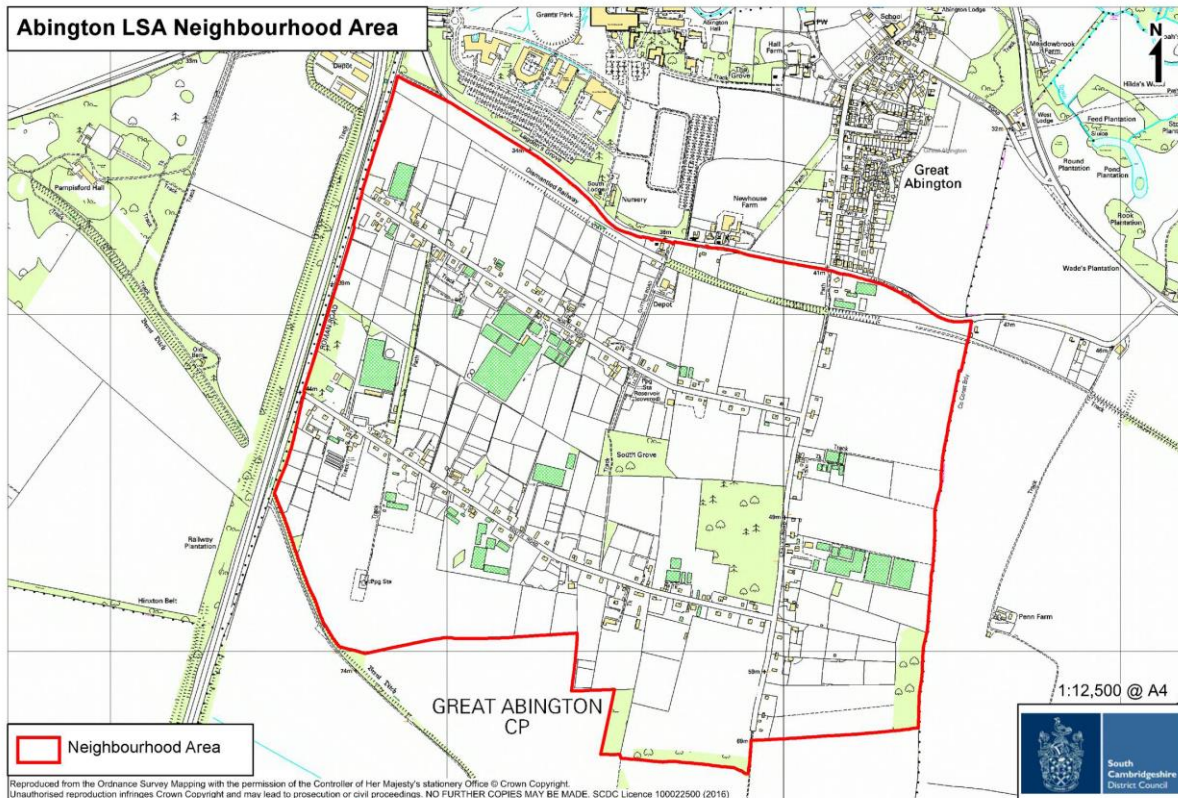
Following this stage of consultation we will take on board your comments and prepare a “pre-submission” version of the plan. There will be a formal consultation period for a minimum of six weeks on the “pre-submission” plan. We expect this will happen by June 2017. Following the pre-submission consultation, we will refine the plan further to take on board consultation comments as appropriate and submit to South Cambs local planning authority. At this stage, South Cambs will be required to publish the document for a further period of six weeks (allowing further representations from consultees to be submitted) and submit the plan, alongside any representations, for independent examination. For purpose of clarity, a timeline of the next steps is set out below:

Timeline for the Neighbourhood Plan	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with community and stakeholders on the draft draft Neighbourhood Plan 	<p>This plan. Responses sought 31 March to 14 April 2017</p> <p>Indicative timings:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre submission consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan for six weeks 	<p>June 2017 to July 2017</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission of the plan to South Cambs District Council. Plus six week publication stage (where further comments can be made direct to South Cambs) 	<p>September 2017</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent Examination 	<p>December 2017</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referendum 	<p>Spring 2018</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan Made 	<p>Spring 2018</p>

This is your opportunity to tell us what you think of our plan so far. Please respond to the consultation by 14 April 2017.

3 The Neighbourhood Plan area

The area covered by this Neighbourhood Plan is the former Abington Land Settlement Association Estate, comprising holdings on North Road, South Road and Chalky Road and three on the southern side of Pampisford Road. The Neighbourhood Area, as shown in the map below, was designated by South Cambs District Council on 5 September 2016.



3.1 Historic context of Great Abington

The village of Great Abington is situated with its partner village, Little Abington, within the South Cambridgeshire District Council area. It is seven miles South of Cambridge on the A11 London to Newmarket Road and the A1307 Cambridge to Haverhill Road. Originally a very small farming community its population was increased significantly in the late 1930s by the establishment of the Land Settlement Association Estate at Abington.

3.2 Abington Land Settlement

1. The land described in this document as the former Abington Land Settlement was originally part of Abington Hall Estate and known as New House Farm. It was purchased by the Land Settlement Association in 1936 to establish the Abington LSA Estate. The land amounted to 688 acres and it was divided in 62 holdings. Most of the holdings were situated on North Road, South Road and Chalky Road with three along Pampisford Road.
2. Like many other former LSA estates, the policy area is characterised by a relatively uniform collection of smallholdings of 1-11 acres depending on the location within the former LSA

estate. The long straight roads (all of which are unadopted, owned and maintained by the LSA residents/landowners see Appendix) and uniform plots are the result of farming techniques used on the LSA estates.

3. Smallholdings had outbuildings located to the side of the dwellings. Originally each had a piggery and a small green house; other outbuildings were often added. Many had several large glasshouses.
4. The Land Settlement Association operated in Abington until 1983 when the holdings were sold off by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

3.3 Baseline for policies

The situation on the former LSA in 1983 immediately prior to the decision to sell the estate was therefore as follows: each holding had a house and a piggery with some land; most of the houses had been extended to add a bathroom and extra living space; many had outbuildings and glasshouses.

This situation as at 1983 immediately prior to the decision to sell the estate will be used as the baseline for defining the 62 original holdings and therefore what building will be permitted by the policies in section 5. This will avoid any confusion that might be caused by changes of ownership of land and dwellings during the intervening years.

3.4 Current situation

Properties in the Estate range from some in their original state being small, two up and two down cottages to, at the other extreme, what are now very large houses with many bedrooms and additional facilities. A significant number of businesses of various kinds are operated from the Estate. There are also a considerable number of buildings without planning permission.

In earlier South Cambridgeshire local plans there was a specific policy relating to the former estate area. This was removed from later plans so that planning applications are considered in the context of the area being 'countryside'. However, the area has a number of features which make it quite different from open countryside as illustrated by the following extract taken directly from an appeal inspector's report:-

'... the Estate overall appears clearly distinguished from the surrounding countryside. This is due, in part, to the linear form of the two parallel private roads that serve the Estate and the regular pattern and layout of the various buildings along them, as well as the noticeable degree to which a significant number of the original dwellings have been extended and altered.'

This has meant that planning decisions have been varied and planning officers have found it difficult to find a standard approach.

This Neighbourhood Plan will provide a framework against which all future applications in this area can be assessed and planning decisions made.

4 Aims and Objectives

The essential aim of the Neighbourhood Plan is to retain the special character of the former Land Settlement Estate while allowing limited development. The plan aims:

to keep the historic pattern of building on the land settlement, comprising a house with outbuildings (these may include a new dwelling as defined below) surrounded by open land separating each holding;

to retain the existing single track roads with passing places, currently paid for and maintained through the Road Management Association;

to encourage a wider demographic mix on the former LSA by allowing for the building of smaller dwellings attractive to both young and elderly;

to support the construction of smaller high quality dwellings as many original smaller houses have been extended;

to ensure that new development responds positively to local character and history and uses construction materials that are inkeeping with the local area ; and

to retain the agricultural and paddock land outside the areas defined by the original house and its outbuildings.

5 The Policies

To achieve this, the Parish Council working group proposes the following principles and policies to be contained within the Neighbourhood Plan area.

General principles to be followed in the Neighbourhood Plan area

1. The designated area remains outside the Great Abington village framework.
2. The broadly rural nature of the designated area should be preserved with all public footpaths and rights of way for horse riders retained.
3. The roads will remain unadopted by the Council and their maintenance will continue under the existing road management organisation.
4. Developments will not be allowed which have a significant adverse impact on the unique character or appearance of the Estate and or which may have an adverse impact on residential amenity or create unacceptable disturbance.
5. All new building designs should be in keeping with the original housing stock on the Estate.
6. No development should be allowed that would result in a substantial increase in traffic on the Estate or the need for significant related road development, such as businesses that by their nature require large numbers of vehicle movements.

Policy 1: original dwellings (including those that have been rebuilt)

Extensions to and rebuildings of original dwellings will be permitted provided the development does not result in a building that has a floor area exceeding 300 square metres.

Replacement of original dwellings will be permitted providing the development does not exceed the floor area of the existing dwelling, or 300 square metres whichever is larger.

For all development proposals the following must be demonstrated:

- **the dwelling will continue to sit comfortably within its setting;**
- **the existing uniformity in the layout of buildings along the road, as described in the Great Abington LSA Character Assessment, is retained;**
- **residential amenity of neighbouring properties and future occupiers of proposed development will not be adversely affected;**
- **the new building will have no more than two floors visible above the ground level;**
- **the new building will be in keeping with others in the area in particular the external appearance of all four walls should be brick, washed concrete or timber, windows and doors should be of a traditional simple design, roofs will be in keeping with existing styles (gabled, half hipped, gambrel) with traditional tiles;**
- **all new or replacement dwellings should be set back from the roads at least as far as the original dwellings but will not be placed significantly further back on the plot; and**
- **development will recognise and reinforce the distinct local character (as set out within the Great Abington LSA Character Assessment) in relation to height, scale, spacing, layout, orientation, design and materials of buildings.**

5.1 Rationale and intent for Policy 1

Policy 1 applies to all development proposals affecting the original dwellings in the LSA area or, where these have been rebuilt, the newer properties on the site of the original dwelling. The intention of Policy 1 is to allow extensions and rebuilds in a way that will maintain separations and character of the area.

From the roads, the former LSA estate is characterised by the residential properties being well spaced out and a strong uniformity in the layout of the buildings (described in more detail in the Character Assessment). Dwellings are located along the road frontages (being set back at an approximate distance of 13 metres) however many of these are hidden from the road behind hedge and tree belts. The piggery is located to the side of the main dwelling at varying distances away but at least 30 metres from the original dwelling (at the time of the LSA settlement being built, it was stipulated by the Ministry of Agriculture that all livestock had to be minimum distance from a

dwelling). In many instances there are other outbuildings located to the side of the main dwelling. Between the piggery and the neighbouring residential property there is, in the majority of cases, a gap of about 30 to 40 metres. In places, this gap affords long views from the roadsides into the open agricultural land behind the residential curtilages but in other places, this gap is itself hidden behind tree and hedge belts. Originally, all residential dwellings were, together with their piggeries and small green houses, set within long rectangular plots with the growing land behind. Plots were separated from the next by the headland of a field and it is this that has left a legacy of a gap.

Due to the buildings being set back from the road at a uniform distance, the extent of mature vegetation along the roadside having the effect of nestling buildings within a rural setting, and the design and layout of the dwellings (including, in the vast majority of cases, rebuilds), being subtle and sensitive to their setting, the buildings are not prominent in the landscape. It is important this key characteristic is retained and that no extensions or rebuilds are allowed that overwhelm or dominate their setting. It is equally important that the cumulative effect of rebuilds and extensions will not damage the rural character.

Allowing floor spaces of up to 300 square metres is based on an assessment of the sizes of the houses in the NP area which have already been extended or rebuilt without dominating their setting inappropriately.

Policy 2: Additional dwellings

The development of one additional dwelling on the site of the original piggery will be permitted provided that:

- 5. the development will not result in more than two dwellings for each original house on the LSA estate as at the 1983 baseline;**
- 6. the footprint of the additional dwelling covers at least a part of the site of the original piggery;**
- 7. residential amenity of neighbouring properties and future occupiers of proposed development will not be adversely affected;**
- 8. the additional dwelling has no more than two floors visible above the ground level;**
- 9. the additional dwelling has a total floor area of no more than 150 square metres;**
- 10. the additional dwelling is suitable for independent living, in accordance with Lifetime Home Standards;**
- 11. the additional building should be an asset to the area in terms of quality of building materials used and should be designed having regard to its impact on surrounding landscape and character;**
- 12. the additional dwelling should be set back from the roads at least as far as the original piggery but will not be placed significantly further back on the plot; and**
- 13. development will be expected to recognise and reinforce the distinct local character (as set out within the Great Abington LSA Character Assessment) in relation to height, scale, spacing, layout, orientation, design and materials of buildings.**

It is a condition of development that the owner(s) of the new dwelling must be or become members of the Road Management Association and accept liability for the charges and conditions associated with the new dwelling.

No other additional dwellings requiring planning permission will be permitted in the NP area.

5.2 Rationale and intent for Policy 2

Policy 2 applies to the development proposal affecting the piggery building or the site of the piggery building within each plot of land as at 1983. The intention of the policy is to allow one additional dwelling for each of the original houses as at the 1983 baseline. Each additional dwelling will only be allowed to be developed on the site of the original piggery therefore maintaining the original pattern and separations considered an important characteristic of the area.

Due to the limited capacity of the single tracked unadopted roads in the LSA area, limited provision of community infrastructure within the NP area, the importance of preserving rural character and the desire to respect the layout of the former LSA settlement, it is necessary to manage the level of growth that can come forward within the NP area. Policy 2 specifically stipulates that there can be no more than two dwellings (including any annexes that have been built) per each original house as at the 1983 baseline.

In order to respect the existing character in the layout and pattern of development, it would not be considered appropriate to allow large extensive dwellings on the site of the piggery , neither would it be considered appropriate to allow dwellings which would not appear subservient to the adjacent dwelling. Allowing for larger homes on the original dwelling site and a smaller home on the site of the piggery also brings advantages in terms of maintaining a balanced housing mix appropriate to meeting local needs. The types of buildings considered suitable for the piggery site would be ideal for meeting needs of older members of the community and young people wishing to stay in the area.

Policy 3: Road usage limitation in the Neighbourhood Plan area

Development that would result in a substantial increase in traffic on the Estate or the need for significant related road development, such as businesses that by their nature require large numbers of vehicle movements, will not be permitted.

5.3 Rationale and intent for Policy 3

The roads on the former LSA are South Road, North Road, Chalky Road and Cutting Road; all are unadopted roads. They are owned and managed by a Road Management company; land-owners pay an annual fee to the elected Road Management Committee for the maintenance of the roads. They are single tracked roads with passing places. Whilst it may be possible to increase the number of passing places it will not be possible and is not considered appropriate to increase road capacity through road widening.

Any development proposals that would individually or cumulatively lead to substantial increases in traffic would not be appropriate in the NP area due to the limited capacity of the road network. Policy 3 will apply to all proposals requiring planning permission in the NP area not just the residential proposals.

Policy 4: Other development in the Neighbourhood Plan area

Development for agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor recreation and other uses which need to be located in the countryside will be permitted so long as it accords with Local Plan policy and Policy 3 in this plan.

5.4 Rationale and intent for Policy 4

The South Cambs Local Plan defines the boundary of development frameworks. Policy 4 clarifies that with the exception of development allowed under Policy 1 and Policy 2, the countryside designation applies across the NP area.

There is national legislation¹ in place that grants planning permission for certain types of development and this legislation is, from time to time, subject to amendments. These are often referred to as “permitted development” or “PD” rights. At the time of writing permitted development rights will apply in the NP area to some of the agricultural buildings and subject to prior approval being granted by South Cambs District Council.

6 Brent Ditch

The Neighbourhood Plan designated area incorporates Brent Ditch which is a Scheduled Monument. The proposals in this plan do not affect Brent Ditch which is recognised as an important historic asset.

¹ Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015