



# Watton

## Neighbourhood Plan

2021-2036

Your chance to shape our future

**Basic Conditions Statement**

October 2022

A photograph of a brick building with a sign that reads 'WAYLAND HOUSE'. In the foreground, there is a large, curved stone monument with a wheel-like design on its side. The monument is set on a paved area with yellow markings. A white car is partially visible on the right side of the image.

Watton Town Council

# Watton Neighbourhood Plan Statement

October 2022

Prepared for Watton Town Council by  
Places4People Planning Consultancy

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# 1 Introduction

1.1 As part of the formal submission of the Watton Neighbourhood Plan for Examination, there is a requirement for the Town Council, as the 'qualifying body' to illustrate that they have complied with a series of 'basic conditions' as set out in the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). This Statement accompanies the submission to the local planning authority, Breckland District Council, of the Watton Neighbourhood Plan under Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 ("the Regulations"). Regulation 15 requires a submission neighbourhood development plan to be accompanied by "*a statement explaining how the proposed neighbourhood development plan meets the requirements of paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act*".

1.2 This statement has been prepared in order to confirm compliance with these basic conditions as follows:

**Section 2** identifies the legislative requirements for the 'basic conditions'

**Section 3** identifies how the Plan Objectives and Policies are in general conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework and the Strategic Policies of the adopted Local Plan.

**Sections 4** confirms that the neighbourhood plan is compatible with the Convention Rights.

It is considered that the Neighbourhood Plan complies with the requirements of the basic conditions as set out in Paragraph 8(1)(a) of Schedule 4B of the Act.

## 2. Legal Requirements

2.1 Paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) identifies the “Basic Conditions” that the neighbourhood plan must comply with.

2.2 Paragraph 8 (1) states that the examiner must consider:

- (a) whether the draft neighbourhood development plan meets the basic conditions (see sub-paragraph (2)),
- (b) whether the draft neighbourhood development plan complies with the provision made by or under sections 38A and 38B of this Act,
- (d) whether the area for any referendum should extend beyond the neighbourhood area to which the draft neighbourhood development plan relates, and
- (e) such other matters as may be prescribed.

2.3 Paragraph 8 (2) states that a draft neighbourhood development plan meets the basic conditions if:

- (a) having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood development plan,
- (d) the making of the neighbourhood development plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development,
- (e) the making of the neighbourhood development plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area),
- (f) the making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations, and
- (g) prescribed conditions are met in relation to the neighbourhood development plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the neighbourhood development plan.

The requirements of Paragraph 8(2)(b), (2)(c) (3), (4) and (5) are not of relevance to the compliance with the basic conditions test.

2.4 Paragraph 8 (6) stipulates that the examiner is not to consider any matter that does not fall within subparagraph (1) apart from considering whether the draft neighbourhood plan is compatible with the Convention rights.

2.5 On 28 December 2018 the Conservation of Habitats and Species and Planning (Various Amendments) (England and Wales) Regulations 2018 came into force. Amongst other things, these Regulations amend the basic condition prescribed in Regulation 32 and Schedule 2 (Habitats) of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) which stated:

- The making of the neighbourhood plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site or a European offshore marine site either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

The Regulations substitute this with a new basic condition which states:

- The making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

## Meeting the Legal Requirements

Compliance with the individual elements of the legal requirements is set out below.

Requirement	Interpretation	NP response
4B 8 (1)(a) Whether the Draft NP meets the Basic Conditions	This requires the NP to demonstrate compliance with paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B of the T&CP Act.	This is considered in detail in later sections of this Statement.
4B 8 (1)(b) Whether the Draft Order Complies with Sections 38A & 38B of the Compulsory Purchase Act 2004	This requires the draft order to comply with Sections 38A & 38B of the Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Section 38A sets out the "Meaning of Neighbourhood Development Plan".	Compliance with Sections 38A and 38B is demonstrated in the following rows.
	Section 38A(1) "any qualifying body is entitled to initiate a process for the purpose of requiring a Local Planning Authority in England to make a Neighbourhood Development Plan."	The Neighbourhood Plan has been submitted by Watton Town Council, a qualifying body (as defined in the Localism Act 2011).
	Section 38A(2) A "Neighbourhood Development Plan is a plan which sets out policies (however expressed) in relation to the development and use of land in the whole or any part of a particular neighbourhood area specified in the plan."	The NP sets out Policies that relate to the development and use of land for the Neighbourhood Area covering the Parish of Watton, as designated by Breckland District Council on 4 August 2017. The boundary of the Neighbourhood Area is shown in the NP (Map 1).
	Section 38A, Paragraphs (3) - (12)	These paragraphs are not of relevance to the submission phase of the NP.
	Section 38B1(a) The Neighbourhood Development Plan "Must specify the period for which it is to have effect."	The plan period of the NP is from 2022 to 2036.
	Section 38B1(b) A Neighbourhood Development Plan "may not include provision about development that is excluded development."	The NP does not contain policies relating to excluded development as defined in Section 61K of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
	Section 38B1(c) A Neighbourhood Development Plan may not relate to more than one neighbourhood area	The NP does not relate to more than one neighbourhood area. It solely relates to the Neighbourhood Plan Area as designated by Breckland District Council on 4 August 2017.
	Section 38B(2) Only one Neighbourhood Development Plan may be made for each neighbourhood area.	There are currently no other NP's in place in this neighbourhood area.
	Section 38B(3) If to any extent a policy set out in a Neighbourhood Development Plan conflicts with any other statement or information in the plan, the conflict must be resolved in favour of the policy.	There are no conflicts within the NP

Requirement	Interpretation	NP response
	<p>Section 38B(4)(a)</p> <p>Regulations made by the Secretary of State may make provisions for "restricting the provision that may be included in Neighbourhood Development Plans about the use of land."</p> <p>These Regulations are set out in Statutory Instrument 2012 No 637, The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.</p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 have been used to inform the process of making the NP.</p>
	<p>Section 38B(4)(b)</p> <p>Regulations made by the Secretary of State may make provisions "requiring Neighbourhood Development Plans to include such matters as are prescribed in the Regulations."</p>	<p>A screening process was carried out by the local planning authority in May 2022, to determine whether a Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) or Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) would be required in support of the Neighbourhood Plan. In both cases it was considered that the Watton Neighbourhood Plan will not have significant environmental effects and that no European sites would be affected by the policies described in the NP, therefore the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment or Appropriate Assessment (Habitats Regulations) is not required.</p>
	<p>Section 38B, which include paragraphs 38B(4)(c), 5 &amp; 6,</p>	<p>The remaining requirements of Section 38B are not of relevance to this Basic Conditions Statement</p>
<p>4B 8 (1)(d) Whether The Referendum Should Extend Beyond The NP Area</p>	<p>This requires the examiner to consider whether the area for any referendum should extend beyond the NP Area to which it relates.</p>	<p>The NP relates solely to land that falls within the Parish of Watton.</p>
<p>4B 8 (1)(e) Other Matters 3.28.</p>	<p>This requires the examiner to consider such other matters as may be prescribed</p>	<p>There are no other prescribed matters.</p>
<p>Conservation of Habitats and Species and Planning (Various Amendments) (England and Wales) Regulations 2018</p>	<p>These Regulations require an Appropriate Assessment of the Plan to be carried out should the SEA and HRA Screening Opinion deem it necessary.</p>	<p>The SEA Screening Opinion concluded that a full SEA was not required. The HRA screening concluded that no potential impacts were identified and therefore it was not necessary to proceed to the Appropriate Assessment stage.</p>

### 3. Compliance with Basic Conditions

3.1 Paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act sets out the basic conditions that must be met by a draft Neighbourhood Plan. Subsections (a), (d), (e), (f), and (g) are of relevance to this statement. The Regulations state that the neighbourhood plan will have met the basic conditions if it:

- Has regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
- Contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
- Is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area; and
- Is compatible with European Union (EU) and European Convention on Human Right (ECHR) obligations.

#### **National Policy**

3.2 The Watton Neighbourhood Plan must have appropriate regard to national policy. The following section describes how the Plan relates to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which was originally published in 2012 amended in July 2018, February 2019 with further amendments in July 2021. It is the latter version of the NPPF that has been used as the basis to assess the Neighbourhood Plan in terms of its regard to national policies. The NPPF is framed around a basic premise of achieving sustainable development, comprising three main dimensions: economic, social and environmental. It requires the planning system to have regard to three overarching objectives:

- a) "an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*
- b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and*
- c) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy."*

3.3 The NPPF contains thirteen topic-based chapters in which more detailed policy guidance is set out for plan making and decision taking. Table 1, below, identifies how the Plan meets the basic condition of having regard to the NPPF by assessing the Plan against the principles for each of the NPPF topic-based chapters



**Table 1 - Compatibility of the Plan's objectives and policies against the NPPF Core Principles**

Delivering a sufficient supply of homes	6 To ensure any new housing is available, appropriate and accessible to people of all ages and circumstances in order to maintain a balanced and diverse population.	WTN3 – Design Considerations WTN5 – Housing Mix WTN6 – Housing in Multiple Occupation
Building a strong, competitive economy	12 To support opportunities for expansion and growth of existing Watton businesses. 13 To attract and encourage new business in line with identified key investment opportunities. 14 To encourage and support all appropriate new and existing opportunities for business and employment in the parish arising out of development along the designated A47 and A11 corridors.	WTN2 – Infrastructure Provision WTN9 – Watton Town Centre
Ensuring the vitality of town centres	11 Preserve the Market Town character of Watton, including the spatial balance between the rural and built environment, historical assets and Town Centre whilst improving design based on surrounding character.	WTN3 – Design Considerations WTN9 – Watton Town Centre
Promoting healthy and safe communities	20 To encourage, support and promote initiatives aimed at improving health, well-being and social cohesion within our community; particularly those which make best use of our current amenities, public spaces and recreational facilities. 21 Look to provide facilities and services that promote and provide for the health, physical and mental wellbeing of the community. 22 To publicise information in relation to events and services within the town. 23 To work towards a more sustainable future.	WTN3 – Design Considerations WTN4 – Residential Amenity Space WTN7 – Country Park
Promoting sustainable transport	17 Reduce the impact of vehicular traffic flows throughout the town. 18 It is important that the increased provision of nonvehicle travel options is supported throughout the town. 19 To encourage increased provision of non-car travel options in and around the parish including cycle paths and secure cycle racks.	WTN3 – Design Considerations WTN6 – Housing in Multiple Occupation WTN7 – Country Park

NPPF Topic	Watton NP Objectives (as identified in Section 4 of the Plan)	Watton NP Policies
Supporting high quality communications	No specific objectives apply	WTN3 – Design Considerations
Making effective use of land	4 Ensure that new development respects the local character and scale, historic and natural assets of the surrounding area, and takes every opportunity, through design and materials, to reinforce and enhance the distinctiveness of Watton and a strong sense of place.	WTN3 – Design Considerations WTN4 – Residential Amenity Space
Achieving well-designed places	4 Ensure that new development respects the local character and scale, historic and natural assets of the surrounding area, and takes every opportunity, through design and materials, to reinforce and enhance the distinctiveness of Watton and a strong sense of place.  5 New development should be sympathetic to the existing form, scale and character of its location and be appropriate to its rural context. Development should respond to the character of both the built and natural environment. Materials and boundary treatments should be sympathetic to the character and landscape of the part of the Parish area in which they are proposed.	WTN3 – Design Considerations WTN4 – Residential Amenity Space WTN9 – Watton Town Centre
Protecting Green Belt land	Not applicable to Watton	None
Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change	1 To ensure that any new development does not cause surface water flooding on site or elsewhere in the parish and that foul sewers are of a size that is fit for purpose.	WTN1 – Managing Flood Risk
Conserving and enhancing the natural environment	7 Minimise the impact of development on international, national and local natural environment designations. 8 Seek, where appropriate, to deliver net biodiversity gains in new development proposals. 9 Ensure access routes are created with and between new developments and improve the quality of access to and use of countryside route-ways for non-vehicle users, for both recreational and local travel opportunities.	WTN3 – Design Considerations WTN4 – Residential Amenity Space WTN7 – Country Park WTN8 – Local Green Spaces

NPPF Topic	Watton NP Objectives (as identified in Section 4 of the Plan)	Watton NP Policies
	10 Ensure that existing green spaces are retained and their quality improved, and that sequences of green spaces are maintained to protect the visual amenity of all green spaces that contribute to the identity of the town.	
Conserving the historic environment	15 To protect and enhance the historic assets of the town and take every opportunity, through design and materials, to reinforce and enhance the distinctiveness of Watton.  16 To promote the character of Watton as an historic market town.	WTN3 – Design Considerations WTN10 – Buildings of Local Significance
Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals	Not applicable to the Neighbourhood Plan	None

## How the purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan policies achieve sustainable development

3.6 The table below identifies the purpose of each policy in the Plan and its intended outcome in relation to achieving sustainable development as defined by the NPPF.

Policy	Purpose	Outcome
WTN1	Provides a strategy for the location of new development with regard to flood risk within the neighbourhood plan area.	Ensures that proposals for new development include details for surface water drainage and sustainable drainage systems where appropriate.
WTN 2	Requires proposals to be supported by evidence to demonstrate that capacity exists in the infrastructure.	To ensure that there is sufficient infrastructure capacity to accommodate new development.
WTN 3	Provides detail design considerations to be applied to all new development proposals.	Ensures new development regardless of its scale and location is designed in an appropriate way to positively contribute to the character of the area, in terms of creating a high quality, safe and sustainable environment.
WTN 4	Sets out requirements for the provision of amenity space and landscaping.	Ensures new development has access to areas of amenity space to the benefit of the residents.
WTN 5	Sets out requirements for a mix of dwellings on sites of ten or more dwellings.	To ensure that new residential development provides the right types of housing as identified in the SMHA.
WTD 6	Specifies where proposals for houses in multiple occupation will be acceptable.	To ensure that there is not an over-concentration of such provision to the detriment to the wider area.
WTD 7	Provides support for a new country park to serve Watton and the wider area, where it is accessed by pedestrian and cycle routes.	Provision of a new country park to the benefit of the local community.
WTD 8	Designates 32 Local Green Spaces.	To retain these spaces as open land to the benefit of the local area and community.
WTD 9	Sets out guidance for proposals seeking to alter shop fronts in the town centre.	Ensures that the town centre retains its attractiveness and character.
WTD 10	Identifies 7 buildings of local significance.	To ensure that the identified locally important buildings are not only retained but also retain their important features to the benefit of the local area.

### **General conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan**

3.7 The Neighbourhood Plan must demonstrate that it is in general conformity with the development plan for the local authority area concerned. The development plan currently in force is the Breckland Local Plan adopted on 28 November 2019. This is currently subject to a partial review with regard to Policy INF03 which committed the Council to a full review with adoption by November 2022, which has not been achieved. Initial consultation on the partial review which revises the expression of Policy INF 03 concluded in September 2022 and a Regulation 19 consultation commenced on 30 September 2022 and concludes on 11 November 2022, after which the plan will be submitted for examination. The purpose of the [partial review](#) is simply to extend the timeframe of the full review committed to in Policy INF 03 and in any event early preparation of a [full review](#) has commenced. There are also saved policies from the Core Strategy and Development Control Policies 2009 and the Thetford Area Action Plan 2012. Neither the saved policies nor Thetford Area Action plan cover any area within the Neighbourhood Plan area and are therefore not referred to in this Basic Conditions Statement.

Consequently this Basic Conditions Statement has assessed the Neighbourhood Plan against the strategic policies of the adopted local plan as applicable to the Neighbourhood Plan area.

### **Compatibility of the Neighbourhood Plan with the Strategic Policies of the Development Plan**

3.8 The Government's Planning Practice Guidance states:

"Strategic policies will be different in each local planning authority area. When reaching a view on whether a policy is a strategic policy the following are useful considerations:

- whether the policy sets out an overarching direction or objective
- whether the policy seeks to shape the broad characteristics of development
- the scale at which the policy is intended to operate
- whether the policy sets a framework for decisions on how competing priorities should be balanced
- whether the policy sets a standard or other requirement that is essential to achieving the wider vision and aspirations in the Local Plan
- in the case of site allocations, whether bringing the site forward is central to achieving the vision and aspirations of the Local Plan
- whether the Local Plan identifies the policy as being strategic"

3.9 Breckland District Council has identified a [number of policies which are strategic](#) in nature and this has been used in the following assessment. Those that are not considered relevant are listed in Appendix A of this statement.

3.10 The table below provides details of the policies in the development plan, a link to the Neighbourhood Plan policy (where relevant) and a narrative of conformity of the Neighbourhood Plan with the development plan.

Local Plan Strategic Policy		Neighbourhood Plan Policy		Comment
Breckland Local Plan 2019				
GEN 01 Sustainable Development in Breckland	All policies apply			All policies in the Neighbourhood Plan are positively worded to encourage sustainable development to take place in the village
GEN 02 Promoting High Quality Design	WTN 3 – Design Considerations			The policy sets out a requirement for high quality design. The Neighbourhood Plan accords with this policy.
GEN 03 Settlement Hierarchy	WTN 3 – Design Considerations WTN 5- Housing Mix			The policy identifies Watton as a Market Town as a sustainable location for development. The Neighbourhood Plan provides a positive response to this policy.
GEN 05 Settlement Boundaries	WTN 3 – Design Considerations WTN 5- Housing Mix			The policy specifies development within defined boundaries will be acceptable. The Neighbourhood Plan accords with this policy.
HOU 01 Development Requirements	WTN 5- Housing Mix WTN 6 - Housing in Multiple Occupation			The policy specifies the amount of new development to be provided over the plan period, acknowledging this will be delivered through development in sustainable locations such as Watton as a designated market town. The Neighbourhood Plan does not conflict with this policy.
HOU 2 Level and Location of Growth	WTN 5- Housing Mix WTN 6 - Housing in Multiple Occupation			The policy specifies the quantum of development across various settlements including Watton. The Neighbourhood Plan does not conflict with this policy, even though it does not allocate specific sites for development.
HOU 06 Principle of New Housing	WTN 3 – Design Considerations WTN 6 - Housing in Multiple Occupation			The policy specifies appropriate levels of density for new housing and makes reference to parking provision. The Neighbourhood Plan reflects these principles.
HOU 07 Affordable Housing	No specific policies apply.			The policy specifies the provision of affordable housing. The Neighbourhood Plan does not conflict with this approach.

Local Plan Strategic Policy	Neighbourhood Plan Policy	Comment
HOU 08 Provision for Travellers and Travelling Showpeople	No specific policies apply.	The policy specifies provision for pitches and plots for traveller accommodation. The Neighbourhood Plan makes no specific reference to traveller accommodations but does not conflict with this approach.
HOU 09 Specialist Housing	No specific policies apply.	The policy refers to the provision of specialist accommodation to meet the needs of an ageing population. The Neighbourhood Plan makes no specific reference to specialist accommodations but does not conflict with this approach
HOU 10 Technical Design Standards for new home	WTN 3 – Design Considerations	The policy includes reference to water efficiency and internal spaces. . The Neighbourhood Plan includes specific reference to the National Model Design Code.
TR 01 Sustainable Transport Network	WTN 2 - Infrastructure Provision	The policy refers to improvements to various connections in the District. The Neighbourhood Plan policy seeks to ensure adequate capacity exists in the infrastructure to support new development.
TR 02 Transport Requirements	WTN 2 - Infrastructure Provision	The policy requires development to offer flexible choice of travel modes and that the impact of new development on the transport network needs to be assessed. The Neighbourhood Plan policy seeks to ensure adequate capacity exists in the infrastructure to support new development.
ENV 01 Green Infrastructure	WTN 1 - Managing Flood Risk WTN 3 – Design Considerations WTN 4 – Residential Amenity Space WTN 7 – Country Park WTN 8 – Local Green Spaces	The policy refers to the need to exploit opportunities to incorporate green infrastructure through the design and layout and connectivity of new developments. The Neighbourhood Plan includes various policies which make a positive contribution to green infrastructure provision.
ENV 02 Biodiversity protection and enhancement	No specific policies apply	The policy requires the highest level of protection to designated sites. The Neighbourhood Plan does not conflict with this approach.
ENV 03 The Brecks Protected Habitats and Species	No specific policies apply	The policy requires the highest level of protection to the Brecks SPA designation. The Neighbourhood Plan area falls within the buffer zone and does not conflict with this approach.

Local Plan Strategic Policy	Neighbourhood Plan Policy	Comment
ENV04 Open Space, Sport and Recreation	WTN 3 – Design Considerations WTN 4 – Residential Amenity Space WTN 7 – Country Park WTN 8 – Local Green Spaces	The policy specifies the amount of open space to be provided with new development and includes reference to local green space. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies 32 local green spaces and includes other references to open space and amenity land.
ENV 05 Protection and Enhancement of the Landscape	WTN 3 – Design Considerations	The policy requires development to have regard to landscape character assessments and the landscape. The Neighbourhood Plan does not conflict with this approach.
ENV 07 Designated Heritage Assets	WTN 10 – Buildings of Local Significance	The policy requires development to have regard to heritage assets. The Neighbourhood Plan does not conflict with this approach
ENV 08 Non- Designated Heritage Assets	WTN 10 – Buildings of Local Significance	The policy requires development to have regard to non-designated heritage assets. The Neighbourhood Plan does not conflict with this approach
ENV 09 Flood Risk and Surface Water Drainage	WTN 1 – Managing Flood Risk	The policy sets out the requirements to minimise the risk of flooding and the incorporation of surface water mitigation. The Neighbourhood Plan does not conflict with this approach.
ENV 10 Renewable Energy Development	No specific policies apply	The policy sets out where renewable energy proposals would be acceptable. The Neighbourhood Plan does not conflict with this approach.
EC 03 General Employment Areas	No specific policies apply	The policy requires those areas identified for employment purposes to be retained for such uses. There are several general employment areas in the Neighbourhood Plan area and the Neighbourhood Plan does not conflict with this approach.
EC 04 Development Outside General Employment Areas	No specific policies apply	The policy sets out where employment would be suitable outside of the designated general employment areas. The neighbourhood plan does not conflict with this approach.
EC 05 Town Centre and Retail Strategy	WTN 9 – Watton Town Centre	The policy seeks to enhance the vitality of the named retail centres which include Watton as medium town centre and specifies additional floorspace to be provided. The Neighbourhood Plan does not conflict with this approach and offers more guidance in terms of shop fronts and design.
COM 01 Design	WTN 3 – Design Considerations	The policy seeks to ensure new development is designed to the highest possible standard. The Neighbourhood Plan does not conflict with this approach.



Local Plan Strategic Policy	Neighbourhood Plan Policy	Comment
COM 02 Healthy Lifestyles	WTN 3 – Design Considerations WTN 4 – Residential Amenity Space WTN 7 – Country Park WTN 8 – Local Green Spaces	The policy seeks to facilitate enhanced health and wellbeing through the provision of conditions supportive of good physical and mental health. The Neighbourhood Plan includes a number of policies supporting this requirement.
COM 03 Protection of Amenity	WTN 3 – Design Considerations WTN 4 – Residential Amenity Space WTN 6 - Housing in Multiple Occupation	The policy seeks to ensure any impacts from new development on residential amenity is taken into consideration. The Neighbourhood Plan includes a number of policies supporting this requirement.
INF 02 Developer Contributions	WTN 2 – Infrastructure Provision	The policy requires the provision of contribution towards infrastructure provision. The Neighbourhood Plan does not conflict with this approach.
INF 03 Local Plan Policy Review	No specific policies apply	The policy sets out when a partial review of the LP would be undertaken with a focus on various development needs and reference to design standards. The partial review is ongoing with consultation under Regulation scheduled to close on 11 November 2022 after which the partial review will be submitted for examination. The Neighbourhood Plan does not conflict with this approach.

## 4. Compatibility with European Union Obligations and Human Rights

### Environmental Impact and Habitat Regulations

- 4.1 Section 4B 8 (2)(f) states that a draft Neighbourhood Plan will meet the basic conditions if, the making of the Neighbourhood Plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with EU obligations and the making of the neighbourhood plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site or a European offshore marine site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.
- 4.2 European Union Directive 2001/42/EC requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to be undertaken for certain types of plan or programmes that would have a significant environmental effect. The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the Regulations) that this is to be determined by a screening process which should use a specified set of criteria (set out in Schedule 1 of the Regulations). The results of this process must be set out in an SEA Screening Statement, which must be publicly available.
- 4.3 In accordance with Regulation 9 of the Regulations, as amended by the Conservation of Habitats and Species and Planning (Various Amendments) (England and Wales) Regulations 2018, Watton Town Council requested Breckland District Council, as the responsible body, to consider whether an environmental assessment of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan is required. Initial screening was undertaken on the draft Watton NDP in May 2022 which concluded that a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) nor a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) were required. All reports together with the responses from the statutory consultees can be viewed at <https://www.breckland.gov.uk/neighbourhood-planning/watton/pre-submission>
- 4.4 In line with Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) these documents are also submitted to Breckland District Council alongside the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

### Human Rights

- 4.3 The public consultation process for the Watton Neighbourhood Plan has been wide and inclusive and has included direct engagement with the local community. The policies contained within the plan do not disadvantage any minority group or group with protected characteristics.
- 4.4 The overall purpose of the Neighbourhood Development Plan is to improve the quality of life for people living and working now and in the future in the parish from an environmental, social and economic point of view. The aims and policies in the Neighbourhood Plan have been formulated in response to local people's views and in the light of evidence gathered for the parish, and to meet the needs expressed and address the issues identified. To confirm that the Neighbourhood Plan does not have any unintended consequences for particular groups, the strategic aims and the policies in the Plan have been systematically scrutinised to ensure that they do not disadvantage any potentially vulnerable groups. The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on all public authorities in the exercise of their functions to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, to advance equality of opportunity, and to foster good relations between persons who have a "protected characteristic" and those who do not. "Protected characteristics" are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.
- 4.5 This section assesses the Submission Draft of the Neighbourhood Plan to ensure that Watton Town Council is satisfying its statutory duties in this regard. An assessment has been made on whether the objectives and the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan have a positive, negative or neutral impact on each of the protected characteristics. The purpose of each of the objective and the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan are provided, and their likely impact on persons with protected characteristics is assessed.

## Impact of Objectives of Watton Neighbourhood Plan on Persons with Protected Characteristics

Neighbourhood Plan Objectives	Outcome for persons with Protected Characteristics
<p><b>Infrastructure and Services</b></p> <p>1 To ensure that any new development does not cause surface water flooding on site or elsewhere in the parish and that foul sewers are of a size that is fit for purpose.</p> <p>2 To support the provision and maintenance of social health and wellbeing services and infrastructure.</p> <p>3 To establish new burial facilities.</p>	<p>Ensures the provision of infrastructure and services including those to support health and well being.</p> <p>Broadly positive impact for persons with certain protected characteristics.</p>
<p><b>Development Design</b></p> <p>4 Ensure that new development respects the local character and scale, historic and natural assets of the surrounding area, and takes every opportunity, through design and materials, to reinforce and enhance the distinctiveness of Watton and a strong sense of place.</p> <p>5 New development should be sympathetic to the existing form, scale and character of its location and be appropriate to its rural context. Development should respond to the character of both the built and natural environment. Materials and boundary treatments should be sympathetic to the character and landscape of the part of the Parish area in which they are proposed.</p>	<p>Promotes development that is designed in a way to minimise impact on the environment and meets the needs of the community.</p> <p>Broadly positive impact for persons with certain protected characteristics.</p>
<p><b>Housing</b></p> <p>6 To ensure any new housing is available, appropriate and accessible to people of all ages and circumstances in order to maintain a balanced and diverse population.</p>	<p>Provides for the provision of new housing to meet the needs of the community.</p> <p>Broadly positive impact for persons with certain protected characteristics.</p>
<p><b>Natural Environment</b></p> <p>7 Minimise the impact of development on international, national and local natural environment designations.</p> <p>8 Seek, where appropriate, to deliver net biodiversity gains in new development proposals.</p> <p>9 Ensure access routes are created with and between new developments and improve the quality of access to and use of countryside route-ways for non-vehicle users, for both recreational and local travel opportunities.</p> <p>10 Ensure that existing green spaces are retained and their quality improved, and that sequences of</p>	<p>Provides for the varied elements of the natural environment to support both the environment and the health and well being needs of the community.</p> <p>Broadly positive impact for persons with certain protected characteristics.</p>

Neighbourhood Plan Objectives	Outcome for persons with Protected Characteristics
<p>green spaces are maintained to protect the visual amenity of all green spaces that contribute to the identity of the town.</p>	
<p><b>Town Centre and the Economy</b></p> <p>11 Preserve the Market Town character of Watton, including the spatial balance between the rural and built environment, historical assets and Town Centre whilst improving design based on surrounding character.</p> <p>12 To support opportunities for expansion and growth of existing Watton businesses.</p> <p>13 To attract and encourage new business in line with identified key investment opportunities.</p> <p>14 To encourage and support all appropriate new and existing opportunities for business and employment in the parish arising out of development along the designated A47 and A11 corridors.</p>	<p>Provides for economic opportunities to grow to support the employment needs of the community.</p> <p>Broadly positive impact for persons with certain protected characteristics.</p>
<p><b>Built Heritage</b></p> <p>15 To protect and enhance the historic assets of the town and take every opportunity, through design and materials, to reinforce and enhance the distinctiveness of Watton.</p> <p>16 To promote the character of Watton as an historic market town.</p>	<p>Promotes the preservation of the character and historic assets of the village.</p> <p>Neutral impact for persons with protected characteristics.</p>
<p><b>Access and Transport</b></p> <p>17 Reduce the impact of vehicular traffic flows throughout the town.</p> <p>18 It is important that the increased provision of nonvehicle travel options is supported throughout the town.</p> <p>19 To encourage increased provision of non-car travel options in and around the parish including cycle paths and secure cycle racks.</p>	<p>Promotes improvement of road safety and enhancement of routes through the parish.</p> <p>Broadly positive impact for persons with certain protected characteristics.</p>
<p><b>Community and Social</b></p> <p>20 To encourage, support and promote initiatives aimed at improving health, well-being and social cohesion within our community; particularly those which make best use of our current amenities, public spaces and recreational facilities.</p> <p>21 Look to provide facilities and services that promote and provide for the health, physical and mental wellbeing of the community.</p> <p>22 To publicise information in relation to events and services within the town.</p>	<p>Promotes various initiatives to support the health and well being needs of the community.</p> <p>Positive impact for persons with certain protected characteristics.</p>

Neighbourhood Plan Objectives	Outcome for persons with Protected Characteristics
23 To work towards a more sustainable future.	

## Impact of Watton Neighbourhood Plan Policies on Persons with Protected Characteristics

Policy	Purpose	Outcome
WTN1	Provides a strategy for the location of new development with regard to flood risk within the neighbourhood plan area.	Ensures that the new development does not exacerbate flooding in the area.  Neutral impact for persons with certain protected characteristics.
WTN 2	Requires proposals to be supported by evidence to demonstrate that capacity exists in the infrastructure.	To ensure that the existing infrastructure can accommodate any new development.  Neutral impact for persons with certain protected characteristics.
WTN 3	Provides detail design considerations to be applied to all new development proposals.	Ensures new development takes into consideration a range of matters to create high quality, safe and sustainable environment.  Broadly positive impact for persons with certain protected characteristics.
WTN 4	Sets out requirements for the provision of amenity space and landscaping.	Ensures amenity space and landscaping is provided to the benefit of the occupants and local community.  Broadly positive impact for persons with certain protected characteristics.
WTN 5	Sets out requirements for a mix of dwellings on sites of ten or more dwellings.	Ensures new housing responds to the needs of the local community.  Broadly positive impact for persons with certain protected characteristics.
WTD 6	Specifies where proposals for houses in multiple occupation will be acceptable.	Ensures that both the occupants of this form of housing and the amenity of the local area are protected.  Broadly positive impact for persons with certain protected characteristics.
WTD 7	Provides support for a new country park to serve Watton and the wider area, where it is accessed by pedestrian and cycle routes.	Sets out a positive strategy for the provision of new country park for the benefit of the community.  Broadly positive impact for persons with certain protected characteristics.
WTD 8	Designates 32 Local Green Spaces.	Ensures these spaces are retained in their open form to the benefit of the community.  Broadly positive impact for persons with certain protected characteristics.
WTD 9	Sets out guidance for proposals seeking to alter shop fronts in the town centre.	Ensures the character of the town centre is retained.  Neutral impact for persons with certain protected characteristics.
WTD 10	Identifies 7 buildings of local significance.	Ensures these buildings are retained to the benefit of the character of the area.  Neutral impact for persons with certain protected characteristics.

Certain protected characteristics are not affected by the Neighbourhood Plan, namely gender reassignment, race, religion, or sexual orientation. For persons with these characteristics, the Plan has a neutral effect. Where policies in the Plan would adversely affect persons with these protected characteristics, they would not be differently affected than persons without these characteristics. For example, if a person with these protected characteristics were disadvantaged by a policy, it would have the same consequence for a person without the protected characteristic who wished to do the same thing. Similarly, if a person with one of these protected characteristics were to benefit from a policy, it would have the same benefit for a person without the protected characteristic in the same circumstances.

## APPENDIX A

### Adopted development plan policies that do not apply to Watton Neighbourhood Plan

The following strategic policies in the Breckland Local Plan 2019 do not apply to Watton and have therefore not been assessed in this Basic Conditions Statement.

GEN 04 Development Requirements of Attleborough Strategic Urban Extension (SUE)
HOU 03 Development Outside of the Boundaries of Local Service Centres
HOU 04 Village with Boundaries
HOU 05 Small Villages and Hamlets Outside of Settlement Boundaries
EC 01 Economic Development