

# Neighbourhood Plan for Yaxham “NP4Yaxham” 2016-2036



**May 2017  
(updated July 2024)**

Referendum Version



## PREFACE

The Yaxham Neighbourhood Plan (“NP4Yaxham”) has been developed during 2015 and 2016 by the Working Group, a Sub-Committee of Yaxham Parish Council. It was set up in September 2015, following public meetings in April and September 2015 and debate at Parish Council meetings.

The Working Group includes the Chairman of the Parish Council, residents from throughout the parish and includes members who worked previously on the very successful “Your Yaxham” Community Led Plan (CLP) in 2013<sup>1</sup>.

NP4Yaxham is the direct successor to the CLP in taking forward the planning development of Yaxham. It sets out the planning policies (“Policies”) relevant to the parish as well as the community aspirations for issues that cannot be controlled through the planning process, “Parish Action Points” (“PAP”). The PAP are the basis of the “Future Directions Plan” (FDP) for the Parish Council and others to take on the task of fulfilling the wishes expressed by Parishioners.

## 2024 REVIEW & UPDATE

A similar approach has been taken in the ‘review’ process to update the NP4Yaxham, with the Working Group undertaking its activities through 2023 and 2024. Whilst the NP4Yaxham will continue to provide guidance and requirements for development being proposed in the Parish to 2036 it has been updated in July 2024. In summary these changes are:-

- **Policy HOU2:** Housing Density – deletion of the first sentence
- **Policy HOU7:** Affordable Homes for Local People – reworded to enable people with a local connection to the parish of Yaxham to have priority in accessing Affordable Homes.
- **Policy ENV3:** Green Infrastructure – one new area for designation as Local Green Space has been identified - Land to the East of St Peter’s Close and adjacent to the existing footpath leading to Mill Lane.
- Updates, including an ‘intent’ statement for each policy, and corrections: Mainly attributed to the latest version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the adoption of the Breckland Local Plan.

The Neighbourhood Plan for Yaxham forms part of the Development Plan for Breckland and will continue to help make a real difference to the future of the Parish and help shape future proposals for development. It is in general conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)<sup>2</sup> and the strategic policies in the Breckland Local Plan.<sup>3</sup>

The development of NP4Yaxham is supported by Yaxham Parish Council, Breckland District Council (as the Local Planning Authority – LPA), and Norfolk County Council as well as many other organisations. It is funded solely by grants from: the “Your Yaxham” CLP, Yaxham Parish Charity, Locality (MHCLG) and Breckland Council.

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<sup>1</sup>[https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/)

<sup>2</sup><http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/>

<sup>3</sup><https://www.breckland.gov.uk/planning-policy>

The Working Group very much appreciates all the help, support and involvement of so many within the parish and of our ward Councillor Paul Claussen and commends this Neighbourhood Plan. If you would like any further information then please see <https://yaxham.com>. [www.breckland.gov.uk](http://www.breckland.gov.uk), or email [np4yaxham2@gmail.com](mailto:np4yaxham2@gmail.com) .

Maggie Oechsle  
Chairman, Yaxham Parish Council

Gary Osborn  
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## **The NP4Yaxham2 – Review Team**

Acknowledgements and thanks go to the members of Yaxham Parish Council and to the members of the Neighbourhood Plan 4 Yaxham 2 Working Group for all their hard work and contributions.

### **Yaxham Parish Council 2024 Members**

|                           |                             |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Maggie Oechsle - Chairman | Ben Conway - Vice Chairman  |
| Paul Bone                 | Chris Couves                |
| Gary Davison              | Bob Gust                    |
| Graham Howe               | Rebecca Wade – Parish Clerk |

### **Neighbourhood Plan 4 Yaxham 2 Working Group**

|                        |                              |
|------------------------|------------------------------|
| Gary Osborn – Chairman | Melissa Ford - Vice Chairman |
| Paul Bone              | Robert Dye                   |
| Richard Hughes         | Graham Howe                  |
| Tony Morrice           | Maggie Oechsle – Chairman PC |
| Jill Vergerson         | Shaun Vincent – ABZAG Ltd    |

Prepared on behalf of Yaxham Parish Council by the NP4Yaxham Working Group  
with support from



NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT

## The original NP4Yaxham Team:

### The members of the NP4Yaxham Working Group:

|                           |                             |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
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| Susan Martin - Treasurer  | Peter Lowings - Chairman PC |
| David Brown               | Gary Davison                |
| Annie Green-Armytage      | Richard Hughes              |
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| - Jackie Crisp                 | - Lizzie Oechsle          | - Rev Sally Thurgill   |
| - George Crummett              | - Paul Philips            | - Graham Tuttle        |
| - Sharon Davison               | - Amy Robinson            | - Clarke Willis MBE    |
| - Ann Futter                   | - Simon & Michelle Salter | - Karen Willis         |
| - Bill & Shelagh Gillons       | - Libby Smith             | - Johanne Wright       |
| - Steve & Carlie Goldsmith     | - Joan Thurgill           |                        |
| - Anne Meredith                | <i>And many more...</i>   |                        |

### And a huge thank you to:

- Yaxham Village Amenities Association (YVAA) for use of the Village Hall and Meeting Room, and Yaxham Primary School for use of Hall, for meetings & consultation events.;
- YVAA, Yaxham Primary School, St Peter’s Church, Yaxham Waters’ café and shop for hosting “NP4Yaxham” survey “Post” boxes and copies of the Plan;
- St Peter’s Church for the stand at Coffee Mornings in 2015 and 2016;
- Mattishall Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group for guidance and encouragement;
- Paul Claussen, Breckland District Councillor, Mattishall Ward, for support and guidance.

### Consultant Support

- Small Fish Strategy Consultants – Mark Thomson, Melissa Borgan
- Dick Wingate Associates – Dick Wingate

### Printing by:

- Eastern Office Equipment

# Neighbourhood Plan for Yaxham

## 2016-2036

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Glossary of terms – see [www.planningportal.co.uk/directory/4/a\\_to\\_z](http://www.planningportal.co.uk/directory/4/a_to_z)

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#### Notes:

**Copyright:** For all maps and aerial photos, unless stated otherwise, the source is Online GIS for web-mapping, data-sharing, planning and business intelligence provided via “Parish Online” to Yaxham Parish Council, including: ©Aerial imagery-[www.getmapping.com](http://www.getmapping.com)  
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**Map Scale:** Each Ordnance Survey map includes 1km grid-squares.

**Map Orientation:** All maps have north to the top of the page unless indicated otherwise.

#### Abbreviations Frequently Used in the Plan

|   |   |
|---|---|
| CLP - Community Led Plan, “Your Yaxham” 2013  | NPG – National Planning Guidance            |
| CWS – County Wildlife Site  | NPPF – National Planning Policy Framework   |
| MHCLG – Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government   | PAP – Parish Action Point, not a policy     |
| LDF – Local Development Framework made up of a number of documents including three Development Plan Documents | SAC – Special Area of Conservation          |
|   | SEA – Strategic Environmental Assessment    |
| LPA – Local Planning Authority, Breckland DC  | SSSI – Site of Special Scientific Interest  |
| LSC – Local Service Centre  | YVAA – Yaxham Village Amenities Association |
| NP4Yaxham2 - Yaxham Neighbourhood Plan  |   |

**Glossary of terms** – see [www.planningportal.co.uk/directory/4/a\\_to\\_z](http://www.planningportal.co.uk/directory/4/a_to_z)

## Index of Planning Policies

**If NP4Yaxham2 is agreed at a referendum of the Parish, these will supplement and become part of Breckland Local Plan.**

**The Policies** set out what will need to be taken into account by developers in making their planning applications, the Parish Council in commenting on those planning applications, and by Breckland Council when determining those planning applications and deciding whether or not to grant planning permission. Only the policies have any weight when determining planning applications; the supporting text is for explanation; and it is only these policies that are assessed against the Basic Conditions.

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**If NP4Yaxham2 is agreed at a Referendum of the Parish, these will be for consideration by**

**Yaxham Parish Council, NP4Yaxham2 Action Group & Parish Organisations**

**Parish Action Points** cover issues about which the parish feels strongly and wishes to see action. These are wider than requirements relating to future land use development. They may also not be considered as strictly planning matters by Breckland. However, many residents have strongly indicated the need to have services and infrastructure in place to meet current demands as well as the cumulative issues arising from the myriad of likely development in the Mattishall-Yaxham-South Dereham corridor. Key to most of these issues is that they are matters that the Parish Council, or other groups within the parish, can work or lobby for without waiting for or requiring new planning proposals.

Parish Action Points are therefore not Planning Policies and are not required to be assessed against the Basic Conditions.

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# 1 Introduction

## Legislative Status

- 1.1 The Yaxham Neighbourhood Plan (“NP4Yaxham2”) has been developed under the Localism Act (2011) and the subsequent Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012)<sup>6</sup>, as amended, introduced to regulate the formation and approval of Neighbourhood Plans.
- 1.2 A Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the NPPF<sup>7</sup>, with the Local Development Framework<sup>8</sup> and have regard to the emerging Breckland Draft Local Plan Full Update<sup>9</sup>. How the NP4Yaxham2 achieves this is set out in the Statement of Basic Conditions.
- 1.3 The NP4Yaxham2 takes account of the knowledge and views of local residents and other stakeholders to deliver sustainable development. When approved by the residents in a referendum its policies become part of the statutory development plan for decisions on planning applications for development within the designated area.

## Geographic area covered by the Neighbourhood Plan

- 1.4 The Neighbourhood Plan Designated Area covers the whole of the civil parish of Yaxham as shown in Map 1 on Page 2. NP4Yaxham2 Policy Maps where required accompany the specific policy i.e. STR1 on page 37 and ENV3 on page 51. The Neighbourhood Plan period is 2016 to 2036.
- 1.5 Yaxham is the name of the civil parish and of the largest of three settlements within it. When the specific settlements of Yaxham, Clint Green and Brakefield Green are referred to then the word “settlement” is used to distinguish from the parish.

## The Local Planning Authority

- 1.6 Yaxham civil parish lies within Breckland District in the county of Norfolk. Breckland Council is the Local Planning Authority (LPA). It formally designated the Yaxham Neighbourhood Area on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2015<sup>10</sup>.

## This Plan Does **Not** Bring Forward Additional Sites for Development

- 1.7 This Plan does not bring forward additional sites for development. In accordance with NPPF paragraph 29 NP4Yaxham2 does not “*promote less development than set out in the Local Plan or undermine the Strategic Policies*”<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/637/contents/made> as amended

<sup>7</sup> <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/> National Planning Policy Framework December 2023 (NPPF)

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.breckland.gov.uk/planning-policy>

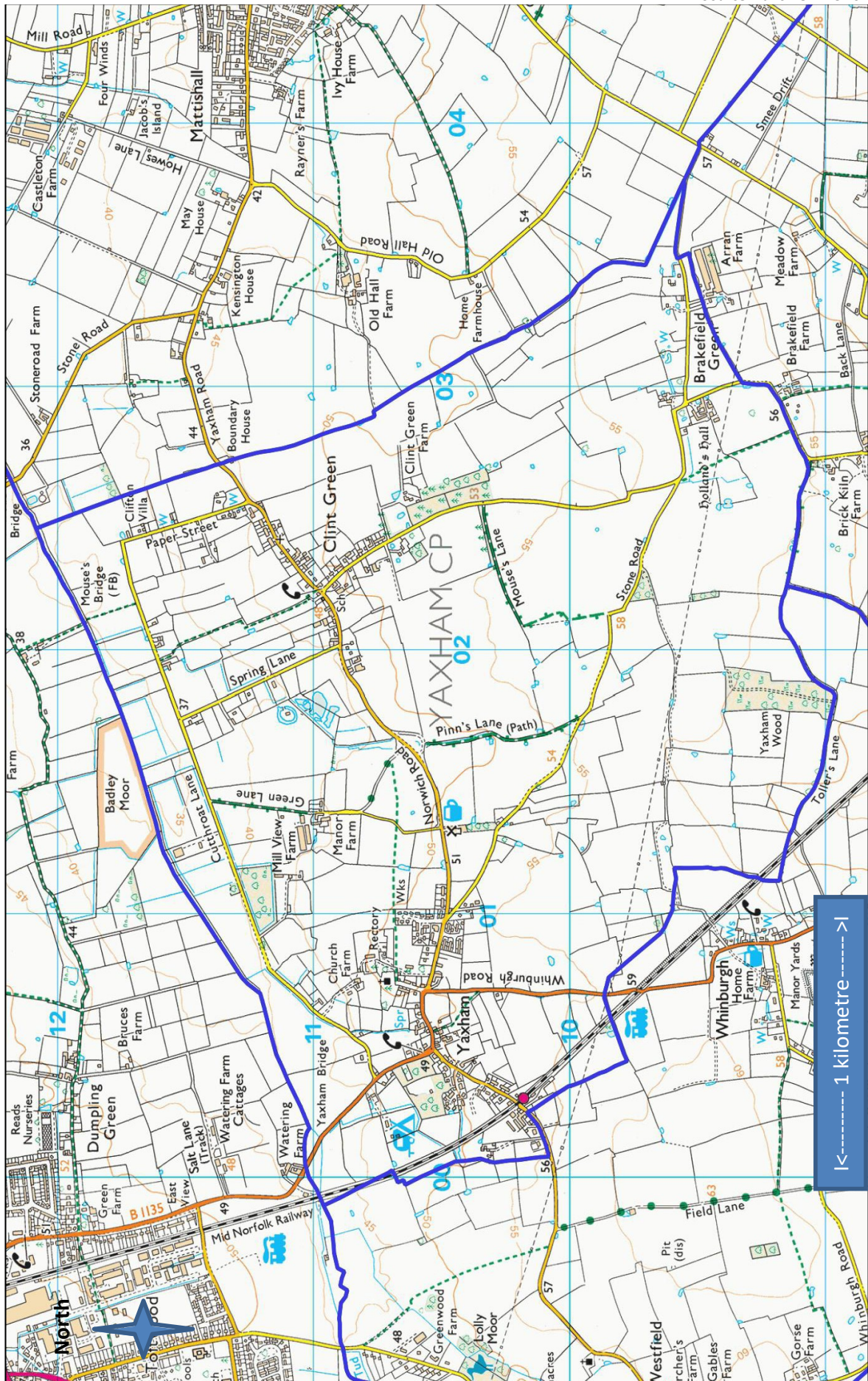
<sup>9</sup> <http://www.breckland.gov.uk/article/4313/Documents-Library-Publications>

<sup>10</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/) Designation Letter 17 11 2015

<sup>11</sup> <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/>

Map 1 Yaxham Civil Parish boundary in blue & Neighbourhood Plan Designated Area

Source: Parish Online 2016



## Development of the Yaxham Neighbourhood Plan

- 1.8 The NP4Yaxham2 has been submitted by Yaxham Parish Council, which is the qualifying body and entitled to submit a Neighbourhood Plan for its own Parish. It has been prepared by the NP4Yaxham Working Group, a sub-Committee of the Parish Council<sup>12</sup>, and reported regularly to the meetings of the Parish Council. The Working Group comprises 12 residents, supported, where necessary, by professional consultants, and has reported regularly to the Parish Council<sup>13</sup> and to residents via reports in periodic Newsletters, the free thrice yearly Yaxham Village Amenities Newsletter delivered to every home, posters in the Parish Council Notice Boards, on the parish website ([www.yaxham.com](http://www.yaxham.com)), the Village Hall website ([www.yaxhamvillagehall.co.uk](http://www.yaxhamvillagehall.co.uk)), and NP4Yaxham Facebook page, Streetlife ([www.streetlife.com](http://www.streetlife.com)), Twitter and via information e-mails sent out to a large number of residents.
- 1.9 The work has involved developing an Evidence Base, building on the comprehensive “Your Yaxham” Community Led Plan (CLP) completed on 2013<sup>14</sup>, reviewing national and local planning policies (existing and emerging), and carrying out extensive public consultation from September 2015 to June 2016. Further detail on consultations can be found in the separate “Consultation Statement”<sup>15</sup>.

## The Plan and Supporting Documents

- 1.10 In accordance with legislation, the finalised Neighbourhood Plan is accompanied by three supporting documents:
1. Statement of Basic Conditions, including
  2. Consultation Statement 2024
  3. Evidence Base
    - Appendix 1 ENV3 Local Green Spaces Review & ENV4 Surface Water Flooding
    - Appendix 2 STR1 Strategic Gaps Field Work

These documents and other information are available at <https://yaxham.com>

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<sup>12</sup> under section 102(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended - Planning Practice Guidance, Neighbourhood Planning Para. 15 Ref ID: 41-015-20160211 [www.planningguidance.communities.gov.uk](http://www.planningguidance.communities.gov.uk)

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.yaxham.com/pages/Minutes>

<sup>14</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/)

<sup>15</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/)

<https://yaxham.com>

## **Presumption in favour of sustainable development**

- 1.11 When considering development proposals, local planning authorities will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development in the NPPF. The LPA will work with applicants and the local community to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area. Paragraph 7 of the NPPF stresses that these should not be undertaken in isolation because they are mutually dependent; therefore a balanced assessment against these three dimensions is required<sup>16</sup>.
- 1.12 Planning applications proposing sustainable development within Yaxham Parish that accord with strategic development plan policies in place at the time and, where relevant, with policies in this Neighbourhood Plan, will be recommended for approval by the Parish Council, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 1.13 Government regulations require the LPA to undertake a Sustainability Assessment for the development of its Local Plan to ensure that its policies support Sustainable Growth. The LPA is undertaking this as part of its emerging Local Plan<sup>17</sup>.
- 1.14 In order to demonstrate that NP4Yaxham contributes to achieving sustainable development, the Working Group has commissioned a sustainability review of its policies, resulting in the Sustainability Statement, Appendix 1 of The Statement of Basic Conditions. This gives consideration to the sustainability questions which form part of the framework for the emerging Breckland Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal. The Sustainability Statement should be used for information purposes only in order to better understand how the NP4Yaxham represents sustainable plan-making<sup>18</sup>.
- 1.15 The methodology used for the Sustainability Statement is based on the Sustainability Appraisal framework for the emerging Breckland Local Plan to guide assessment against the objectives set out. Against each of the sustainability objectives, consideration has been given as to whether each of the NP4Yaxham policies will have a positive effect i.e. will help to meet the objective, no effect or an adverse effect.
- 1.16 Most of the policies have either no effect on the sustainability objectives, or a positive effect. The area where there are the most marked positive effects is within the topic area of cultural heritage and landscape, and this is due to the fact that the majority of the Neighbourhood Plan’s policies focus on maintaining the character and landscape setting of the parish as protecting these assets is the predominant focus of the Plan.

<sup>16</sup> <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/>

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.breckland.gov.uk/article/4313/Documents-Library-Publications>

<sup>18</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/) Appendix 2 Sustainability Statement

- 1.17 The conclusion of this review is that the NP4Yaxham2 does demonstrate that it contributes to sustainable development.

### **Strategic Environmental Assessment**

- 1.18 *“There is no legal requirement for a neighbourhood plan to have a sustainability appraisal as set out in section 19 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. However, a qualifying body must demonstrate how its plan or order will contribute to achieving sustainable development. A sustainability appraisal may be a useful approach for doing this and the guidance on sustainability appraisal of Local Plans should be referred to.”<sup>19</sup>*
- 1.19 Breckland District Council has consulted on NP4Yaxham2 Policies and provided a “Neighbourhood Planning Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report” as to whether the NP4Yaxham2 requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The full Report is available on yaxham.com .It concludes as follows:

*This screening assessment suggests that it is unlikely that there would be significant negative effects on the European Designated Sites on the majority of the policies.*

*In light of this assessment, it is concluded that the emerging Yaxham Neighbourhood Plan Review is not likely to have significant environmental effects and accordingly will not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment.*

### **Five Year Land Supply**

- 1.20 The NP4Yaxham2 Working Group is aware that the Government expects councils, such as Breckland District Council, to have a continuing five years supply of housing land with planning permission. In relation to the 5-year land supply the most recent statement by Breckland District Council states:-

1.21

*“Breckland Council cannot demonstrate a 5-year supply of housing land as set out below. The Council will review the 5-year land supply position in March 2025.”*

Source: Breckland Council Statement of Five- Year Housing Land Supply (March 2025).<sup>20</sup>

### **Planning Policies and Parish Action Points**

- 1.22 The core of a Neighbourhood Plan is the planning policies. These set out what will need to be taken into account by: developers in making their planning applications; the Parish Council, in commenting on those applications; and by Breckland Council

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<sup>19</sup> <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/> Planning Practice Guidance - Strategic environmental assessment and sustainability appraisal, Paragraph: 027 Reference ID: 11-027-20150209

<sup>20</sup> <https://democracy.breckland.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?Cid=124&Mid=5155>

<https://yaxham.com>

when determining those planning applications and deciding whether or not to grant planning permission.

- 1.23 Only the policies have any weight when determining planning applications; the supporting text is for explanation and it is only these policies that are assessed against the Basic Conditions.
- 1.24 In addition to the Planning Policies it became clear during the consultations with the parish that issues connected with planning matters should be raised. The NP4Yaxham therefore includes what we have termed “Parish Action Points” (PAP). These cover issues about which the parish feels strongly and wishes to see action. These are wider than requirements relating to future housing development. They may also not be considered as strictly planning matters by Breckland. However, many residents have strongly indicated the need to have services and infrastructure in place to meet current demands as well as the cumulative issues arising from the myriad of likely development in the Mattishall-Yaxham-South Dereham corridor.
- 1.25 Key to most of these issues is that they are matters that the Parish Council, or other groups within the parish can work or lobby for without waiting for or requiring new planning proposals. These are for the consideration of Yaxham Parish Council and other parish organisations to take forward. The final section of NP4Yaxham proposes the creation of the NP4Yaxham Action Group to help facilitate this process. Parish Action Points are therefore not Planning Policies and are not required to be assessed against the Basic Conditions.



## 2 A Portrait of the Parish of Yaxham

### Setting the Context

- 2.1 Yaxham is a small rural parish situated in the district of Breckland in mid Norfolk. Map 1 shows the boundaries of the civil parish which also represent the Neighbourhood Plan designated area. Map 2 sets the civil parish in relation to its immediate neighbours within Breckland District and Map 3 shows Breckland at the centre of the county. In part, the centrality of Yaxham explains part of its attraction to residents and its popularity with tourists to explore the wider county.
- 2.2 The parish is situated in open agricultural countryside, on the northern end of the Brecks, which is highly valued and extensively used by residents. The small rural agricultural nature of the parish is clearly shown in Aerial Photo 1. The population recorded in the Census of 2011 was of some 772 individuals, within 340 households<sup>22</sup>. Subsequent small scale in-fill development has increased the number of households to around 360 (based on YVAA newsletter deliveries). A mile to the north is the market town of Dereham (parish and town boundaries abut). The parish is bisected north/south by the B1135 Wymondham Road and east/west by the Norwich Road.



**MNR Yaxham Railway Station**

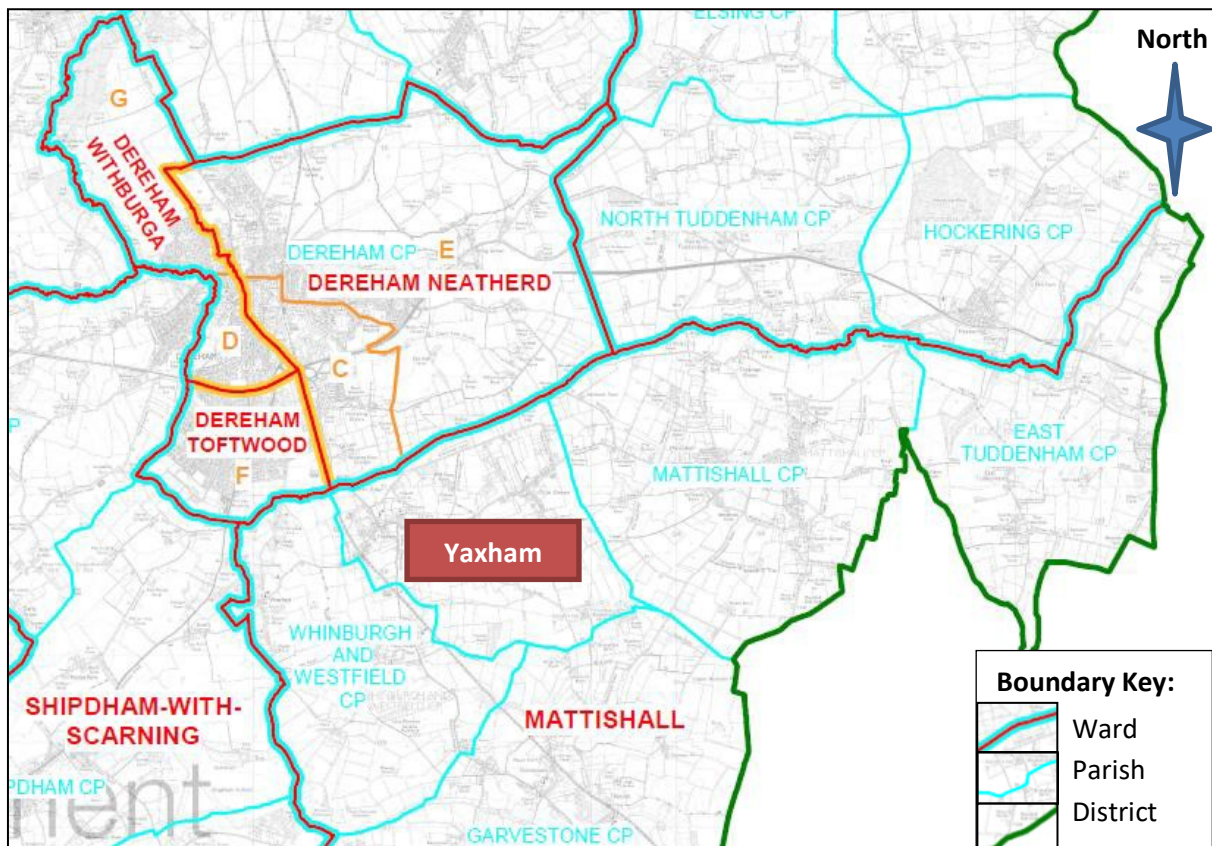
Norwich is approximately 15 miles to the east, with the market town of Wymondham 9 miles to the south and the large village of Mattishall 3 miles to the east. The privately run Mid-Norfolk Railway (MNR) runs trains from Dereham to Wymondham Abbey through Yaxham Station, on the old Norfolk Railways line first opened in 1857<sup>23</sup>.

- 2.3 The civil parish of Yaxham comprises three settlements – the village of Yaxham and the two hamlets of Clint Green and Brakefield Green. The settlement of Yaxham lies in the north west of the parish with some 205 dwellings (Map 5, Aerial Photo 2). The settlement of Clint Green in the north east of the Parish with some 105 dwellings (Map 6, Aerial Photo 3). The much smaller settlement of Brakefield Green, some 6 dwellings, is in the south-east corner of the parish. The balance of the remaining dwellings are (or were) individual farmsteads. Aerial Photo 1 illustrates the sparsely populated countryside that makes up the centre and most of the parish, surrounding small focused settlements.

<sup>22</sup> [www.norfolkinsight.org.uk/resource/view?resourceId=1261](http://www.norfolkinsight.org.uk/resource/view?resourceId=1261) Yaxham Parish Profile Code E04006196

<sup>23</sup> [www.mnr.org.uk](http://www.mnr.org.uk)  
<https://yaxham.com>

Map 2 Yaxham Civil Parish in Mattishall Ward of Breckland District Council



Source: [www.Breckland.gov.uk](http://www.Breckland.gov.uk)

- 2.4 Yaxham is clearly distinct from Dereham and villages such as Mattishall to the east, Westfield to the west and Whinburgh to the south. Yaxham has limited services, but has access to more in the neighbouring Dereham and Mattishall.

Map 3 The District of Breckland in the County of Norfolk



Source: Ordnance Survey, 2009

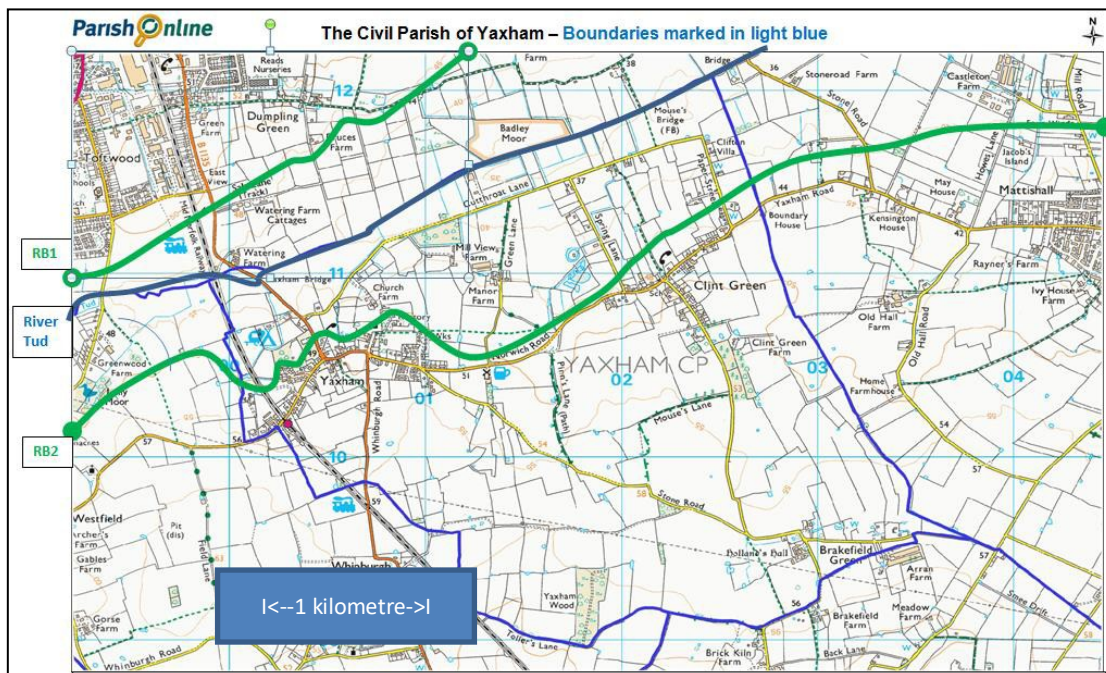
**Aerial Photo 1. View of the civil parish of Yaxham (Boundary Marked in Blue)**

**A small rural parish comprising three small settlements set in sparsely populated open countryside**



- 2.5 In 2013 the parish undertook the “Your Yaxham” CLP<sup>24</sup> which has provided much of the foundation for the Neighbourhood Plan. The Working Group has consulted widely and this input forms the basis of the Plan. The portrait of the parish gives a factual snap-shot of the make-up of the community. This sets the vision of how Yaxham sees itself and how Yaxham wishes to develop during the Plan period – 2016-2036 – and from this flows the objectives and principles that govern the approach to the planning policies, significant statements and community action points. Finally, the future implementation and monitoring of the Plan is set out.

**Map 4 – Indication of The Tud River Valley Boundaries (green) north of Yaxham**



- 2.6 Defining the River Tud Valley in Map 4 is based on contour lines. The river descends from 45m in the west to 35m in the east on the map. The indicative boundaries of the Tud River Valley shown here broadly follow declining contour lines. Whilst the true fluvial watersheds are further apart these contours give an indication of where the inclines become more pronounced down to the river itself.
- 2.7 The northern and southern river valley boundaries are indicated on Map 4 in green and are derived as follows:
- RB1** – is the northern indicative boundary starts in the west at the 55m contour, skirts existing settlement of Dereham and then follows the 50m contour line and descends to the 45m contour line past Dumppling Green.
- RB2** – is the southern indicative boundary line starts at the 50m contour line and skirts the existing settlement of Yaxham round to the Norwich Road and on to the 45m contour line past Clint Green and then to the 40m contour line past Mattishall.

<sup>24</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/)  
<https://yaxham.com>

- 2.8 The Tud Valley to the north of Yaxham (see Map 4) is particularly important to the parish, representing a green gap of open farmland preserving the highly prized clear identity of Yaxham as a small, but vibrant rural community in its own right and not a suburb of nearby Dereham its much larger neighbour.<sup>25</sup> The valley is also ecologically important as it includes a **Site of Special Scientific Interest** (SSSI) at Badley Moor, part of the Norfolk Valley Fen Network **Special Area of Conservation** (SAC). In addition there are a number of **County Wildlife Sites** (CWS) within the valley. CWS are areas of land recognised as being, at least, of county importance for their nature conservation value; this is defined by the presence of important, distinctive and threatened habitats and species. The areas in the Tud River Valley that falls within the Parish of Yaxham, include: pasture south of Watering Farm (CWS 2168), Manor Farm Marsh (CWS 662), and “Look East” Orchard (CWS 2200).<sup>26</sup>
- 2.9 To the south there is the ancient woodland of Yaxham Wood which is another CWS (2039). Various trees within the Parish are covered **by Tree Preservation Orders** (TPO).<sup>27</sup> To the East, between the settlements of Clint Green and Mattishall there are SSSI’s at Mattishall Moor and Rosie Curston’s Meadow. These areas are of national importance and designated based on their nature conservation/ geological value.<sup>28</sup>
- 2.10 To preserve the rural ‘feel’ the area is uncluttered by street furniture and signs, and there are no street lights. This has helped to conserve its essentially rural character, and to preserve the dark skies of Norfolk.<sup>29</sup> There has been little development outside the two main settlements in order to preserve the impressive open rural and agricultural nature. Likewise the similar open countryside exists to the east and represents a clear geographical and visual break with the much larger village of Mattishall. In turn the clear break between the two main settlements of Yaxham and Clint Green is prized for the open rural nature of the area and the feeling of space within the civil parish.
- 2.11 The surrounding landscape is gently rolling and, due to its relatively elevated position and predominantly arable land cover, is open with good long range views. It is characterised by well contained dispersed settlements and the presence of a distinctive field and water drainage pattern delineated by hedgerows. The area is vulnerable to losing its character as a result of sprawl from Dereham and insensitive development not respecting the historic built character, and there is the risk that future loss of vegetation such as hedgerows would open up the landscape further.

<sup>25</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/)

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.nbis.org.uk/CWS>,  
[http://www.nbis.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Designated\\_WildlifeSites\\_2015\\_600dpi.pdf](http://www.nbis.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Designated_WildlifeSites_2015_600dpi.pdf) ,  
<http://www.nbis.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/CWSinBreckland2013.pdf>

<sup>27</sup> <http://www.np4yaxham.com/breckland-council.html> Breckland Tree Preservation & Conservation

<sup>28</sup> Joint Nature Conservation Committee, 2015 <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-23>

<sup>29</sup> Light Pollution as a Statutory Nuisance: A How to Guide, 2010, Campaign to Protect Rural England

<https://yaxham.com>

- 2.12 Up to the mid-1960’s Yaxham was a small largely agricultural community. The predominant reason for living in Yaxham was that you were employed in farming in Yaxham or worked in nearby Dereham which had a significant manufacturing base with Hobbies, Crane Fruehauf and Metamec which employed hundreds of local people. Employment has changed significantly, is more wide-ranging, from one-person home-based activities to a couple of small local businesses, farming and commuting (as far afield as Cambridge).<sup>30</sup>
- 2.13 Since the mid ‘60’s planned changes have doubled the size of Yaxham. There was estate development in the 1960’s; the Council built St Peter’s Close in 1966, and the privately built Elm Close adjacent to The Elms around 1969. There has also been extensive infill and conversion of farm and other buildings since. In addition, there is a significant range in housing tenure, types of housing and economic standing.<sup>31</sup>
- 2.14 The 2013 CLP identified the major changes that the parish had gone through in recent decades. Perhaps the most striking fact was that almost half the residents had lived in Yaxham for less than 10 years, whilst more than a third, had lived here for more than 25 years with a number born-and-bred within the parish and its immediate vicinity. This in itself goes a long way to explain many of the stresses and strains within the community as long-term residents have seen huge changes in the make-up of the parish and may be more reticent about further change, whilst most recent residents may come with new ideas and ways of doing things.<sup>32</sup>

### The Built Environment - Development over time

- 2.15 The settlement of Yaxham was centred on the area around St Peter’s Church which dates, in part, to Saxon times. This is adjoining the north-south Dereham-Wymondham Road, and east-west Norwich Road between Westfield and Mattishall.



- 2.16 Yaxham is home to 5 listed buildings and a listed table tomb, most of which are contained within the Conservation Area which centres on St Peter’s Church (Grade I listed), dating in part to Saxon times (British Listed Buildings, 2016). Its fine round tower marks it out as one of Norfolk’s 100 round tower churches (Norfolk Round Tower Churches, 2015). Within the Church yard to the south-west corner of the porch is the “Table Tomb” (18th Century – Grade II Listed) with fielded stone

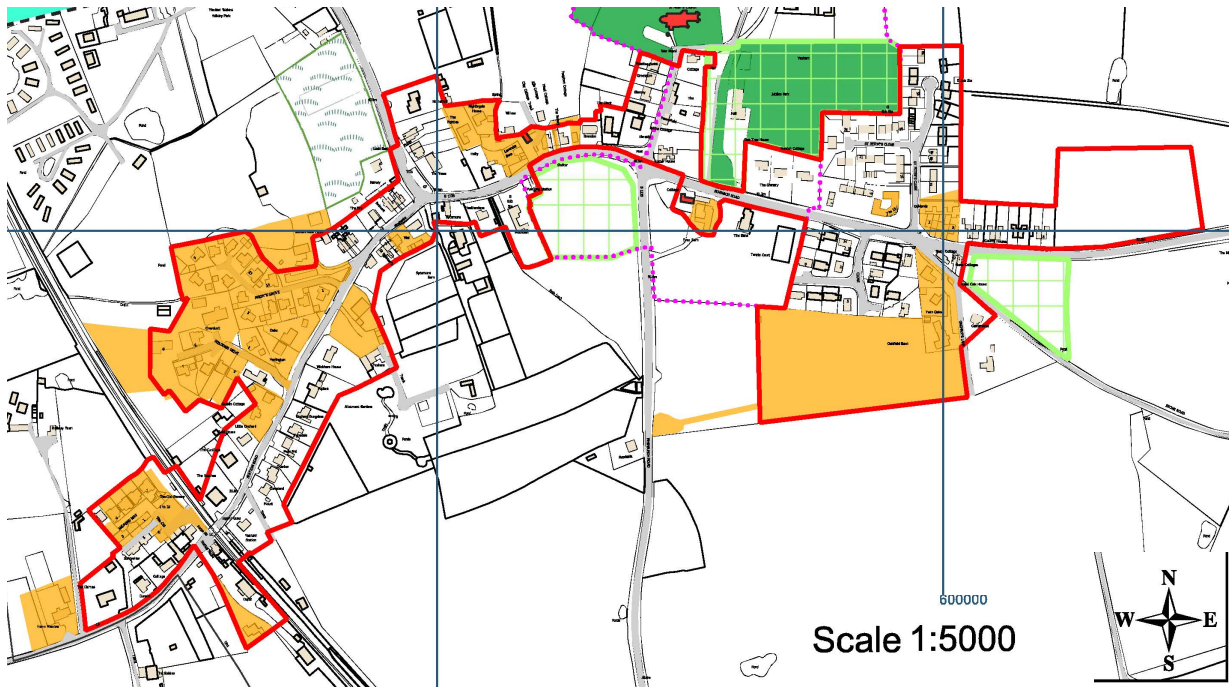
<sup>30</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/)

<sup>31</sup> [www.norfolkinsight.org.uk/resource/view?resourceId=1261](http://www.norfolkinsight.org.uk/resource/view?resourceId=1261) Yaxham, E04006196,

<sup>32</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/)  
<https://yaxham.com>

panels and Baroque corner pallisters. Close by is Willow Farm House (late medieval with 16th and 17th Century additions – Grade II listed), Baronia Cottage (1611 – Grade II listed). Yaxham House (1820 – Grade II listed) is the Rectory built by the Rev “Johnny” Johnson, cousin of William Cowper.<sup>33</sup>

#### Map 5 Yaxham LDF Settlement Boundary (red)



2.17 Between the two main settlements is Yaxham Mill. Historically this was the centre of the milling of cereals for the parish. Yaxham tower mill was built by William Critoph in



1860. The 48 foot, six storey tarred tower had a ground diameter of 20 feet that narrowed by 2 feet per floor culminating with an ogee cap and a ball finial. The four double shuttered sails drove 3 pairs of under-driven stones. In its heyday the mill was providing flour to the adjacent bakery. The site included workers' cottages, the bakery and the miller's house (Norfolk Windmills, 2015). The mill and its buildings are now split between holiday cottages, a pub/restaurant (closed and for sale for over a year, and so has an uncertain future, but registered as a Community Asset) and bed and breakfast – the latter being centred on

the mill itself, an iconic building on Yaxham's skyline.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>33</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/)

<sup>35</sup> <http://www.norfolkwindmills.co.uk/Windmills/yaxham-towermill.html>  
<https://yaxham.com>

- 2.18 Yaxham Station opened on 15<sup>th</sup> February 1847 at the height of “Railway Mania”. This line, running north-south between Dereham and Wymondham led to the development of housing along Station Road and around the Railway Station.<sup>36</sup>

**Aerial Photo 2: The Settlement of Yaxham**



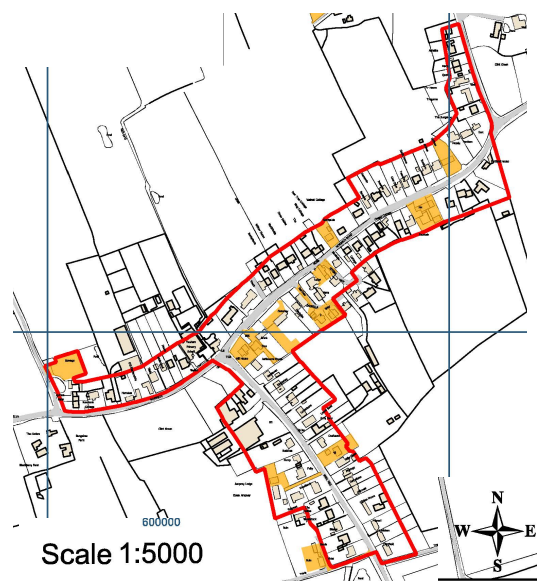
- 2.19 Yaxham has a high proportion of brick-built residences, with newer properties being constructed using more modern methods. Limited estate development has occurred in the Parish. The first was the Council built St Peter’s Close, 1966, and the second privately built Elm Close adjacent to The Elms around 1969.
- 2.20 In Clint Green (see Map 6, Aerial Photo 3) there is the clear linear development of cottages and individual properties fronting the Norwich Road running east to Mattishall. The exceptions to this are Well Hill running to the south and Paper Street to the north. The majority of building in Clint Green has taken place since the 1960s.<sup>37</sup>
- 2.21 Brakefield Green is the smallest of the settlements, comprising some 6 dwellings developed around Holland’s Hall (Grade II\*) dating from late 16<sup>th</sup> Century.
- 2.22 In general, less than 10% of the homes are outside the three main settlements.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>36</sup> [www.mnr.org.uk](http://www.mnr.org.uk)

<sup>37</sup> Land Use Consultants, 2007

<sup>38</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/)

**Map 6 Clint Green LDF Settlement Boundary (red)<sup>39</sup>**



**Aerial photo 3: Settlement of Clint Green**



- 2.23 Within the whole of the Parish smaller developments have taken place on a more piecemeal basis such as at Stranton Avenue, Peters Way and Andrews Close. Outside these areas most other properties are centred on local farms, or are infill.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>39</sup> <http://www.breckland.gov.uk/article/4313/Documents-Library-Publications> - Site Specific Policies & Proposals DPD 2012

<sup>40</sup> <http://www.breckland.gov.uk/content/document-library-publications> Preferred Directions Part 1 2015

- 2.24 The housing stock shows a wide range of styles and sizes, with: 51% detached homes, 26% semi-detached homes, 8% terraced homes, 4% flats (converted granary) and 1% mobile home. 79% of dwellings are privately owned (above the Breckland and national averages). There are few privately rented properties (7% versus 15% nationally) with social housing managed primarily by Peddars Way Housing Association, part of the Flagship Housing Group, accounting for 11% of the housing stock (although all bar 2 of the 46 units are in the settlement of Yaxham i.e. 22% of the dwellings in Yaxham settlement are social housing). Although the most common type of dwelling is 3 bedroomed (39%), Yaxham has a high proportion of 4 or more bedroomed houses (30% versus 22% for Breckland). The proportion of one and two bedroomed dwellings (31%) is lower than the Breckland average of 34%.<sup>41</sup>
- 2.25 There is an increasing risk of surface water flooding in and around the parish road and lanes network, with run off from fields and un-cleared ditches being a contributory factor, as witnessed again during the rains in July 2016 with key roads flooded and unpassable.<sup>42</sup> There is risk as to sewerage capacity. There are a high number of private sewerage systems – cesspits, septic tanks and bio-disk systems serving many private houses. Such systems require regular emptying and maintenance, and run the significant risk of inundation at times of high levels of surface and groundwater, potentially leading to the contamination of drainage ditches and water courses. This issue is considered a serious concern relating to future development.<sup>43</sup>
- 2.26 The Parish experiences little crime: most residents, 99.2%, feel safe living here.<sup>44</sup>

## People

- 2.27 Compared to elsewhere in Breckland and nationally there is a high proportion of retired people – 25% are over 65 compared with a Breckland average of 21%. Conversely, the parish has a lower proportion of children: 0- 4 years of age 5% versus 6% nationally, 5-15 years of age 13% versus 17.7% nationally. The largest disparity versus national figures is in 15-29 year olds with a figure of 12% versus 18% in Breckland and 20% nationally. This may be partly explained by the higher than average retired population who do not have young children.<sup>45</sup>
- 2.28 The ethnic mix of the Parish shows 99% of the Parish are classified as British, with 99% having English as their first language and 97% were born in the UK.

<sup>41</sup> Source: [www.norfolkinsight.org.uk/resource/view?resourceId=1261](http://www.norfolkinsight.org.uk/resource/view?resourceId=1261) Yaxham, E04006196

<sup>42</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/)

<sup>43</sup> Environmental Maps - Yaxham Parish <http://www.magic.gov.uk/>, <http://www.np4yaxham.com/appendix-1-env3--env-4-review.html> ENV3 Surface Water Flooding

<sup>44</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/)

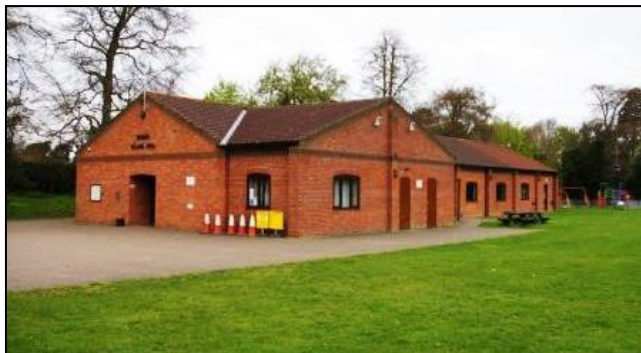
<sup>45</sup> Source: [www.norfolkinsight.org.uk/resource/view?resourceId=1261](http://www.norfolkinsight.org.uk/resource/view?resourceId=1261) Yaxham, E04006196

<https://yaxham.com>

- 2.29 The predominant religion is Christianity with 73% professing to be Christian, the Parish is served by St Peter’s Church and the Congregational Chapel in Clint Green.<sup>46</sup>

### Facilities and Economic life

- 2.30 The Village Hall and Recreation Field are on land on a long lease (999 years) from the Diocese of Norwich and managed by the Trustees of the Yaxham Village Amenities



**Yaxham Village Hall**

Association (YVAA), of which all residents are members. Many of the parish’s active clubs and societies hold their meetings and events in the Village Hall, including: the WI (Women’s Institute), Good Companions, and lace making group. It is also hired on a regular basis by outside

organisations such as the Farm Machinery Club and The Poultry Club all meet regularly. The Hall is often used for parties, wedding and funeral receptions, fund raising events and coffee mornings. It is also used as a polling station. There are regular table tennis, Tumble Tots, keep-fit and Pilates classes.

- 2.31 The Village Hall is at the edge of the Recreation Field – a much valued green resource within the parish. During the season, football is played most weeks and during the summer many community events take place including vintage engines, car-boot sales, the Big Lunch picnic and many more besides.



**The Recreation Field**



**The Big Lunch Picnic 2015**

- 2.32 By the Village Hall is the children’s play-area which provides a safe external play area for children. This is popular and much used, but is showing its age and is in need of modernising.



**The Children's Play Area**

- 2.33 The Trustees of the Village Hall have aspirations for:

<sup>46</sup> <http://www.dioceseofnorwich.org/financefiles/parish%20statistics/260304.pdf> Getting to Know your Parish

- Improved play area, replacing the current play space, planned to include: Flexi Swing, Multi-Play System, Switchback Run, Bigfoot Crossing and Junior Comet Roundabout. The cost for this project is estimated to be £30,000 to £40,000.
- A new “Trim Trail” at the Jubilee Field, Yaxham which is estimated at £65,000.
- A new Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) The new “MUGA” would provide an area for a number of sports such as tennis, mini-tennis and netball.<sup>47</sup> The cost for this project is estimated at around £100,000.

2.34 It is intended that funds will be raised from grants and donations, and from property developers. In the future plans may be considered to provide additional changing room facilities at the Village Hall for sports activities.

2.35 The future of the Church Room, adjacent to the Village Hall, which is held on a long lease (999 years) from the Diocese of Norwich, renovation is being considered by the YVAA Trustees to provide a much needed smaller community meeting place.<sup>48</sup> The anticipated cost of the renovation work alone is in excess of £200,000 with additional funding required for fixtures, fittings and equipment. The Trustees reworking to achieve Grant funding and will be launching a fund raising campaign. Once completed it will be used to host drop-in sessions for local residents, computer classes and smaller family events.



**The Church Room**

2.36 Between Yaxham and Clint Green on the Norwich Road there is a small area of open land at Pinn’s Corner – see Maps 7 and 8. This area lies at the centre of the parish rights of way network linking the three settlements of Yaxham, Clint Green and Brakefield Green. In recent years the Yaxham Woodland Group managed this land, on behalf of the Parish Council, to encourage wild native flora and fauna. It has become a much valued community resource with activities at the site taking place every month including hedge-laying, wood-working, tree planting etc. for all age- groups from the school to more senior citizens.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>47</sup> <http://www.sportengland.org/media/125397/multi-use-games-areas-part-one.pdf>

<sup>48</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/) Community Led Plan, 2013

<sup>49</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/) Local Green Spaces Review  
<https://yaxham.com> [np4yaxham2@gmail.com](mailto:np4yaxham2@gmail.com)

Map 7 Pinns Corner - Location



Map 8 Pinns Corner – Detail



2.37 The parish primary school is the Yaxham Church of England (VA) Primary School. It is



situated in Clint Green and is the first choice for parents resident in Yaxham.<sup>50</sup> As a Church School, with a reputation for SEND (Special Educational Needs & Disability), it draws its pupils from a significantly wider area than the parishes of Yaxham and Whinburgh.

### The Primary School

Set out in its founding document the Primary School has reached its normal capacity of 105

In September 2016<sup>51</sup> At 105 pupils on roll it is at maximum capacity within guidelines for the 0.51Ha site.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>50</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/)

<sup>51</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/)

<sup>52</sup> Norfolk County Council submission to Breckland emerging Plan Consultation, January/February 2016, [www.breckland.gov.uk](http://www.breckland.gov.uk)  
<https://yaxham.com>

- 2.38 Although at capacity, Norfolk County Council, the Diocese of Norwich and the Governing Body do not support the expansion of the school. The school’s planned annual admission number is 12. The County Council said in its Local Plan submission (February 2016) “The forecasts are stable and indicate that catchment residents equate to around 10 per annual cohort.” and that “An additional development of 52 dwellings would generate approximately 2 pupils in each cohort”. On the face of it, the construction of 52 new dwellings after March 2015 would appear to be the limit that the school could sustain, without additional capacity was forthcoming.<sup>53</sup>
- 2.39 As the Governors have stated, their education policy is:  
*“To support children in fully reaching their potential by providing educational facilities that support the needs of a growing population. Yaxham has a Voluntary Aided Primary School that currently meets the needs of the village it serves. The school supports a plan of sustainable growth appropriate to serve the village and the children from the catchment areas. Housing and other development will be expected to contribute towards any improvements to the current education provision.”*<sup>54</sup>
- 2.40 Compared to the rest of Norfolk, a high proportion of Yaxham’s residents are economically active, in full or part time work, with an unemployment rate of below 4%. A number work in agriculture on local farms, or in other local businesses, with a few commuting as far as other market towns, to Norwich or Cambridge.
- 2.41 There is a limited network of footpaths and bridleways (Map 9 below), limited pavements and no facility for cyclists (Ordnance Survey, 2015). Although walking is relatively popular, few people walk between the two settlements or to work. This is principally because of the level and speed of traffic cutting through the parish to bypass congestion on the A47.
- 2.42 Whilst, the speed limit in the two settlements is 30mph (and 20mph as an advisory limit at the school), the speed limit entering/exiting and between the two settlements is 60mph. The back lanes around the parish, no matter how narrow, also have their speed limits set at 60mph. This is a major concern of residents and explains much of the residents’ reluctance to walk or cycle, as well as the desire to see pavements and potentially cycle-paths to adjoining settlement.<sup>55</sup>
- 2.43 A proportion of parents with children at the Primary School have indicated their willingness to park at the Village Hall or at Pinn’s Corner and then walk to the school, if the pavements were cleared and speed limits reduced. Any reduction in car use could also assist the car parking and traffic congestion at the primary school at the start and close of the school day.<sup>56</sup>

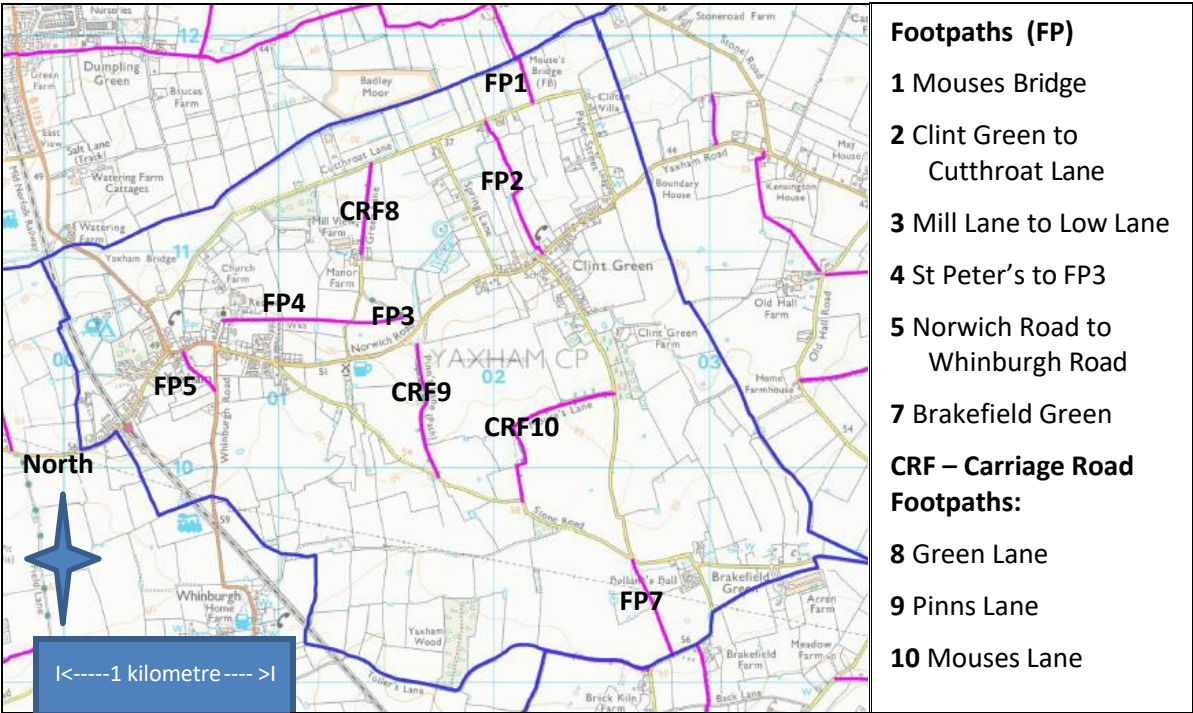
<sup>53</sup> Norfolk County Council submission to Breckland emerging Plan Consultation, January/February 2016, [www.breckland.gov.uk](http://www.breckland.gov.uk)

<sup>54</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/) Governors’ Letter, April 2016

<sup>55</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/) Consultation Statement Appendix 2 Compendium of Surveys

<sup>56</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/) Consultation Statement Appendix 2 Parents Survey, December 2015

Map 9 Limited Footpath Network (Footpaths in red, Parish boundary in blue)



2.44 There is a regular bus service to Norwich, with three stops along the road from the parish boundary with Dereham, through to the boundary with Mattishall, although relatively few residents use the bus to get to work, principally in Norwich. By far the preferred way to travel to work is by car, and 92% of residents have access to a car, or van.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>57</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/) Consultation Statement Appendix 2 Compendium of Surveys  
<https://yaxham.com> [np4yaxham2@gmail.com](mailto:np4yaxham2@gmail.com)

### 3 Parish Consultation Response (2015 & 2016)

- 3.1 The NP4Yaxham Working Group has from the outset been very keen to reflect the views of residents. The Community Led Plan questionnaire was delivered to every household and achieved a response rate of 76%.<sup>58</sup> This provided a strong indicator of



Consulting on emerging policies...

many of the issues concerning the residents – and many of these fall within the development of Yaxham. These have been updated and issues were tested at parish consultation events in November and December 2015, in January 2016 and in numerous surveys with up to around 30% of the

parish regularly participating and commenting. The NP4Yaxham Working Group analysed the responses from the various rounds of consultation. The detailed findings and consultation responses can be found in the accompanying Consultation Statement.<sup>59</sup> The following highlights reflect Yaxham residents’ express preferences:

- a) Protecting and enhancing the small rural nature of the parish was seen as the biggest aim of residents (98%). There was strong concern at moves to urbanise our rural parish, with opposition to street-lighting (89%), traffic refuges (97%) and additional signage (98%).
- b) Ensuring that Yaxham maintains its distinct character and independence from the much larger urban market town of Dereham was viewed as important. Support for the maintenance of the open visual geographical vista of the Tud River Valley between Yaxham and Dereham (92%), and discouraging the coalescence between Yaxham from Dereham (93%).
- c) Homes for young families and the retired were seen as the most important housing type needed. A majority, (91%) felt these should be within a mixed environment of family homes, including the provision of affordable homes (46%), there was little appetite for apartments or flats (5%). There was a general preference for small scale development (98%), up to 10 homes, rather than larger scale developments, and that density should reflect the immediate area and generally be no greater than 17.5 per ha (7 per acre) (95%).

<sup>58</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/) Consultation Statement

<sup>59</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/) Consultation Statement

- d) The lack of provision of adequate new local facilities to cope with a growing population is a concern. There is a need for the sustainable development of the Primary School, Pre-School provision, access to GP surgeries and dentists, sewerage, potable water, superfast speed broadband, and mobile phone coverage.
- e) In terms of infrastructure for supporting housing growth, the most vital were medical facilities (87%), mobile phone signal (70%) and broadband (50%).
- f) For the economic future of the parish, as well as the community, the provision of superfast broadband and comprehensive mobile phone coverage for the whole parish was seen as very important.
- g) With regard to new employment smaller businesses were preferred over larger ones, with strong support especially for home-based businesses (87%).
- h) The need to address the traffic volume and speed of traffic within the parish was considered vital, with residents hoping to see a reduction in level and speeds of traffic through the parish (100%). It was hoped to minimise traffic from new developments by encouraging greater use of public transport and walking (74%). An improved road layout at the “Tesco Roundabout”, where access to Dereham was seen as already dire, was hoped for ahead of the advent of the proposal for 1,000-2,000 more homes and another supermarket on the old Cemex site.
- i) The main way of travelling within the parish is driving (61%). There is a strong demand to address traffic speed and levels to make it safer for walking and cycling (68%). This could also help address chronic parking problems particularly around the primary school at the start and end of the day (92%). If more parents felt safe to walk or cycle with their children this would reduce the pressure on parking at the school (89%).
- j) Better footways or routes could increase walking and cycling activity in and around the parish and the implementation of a Green Lanes policy, with reduced speed limits, would encourage this.
- k) For journeys elsewhere outside the parish, especially journeys to places other than Norwich, driving is the preferred method, (61% car ownership), followed by the bus (15%). Many use the bus service to Norwich at least occasionally (22%).
- l) There was very strong agreement concerning the importance of green spaces (93%), and the need to avoid adverse impacts on these, as well as protecting the landscape, protecting hedgerows and footpaths (93%).
- m) There was strong support for the built heritage and particularly the renovation of the Church Rooms being reviewed by YVAA (topped the parish “priorities” poll).
- n) There was also strong support for enhancing the existing play area on the Recreation Field (YVAA survey) and for the long-held desire for a new play area in Clint Green.

3.2 From the consultation process, the Working Group identified the areas of concern, the objectives, principles and vision (planning and non-planning). These set the basis for the formulation of planning policies and non-planning aspirational parish action points. This has been the subject of further consultation with positive response rates of up to 96% from up to 30% of households responding.

## 4 The Vision, Principles & Objectives

### 4.1 The Vision

- a) The Neighbourhood Plan for Yaxham supports small-scale development, as it is to be welcomed for the long-term economic and social sustainability of the parish. The Plan is designed to ensure that development is undertaken in a way that protects and enhances the small rural nature of the parish, within its surrounding agricultural and open countryside. Its individual identity is valued by residents who appreciate being close to, but not part of, the market town of Dereham or village of Mattishall. Residents value highly the friendly, welcoming community spirit. Both new and old residents wish to build on this to ensure future residents are a part of the community.
- b) Yaxham residents wish to retain the essential ‘small village feel’ of a sustainable rural community through the Plan period and beyond. This can be achieved through small-scale organic development that meets local housing and community needs and supports the rural economy. Development should be: of the highest design and build standards, closely taking account of their surroundings, sympathetically looking to enhance their location in relation to the locality within the parish. The close co-operation between relevant authorities and developers to provide the necessary infrastructure ahead of development will be actively encouraged. Specifically in relation to health, education, sustainable transport, drainage: co-operation will be essential, as these services are already under pressure.
- c) Small-scale economic and employment opportunities in the parish, including working from home, are and will continue to be an integral element of the sustainability of a vibrant community. The encouragement and growth of such opportunities will support and foster local services, to aid this greater access to high quality and high speed mobile phone, broadband and other emerging technologies is required. Suitable opportunities, such as a new shop, cafe or pub (particularly in Clint Green), will be supported. Such facilities would enhance the community by providing more opportunities for social interaction, employment and recreation locally.
- d) Travel by private car will continue to be the predominant way of travelling to, from, and around this part of the District. Adequate parking for proposed new homes, new employment sites, new services and recreational facilities will be encouraged. The aim is to reduce the need for on street parking, and its associated impingement on cyclist and pedestrians. The reduction of car use for travelling to and from neighbouring settlements can be achieved through making walking and cycling safer – through lower speed limits, wider pavements, the installation of new pavements/footpaths and, where possible, cycle-paths. This improved infrastructure would also contribute to a reduction in the parking and traffic congestion at the school at the start and end of the school day. The present network of rural lanes and footpaths (Map 9) used for informal recreation needs to be preserved and enhanced, with the introduction of

reduced speed limits under a “Quiet Lanes” Scheme to be encouraged. The current public transport bus services enabling residents to travel to Norwich, Dereham and the Norfolk & Norwich University Hospital (NNUH), should extend to include an additional evening service to further reduce car use.

- e) The built environment and natural heritage of Yaxham is of vital importance and value to the Parish and should be protected, enhanced and retained – throughout the Plan period. The most highly valued countryside areas in Yaxham Parish need to be nurtured, recognised and conserved. Thus, it will retain its character as a small rural, independent, inclusive, vibrant economically and socially sustainable community.

### **Three Key Principles**

- 4.2 Sustainable development underpins the National Planning Policy Framework and is about positive growth within the community. The three key principles of such development are also drawn from the CLP and the NP4Yaxham consultation process.

#### **Principle 1 – Environmental**

- 4.3 Yaxham maintains, and its residents value highly, its “village” feel as a small rural parish set in open agricultural countryside, close to, but separate from Dereham and nearby villages – sustaining its own primary school, village hall, cafe, chapel and church. This “rural village” view underpins the whole approach of this Neighbourhood Plan. Consultations have shown that Yaxham is a much valued place to live and residents appreciate the special qualities within the settlements. At the same time, local residents accept that growth will continue, but they wish to minimise the impact of development and have a say how that development takes place.
- 4.4 Each of the sites put forward for development potential in 2016 border existing settlements and there is great concern that large new developments of 30 plus homes could erode the very qualities that make this community special, if such developments are not carefully managed in terms of scale and design. Residential or rural business development should seek to minimise the irreversible loss of undeveloped land and productive agricultural land.
- 4.5 All new development should contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment for future generations. Measures to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution and adapt to climate change will be required as well as avoiding allocating inappropriate development in flood-risk areas.
- 4.6 Elm Close is a site with outline planning permission for housing development. It is adjacent to the Conservation Area and the Grade II listed Baronia Cottage (1611) within the curtilage of The Elms. New dwellings would be expected to enhance the historic environment and avoid eroding the quality and distinctiveness of the setting.

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**Principle 2 – Economic**

- 4.7 Our aim is to enable the provision of new homes to meet the needs of all sections of the community in a manner that respects the character of a small rural village surrounded by open farmland. The Plan also seeks to enhance the provision of, and protect, the existing small businesses and farming activities in and around our parish while at the same time protecting the countryside and supporting nature conservation.
- 4.8 Connectivity within the parish through linking up existing footways and a cycleway into Dereham may increase the viability of small local businesses and encourage more start-ups. Evidence from the consultations showed over 40 small businesses within the parish but also a large number of people commuting to work further afield.
- 4.9 The Yaxham Neighbourhood Plan is not anti-development and accepts that housing growth is needed and new people and new businesses will come with it. However it must be more than an exercise in meeting housing supply numbers by the addition of characterless estates on the rural fringes of our settlements and open countryside.

**Principle 3 – Social**

- 4.10 This Neighbourhood Plan seeks to build, extend and add to initiatives arising from the CLP to ensure that Yaxham continues to be a balanced, healthy and inclusive community and ensure Yaxham remains a special place that people choose to live, work and visit. Housing should meet the needs of the present and future generations and by creating a high quality built environment where appropriate, there should also be accessible local services that reflect the community's needs.
- 4.11 The Neighbourhood Plan would seek to develop and improve local community facilities such as medical, educational, leisure and recreational to enable the good health and wellbeing of residents.
- 4.12 The provision of a footway to link up to Footpath No 5<sup>60</sup> from a new development in Elm Close would enable safe walking to Station Road and the bus stop and also would provide easy access to community facilities such as Village Hall, Church Room and St Peter's Church thus reducing the need to get in the car.
- 4.13 Pre-school provision is seen as a much needed facility that is currently lacking as well as the re-opening of the closure of the last pub in the parish in 2015. A play area in Clint Green and the upgrading of the children's play area on the Recreation Field in Yaxham are seen as priorities and solutions can be found in NP4Yaxham Community Benefit Policy COM2 – Developer Contributions.

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<sup>60</sup> See NP4Yaxham Map 9 on page 21  
<https://yaxham.com>

## Objectives

### 4.14 Key Aims

**Objective 1:** In the context of cumulative proposed developments in the Mattishall-Yaxham-Dereham area to ensure sufficient infrastructure and facilities to meet the ongoing and future needs of the local community, including: sufficient primary school places, pre-school provision, primary health care provision, and that sufficient potable water and sewerage capacity are available to meet the needs of the expanding parish population. **See Parish Action Points (PAP)– PAP1, PAP7 & PAP8**

**Objective 2:** to maintain the independent and separate character and identity of the parish of Yaxham as a small rural and independent, close to, but separate from the neighbouring settlements of Dereham and Mattishall.

**See Policies/PAP – STR1, PAP 2, HOU3, HOU4**

**Objective 3:** to establish clear Non-Coalescence Gaps between Yaxham and Dereham, Yaxham and Mattishall, and within the parish of Yaxham between the two main settlements of Yaxham and Clint Green. **See Policy – STR1 & PAP2**

### 4.15 Housing

**Objective 4:** to resist those developments which do not meet the key principles, and to support small-scale, sustainable developments in keeping with the character and the parish within the settlement boundaries.

**See Policies – HOU1, HOU2, HOU3, HOU4**

**Objective 5:** to support good design, a diversity of housing types appropriate to local need and the use of sustainable materials and methods.

**See Policies/PAP – HOU5, HOU6, HOU7, PAP3**

### 4.16 Environment

**Objective 6:** to seek to champion and enhance the “Dark skies” initiative in order to minimise light pollution and protect the small rural character of the parish.

**See Policies/PAP – ENV1, PAP4**

**Objective 7:** to conserve and enhance the historic built and environmental heritage within the parish. **See Policies/PAP – ENV2, PAP5**

**Objective 8:** to maintain and protect the green spaces within the parish.

**See Policy – ENV3**

**Objective 9:** to protect and enhance the countryside, including wildlife habitats and sites of special interest. **See Policy – ENV3**

**Objective 10:** to minimise the level of surface water/groundwater run-off in order to minimise the risk of local flooding and contamination of the drainage ditches and water courses including the River Tud. **See Policies – ENV4, ENV5**

#### 4.17 Economy

**Objective 12:** to maintain and enhance the vibrancy of the parish by supporting existing local businesses, and encouraging small-scale new businesses, including home-working, consistent with a rural environment.

**See Policy – ECN1**

**Objective 13:** to work towards achieving the latest communications technology is in place including superfast broadband and 4G mobile phone network infrastructure for all parts of the parish to support local people, families, businesses and services.

**See PAP – PAP7.**

#### 4.18 Transport

**Objective 14:** within the parish to minimise the need for private car use by encouraging the use of alternative forms of transport. **See Policy/PAP – TRA1 & PAP6.**

**Objective 15:** to promote and enable alternative forms of transport within the parish by making cycling and walking safer; specifically by creating and/or enhancing pedestrian walkways, cycle paths and “Green Lanes” and “Quiet Lanes” within the parish, and walkways and cycle paths between the two main settlements of Yaxham and Clint Green and with the neighbouring settlements of Dereham and Mattishall.

**See Policies/PAP – TRA1, ENV3, PAP6.**

**Objective 16:** to achieve the extension of the local bus service (Dereham - Norwich, running through the parish) into the evening. **See PAP – PAP7.**

#### 4.19 Community

**Objective 17:** to encourage opportunities for cultural, leisure, community, sport and other activities, fostering social interaction and community spirit between all sections of the community. **See Policy – COM1.**

**Objective 18:** to protect and enhance the existing local play space in the settlement of Yaxham and to seek a new play space in Clint Green. **See Policy – COM2.**

**Objective 19:** to maximise the developer contributions to the community infrastructure within the Parish of Yaxham. **See Policy – COM2.**

## 5 Specific Policy & Parish Action Points

5.1 It is clear from the consultation and from the Community Led Plan that the parish has many concerns and priorities that can be covered by planning policies. But most people do not see the distinction between planning matters and those they see as part of the same picture, but cannot be part of the planning process. To only focus in this Plan on matters that are purely planning matters would therefore only present part of the picture. NP4Yaxham2 therefore includes two distinct sets of outcomes: Policies that relate to planning matters; and Parish Action Points that the community can seek to take forward itself.

5.2 The following definitions need to be kept in mind in considering the following pages:

### **THE PLANNING POLICIES (Denoted in Yellow)**

These set out what will need to be taken into account by developers in making their planning applications, the Parish Council in commenting on those planning applications, and by Breckland Council when determining those planning applications and deciding whether or not to grant planning permission. Only the policies have any weight when determining planning applications; the supporting text is for explanation. It is only these planning policies that are assessed against the Basic Conditions.

### **PARISH ACTION POINTS (Denoted in Blue)**

These cover issues about which the parish feels strongly and wishes to see action. These are wider than requirements relating to future housing development. They may also not be considered as strictly planning matters by Breckland. However, many residents have strongly indicated the need to have services and infrastructure in place to meet current demands as well as the cumulative issues arising from the myriad of likely development in the Mattishall-Yaxham-South Dereham corridor. Key to most of these issues is that they are matters that NP4Yaxham Working Group or its successor will work with Yaxham Parish Council and other groups within the parish can work or lobby for without waiting for or requiring new planning proposals. Parish Action Points are therefore not Planning Policies and are not required to be assessed against the Basic Conditions.

## 6 Strategic Planning Context

### Spatial Planning – Yaxham’s Rural Settlements

- 6.1 Paragraph 3.18 of The Breckland Local Plan 2019 identifies Yaxham Parish as a ‘village with boundaries and states that ‘In line with the Spatial Development Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy, the level of new development permitted in settlements defined in the policy will be restricted, consistent with the rural character of these villages and reflective of the more limited-service provision and infrastructure available.”
- 6.2 Yaxham’s settlements were not designated as anything else such as “Local Service Centre” (“LSC”) by Breckland as it had insufficient services and its settlements have significantly less than 1,000 residents each or in aggregate. As described, the parish of Yaxham is not a village – it is three separate settlements. Since 2012 the parish has seen a marked reduction in local services – losing its two public houses, post office, a shop and now also the primary school in the parish is over-subscribed. At the same time organic growth has continued within the parish with 23 new dwellings in the period April 2011-March 2015. However, Breckland’s 2015 emerging Local Plan Part 1 Preferred Directions (Regulation 18 Consultation January-February 2016) Policy PD03 expressly “promotes” Yaxham in its proposed settlement hierarchy to being an LSC.<sup>62</sup>
- 6.3 Yaxham Parish Council and NP4Yaxham Working Group, based on parish consultation,<sup>63</sup> believe that Yaxham with its lack of services and three separate settlements should remain as rural settlements and that it does not “satisfy all five qualifying criteria” required by Breckland Council for its designation to be “elevated” to being a LSC.<sup>64</sup> This Plan is therefore prepared on the basis of the designation of Yaxham parish within the existing “Core Strategy” SS1.
- 6.4 Following the representation made by the Yaxham Parish Council and NP4Yaxham Working Group the designation of Yaxham within the settlement hierarchy was reviewed and changed to “Villages with Boundaries” and included in Breckland Local Plan Policy HOU 04 – Villages with Boundaries of the Local Plan.<sup>65</sup>

### Settlement Boundaries

- 6.5 The settlement boundaries for settlements of Yaxham and Clint Green are referred to in these policies as set out in Breckland’s Local Plan 2019 (see Maps 5 and 6).
- 6.6 Brakefield Green does not have a settlement boundary.

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<sup>62</sup> <http://www.breckland.gov.uk/article/2455/Documents-Library-Publications> Emerging Local Plan

<sup>63</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/)

<sup>64</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/)

<sup>65</sup> <https://www.breckland.gov.uk/planning-policy>

<https://yaxham.com>

## Breckland Local Plan

- 6.7 In November 2019 the current Breckland Local Plan was adopted.
- 6.8 **Policy HOU 01 – Development Requirements (Minimum)** sets out to meet Breckland District’s future housing needs the Local Plan will provides for no less than 15,298 new homes between 2011 and 2036, an average of 612 dwellings per annum.
- 6.9 The distribution of the new homes required follows the settlement hierarchy outlined in **GEN 03 - Settlement Hierarchy** and defines the villages of Yaxham and Clint Green as ‘Villages with Boundaries’.



### Settlement Hierarchy:-

- Key Settlements;
  - Market Towns;
  - Local Service Centres;
  - Villages with Boundaries; and
  - Villages without Boundaries
- 6.10 **Policy HOU 04 – Villages with Boundaries** sets out the criteria required for allowing appropriate development immediately adjacent to the settlement boundary. The number of new dwellings should not lead to the number of dwellings in the settlement increasing by significantly more than 5% from the date of adoption of the Local Plan (November 2019).
- 6.11 The number of dwellings inside the defined settlement boundaries (including planning permissions granted) has been baselined (at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018) for Yaxham and Clint Green as 357 with an accumulative growth of 18 dwellings over the Local Plan period to 2036.
- 6.12 Although this does not include 3PL/2016/1499/O for 25 dwellings which were allowed on appeal on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2018, which increases the numbers to a total of 382 dwellings and with a new accumulative growth of 19 dwellings over the Local Plan period to 2036.
- 6.13 The remainder of the parish of Yaxham, including Brakefield Green, is included within **Policy HOU 04 – Villages with Boundaries**.

## Allocations and Planning Permissions for New Development

6.14 There are many planning permissions already granted within the parish of Yaxham.

| Yaxham | Completions<br>at<br>2021/22 | Permissions<br>at<br>March 2023 | Allocations (LP<br>& NP4Yaxham) | Total | Completions<br>by 2046 |
|--------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------|------------------------|
|        | 22                           | 72                              | 0                               | 94    | 94                     |

Source: Breckland District Council Principle Planning Policy Officer March 2024 (data March 2023)

## Local Plan Review

6.15 The Local Plan is also currently undergoing a review. Breckland DC have agreed to do a Full Update of the Local Plan which will roll forward the Local Plan period to 2046, including the allocation of new developments and reviewing other policies as necessary.

6.16 The Regulation 18 consultation, a 6-week period of public consultation on the Full Update (emerging development strategy) for the Local Plan finished on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024. The proposals included:-

- Alternative development strategy options.
- Potential new development sites.
- Settlement boundaries and the removal of settlement boundaries.
- Call for sites & site assessments.

6.17 In June and July 2024, the Draft Local Plan Full Update Preferred Options document was consulted on, Regulation 18.

6.18 Breckland DC has published an updated timetable to reflect the changes to housing numbers required following the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) issued in December 2024 and the transition period during which plans can be made under the existing system.

6.19 It is anticipated that the Regulation 19 consultation will happen in Summer 2026, and the Draft Local Plan Full Update will be submitted for Examination by December 2026.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>67</sup> <https://www.breckland.gov.uk/article/19942/Local-Plan- Full-Update-2024>

## Cumulative Development

- 6.20 The parish is not an island. As is described in “A Portrait of Yaxham Parish”, Yaxham is a small parish drawing on many services and employment opportunities in nearby larger villages or towns and as far afield as Norwich. Potential development in the wider area therefore has a direct effect on Yaxham. In the emerging Local Plan, the local market town of Dereham shows allocated sites on the south side of the town towards Yaxham for up to 1,500 new homes. To the east of Yaxham, the larger village of Mattishall has been allocated sites for up to some 200 new homes.<sup>69</sup>
- 6.21 In all, these allocated sites provide for cumulative development of up to 1,800 new homes, primarily on green-field sites. This is a significant increase in an area where there are: existing major infrastructure/service constraints already; and where the bulk of these developments are on agricultural land, particularly located in the environmentally sensitive strategic gap of the Tud Valley between Yaxham and Dereham (see Strategic Gaps Policy STR1).

## Infrastructure and service constraints

- 6.22 The main current issues include:
- Road access to and from Yaxham and Dereham via the “Tesco” roundabout
  - Traffic “rat-runs” along the Norwich Road through Yaxham & Mattishall
  - GP Surgeries with closed lists in Dereham, and Mattishall Surgery under strain
  - Lack of sewerage capacity for the area
  - Primary school provision, local primary school at capacity<sup>70</sup>
  - Patchy provision of superfast broadband (>20Mbps)<sup>71</sup>
  - Poor to non-existent mobile-phone coverage in many parts of the parish, although at the other extreme a few dwellings can achieve 4G coverage following the turning on of the Toftwood EE 4G transmitter.<sup>72</sup>
- 6.23 Particularly of note is that of primary school capacity. As noted at 2.38 above, Norfolk County Council’s projection is that annual new pupil intake from within the catchment area will be at capacity with a further 52 new dwellings completed in the parish. The County Council also notes that the school is at capacity for the size of its site. This will need to be addressed if Yaxham is to sustainably see further significant development.
- 6.24 The NP4Yaxham cannot provide planning policies for development outside the designated area of the civil parish of Yaxham, however it would be failing in its

<sup>69</sup> Breckland Local Plan Part 2 Emerging Site Options, December 2015, and Local Plan Working Group meeting Reports Packs for 11th and 15th July 2016 at [www.breckland.gov.uk](http://www.breckland.gov.uk)

<sup>70</sup> Norfolk County Council submission to Breckland Council’s emerging Plan Consultation 2016

<sup>71</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/)

<sup>72</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/)

responsibility if it did not represent the views of residents as expressed through the community consultation process,<sup>73</sup> for the identified infrastructure and constraints.

- 6.25 It is noted Breckland Council is considering the future development strategy that will be required to meet the new mandatory housing requirement, including Yaxham and neighbouring towns and parishes. This will include updated evidence on key issues including transport and a water cycle study.
- 6.26 This Plan therefore sets out Parish Action Point PAP1 for the NP4Yaxham Working Group or its successor to work with Yaxham Parish Council, Breckland District Council, and, where appropriate, the neighbouring Town Council of Dereham, and Parish Councils of Whinburgh and Westfield, and other Neighbourhood Plan Groups, to seek to ensure that Yaxham’s interests and concerns are taken account of.

### **PARISH ACTION POINT PAP 1 – CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE**

In order to promote economic development and basic quality of life in the Mattishall-Yaxham-South Dereham area, Breckland District Council should recognise the important need to put in place in support of the proposed development the critical elements of infrastructure to enable the proposed development to be sustainable.

NP4Yaxham Working Group or its successor will work with Yaxham Parish Council and other groups within the parish to work with other Parish and Town Councils to lobby/work with Breckland District Council, and any other relevant Authorities and Providers, to develop significant plans to address:

- Road Traffic access to/from Yaxham and Dereham
- Enhanced sewerage facilities at Mattishall
- Sufficient GP Surgeries, dentists etc.
- Sufficient Primary School capacity in Yaxham
- The extension of superfast broadband and mobile-phone coverage

<sup>73</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/)  
<https://yaxham.com>

## 7 Strategic Gaps

- 7.1 The rural nature of the parish of Yaxham is of critical importance to parish residents, with 91% of respondents ‘strongly agreeing’ with the statement ‘I value Yaxham as a small rural village’.<sup>77</sup> A key issue for the parish and its component settlements is therefore respecting the separate and distinct identity of the settlements of Yaxham and its immediate neighbours (Map 1 and Aerial Photo 1). The coalescence of Yaxham with one or more of these could seriously undermine the sustainability of Yaxham other than as a suburb of a larger entity. The open nature of surrounding countryside in which Yaxham is situated represents a clear visual break – with neighbouring settlements invisible from Yaxham, despite their proximity. The sense of self of Yaxham’s settlements requires the preservation of such gaps, so that when you leave one settlement, such as Yaxham, you do not feel that you are immediately in the large market town of Dereham. NP4Yaxham supports sustainable development and growth and seeks to guide development so as to respect these important geographical gaps.
- 7.2 **The Yaxham-Dereham Strategic Gap (Plan 10 p. 38).** By contrast with the small rural parish of Yaxham, Dereham is a large market town. The contrast between urban and rural is striking. The gap between the two is largely defined by the Tud River and its valley (see Map 4). This is the source of the Tud River which flows east eventually becoming the River Wensum and flowing into the River Yare. It is of strategic importance to Yaxham in maintaining its rural village nature, as set out in Principle 1. It is also environmentally sensitive.<sup>78</sup> The two parishes directly abut to the north of Yaxham. The parish boundary in that direction is only 0.5km from Yaxham’s settlement boundary. At its narrowest the gap is only 1km between the respective settlement boundaries, and only 0.75km of road with the National Speed Limit. There is continual concern that Dereham’s urban boundary will extend south to the parish boundary and halve the gap. The parish has seen the effective absorption of another village, Scarning to the west of Dereham, and does not wish to go the same way as it would seriously undermine the independent and distinct character of the parish. The boundary of the Strategic Gap has been determined on the basis of an assessment of the sensitivity of this area to potential development pressures and extensive fieldwork to assess the physical characteristics of the gap.
- 7.3 **The Yaxham (Clint Green)-Mattishall Gap.** This is similarly highly valued as maintaining the separate and distinct identities of both the hamlet of Clint Green, at the eastern end of the parish of Yaxham, and the village of Mattishall. This is open countryside looking out to SSSI’s at Mattishall Moor and Rosie Curston’s Meadow, to the south of the River Tud. The gap is only 1.3km at its narrowest between Clint Green and Mattishall, and the parish boundary is 0.17km east of Clint Green.

<sup>77</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/) Consultation Statement Appendix 2 Compendium of Surveys

<sup>78</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/) Evidence Base

7.4 **The Gap** is within the parish between the two settlements of Yaxham and Clint Green. Whilst thinking of themselves as a single parish, the residents of both of the main settlements see Clint Green as having a very separate and distinct identity from that of the settlement of Yaxham. The gap between existing settlement boundaries is only 1km.

#### 7.5 **INTENT STATEMENT**

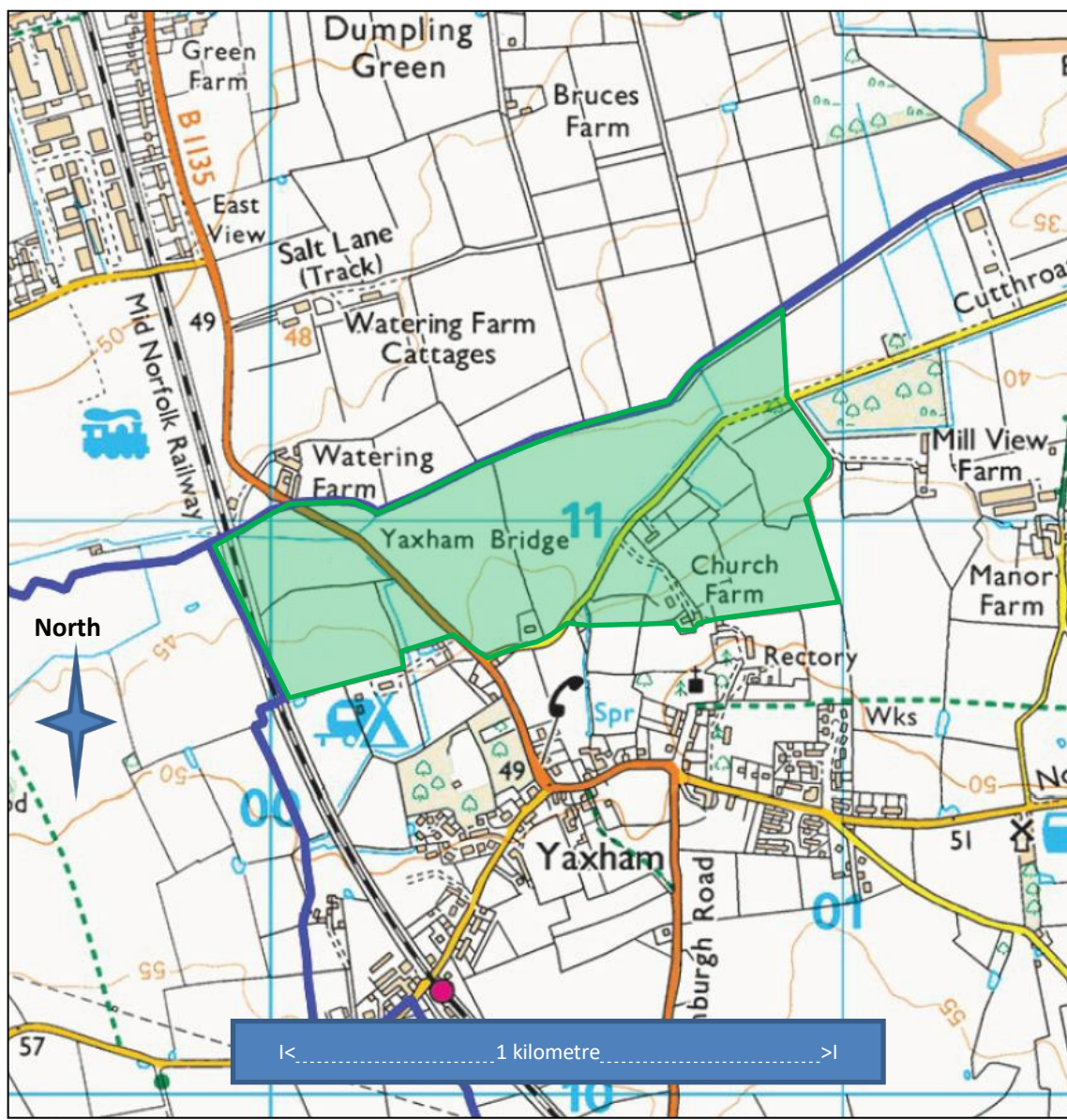
This policy seeks to keep Yaxham and Clint Green as individual settlements, in their appearance, character and with their own identity. It aims to stop Yaxham and Clint Green joining up with each other and becoming a suburb of Dereham or adjoining Mattishall. The objective of this policy is to direct development in such a way as to respect and retain the generally open and undeveloped nature of the gaps between settlements to help prevent the coalescence and retain the separate identity of the settlements of Yaxham and Clint Green from the neighbouring settlements of Dereham and Mattishall and from each other.

### **STRATEGIC PLANNING POLICY STR1 – THE GAPS BETWEEN SETTLEMENTS**

1. The Plan identifies a gap between Yaxham and Dereham (as shown on Map 10) development will only be supported if:
  - a) it is consistent with policies for development in the countryside;
  - b) it would not undermine the physical and/or visual separation of Yaxham and Dereham;
  - c) it would not compromise the integrity of the strategic gap, either individually or cumulatively with other existing or proposed development; and
  - d) it cannot be located elsewhere.
3. Development that would, individually or cumulatively with other development, substantially undermine the physical and / or visual separation of Clint Green and Mattishall or Yaxham and Clint Green will only be supported where the harm would clearly be outweighed by the benefits of the development.

7.6 **For the Gaps between Yaxham and Dereham and Clint Green and Mattishall** it will be helpful if similar arrangements were put in place as part of the Dereham and Mattishall Neighbourhood Plans. NP4Yaxham will therefore provide the basis of working with the Town Council of Dereham and Parish Council of Mattishall respectively – see Parish Action Point PAP 2. Any Gap or similar that is beyond the NP4Yaxham Area is therefore aspirational and not a formal part of the Strategic Planning Policy STR1.

**Map 10 Strategic Gap (Green) between Yaxham and Dereham. Civil Parish Boundary (Blue) of Yaxham.**



- 7.7 **Please Note:** Large-scale maps indicating the Gaps and the field work supporting them area available in Appendix 2 of the Evidence Base and in A3 format – with one map to a page.<sup>79</sup>

## PARISH ACTION POINT PAP 2 – POSSIBLE SIMILAR GAPS BEYOND THE PARISH BOUNDARY

NP4Yaxham Working Group or its successor will work with Yaxham Parish Council, with Breckland Council on its emerging Local Plan and with neighbouring Parish Councils in Dereham, Mattishall and Whinburgh & Westfield and with related Neighbourhood Plan Groups to seek to create Gaps within their parishes that mirror and abut where appropriate the Gaps within Yaxham.

<sup>79</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/)  
<https://yaxham.com>

## 8 Housing

### Scale and location of new residential development

8.1 The Consultation carried out in November 2015 found that residents have a general preference for small scale development, including in-fill and brownfield development, which is reflected throughout this plan.<sup>80</sup>

#### 8.2 INTENT STATEMENT

The purpose of this policy is to prompt development to be within the existing settlement boundary.

#### HOUSING POLICY HOU1 – LOCATION OF NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Proposals for residential development on suitable sites within the settlement boundary (Map 5 – Yaxham and Map 6 – Clint Green) will be supported where they comply with relevant development plan policies.

Proposals for new residential development outside the settlement boundary will not be supported unless:

- They are in accordance with the other policies in this Neighbourhood Plan;
- They fall within the categories of development which the NPPF identifies as appropriate for the countryside:
- It is a rural exception site for affordable homes;
- It is of an appropriate scale and design to the settlement and does not increase the size of the settlement by significantly more than 5% of its existing dwellings; and
- It can be clearly shown that the benefits clearly outweigh the adverse impacts, especially those impacts on the strategic gaps, the rural landscape and the open countryside.

Development within or outside the settlement boundary will not be supported where it has a significant adverse impact, whether direct or indirect, on the Badley Moor SSSI or the Nar Valley Fens SAC.

### Housing Density

8.3 Local consultation has established a strongly felt need to keep future development consistent with current design and spatial allocation, in order to maintain the scale and character of the parish settlements.<sup>81</sup>

#### 8.4 INTENT STATEMENT

Seeks to guide new development to maintain the village feel in concentration and intensity of homes.

<sup>80</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/) Consultation Statement Appendix 2 Compendium of Surveys

<sup>81</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/) Consultation Statement Appendix 2 Compendium of Surveys

#### HOUSING POLICY HOU2 – HOUSING DENSITY

In keeping with the generally low density within the parish, the density of new residential development should not normally exceed approximately 20 dwellings per hectare, unless there are material considerations which clearly justify a higher density, which may include the need for the development to be viable or the quality of the design of the proposal.

The need for an appropriate density is particularly important for proposals which are within or abutting the Conservation Area.

### Scale of Residential Development

- 8.5 With the exception of the two estate developments in the 1960’s, Yaxham’s two main settlements have evolved from collections of farms and cottages (and at one time a high number of ale-houses). Throughout recent decades there has been a steady rate of new development of typically single houses with the occasional development of more, but always less than 10 to a development. This has meant that the parish has achieved a balance of incremental growth and acceptance within the community – and explains largely why the residents value the parish.<sup>82</sup>

### 8.6 INTENT STATEMENT

Seeks to see the growth of the neighbourhood of Yaxham proportionate to the needs of a rural parish.

#### HOUSING POLICY HOU3 – SCALE OF RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Residential development that is of an appropriate scale commensurate with the existing development pattern and rural nature of the parish and its settlements will be supported. All developments will need to be designed to avoid or mitigate likely significant effects to the Norfolk Valley Fens SAC, both individually or cumulatively.

Development on a single site that would increase the size of the settlement by more than 10% will only be supported if it is necessary to provide affordable homes, or to make the development viable, is clearly the most advantageous way of providing for local housing need, or it can be demonstrated in some other way that the benefits clearly outweigh any adverse impacts.

- 8.7 The parish has seen steady small-scale development over the last few decades through in-fill and brownfield land development, including the conversion of barns and other buildings. This has enabled the parish to grow and absorb new developments. A high priority for the community is that new development continues in this organic manner.

<sup>82</sup> [www.norfolksight.org.uk/resource/view?resourceid=1261](http://www.norfolksight.org.uk/resource/view?resourceid=1261) Yaxham, E04006196  
<https://yaxham.com>

## 8.8 INTENT STATEMENT

Seeks to guide the use of land, giving priority and support to the use of ‘brownfield’ sites first.

### HOUSING POLICY HOU4 – BROWNFIELD SITES

Wherever practicable, proposals for residential development should be focused on sites that make use of brownfield land or which are in-fill sites within the settlement boundary.

## 8.9 INTENT STATEMENT

Aiming for a mix of housing types that focusses on local needs while being supportive for the needs of the wider District.

### HOUSING POLICY HOU5 – HOUSING MIX

New residential development should provide a mix of housing types to meet local housing needs, as evidenced by the latest published Strategic Housing Market Assessment or local housing needs survey.

The provision of smaller affordable dwellings with one or two bedrooms will be particularly supported.

## Housing Design

8.10 NP4Yaxham requires those planning new development to demonstrate the highest standards of design in the context of the immediate locality within small rural settlements.

8.11 In preparing any proposals for development, consideration should be given to the Breckland Design Guide.<sup>83</sup>

## 8.12 INTENT STATEMENT

This policy seeks the use of good, sustainable design principles to facilitate high quality and well-designed development, promoting satisfaction and wellbeing to its residents. It is also focused on the infrastructure of multiple or single new developments meets high standards.

<sup>83</sup> <https://www.breckland.gov.uk/article/19942/Local-Plan-Full-Update-2024>  
<https://yaxham.com>

## HOUSING POLICY HOU6 - DESIGN

The design of residential development should deliver high quality design and not adversely impact on the essentially rural character and appearance of the parish. Proposals for major residential development of 10 dwellings or more will be accompanied by a Building for a Healthy Life assessment and will be expected to show no red scores and the industry standard of 9 green scores unless it can be clearly demonstrated that this is not possible for practical or viability reasons.

Any new dwelling, redevelopment or extension to a dwelling should be carefully designed to avoid conflicting with adjacent properties or landscape and should overall help to maintain the rural character of the villages and parish. To achieve this:

Development proposals should have regard to the height, layout, building line, massing and scale of existing development in the immediate area;

- Houses of more than two storeys will be considered as inappropriate, unless they can be shown to contribute positively to the character and appearance of the area; furthermore, ridge heights of new buildings should be in keeping with the immediate surrounding buildings;
- Rear gardens should be at least equal to the ground floor footprint of the dwelling;
- Residents should be able to access the rear garden without going through the house;
- Sufficient external space should be provided to enable refuse, recycling and compost to be stored out-of-sight. There should also be sufficient storage space for items commonly stored in garages;
- The use of traditional materials common in the parish, especially those sourced locally and of low ecological/ environmental impact, is to be encouraged; and
- Existing natural features such as trees or hedgerows should be retained where possible, unless their removal results in an ecological gain or an improvement to green open space or important views.

A degree of design variety within a development is essential but it must take into account the design and detailing of adjacent buildings and the spatial, visual and historical context in which it resides. This is particularly important within or adjacent to the Conservation Area.

### Affordable Homes

- 8.13 The need for affordable housing became apparent during consultation and from housing needs data. The issue is addressed in Policy HOU 07 of the adopted Local Plan. The policy applies to developments which deliver 10 or more homes or where the site area is greater than 0.5 hectare. The policy also advises that 25% of the

housing delivered should be affordable housing. Paragraph 345 of the Local Plan comments that eligibility for affordable housing will be in line with the Council's allocation policies and Housing Strategy. Intermediate products such as housing for sale and rent at a cost above social rent, but below market levels, can include shared equity schemes and shared ownership and other low-cost homes for sale and intermediate rent.

- 8.14 The continuity of affordable housing is also seen as crucial to the community’s ability to provide affordable opportunities in the future. Yaxham has a significant proportion of what has previously been known as social housing i.e. that which has been built with a public subsidy. Within this the model is primarily for general rent and there is little/no shared-ownership. As a result of this tenure structure the number of properties that become available for re-letting is low. Breckland has a housing allocation policy based on defining local need as having a connection with the district – it does not allow for more local community priority (Breckland Housing Allocation Policy 2015). There is concern locally that there are not enough affordable homes available.
- 8.15 Public consultation as part of NP4Yaxham was reinforced this point and has led to the development of the following policy and parish action point.
- 8.16 There are 47 Affordable Homes in the parish of Yaxham, of which 46 are for rent and one is of shared ownership. The size breakdown is illustrated in the table below.

| Number of Bedrooms | Number of Homes |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1                  | 9               |
| 2                  | 28              |
| 3                  | 9               |
| 4                  | 1               |
| <b>TOTAL</b>       | <b>47</b>       |

Source: Breckland District Council Housing Growth and Enabling Office (March 2024)

- 8.17 As of March 2024, a total of 1,538 applicants were on the Breckland Housing Register, of those seven have been identified as persons currently who live in the parish of Yaxham. The following table has a further breakdown and details of the type of accommodation required.

| Type       | Number | Needing Adapted or Wheelchair Standard |
|------------|--------|--|
| Sheltered  | 0      | 0                                      |
| 1 bedroom  | 3      | 0                                      |
| 2 bedrooms | 2      | 0                                      |
| 3 bedrooms | 1      | 0                                      |
| 4 bedrooms | 1      | 0                                      |

Source: Provided by the Housing Growth and Enabling Officer (March 2024)

#### 8.18 INTENT STATEMENT

This policy is seeking to create the opportunity for residents or those with connections to the parish of Yaxham, who are on Breckland District Council’s Housing Register, to have priority to access Affordable Homes.

#### POLICY HOU7: AFFORDABLE HOMES FOR LOCAL PEOPLE

The provision of affordable housing/shared ownership housing will be supported where it is commensurate with the scale and nature of need for such housing locally.

#### PARISH ACTION POINT PAP 3 – AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The community strongly believes that affordable housing within Yaxham should first be offered to local people i.e. those who have a connection with the parish through family, residence, education, employment etc. NP4Yaxham Working Group or its successor will work with Yaxham Parish Council and other elected representatives to promote this objective as appropriate, and to report back to the community on progress made.



## 9 Environment

### Small Rural Village Nature of the Settlements of Yaxham

9.1 In NP4Yaxham consultations statements valuing Yaxham’s settlements as small rural villages and hamlets or should remain as small rural villages and hamlets were agreed or strongly agreed by 98% by respondents.<sup>87</sup> This was typified by comments such as:<sup>88</sup>

- “A small village and close enough to town but still rural”
- “The size and character of the village”
- “being a small rural village, surrounded by countryside”

### Light pollution

9.2 This is recognised as an increasing problem in the countryside. The importance of Dark Skies is recognised as contributing to the tranquillity of the environment – see Breckland Development Plan Document<sup>89</sup> and Norfolk County Council Environmental Lighting Zones Policy.<sup>90</sup> This sets the context for Policy ENV1 and PAP 4.

### 9.3 INTENT STATEMENT

Seeking to avoid light pollution by maintaining dark skies which characterise the parish of Yaxham through the implementation of good design principles in the planning process.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ENV1 - DARK SKIES

Artificial light is to be kept to a minimum, consistent with a small rural parish. New development should therefore help to maintain and enhance local tranquility and dark skies and in doing so should seek to avoid light pollution wherever possible.

Where significant external lighting is proposed, such as street lighting and/or floodlighting, a Lighting Assessment will be expected to accompany any application submitted. Lighting Assessments should include details of the type and design of the lights proposed, the hours when they will operate, and proposed illumination levels. The report should also explain how the proposed lighting scheme has been designed to minimise light pollution and any mitigation measures that will be put in place.

Any permitted lighting is likely to be limited to specific operating hours only and this and any other proposed mitigation measures from within the Lighting Assessment are likely to be secured via a planning condition.

#### PARISH ACTION POINT PAP 4 – STREET LIGHTING

It will be essential for NP4Yaxham Working Group or its successor to work with Yaxham Parish Council and other elected representatives of Yaxham to work to maintain and enhance the “dark skies” and the strong rural feel in Yaxham by avoiding the introduction of street lighting. New street lighting will therefore not be encouraged.

<sup>87</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/) “Vision 2” Questionnaire, November 2015

<sup>88</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/) “Vision 1” Questionnaire, November 2015

<sup>89</sup> <http://www.breckland.gov.uk/article/4313/Documents-Library-Publications> Development Control Policies, Policy DC1 Protection of Amenity

<sup>90</sup> [www.norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk)

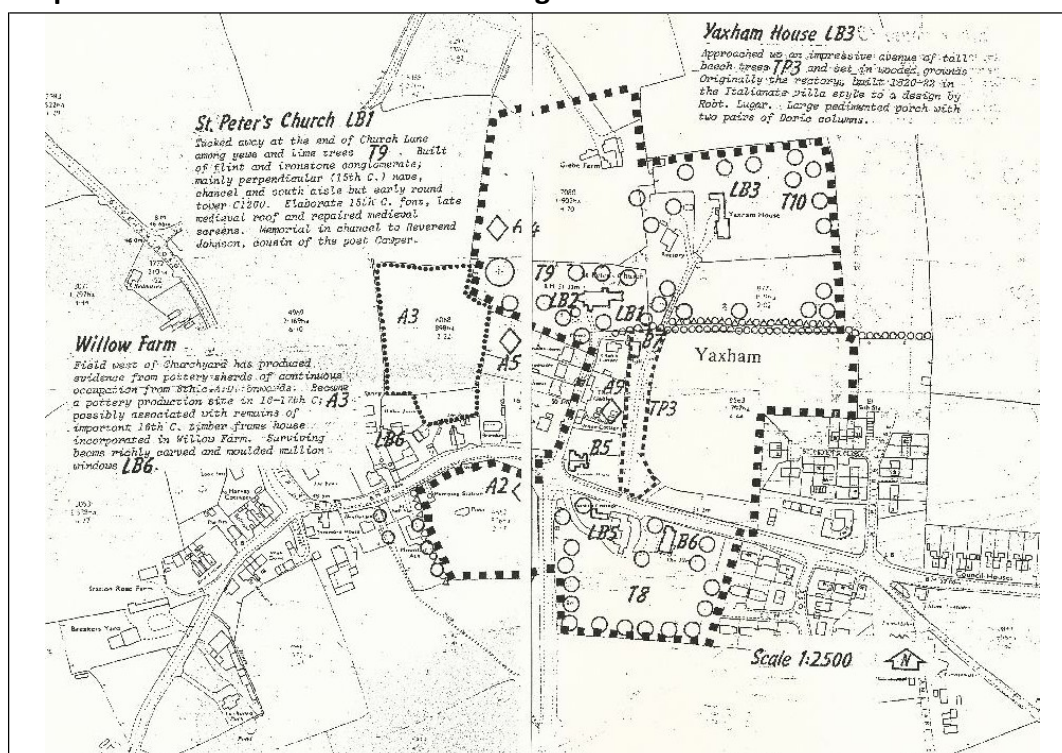
## Conservation Area & Heritage Assets

- 9.4 Yaxham is home to a Conservation Area (Map 5), which is subject to special planning controls through the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Historic England must be given notice of applications for works to a Grade I or II\* listed building and for certain works to Grade II (unstarred) listed buildings.<sup>91</sup>
- 9.5 In addition to the formally designated heritage assets (Listed buildings, Conservation Areas etc), there are non-designated heritage assets within the parish that are of important to the local community which have a wider significance.

*“The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.” Paragraph 209 of the NPPF.<sup>92</sup>*

The non-formally designated heritage assets set out in the Yaxham Heritage Register,<sup>93</sup> as updated from time to time, are included as heritage assets for the purposes of the following policy.

### Map 11.1 Conservation Area and Heritage Assets

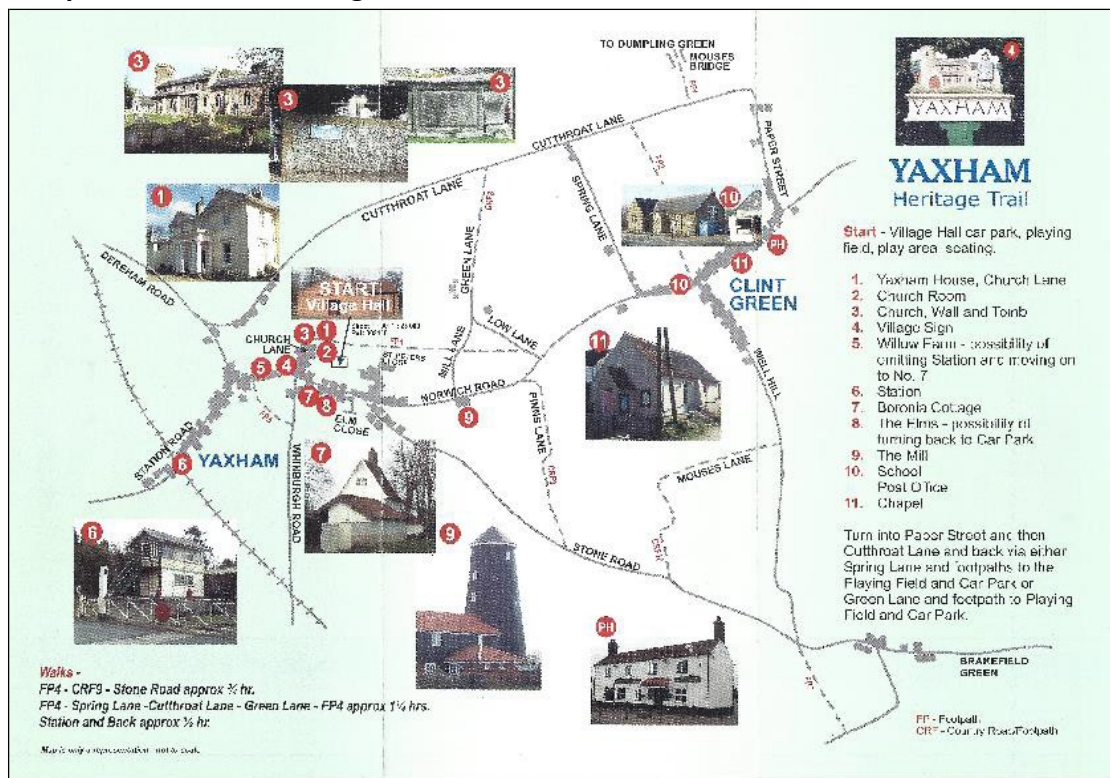


<sup>91</sup> Arrangements for handling heritage applications direction 2015 and National Planning Policy Guidance at Paragraph: 059 Reference ID: 18a-059-20140306 under conserving and enhancing the Historic Environment – consultation and notification requirements for heritage related applications.

<sup>92</sup> <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk>

<sup>93</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/)  
<https://yaxham.com>

Map 11.2 Yaxham Heritage Trail



## 9.6 INTENT STATEMENT

Recognising the importance of Yaxham's heritage and conservation areas, this policy aims to protect and enhance these valuable assets for future generations. Seeking to prevent development negatively impacting on these heritage assets and their settings.

### ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ENV2 - CONSERVATION AREA AND HERITAGE ASSETS

New development in the parish near or close to the following assets (as shown in the current Yaxham Heritage Register<sup>94</sup>):

- In or adjacent to the Conservation Area; and
- Near or close to
  - the six Listed Buildings;
  - trees with Tree Preservation Orders; and
  - non-heritage assets in the parish, as listed in the current Yaxham Heritage Register,

should take account of the historic fabric of the area and preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, the Listed Buildings, protected trees and/or other heritage assets.

In doing so a proportionate Heritage Statement shall be provided in support of all development proposals within or adjacent to the Conservation Area, Listed Buildings or other heritage assets. Such Heritage Statements should outline the significance of any heritage assets affected and any adverse impacts that the development may have on

<sup>94</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/)  
<https://yaxham.com>

heritage assets. It shall also include any proposed mitigation measures, as well as how the proposed development will contribute to the character and setting of the relevant Conservation Area, Listed Buildings and other heritage assets(s).

## PARISH ACTION POINT PAP 5 – HERITAGE ASSETS

The community places high value on the heritage assets within the parish. It is noted that since the Yaxham Heritage Register was compiled a number of the assets identified then have been replaced or ceased to exist (such as the old school, and the threshing barn at Yaxham Mill). In addition there are notable buildings and other assets within the parish that should be added to the Register.

NP4Yaxham Working Group or its successor to work with Yaxham Parish Council to consider undertaking or arranging for a group of residents to undertake on its behalf to produce and maintain an updated Yaxham Heritage Register to enable the community be aware of and cherish its heritage assets and for the purposes of informing Policy ENV3.

## Green Infrastructure Policy - Green Heritage in Yaxham

9.7 The parish has a limited number of open green spaces. These are precious to the community and are important to the parish and need to be protected and enhanced. This policy proposes a number of important Green Spaces in the parish that are to be protected from development by the designation as Local Green Spaces in accordance with Paragraphs 105, 106 and 107 of the NPPF.<sup>95</sup> In each case the Local Green Spaces are integral parts of the settlement within their own part of the parish and are therefore regarded as special to the community. The Local Green Spaces Review<sup>96</sup> has tested each nominated site against the guidelines in the NPPF and has satisfied the following tests:

1. It is in close proximity to the community it serves
2. It is special to the local community, by dint of being a place of beauty, historical interest, recreational value, tranquillity or richness of flora and or fauna.
3. It is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

9.8 The designated Local Green Areas, (see Map 12) in summary are:

**Site 1 Recreation Ground and Beech Avenue, in Yaxham.** It is in the centre of the largest settlement and therefore close to the community, it is easily accessible and has significant recreational value. It is the main “Open Space” within the parish is the Jubilee Recreation Ground, in the parish it is used for a variety of outdoor games, children’s playspace and the proposed MUGA, public events, dog walking, car boot sales and village football. Its designation as a Green

<sup>95</sup> <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk>

<sup>96</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/) Local Green Space Review

<https://yaxham.com>

Space would extend to cover the area to the west of the site, which includes the Church Room (currently subject to an ongoing renovation programme) and an avenue of beech trees covered by Tree Preservation Orders.

**Site 2 Pinn’s Corner between Yaxham and Clint Green.** This is an orphan piece of land cut-off when the road was straightened and widened. In recent years the Yaxham Woodland Group under license from the Parish Council has maintained and enhanced this area for the benefit of the whole community. It is within walking distance of both main settlements and is at the northern end of Pinn’s Lane footpath leading south towards Brakefield Green and forms part of Yaxham’s circular walk.<sup>97</sup> It also links north to Cutthroat Lane via Low Lane and Green Lane.

**Site 3 Central Site** – known locally as the Old Green and Village Pond, Yaxham. This site is central to Yaxham village and falls within the conservation area, acting as a green lung to the surrounding properties. It is highly valued for the open aspect it presents as the approach to Church Lane and St Peters Church, to the north is the listed property Willow Farmhouse.

**Site 4 Parochial Church (Townlands) Charity Land, Yaxham** – triangle of land between Stone Road and Norwich Road. This piece of land is grazed and gives a clear and open view towards the old Yaxham Mill.

## **Green Infrastructure Policy - Rights of Way & Footpaths**

- 9.9 Comments raised by residents during the consultation included a general desire to see greater connectivity between the different parts of the Parish and especially between the two main settlements of Yaxham and Clint Green, then onto the surrounding villages.
- 9.10 The current footpaths and right of ways connect to form a circular walk of some 3 miles (See Yaxham Heritage Trail Map 11.2 and Footpath Map 9), however, they do not connect into a wider system of public right of ways. These footpaths, along with cycle-paths and bridleways, should be developed to form part of a coherent network and aim to encourage pedestrian alternatives to using through roads.
- 9.11 The Parish seeks to encourage new and improved rights of way such as footpaths and bridleways connecting Yaxham with surrounding villages and the countryside, specifically to include enhancing the links between Yaxham and Clint Green and onto Mattishall. These will contribute to the establishment of a Yaxham Parish Green Infrastructure Network comprising a variety of green infrastructure assets including;
- Local Green Spaces

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<sup>97</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/) Local Green Space Review  
<https://yaxham.com>

- The Open Space designated Jubilee Playing Field and children’s play area
- Assets of biodiversity value e.g. SSSI’s, CWS’s and local Nature Reserves
- The Yaxham Heritage Trail,
- Green lanes and footpaths and bridleways

## Green Infrastructure Policy – Hedgerows

9.12 In recent years the Parish Council has pursued a policy of protecting and augmenting hedgerows. Where possible all hedgerows in Yaxham should therefore be retained in situ within development proposals wherever possible. In certain circumstances, it is understood that some hedgerow realignment may be necessary in order to ensure safe and suitable access. However, in such cases it will be expected that any hedgerow lost is replanted with a native species mix to promote local biodiversity and also that new or realigned hedgerows are reintegrated into any existing adjacent hedgerows.

### 9.13 INTENT STATEMENT

This policy seeks to recognise the importance of green space, footpaths and hedgerows in and around the parish of Yaxham as areas of recreational, natural and visual value that promote good mental health and well-being.

## ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ENV3 – GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

### Local Green Spaces Designation

In line with the NPPF Paragraph 105, 106 and PPG<sup>98</sup> NP4Yaxham designates the following local green spaces:

Sites 1-4 as marked on map 12.

1. Recreation Ground and Beech Avenue, in Yaxham.
2. Pinn’s Corner between Yaxham and Clint Green.
3. Central Site – known locally as the Old Green and Village Pond, Yaxham.
4. Parochial Church Charity Land, Yaxham – triangle of land between Stone Road and Norwich Road.

Development will only be permitted on the sites designated as Local Green Spaces where it is consistent with the character and use of the spaces.

### Rights of way & footpaths

New developments will be required to contribute to the provision of improved pedestrian links which will help to develop and coherent network connecting different parts of the parish, where the legal requirements for such contributions are met.

<sup>98</sup> <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk>

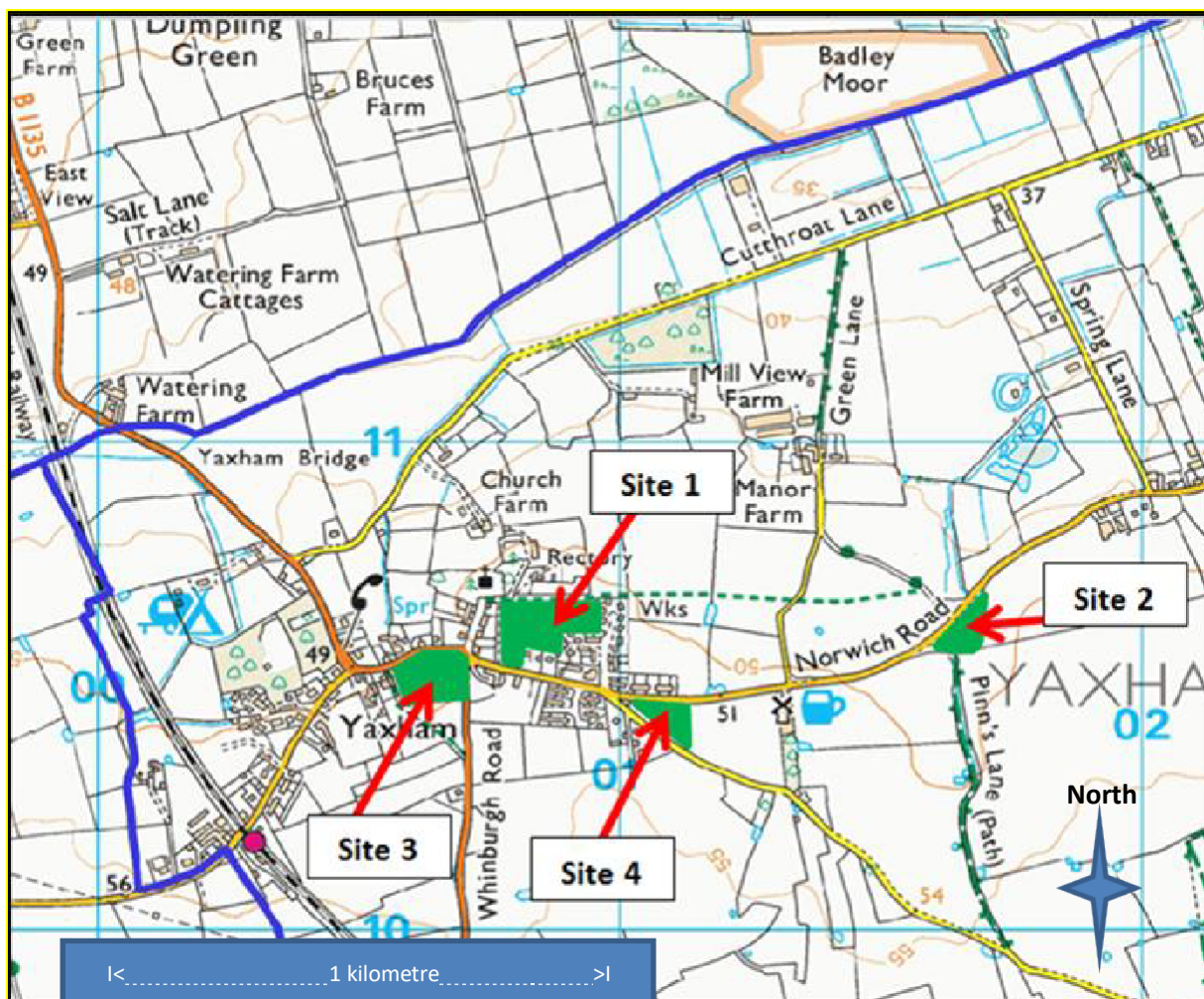
## Hedgerows

In order to minimise further opening up of the landscape, all road fronting hedgerows in Yaxham affected by development requiring consent should be protected and, wherever possible, enhanced.

Any hedgerow lost as a result of such development will be expected to be compensated elsewhere within the site, if possible, or elsewhere in the vicinity. Supplementary planting which strengthens the existing network of hedgerows will also be supported.

Proposals that would lead to the enhancement of ecological network will be encouraged, particularly where they would further support the management of the County Wildlife Sites and improve habitat connectivity.

Map 12 Local Green Space Designation

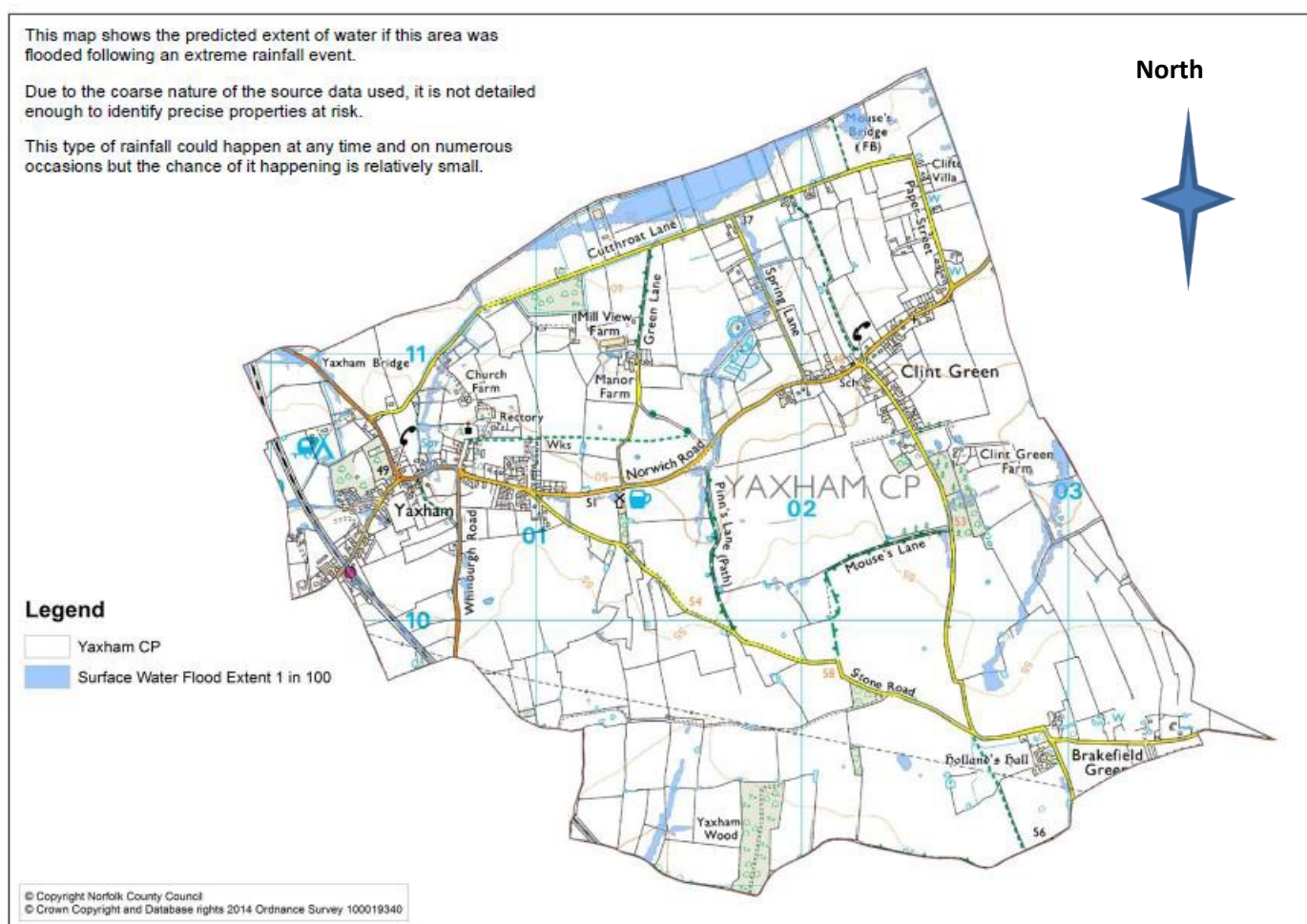


## Flood Risk

- 9.14 Several areas in Yaxham, including the main roads through the parish, have suffered surface-water flooding in recent years. Surface water flooding happens when rainwater does not soak into the ground or drain away through the normal drainage

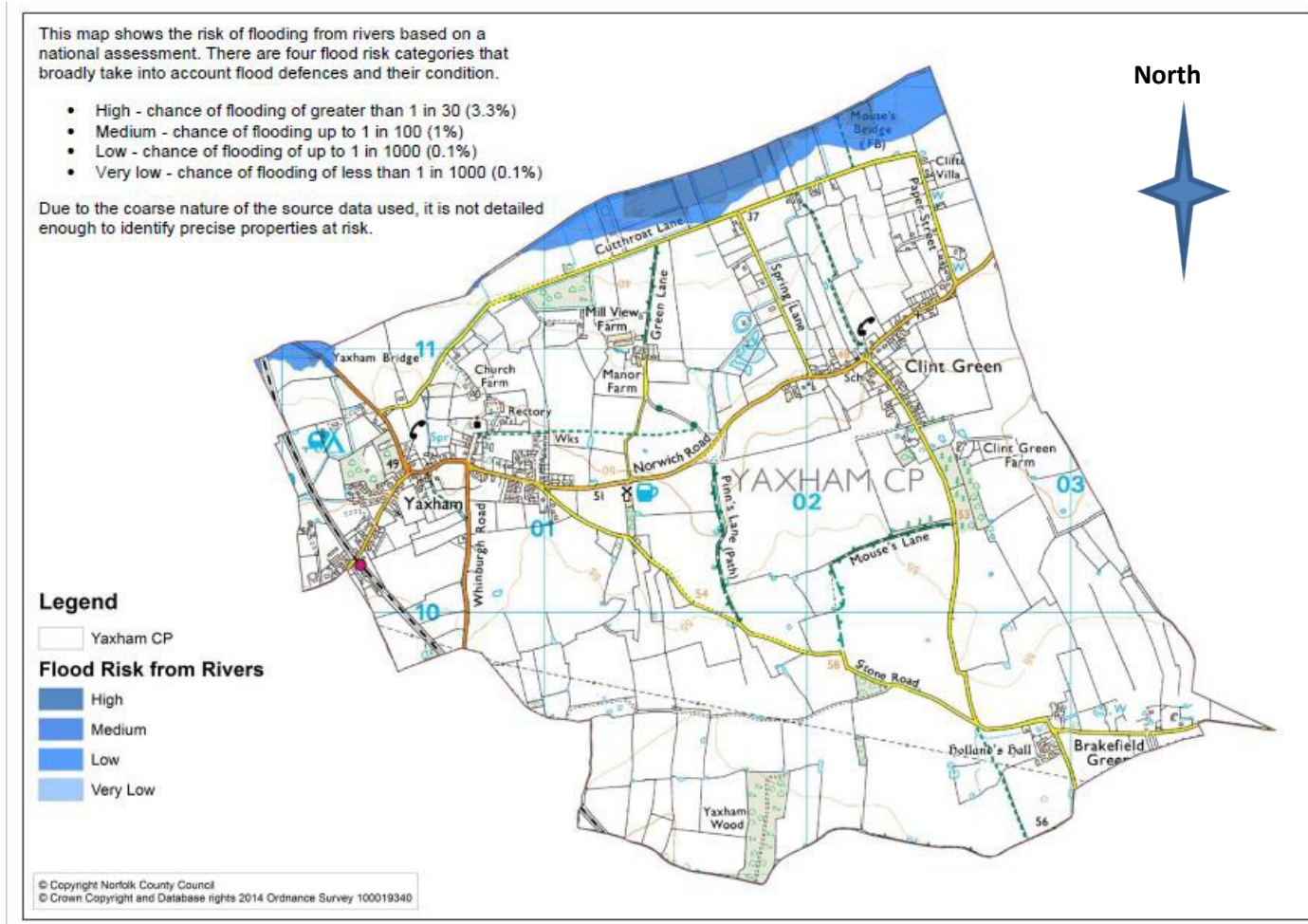
systems, which locally have a limited capacity, but lies on or flows over the ground instead. It is particularly problematic during heavy rainfall events, the frequency of which has been on the rise in recent years, and again in June 2016.<sup>99</sup> In wet periods standing water is often to be seen in pasture to the north of the parish and abutting the River Tud. It is likely that there will be an increasing risk of surface water flooding in the face of climate change. There is therefore significant concern that future development should not add to the flood risk within the parish. The following maps supplied by Norfolk County Council indicate that whilst fluvial flooding is not significant (Map 14), surface water flooding (Map 13) can be, particularly north of the Norwich Road as water makes its way down the valley side to the River Tud.

**Map 13 Surface Water Flood Risk Map – Norfolk County Council**



<sup>99</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/) ENV\$ Surface Water Flooding Review

Map 14 Fluvial Water Flood Risk Map – Norfolk County Council



### 9.15 INTENT STATEMENT

This policy seeks to ensure that developers recognise the need for effective surface water design and management; and that any development does not cause flood related problems within the parish of Yaxham.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ENV4 – SURFACE WATER MANAGEMENT PLANS

All development within a surface water flood risk area as shown on the Environment Agency’s website maps and all developments of 5 properties or more and any development in excess of 0.5 ha will need to be accompanied by a Surface Water Management Plan which should seek to demonstrate that the proposal will not result in any increase in the risk of surface and/or groundwater flooding. Any mitigation measures set forth within Surface Water Management Plans to reduce the risk of surface water flooding are likely to be secured via a planning condition.

A surface water drainage solution will need to be identified and implemented prior to the construction of hard standing areas to protect both existing and future development.

## Sewerage Provision

- 9.16 The parish has a high proportion of dwellings, 20% +, on private sewerage arrangements.<sup>100</sup> There is always the risk with such facilities that they can become inundated with surface/ground water flooding or a higher water-table during periods of prolonged rainfall. With its network of drainage ditches leading to the River Tud there is a recognised risk of consequent contamination in the event that such facilities are overwhelmed.

### 9.17 INTENT STATEMENT

This policy seeks to ensure the provision for the treatment and disposal of foul water is accommodated in future planning applications and development with the implementation prior to occupation of a new home.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ENV5 – SEWERAGE PROVISION

All new developments will be expected to connect to mains sewerage unless evidence is produced that it is unviable through a Viability Assessment and/or consultation with Anglian Water. If mains sewerage is not viable then an effective and sustainable private sewerage system plan shall be agreed in advance of development commencing and must be in place prior to the occupation of the first dwelling.



<sup>100</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/) Consultation Statement Appendix 2 December 2015 Survey  
<https://yaxham.com>

## 10. Economic Development

- 10.1 Until recently, Yaxham’s economic basis was largely agricultural. Today employment is more wide-ranging from one-person home-working, a few small local businesses, farming, and commuting as far afield as Cambridge. There are a number of tourist oriented businesses such as furnished holiday lets and the lodge park at Yaxham Waters.
- 10.2 The growth in home-working or home-based working has meant that the parish provides a small number of local economic opportunities for businesses to be based here – whether their customers are local, across the UK or international. Key to this is achieving the provision of fast broadband services mobile coverage. The parish is keen to encourage modest local economic development that provides local opportunities should therefore be encouraged – including the encouragement of micro-businesses (often sole traders based at home).
- 10.3 Integral to any such development should be sufficient land to provide for all vehicle parking needs of staff and visitors, so as to eliminate any adverse impact of over-spill parking on surrounding residential roads or lanes.

### 10.4 INTENT STATEMENT

This policy seeks to encourage the creation of local employment that is appropriate in size and impact to the Parish of Yaxham to strengthen the local economy, improve the sustainability of village life and and to make any adverse impacts of economic development acceptable in planning terms.

#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY ECN1 - NEW ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Proposals for micro or small business will be supported where they otherwise comply with development plan policies. Proposals for employment-generating uses, including the expansion of existing businesses, will be supported where it can be demonstrated that they will:

- not have an unacceptable effect on residential amenity;
- not have an unacceptable effect on the transport network;
- be able to accommodate all parking within its site;
- not have any other unacceptable environmental impacts, including impacts on the historic environment; and
- not conflict with other development plan policies.

## 11 Transport

### Level & Speed of Traffic

- 11.1 A major concern within the parish is the level and speed of traffic. Road safety fears are a major obstacle to persuading many Yaxham Primary School parents to leave their cars at home and walk or cycle with their children to school.<sup>103</sup> The community would therefore like to see:

#### **PARISH ACTION POINT PAP 6 – CAR REDUCTION STRATEGY – MAKING THE PARISH MORE “WALKABLE” AND PEOPLE-FRIENDLY**

Given the high concerns about the volume and speed of traffic, there is a real opportunity to work towards helping to achieve healthier lifestyles as well as a reduction in the carbon-footprint of the parish and is being actively encouraged by Norfolk Get Active Scheme (Active Norfolk, 2016).

Such actions could include:

- A reduction in the speed limit between the two main settlements of Yaxham and Clint Green from 60mph to 40mph;
- The aim to reduce the number of speeding drivers by greater use of speed awareness measures;
- Footpaths on Norwich Road cleared of undergrowth or widened so that users can walk side by side;
- A reduction in the speed limit on back roads such as Cutthroat Lane, Spring Lane and Paper Street from 60 mph to 40 mph or lower (possibly through being designated “Green Lanes” or “Quiet Lanes”;
- The provision of footpaths along Station Road to the edge of the parish and combined with a cycle path along Dereham Road from Yaxham to Dereham;
- The inclusion of footpaths in developments or contributions for such footpaths, and
- To encourage parish and primary school parents to walk and cycle within the parish.

NP4Yaxham Working Group or its successor will work with Yaxham Parish Council and other elected representatives to work with the Highways Authority, Breckland District Council and others such as the primary school and the Diocese of Norwich, to seek to achieve these aims.

<sup>103</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/) Appendix 2 School Parent Survey Dec. 2015

### 11.2 INTENT STATEMENT

This policy is focused on generating practical solutions to improve road safety throughout Parish of Yaxham by seeking to reduce the negative impacts of traffic and speeding and to ensure that future developments do not cause congestion. To promote and facilitate walking and cycling wherever possible.

#### TRANSPORT POLICY TRA1 – TRAFFIC AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

As appropriate to their scale, nature and location development proposals should incorporate measures to promote sustainable transport and to minimise the generation of traffic. Proposals that include measures to facilitate walking and cycling will be supported. In addition, development proposals should connect with the existing footway network where it is practicable to do so.

Any adverse impacts arising from the residual traffic generated should be mitigated where this is viable, and the measures are of a scale that is commensurate with the development.

### 11.3 INTENT STATEMENT

The purpose of this policy is to minimise the practical impacts of parked vehicles and to maximise security for homeowners.

#### TRANSPORT POLICY TRA2 – PARKING PROVISION

Where parking provision is made to the front of the property, its impact on the street scene should be mitigated by appropriate boundary treatment and planting and, where possible, the provision of an equal area of landscaped front garden. In the interests of crime prevention and protecting the rural character of the area rear parking courts will not be supported.

Secure and convenient cycle storage should be provided of a quantity consistent with the number of bedrooms to encourage increased cycle usage.

## 12 Community Benefit

### Provision of Facilities and Services

12.1 Yaxham has a number of useful everyday services and facilities as detailed in the “Portrait of the Parish”:

#### 12.2 INTENT STATEMENT

The aim of this policy is to generate support for existing community facilities and amenities, both indoor and outdoor, which improves village life for residents of all ages and abilities.

#### COMMUNITY BENEFIT POLICY COM1 – EXISTING PARISH-BASED COMMUNITY SERVICES

Development proposals which would result in the loss of existing community facilities will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that:

- 1) They will be satisfactorily relocated to elsewhere in the parish;
- 2) Adequate other facilities of the same service offering exist within a reasonable walking distance of the majority of Yaxham residents to meet local needs; and
- 3) No reasonable prospect of continued viable use which can be demonstrated through:
  - a) Twelve months of marketing for the permitted and similar uses, using an appropriate agent; and
  - b) Confirmation that it has been offered on a range of terms (including price) agreed to be reasonable on the advice of an independent qualified assessor.

#### PARISH ACTION POINT PAP 7 – COMMUNITY SERVICES OUTSIDE THE PARISH

By the nature of a small rural parish such as Yaxham, its residents are dependent on services provided by a myriad of providers beyond the parish boundaries, including, but not limited to:

- Refuse, Water & sewerage, Education, Medical, Highways, Bus Services, Broadband & Mobile Telecoms

NP4Yaxham Working Group or its successor will work with Yaxham Parish Council and other elected representatives to work with the relevant authorities, organisations and companies to ensure that the service infrastructure is developed to meet the cumulative demands of the anticipated development of Yaxham, Dereham, Mattishall and the surrounding area as appropriate, and to report back to the community on progress made.

### Open Space/Play Areas

12.3 Yaxham is currently shown as having approximately the right amount of open space for general recreation commensurate with its population (with the Recreation Field at 1.53 ha). However, it is significantly deficient in children’s play areas within the parish – 0.05ha versus 0.61ha NPFA Standards<sup>104</sup> as there are no such facilities in the eastern settlement of Clint Green.<sup>105</sup> This would accord with proposals in the new Local Plan which state:

<sup>104</sup> <http://www.breckland.gov.uk/article/4313/Documents-Library-Publications> Open Space Parish Sched.2015

<sup>105</sup> <http://www.breckland.gov.uk/article/4313/Documents-Library-Publications> Open Space Parish Sched. 2015

*“In terms of children’s play areas, all dwellings in housing areas should be within 100m of a local area of play (LAP), 400m of a local equipped area for play (LEAP) and 1000m of a neighbourhood equipped area for play (NEAP) as recommended by FIT.”<sup>106</sup>*

12.4 The parish priorities are, depending on where new development takes place include:

- Enhanced children’s play space on the Recreation Field in Yaxham;
- A new children’s play space in Clint Green;
- A recreation space in Clint Green.

12.5 The parish priority is to enhance the existing play area in the settlement of Yaxham and to create a new children’s play area in the settlement of Clint Green. It is not to have small areas of grass called “open space” and “children’s play area” as tokens in any new development, which would not benefit the whole community. The parish requires that the LPA and developers instead to provide money or land to facilitate the three priorities set out.<sup>107</sup>

### **Community Priorities for Developer Funding (s.106/CIL)**

12.6 In the event of developments being of a size to trigger the payment by the developer of s106 or CIL payments then the parish has a strong presumption that those payments be used within the parish. The following Community Action Policy sets out the parish priorities identified from consultation.<sup>108</sup>

12.7 The priorities relating to the developer funding towards local infrastructure (involving s106 agreements) will have to satisfy the legal tests set out in Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations (2010 as amended). All infrastructure requirements must now be compliant with the legal tests set out in the CIL Regulations and be:

- Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- Directly related to the development; and
- Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

12.8 If during the Plan the District Council is minded to prepare a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule rather than continue with the existing planning obligations (S106) mechanism for securing developer funding, then the priorities set out in Policy COM 2 would need to be reflected in the District Council’s emerging CIL Regulation 123 List (list of infrastructure which CIL will be eligible to fund).

### **12.9 INTENT STATEMENT FOR COM 2**

This policy seeks the provision of additional facilities and amenities that support village life for all residents.

<sup>106</sup> <http://www.breckland.gov.uk/article/4313/Documents-Library-Publications> Preferred Direction Part 1 2015

<sup>107</sup> <http://www.breckland.gov.uk/article/4313/Documents-Library-Publications> Preferred Direction Part 1 2015

<sup>108</sup> [https://yaxham.com/local\\_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/](https://yaxham.com/local_index/nplan/neighbourhood-plan-support-documents/) Consultation Statement Appendix 2 Compendium of Surveys  
<https://yaxham.com>

## COMMUNITY BENEFIT POLICY COM2- DEVELOPER FUNDING PRIORITIES

Where, as a result of a new development there is the facility for funds to be provided by the developer for the local community, whether through s.106, Community Infrastructure Levy or other arrangements the following would apply:

### Commutation of play areas/open-space planning conditions;

1. For developments in or close to the settlement boundary of Yaxham (see Map 5) that these should be commuted into off-site equivalent financial contributions to the upgrading of the children’s play area on the Recreation Field.
2. For developments in or close to the settlement boundary of Clint Green (see Map 6) then the provision of a new children’s play area on site of any new development, or off-site, if deemed appropriate.

### To provide:

#### Community Facilities

- Funding towards the Regeneration of the Church Room – estimated costing £200,000
- Outdoor Learning Space at Yaxham Primary School (Complete)
- Pre-school provision – to be assessed during the life of the Plan.

#### Open Space Projects

- Improved Safe Play Space at Yaxham Village Hall – current estimated costing £35,000 (Complete)
- Provision of “Trim Trail” at Jubilee Field, Yaxham – current costing estimated £65,000.
- A new Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) The new “MUGA” would provide an area for a number of sports such as tennis, mini-tennis and netball – current cost estimated at around £100,000.
- Provision of Safe Play Space in Clint Green – current estimated cost £65,000 - £100,000

#### Transport Projects

- Provision of footpath, cycle-way along Dereham Road from Yaxham to Dereham

## PARISH ACTION POINT PAP 8 – EDUCATION

Yaxham Primary School is at its physical capacity and with up to 52 new dwellings its planned annual admissions is likely to be filled from with its catchment area . NP4Yaxham or its successor will therefore work with Yaxham Parish Council and other elected representatives to work with the relevant authorities and developers to enable:

- The sustainable development of the parish primary school to enable primary age children from the parish to attend their local school – an integral element of the community, and
- To seek to address or alleviate the chronic parking problems and congestion around the school at the start and close of the school day
- To seek to establish a pre-school facility on or close to the Primary School

## 13 Monitoring/Implementation – Future Directions Plan (FDP)

- 13.1 The NP4Yaxham has a plan period of 20 years from 2016 to 2036 and shall be regularly reviewed.
- 13.2 The NP4Yaxham sets out planning policies for applicants for planning permissions, and the Parish Council and the LPA to formally take account of. It identifies Parish Action Points that the parish has indicated it wishes to be achieved, and the priorities for the use of any s106/CIL or other developer monies may be put to within the parish. From this fact a number of points arise within the parish for the Parish Council:
1. To ensure that it considers all planning applications in the light of the NP4Yaxham and to what extent a planning application complies with or fails to comply with the NP4Yaxham and any positive or detrimental effects that follow from this;
  2. Together with other parish organisations to keep under review whether the planning policies set out are effective or amendments need to be considered;
  3. Together with other parish organisations to work together to achieve the Parish Action Points identified within NP4Yaxham.
  4. To consider establishing and funding an NP4Yaxham Action Group to take forward the issues identified in the NP4Yaxham and to carry out periodic reviews of its performance and to identify how best to advance the issues set out.
  5. As a minimum the Parish Council will initiate a formal review of the NP4Yaxham every five years and report on its findings to the LPA. The District Council is preparing a full review of the Local Plan. This may change the strategic planning context for Breckland in general, and as that Local Plan responds to the publication of the 2024 version of the NPPF. The Parish Council will assess the need or otherwise for a further review of the Neighbourhood Plan within six months of the adoption of the emerging Local Plan.

### **PARISH ACTION POINT PAP 9 – NP4YAXHAM ACTION GROUP**

For the Parish Council to consider initiating, funding and support the formation of a group of residents – NP4Yaxham Action Group;

- Monitor and review the Planning Policies set out in the Plan and where appropriate initiate amendments or additions to it; and
- To bring together the Parish Action Points in this Neighbourhood Plan into a formal Neighbourhood Action Plan for Yaxham
- To keep residents updated as to the progress of the PAP's.
- At the Annual Parish Meeting annually report to the Parish Council and residents on the progress made and to suggest any recommendations or alteration to NP4Yaxham.

# Yaxham Neighbourhood Plan

## NP4Yaxham

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