

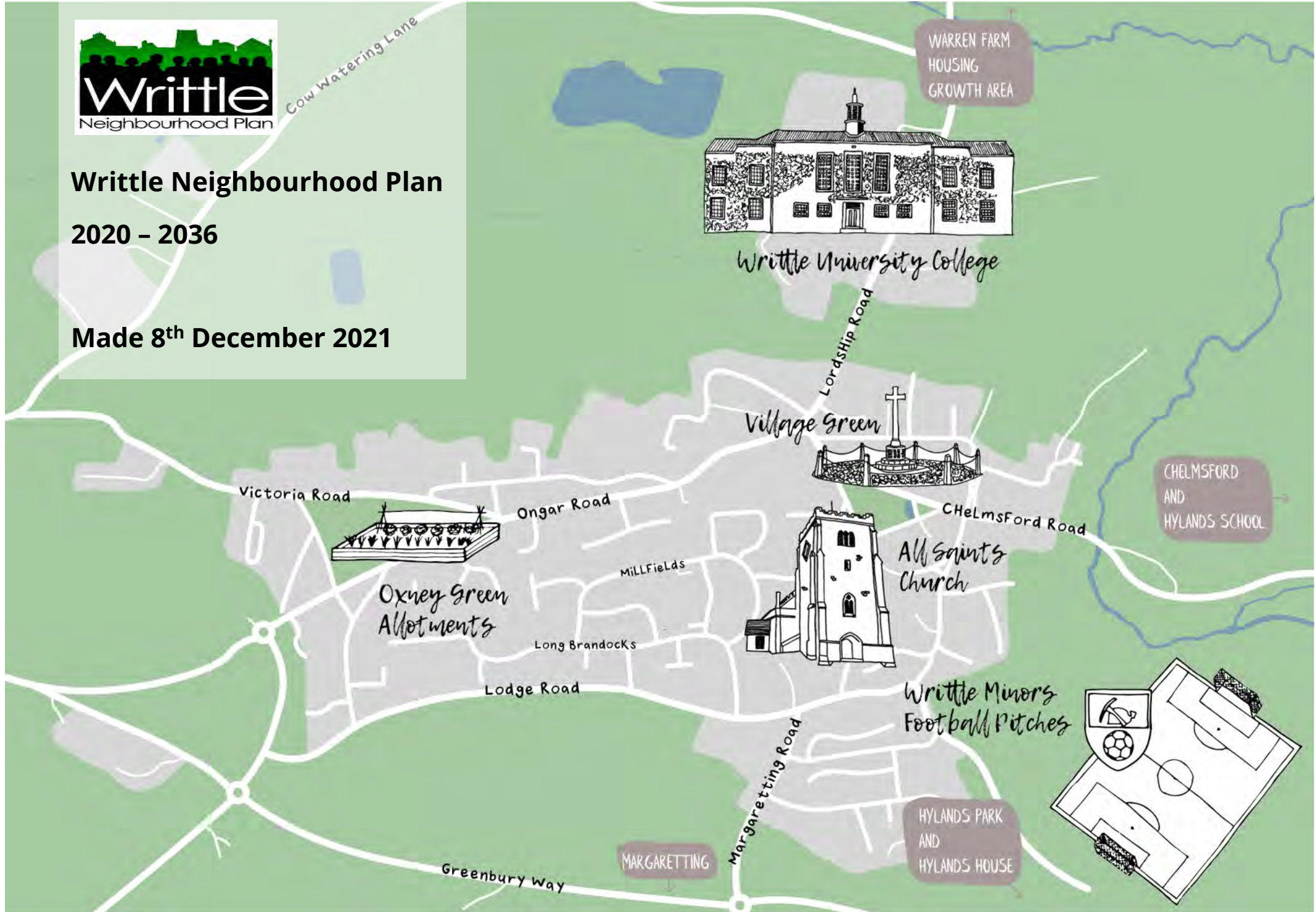


Cow Watering Lane

Writtle Neighbourhood Plan

2020 – 2036

Made 8th December 2021



WARREN FARM HOUSING GROWTH AREA



Writtle University College

Lordship Road

Village Green



All Saints Church



Chelmsford Road

CHELMSFORD AND HYLANDS SCHOOL

Victoria Road

Ongar Road

MILLFIELDS

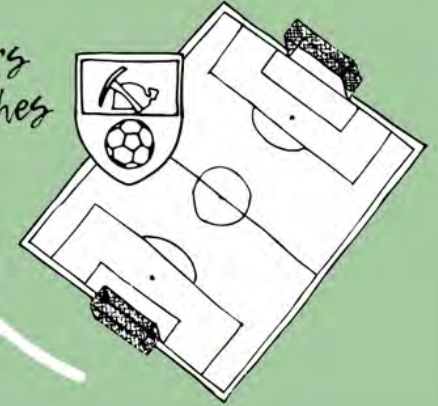


Oxney Green Allotments

Long Brandocks

Lodge Road

Writtle Minors Football Pitches



HYLANDS PARK AND HYLANDS HOUSE

MARGARETTING

Greenbury Way

Margaretting Road

Writtle Parish Council
Neighbourhood Plan for Writtle
Parish, 2020-2036

Writtle Neighbourhood Plan
Steering Group
Writtle Parish Council
Parish Office
The Green
Writtle
Chelmsford CM1 3DT
<https://writtle-pc.gov.uk/>

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Foreword

Dear Residents,

Welcome to the Writtle Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan 2020-2036. The Localism Act 2011 provided communities with the opportunity to shape their own future. Prior to the Act, planning decisions were taken solely by our local authority, Chelmsford Borough (now City) Council (CCC).

To prepare a robust Neighbourhood Development Plan and offer residents of Writtle the opportunity to influence the future of the Parish, Writtle Parish Council applied to CCC and were granted permission to become a designated area for such a Plan in January 2017. As a result, a community led Steering Group was put in place consisting of some Parish Councillors, but mainly of volunteers from within the Parish, who were subsequently advised by a professional planning consultancy.

A range of community engagement events were then held around the village and focus groups formed to identify key issues which were important to the Community as a whole. In November 2018, a community survey was distributed to every household, business and school. These activities further established Parish needs, allowing residents and businesses alike to express their views and opinions. An excellent, and above average, response was received which showed how passionately residents felt about the Parish. The results of this questionnaire were then analysed externally and provided to the Steering Group.

Further events were held to communicate these initial results, and participation was further widened by including younger members of the community and all the major organisations including Scouts and Guides, the Junior Parish Council, the junior and primary schools and sports clubs. This enabled us to further refine and identify how you felt.

Your responses indicated that in looking forward there existed a strong desire to protect the strong community which exists in Writtle, its semi-rural nature and its continued separation from the ever growing City of Chelmsford. This was to be achieved by controlling development of a type and at a level that meets the needs of the Parish, especially concentrating on the need for smaller and more affordable housing units, without negatively impacting the environment and tranquil character of the area and improve its appearance.

You also identified the urgent need for traffic controlling and calming initiatives, especially in the light of the housing development at Warren Farm allocated to Writtle Parish in the adopted Chelmsford Local Plan. Both businesses and residents emphasised the need for improvements to the available communications infrastructure.

The Parish Council proposes to formally review the Neighbourhood Development Plan on a five year cycle or to coincide with the review of the Chelmsford Local Plan if this cycle differs. The review will assess the performance of the Neighbourhood Development Plan in

influencing the design, quality and housing types, in managing development generally, and in bringing forward other proposed infrastructure improvements.

I would emphasise that this is your Plan and sets out your desires and ideas for the future of the Parish which we all believe is unique in its history and location. That having been said, this Plan is designed to steer change going forward and when adopted takes its place as a statutory planning document which will apply to all planning matters within the Parish

A huge amount of time and effort has gone into the production of our Plan and I would like to thank everyone who has contributed, especially given the difficulties encountered with the intervention of the COVID 19 Pandemic. This is basically the whole of the Community of Writtle Parish who contributed in so many ways, all those who completed questionnaires, attended community events and joined Focus Groups: all of whom have helped to shape the content of our Plan along the way. My thanks to all the members of the Steering Group, past and present, our planning consultants at Troy Planning + Design, the unwavering support of Writtle Parish Council and their staff and our contacts at Chelmsford City Council, who have worked hard to bring our Plan to this stage over the last three years. A formal list of acknowledgements appears in the Plan itself.

I hope that you will be able to take the time to read this plan carefully and give it your support, which is based on your views as this is an important and vital opportunity to shape the future of your community. The period lost by the Pandemic, has given us all time to think about how we wish the future of our environment and our Parish to develop and perhaps this Plan can go some way to enable us to reset our values and ensure that Writtle continues to remain a strong lasting community and a tranquil and pleasant place in which to live and work.

Jonathan Weymouth

Chair Writtle Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

1. Introduction



A new plan for Writtle

1.1 This is the Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish of Writtle. It covers the entire Parish area, as illustrated in Figure 1, and sets out the local community's aspirations for Writtle Parish over the period to 2036¹, establishing policies in relation to land use and development. Having now been formally adopted ('made') the Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the suite of policies used by Chelmsford City Council to determine future planning applications in the area. But the Neighbourhood Plan is much more than this. It represents the community's manifesto for the Parish, bringing together more than just traditional planning matters.

1.2 The purpose of neighbourhood planning is to give local people and businesses a much greater say in how the places they live and work in should change and develop over time. Neighbourhood planning is designed to give local people a very real voice in shaping the look and feel of an area.

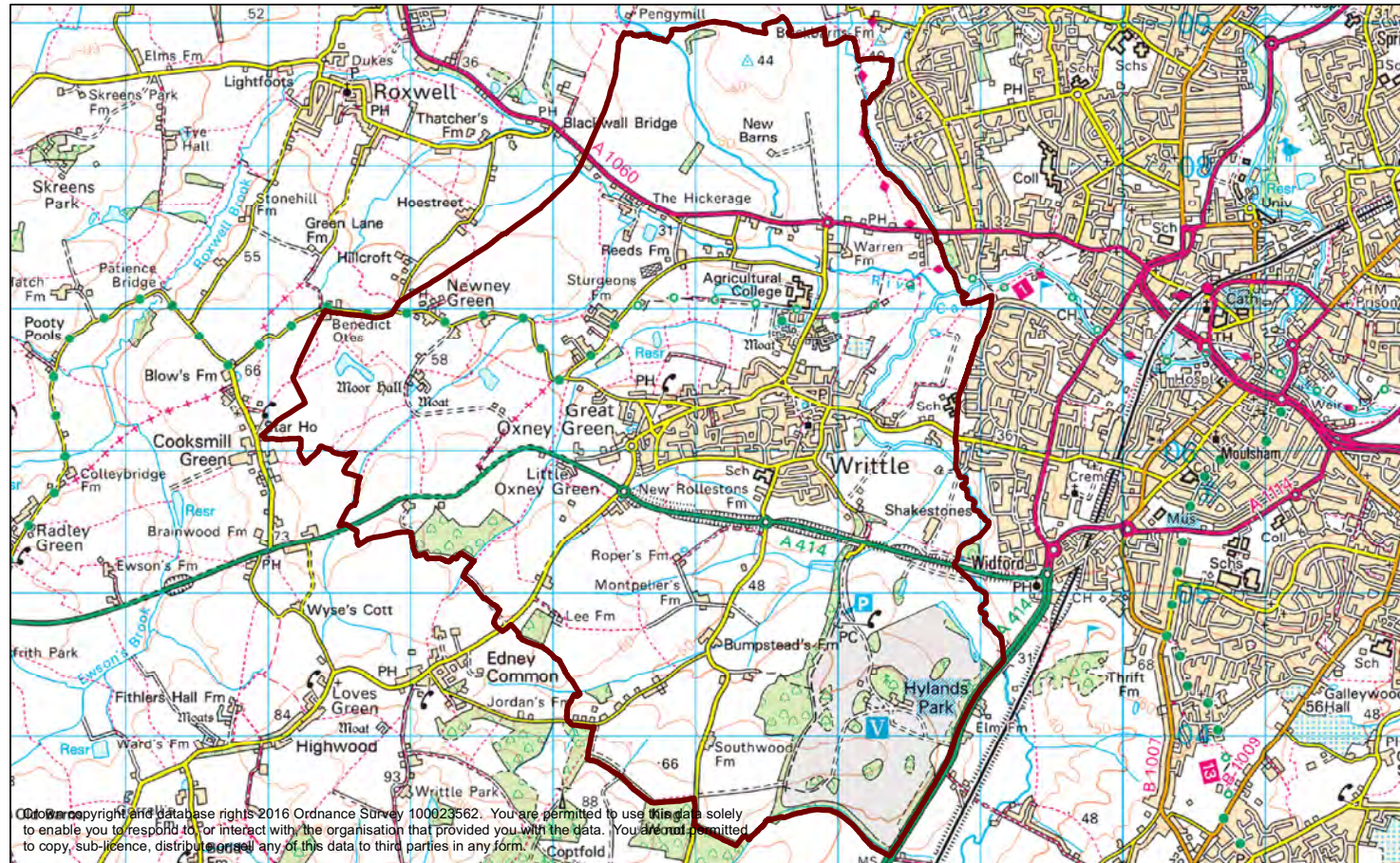
1.3 Writtle Parish was formally designated as an area for neighbourhood planning purposes in January 2017². A Steering Group, set up by the Parish Council to prepare the Plan, has surveyed, spoken to and listened to members of the community, and has used the issues, and opportunities, raised during that process to help inform production of the policies and projects now presented in this Neighbourhood Plan.

1.4 There are a number of stages involved in preparing a Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan was subject to a formal period of consultation and independent examination, with the Examiner recommending that, subject to modifications, the Plan could proceed to a referendum, which was held on 21st October. All people of voting age residing in the Parish were able to cast a vote on whether they thought the Neighbourhood Plan should be brought into force 'made'. With 93% of those people who turned out having voted 'yes', the Neighbourhood Plan was then 'made' by the City Council on 8th December 2021.

¹ This aligns with the period covered by the Chelmsford Local Plan.

² The Localism Act 2011 gave communities the power to develop neighbourhood plans, to be progressed by Town and Parish councils, or neighbourhood forums, as opposed to the local authority.

WRITTLE PARISH BOUNDARY



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Figure 1: Designated Writtle Neighbourhood Plan area

Structure of the plan

1.5 Following this introduction the Neighbourhood Plan comprises seven further sections. These are:

- Section 2: 'Writtle today', presents an overview of the area covered by the Neighbourhood Plan, what existing planning policy says for the area, key issues and comments raised during consultation.
- Section 3: 'Writtle tomorrow', presents the vision and objectives for the Plan area.
- Sections 4 – 9: These sections present the policies and associated projects for Writtle Parish. These are intended to achieve the objectives outlined in Section 3.
- Section 10: 'Next steps' outlines the current stage in the plan making process, and what the future steps in the process are.

1.6 Within sections 4 – 9 each topic area includes some introductory and explanatory text, followed by a policy of project. These are highlighted in coloured boxes, as shown below:

Policy Box

The Neighbourhood Plan establishes land use and development management policies for Writtle Parish. These are contained in green shaded policy boxes, like this one.

Project / Aspiration Box

The Neighbourhood Plan covers more than just traditional planning matters as it presents the community's vision for the area. Items that the community are seeking, but that cannot be delivered through planning policy, are identified and contained in blue shaded project boxes, like this one. These are included within the body of the report, rather than being presented in a separate chapter or appendix, because they relate to the objectives and form a clear and important part of the story.

1.7 **It is important that the Neighbourhood Plan is read as a whole. All policies should be viewed together, alongside those in the Chelmsford Local Plan (2020), in the preparation and consideration of planning applications.**

2. Writtle 'today'



The neighbourhood plan area

2.1 The Neighbourhood Plan area covers the entire parish of Writtle. The Parish lies within the administrative area of Chelmsford City Council and is located to the west of the Chelmsford urban area, though separated from it by a combination of river valleys, green and open spaces. Consultation undertaken for the Neighbourhood Plan highlighted the importance that is attached by the community to the sense of separation between Writtle and Chelmsford, as well as the presence of areas of wildlife, natural areas, waterways and the associated feeling of tranquility,

2.2 The village of Writtle is, in the main, surrounded by Green Belt (see Figure 2). At the heart of the village is the Writtle Conservation Area, focused around the Village Green: which is probably amongst the most beautiful and best preserved of its kind in Essex.

2.3 The Parish benefits from the presence of Hylands Park, to the south of the Parish. This is a Registered Park and Garden extending across more than 230 hectares of historic parkland. The Park, which includes the Grade II* listed house and adventure playground is also home to regular events, and, historically, hosted an annual music festival.

2.4 The Parish is also home to Writtle University College. Established in the late 1890's it is the only 'land-based' higher education institution in the Eastern region of the country. Occupying an estate of 220 hectares in size which is spread across a number of sites, it employs 240 people and has 4,000 students (mixed between full and part time). The estate includes traditional educational premises as well as farm and livestock buildings, glasshouses, equine areas, small animal units and design studies. Furthermore, it also includes halls of residence (for 400 students), a restaurant, bar and sports facilities.

2.5 The Chelmsford Local Plan identifies the College as being within a Special Policy Area (SPA), which allows for the improvement of facilities whilst being responsive to the landscape and rural setting, and which are considered appropriate in the Green Belt.

2.6 To the north of the Parish, and immediately adjoining the western boundary of Chelmsford, is a new growth area. Allocated in the Chelmsford Local Plan as Strategic Growth Site Policy 2 ('West Chelmsford'), this growth area (henceforth referred to as Warren Farm in this Neighbourhood Plan) will accommodate around 800 new homes and supporting facilities.

2.7 Chelmsford City Council has prepared a set of parish profiles which form supporting evidence to the Local Plan³. Some of the key statistics from that for Writtle are:

- The Parish has a population of 5,383 people living in 2,263 households. This equates to an average household size of 2.38 people per household. However, almost a third of all households comprise one person. These figures are reflective of the national picture, which sees an average household size of 2.4 people and around 28% of households containing one person.
- Most homes are owner occupied (almost 74%), with semi-detached and detached units being the predominant house type (64.72% combined). Home ownership is higher in Writtle than across the country as a whole, which averages around 65%.
- The largest age-group in the Parish is the 45-64 group, accounting for just over a quarter of the total population (26.4%), closely followed by those aged 65+ (24.42%). Around 10% of the population comprise those of school age. The age structure of Writtle is older than that for the UK as a whole, where 18% of the population is aged 65 or over. And the population is ageing, with growth in the over 65 age group expected.

- The majority of the population is reported as being in good or very good health (combined total of 82.15% of the population). This is reflective of the national picture.
- Educational attainment in the Parish is high, as is the rate of employment. Of those in employment, education accounts for the primary industry of work (15.32%), perhaps related to the presence of Writtle University College and, in Chelmsford, Anglia Ruskin University, the Grammar Schools and numerous secondary schools, including private schools. The 'wholesale, retail trade and repair of motor vehicles' sector also performs strongly, accounting for 13.32% of those in employment.
- Most people travel to work by car or van (64.8%). This is around ten percentage points higher than the national average. Despite the proximity to Chelmsford railway station, the speed and frequency of services for accessing employment in London, less than 8% of people use rail as their main mode of transport for work. So although links to the station are important, those to the City centre and other employment areas in Chelmsford (and elsewhere) are equally important.

³ See <https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/your-council/data-and-statistics/parish-profiles/> accessed June 2019. This draws on information from the 2011 census.

The development plan

2.8 Neighbourhood Plans must be prepared in line with national guidance and legislation including the Localism Act (2011), the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012)⁴, the Neighbourhood Planning Act, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG).

2.9 Neighbourhood Plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan⁵. The development plan for Writtle Parish is the Chelmsford Local Plan. This means that the Neighbourhood Plan cannot have policies or objectives that conflict with the Chelmsford Local Plan.

2.10 The Local Plan, adopted in May 2020, presents the planning strategy for the City Council administrative area for the years up to 2036 and is the framework within which the Neighbourhood Plan needs to function.

2.11 Of particular relevance to the Neighbourhood Plan are the following policies in the Local Plan:

- The spatial strategy outlined in Strategic Policy 7 identifies Writtle as a 'Key Service Settlement' and makes provision for a sustainable urban extension to the west of Chelmsford, but within the parish of Writtle (Warren Farm). This is further elaborated upon in Strategic Growth Site Policy 2, establishing the mix and quantum of development to be provided (around 800 homes). This also requires a masterplan to be prepared for the site.
- Growth Site Policy 5 covers the Telephone Exchange in the centre of Writtle and notes potential for provision of around 25 new homes on the site. Supporting text to the Local Plan policy notes that the Neighbourhood Plan can help shape the nature of development on this site.
- Strategic Policy S11 seeks to protect land outside of urban areas from development, and notes that the extent of the Green Belt will be maintained. This is further developed in Policy DM6. Special circumstances need to be demonstrated for development in the Green Belt. On land outside of the Green Belt (i.e.: 'Rural Areas'), development will only be considered acceptable where it does not adversely impact on the character of the that area. This is important to note in respect of the north western part of the Parish which is outside of the Green Belt and beyond the Warren Farm growth area.

⁴ Updated in 2015 and 2016

⁵ See Para 29 / Footnote 16, MHCLG, February 2019, NPPF

- Policy DM4 covers employment areas and rural employment areas, of which there are two such allocations in Writtle, being (1) land to the east of Lordship Road (The Warren Estate) and (2) land north of Cow Watering Lane (Reeds Farm Estate Business Centre). This policy seeks to retain and protect these allocations for employment purposes.
- Writtle University College is identified as a special policy area, covered by Policy SPA6. This supports the functional and operational requirements of the College, improving facilities, enhancing the setting of Listed Buildings, improving links to the countryside and encouraging sustainable travel.
- The requirement for new development to help make high quality new places, through good design and sustainable principles, as set out, for example, in Policies DM23 (High Quality Design and Inclusive Design), and DM24 (Design and Place Shaping Principles in Major Developments).

2.12 This Neighbourhood Plan has been informed by the Chelmsford City Council Local Plan documents and the suite of supporting material providing evidence to this, all of which can be accessed via the Chelmsford City Council website⁶. Policy designations and layers of relevance to the Neighbourhood Plan area are presented on Figure 2.

⁶ See: <https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy-and-new-local-plan/new-local-plan/> (accessed May 2019)

⁷ <https://www.essexdesignguide.co.uk/>

2.13 Writtle also benefits from a Village Design Statement (VDS). This was published in 2004 and formed Supplementary Planning Guidance to the previous Chelmsford Local Plan. The findings and recommendations of the VDS have been reviewed to inform appropriate policies in the Neighbourhood Plan. The 2011 Parish Plan (updated 2019) has also informed the Neighbourhood Plan. A list of all supporting material is included in Appendix 7.

2.14 Other relevant policy documents include the Essex Minerals Local Plan (2014) and the Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan (2017). Information from the Minerals and Waste Plans is presented in Appendix 6 of the Neighbourhood Plan. Furthermore, the Essex Design Guide⁷ was updated in 2018 and provides design advice and guidance to inform proposed new development in the County.

Reviewing the Neighbourhood Plan

2.15 Notwithstanding the defined period of the Neighbourhood Plan to 2036, it is recognised that, with further changes to and review of the Local Plan likely⁸, the Neighbourhood Plan will need to be reviewed periodically. This will enable the Neighbourhood Plan to remain 'current' and in conformity with the Chelmsford Local Plan and National Planning Policy Framework.

⁸ The Local Plan was adopted in May 2020 and a review is likely to commence within two years from this date

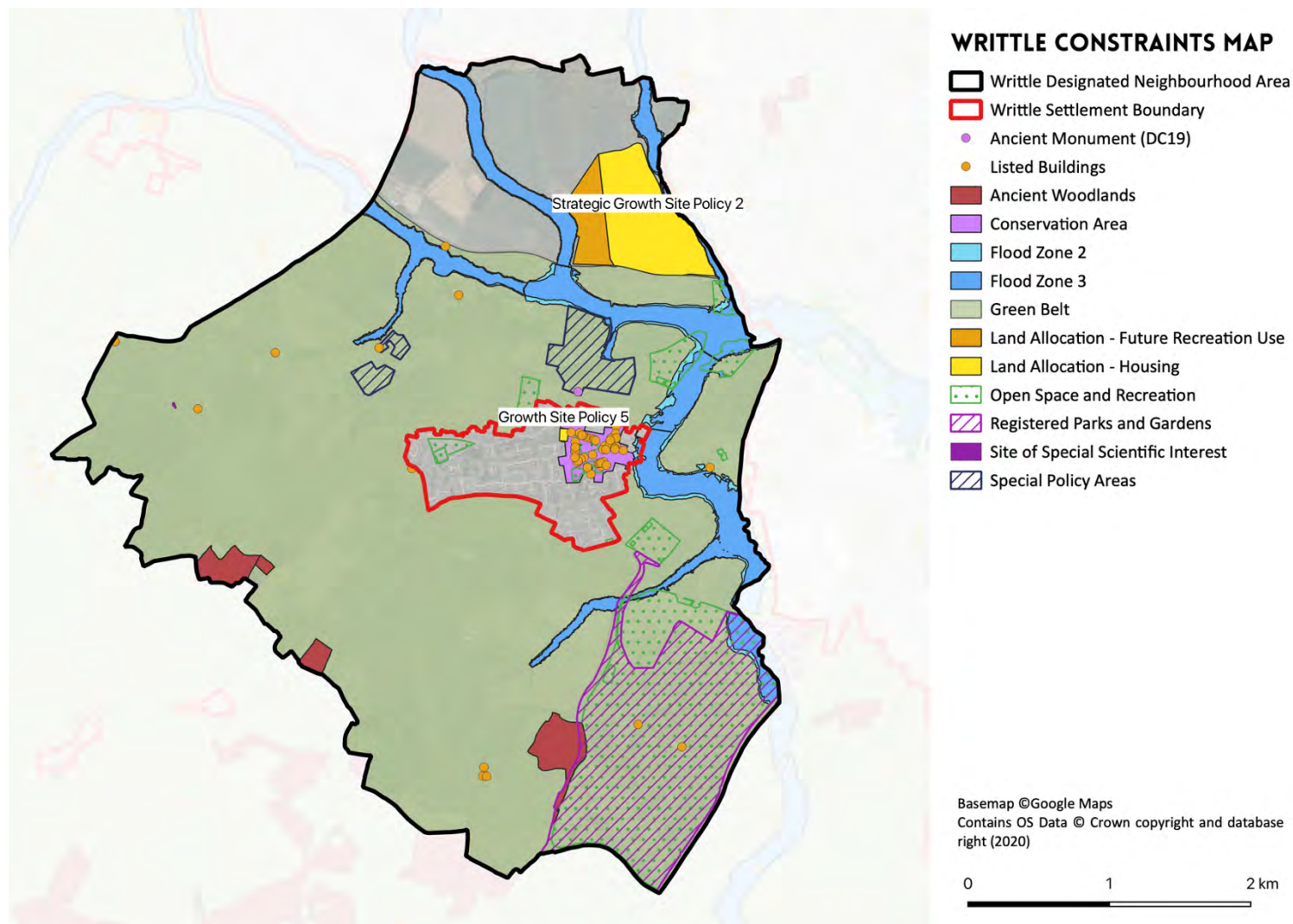


Figure 2: Policy layers and constraints in Writtle (Sources: Chelmsford City Council, Environment Agency, Historic England, Esri, Ordnance Survey 2018). For more detailed information see the Chelmsford City Local Plan Policies Map

3. Writtle 'tomorrow'



What you told us

3.1 The consultation exercises undertaken identified a range of issues of importance for addressing in the Neighbourhood Plan. Feedback from consultation exercises, including that received during the Regulation 14 consultation, reinforced earlier findings from the 2011 Parish Plan (updated 2019) and suggested that:

- There is a strong sense of community in Writtle which is highly valued, as is proximity to Chelmsford and its services. However, the sense of separation from Chelmsford is highly valued, as is proximity to and the quality of the surrounding countryside.
- The impact of traffic on the village and quality of life is a key concern. Measures to reduce the volume and speed of traffic would be welcome.
- It is important to preserve Writtle's historic buildings and landscape features, and to maintain the quality of public spaces.
- New development should reflect the existing character and qualities of the village, with a mix of housing provided, including opportunities for those looking to downsize, as well as for young families.
- Writtle is generally well catered for in terms of local facilities, though more and better pedestrian crossings, cycle lanes and recycling facilities should be provided.

3.2 Although not all of these are 'land-use planning policy' matters, they do reflect the community's concerns and hopes for the area, and are thus embedded in this Neighbourhood Plan through a combination of the vision, objectives and supporting projects.

Vision

3.3 Our proposed Vision for how the Parish of Writtle will grow and develop over the period to 2036 is:

“Writtle will continue to be a thriving and vibrant community whose character, rich heritage and natural assets are protected and enhanced in their rural setting separate from the City of Chelmsford, and where the Parish benefits from a distinct identity of its own. Sustainable development in the parish will help make it a better place in which to live, learn, work or visit”

3.4 The policies, and projects presented within this Neighbourhood Plan intend to deliver on the vision and objectives that flow from it, as presented in the following section of the Plan.

Objectives

3.5 Following from the vision a set of objectives have been created. These provide a framework for the policies in the Plan.

Objective 1: Our Built Environment

To conserve and enhance Writtle's unique identity, history and character as reflected in its heritage assets and their setting, landscape setting, distinctive local features and architectural quality within the built form. To promote high-quality design and sustainability standards within any new development.

Objective 2: The Natural Environment

To conserve, manage and enhance Writtle's natural environment and to enable access for the enjoyment of the public. This includes measures that safeguard the natural water systems, wildlife, biodiversity and other multi-functional green infrastructure, mitigate climate change and support enduring sustainability. To retain the separation between Writtle and Chelmsford which gives the Parish its distinct identity.

Objective 3: Our Community and Wellbeing

To support a flourishing and inclusive community through the provision of a mix of housing types, with appropriate infrastructure including community, health, education and leisure facilities.

Objective 4: Business and Economy

To encourage the creation, retention and growth of local businesses, training facilities and employment opportunities.

Objective 5: Access and Movement

To promote active and sustainable travel that is safe and attractive for all, including walking, cycling and public transport, and to seek to adopt measures that reduce the impact of traffic in the Parish.

Objective 6: Writtle University College

To work in collaboration with the College to support its growth as a centre of excellence for learning and to deliver improved access to sports, leisure, recreation, education and training opportunities for the benefit and enjoyment of the community.

Opportunities

3.6 Based upon the consultation and research undertaken to inform the Neighbourhood Plan, a set of ideas and interventions have been identified. These are presented spatially in Figure 3 and developed through the set of policies and projects in subsequent sections of this Plan. They comprise:

- Setting the new Warren Farm development back from Roxwell Road, thus creating a green corridor which takes the form of a landscaped buffer and amenity space, which retains the sense of separation between Chelmsford and Writtle, and which helps contribute to a reduction in traffic speeds and creates a safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Supporting the presence of the extensive sporting, recreational and educational facilities in the area, better integrating these within the fabric of the Parish for use by all.
- Promoting active travel measures that support healthy lifestyles and access for all.
- Extending and connecting the network of cycle routes to provide an attractive alternative to car based travel for long and short trips, including a new north south route between Warren Farm, Writtle University College (and National Cycle Route 1), The Green, Paradise Road Sports Pitches and Hylands Park. Other new routes and links should also be explored, including to Hylands School.
- Combined with the above making the network of streets safe for all, including physical interventions that slow traffic and allow better crossing points.

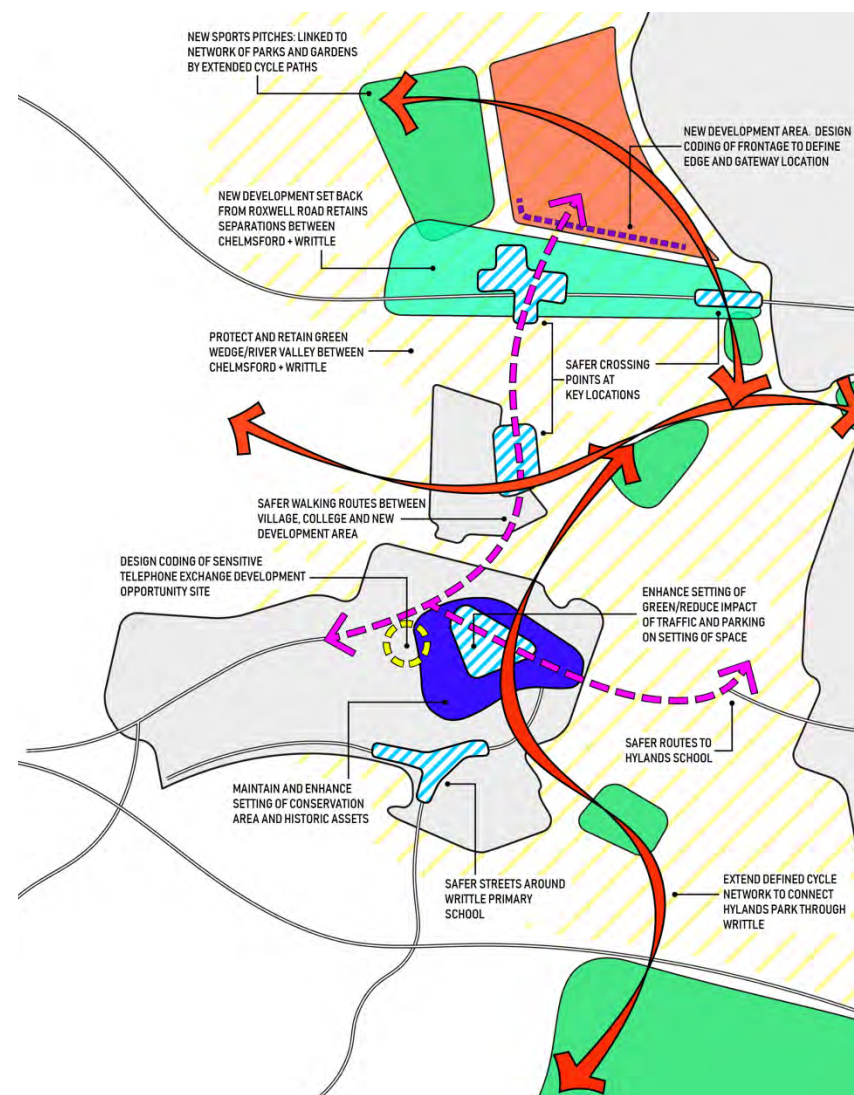


Figure 3: Spatial opportunities in Writtle

- Promoting street improvements at the junction of Lordship Road and Roxwell Road, which might be delivered as part of the Warren Farm development, crossing points between Writtle University College and Tea Rooms, along The Green and outside Writtle Primary School.
- Remodelling of the public realm and parking provision along The Green, reducing the visual impact and intrusion of parked cars in this space, maximising it is a place for all the community to enjoy.
- Production of design codes that help shape new development that responds to setting, local character and context, and which build upon the Village Design Statement. The design codes are set out in the Writtle Village Design Guide which accompanies the Neighbourhood Plan.
- A requirement for all future change to respond to the rich history of the Parish, including opportunities to maintain and improve existing assets, but also to reinterpret local history through design and public realm treatments. This richness extends to reinforcing key views, including those of the Church Spire⁹ and along river valleys.
- Exploring opportunities for improved communication systems, supporting local businesses and allowing more people to work from home.

Climate Change

3.7 This Neighbourhood Plan is also set in the context of the 'Climate and Ecology Emergency' declared by Chelmsford City Council in July 2019. The City has pledged to reduce its own carbon emissions to net zero by 2030 and to encourage others to do the same.

3.8 A raft of actions have been proposed by the City Council to support this, including the promotion of sustainable forms of development, promoting active travel, protecting and planting new woodland, and reviewing planning policies that encourage builders to build to zero-carbon standards.

3.10 In addition, the Essex Climate Action Commission (ECAC) was established in October 2019 by Essex County Council (ECC) and is seeking to identify ways where ECC can mitigate the effects of climate change, improve air quality, reduce waste and increase the amount of green infrastructure and biodiversity across the county. It is also exploring how ECC can attract investment in natural capital and low carbon growth.

3.11 This Neighbourhood Plan seeks to promote high quality, eco-friendly design, that respects the environmental qualities and landscape setting of Writtle. It promotes walking, cycling and better public transport facilities. It seeks to protect and enhance green infrastructure and river valleys, and seeks to protect and support the

⁹ More accurately a 'Bell Tower', though the evidence base for the Local Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan refer to a Church Spire. For consistency we retain reference to Spire in this document

full range of facilities that make Writtle a vibrant and attractive place, reducing the need to travel, promoting social cohesion, health and wellbeing. As the City Council reviews and updates policies in response to the Climate and Ecology Emergency, so this Neighbourhood Plan will be reviewed.

3.12 Linked to matters of climate change is the presence of European designated nature conservation sites¹⁰ and concern about any plan or proposal that might adversely affect the integrity of these sites. Essex County Council, in conjunction with Chelmsford City Council and other local authorities in Essex has prepared the Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) which has been adopted as SPD by the City Council¹¹. This sets out the mitigation strategy necessary to protect the birds of the Essex coast and their habitats from increased visitor pressure associated with new residential development in combination with other plans and projects. It also sets out how this strategy will be funded, with the Planning Obligations SPD adopted by the City Council¹² providing the mechanism for collecting contributions associated with the mitigation strategy from residential development in the Chelmsford administrative area.

3.13 Writtle falls entirely within the zone of influence of the RAMS area and all proposals for residential development in the Neighbourhood Plan area will be subject to the overarching RAMS policy set out below.

Policy WNP RAMS1: Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation

All residential development within the zones of influence of European Sites should make an appropriate financial contribution towards mitigation measures, as detailed in the Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) Supplementary Planning Document, to avoid adverse in-combination recreational disturbance effects on European Sites.

All residential development within the zones of influence should deliver all measures identified (including strategic measures) through project level Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRAs), or otherwise, to mitigate any recreational disturbance impacts in compliance with the Habitats Regulations and Habitats Directive.

¹⁰ Colne Estuary Special protection Area, Blackwater Estuary Special Protection Area and Ramsar, and Essex Estuaries Special Area of Conservation

¹¹ Essex County Council, May 2020, Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy, Supplementary Planning Document

¹² Chelmsford City Council, January 2021, Planning Obligations, Supplementary Planning Document

4. Design



Design and Character

4.1 Good design has a major role in contributing to quality of life and creating attractive, livable places. This goes beyond the look of buildings and considers: the mix of uses and activities that help create lively and interesting places; the local character and distinctiveness of a place, reflected through its landscape and building materials for example, contributing to healthy lifestyles by making it easy for people to move on foot and by bike; fostering a sense of community through well designed, functional and attractive public spaces; and enhancing the quality of environment.

4.2 The achievement of high quality design is a core principle of the NPPF. It states, at paragraph 124, that *'good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps makes development acceptable to communities'*. The importance of the design of the built environment and its contribution to making better places for people is emphasised. It goes on to note that *'Neighbourhood Plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development'* (paragraph 125).

4.3 In short, good design will help create high quality, safe and successful places where people enjoy living, working and visiting. This is emphasised in the National Design Guide¹³, which should be referred to by all involved in the planning system when shaping, responding to and considering applications for planning permission. This recognises the importance of local character and the role of the community in the design process. It states that:

'Local communities can play a vital role in achieving well-designed places and buildings and making sure there is a relationship between the built environment and quality of life' (paragraph 17).

4.4 The key characteristics and features of the built form in Writtle have been reviewed¹⁴ to inform future development proposals. The historic context and growth of the village is recognised as being important to the character of Writtle, and this manifests itself in the structure of the village, centred around the green, the conservation area and listed buildings. This is also reflected in the style of buildings and materials used, as well as the presence of Hylands House and Writtle University College, and views of these.

4.5 This Neighbourhood Plan includes a series of character areas (see Figure 4) within the defined settlement area as well as a set of general guidelines for development. It also presents general guidance

¹³ MHCLG, September 2019, National Design Guide: Planning practice guidance for beautiful, enduring and successful places

¹⁴ The Village Design Statement provides a useful overview of the qualities of Writtle

in respect of the rural environment, highways and infrastructure. Applicants for development will be expected to show how they have responded to these policies, principles and guidelines, taking a design-led approach to development. Key aspects of each character area are summarised in Table 2.

4.6 For the purpose of this Neighbourhood Plan a Writtle Design Guide has been prepared. This has been informed by a review of the VDS and reflects the NPPF which encourages the use of codes and guidelines to help deliver quality outcomes for new development. Production of the Design Guide responds to the new National Model Design Code (January 2021) and the clear expectation from central Government that *'codes and guides are used to inform development proposals to provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage and reflect local character and preferences'*. The stated purpose of the Writtle Design Guide, which informs policies and design principles in the Neighbourhood Plan, is:

"to establish principles so that new development is designed and planned with regard to the existing character and context of the Writtle Neighbourhood Plan Area... It sets out a series of design guidelines related to green infrastructure and residential development within the landscape setting of Writtle".

4.7 It is important that full account is taken of the local context and that the new development responds to and enhances 'sense of place'. General design considerations that all proposals for development in Writtle should respond to are set out in Table 1.

Important design considerations for all development in Writtle

- Harmonise with and enhance the existing settlement in terms of physical form, movement pattern and land use.
- Relate well to local topography and landscape features, including prominent ridge lines and long-distance views (see Table 4 and Section 5: Setting).
- Reinforce or enhance the established character of streets, squares and other spaces (See Table 2).
- Integrate with existing paths, streets, circulation networks and patterns of activity.
- Provide adequate open space for the development in terms of both quantity and quality.
- Reflect, respect and reinforce local architecture and historic distinctiveness (see Table 2 and 3).
- Retain and incorporate important existing landscape and built form features into the development.
- Respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing (see Table 2).
- Adopt contextually appropriate materials and details (see Table 3).
- Ensure all components e.g. buildings, landscapes, access routes, parking and open space are well related to each other; to provide a safe, attractive and cohesive environment.
- Make enough provision for sustainable waste management (including facilities for kerbside collection, waste separation and minimisation where appropriate) without adverse impact on the street scene, the local landscape or the amenities of neighbours.
- Sensitively integrate energy efficient technologies within the scheme at the start of the design process.

Table 1: General design considerations that all proposals for development in Writtle should respond to. All are developed further in the Writtle Design Guide document, with key principles summarised in Appendix 1

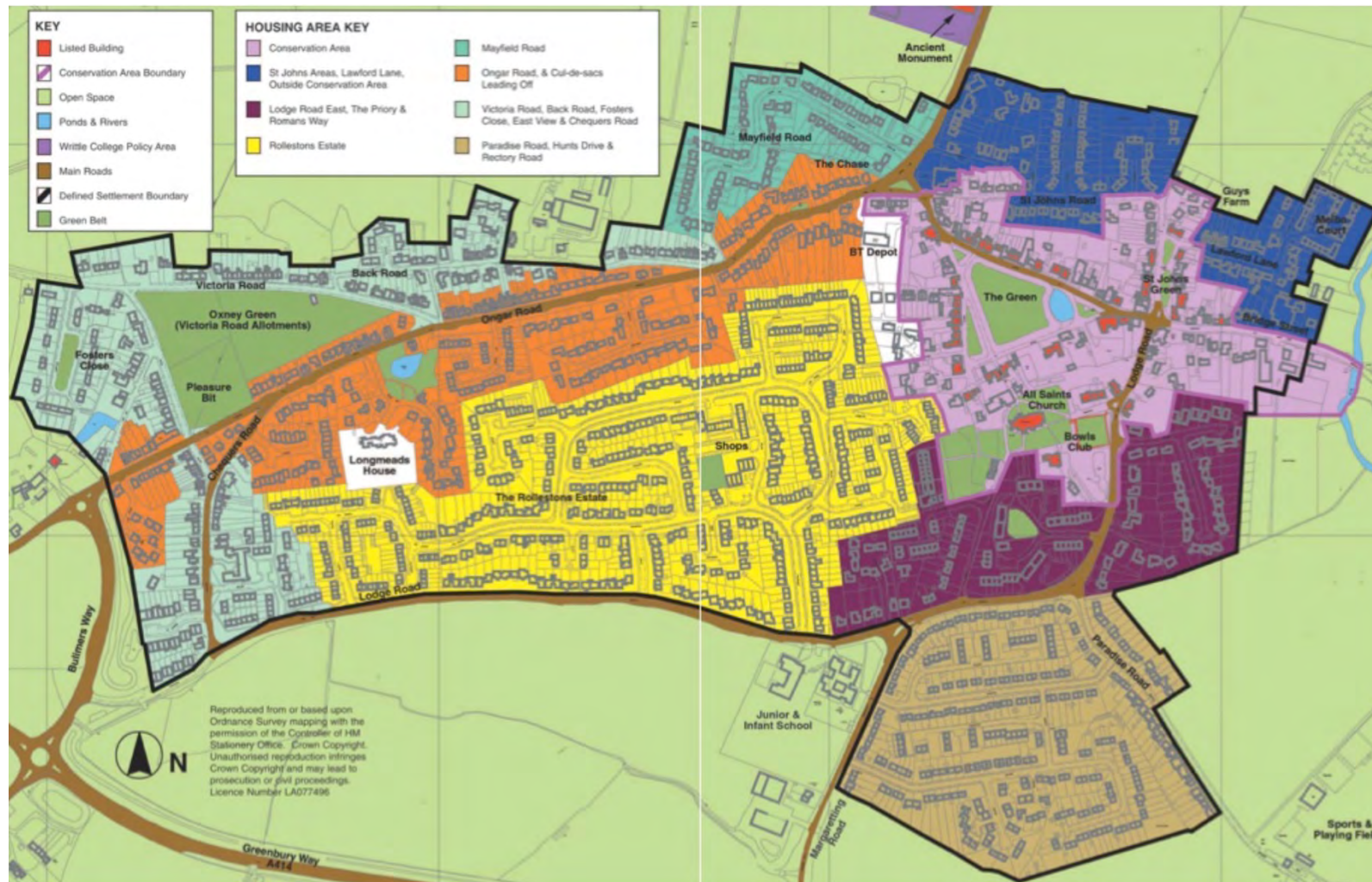


Figure 4: Character areas in Writtle (source: Writtle Village Design Statement). It should be noted that although some limited change and development has taken place in Writtle since the Village Design Statement was prepared, the key characteristics and qualities of Writtle, as well as the main character areas identified above, effectively remain as set out in the Village Design Statement.

Character Area	Summary of key features identified within the Village Design Statement
Conservation Area	The Greens are key features of the area, surrounded by buildings that display a variety of architectural styles and materials which reflect the historic growth of the village. Most buildings are of two to three storeys and include dormer windows in the roof. Building forms, heights, roof styles and materials should respond positively to those found in the Conservation Area.
Lawford Lane and St. Johns Road (outside the Conservation Area)	Lawford Lane is important as part of the historic link between London and Colchester. The area includes early examples of local authority housing, with rendered elevations, slate roofs and pantiles representing interesting architectural features that might inform any new development. Buildings are generally two storeys in height.
Lodge Road East (outside the Conservation Area)	This area comprises a mix of housing types. The mature street trees in this area are an important feature and should be retained, marking the extent of an ancient defensive ditch and bank around the Green. Opportunities to improve parking conditions are welcome. The area includes a mix of modern houses, bungalows and maisonettes. Building heights are generally between one and two storeys.
Rollestons Estate (including part of Lodge Road)	An area of 1960's housing including a mix of house types and with front gardens that are open to the street. This open nature should be retained with any extensions staggered or set back from the main building line to avoid a terracing effect. House types include a mix of terraces, detached and semi-detached, town houses and some flats. Building heights are generally between two and three storeys.
Ongar Road	An area of varied housing stock, generally two storeys in height, including Victorian and Edwardian properties, the scale of which should inform new developments. An unmade track known as The Chase should be retained as such, preserving its natural appearance.
Victoria Road, Back Road, East View and Chequers Road	Area mainly comprises small two storey Victorian homes, with some larger family homes, as well as green spaces which are integral to the pattern of development and should be retained as such.
Mayfield Road	Area of 1930s housing and chalet style bungalows. New development should respect building heights (between one and two storeys), sense of space and open aspect to the streets.
Paradise Road Area	This area includes a mix of housing types, though with a regular and well established building line to the street, which should be maintained. Interesting architectural features include curved roof canopies and key hole porches which should be retained wherever possible. Front garden hedgerows should also be retained as a feature of the area. Buildings are generally two storeys high.

Table 2: Summary of key features of the Character Areas in Writtle. Table 3 (overleaf) provides more information on common building materials and features.

Local building materials and features

Older timber framed buildings in Writtle have lime washed walls in a variety of traditional colours, some having been clad with brickwork in Georgian times. There are also some examples of pargetting: a traditional Essex design feature.

Buildings of the Georgian and Victoria periods were mainly constructed in traditional red brick and lime mortar, although on St. Johns Green the predominant brick is yellow stock.

Many buildings facing The Green and St. Johns Green have hand-made clay pegged tiled roofs, with later Georgia, Victorian and Edwardian properties having slate roofs. Chimneys, mansards and dormers are a feature in the village, particularly in the Conservation Area.

New buildings are constructed in a variety of brick and / or render, with slate and plain tile roofs.

Front gardens around The Green and St. Johns Green are typically enclosed by a combination of walls, picket fences or iron railings with decorative finials. The Rolleston Estate area and other newer developments tend to have open front gardens with boundary treatments. Elsewhere, boundaries are commonly defined by hedgerows.

Table 3: Common building materials and treatments characteristic of development in Writtle

4.8 Further design guidance is presented in the Essex Design Guide. This is intended to be used as a reference guide to help create high quality places with an identity specific to the Essex context. It was updated in 2018 (<https://www.essexdesignguide.co.uk/>). Applicants should refer to and be guided by the most recent version of the Essex Design Guide. Reference should also be made to the ‘Making Places SPD’ published by Chelmsford City Council¹⁵. Together with the Writtle Design Guide these documents present up-to-date design advice which will contribute to the delivery of sustainable development within the Neighbourhood Area.

4.9 In addition, Chelmsford City Council, together with all the local authorities in Essex, has launched the ‘Livewell Campaign’¹⁶, which seeks to improve the health and wellbeing of local people. Alongside this a ‘Livewell Development Accreditation Scheme’ has also been created¹⁷. This encourages developers to promote the physical and mental health of residents when designing and building new developments. Schemes following this process should embed health design principles identified through a Health Impact Assessment or through submission of a Healthy Places Checklist to the City Council at pre-application stage. Schemes should also be subject to review by the Essex Quality Panel.

¹⁵ Chelmsford City Council, January 2021, Making Places – Supplementary Planning Document

¹⁶ <https://www.livewellcampaign.co.uk/>

¹⁷ <https://www.essexdesignguide.co.uk/supplementary-guidance/livewell-development-accreditation/>

4.10 The Writtle Design Guide presents a set of principles and codes that interpret development plan policies within the context of Writtle, indicating how these should be applied in the Neighbourhood Area. The Design Guide advocates character-led design which responds to and enhances the existing townscape. Reference to context does not intend to promote the copying of or use of pastiche solutions. It means responding to what is around as inspiration and influence and it could be that a contemporary solution is equally in harmony with the surroundings.

4.11 Key principles presented in the Writtle Design Guide are summarised in Appendix 1 of the Neighbourhood Plan with further information set out in the Design Guide itself and to which applicants and decision-takers should refer.



Figure 5: View across The Green towards the Church

Local views

The landscape setting of the village and Parish as a whole, combined with the historic growth and evolution of the settlement, which is evident in the numerous heritage assets still present in the area, means the Neighbourhood Area benefits from numerous views that help characterise the Parish.

Views include those of buildings within the village, of the entrances to the village, and of longer distance vistas across the landscape. They give Writtle a strong identity and sense of place, defining it from the wider Chelmsford area.

Within the village key views include those in and around the Conservation Area, of the Church, The Green and St Johns Green. The rural character of the Parish is evident in long distance views across fields and farmland, including tree lined country lanes.

Hylands Park and Gardens is a significant historical and recreational asset for Chelmsford as a whole, with views of the House and gardens, as well as further afield to Widford Church important to the setting and enjoyment of the Park.

Views within the village and of the landscape setting should be used to inform appropriate design responses, particularly in terms of the siting and form of development. The Writtle Design Guide, along with the Making Places SPD, provide advice on how views should be considered within the design process.

Table 4: Design responses should consider local views

Policy WNP D1: High Quality Design

New development in the parish of Writtle which contributes to the creation of high quality places through a design-led approach to development underpinned by good practice principles and reflecting a thorough site appraisal will be supported. Development proposals which have regard to guidance and best practice principles established in the Essex Design Guide, the Chelmsford Local Plan, the Making Places SPD and the guidance and relevant codes established in the Writtle Design Guide, including those summarised in Table 1 and Appendix 1 of the Neighbourhood Plan will also be supported.

Development proposals that have regard to the key features of each character area (Figure 4) set out in Table 2, and local design cues, and which demonstrate an imaginative sense of place whilst respecting the surrounding context, are welcome.

The design and standard of any new development should aim to meet a high level of sustainable design and construction and be optimised for energy efficiency, targeting zero carbon emissions. Innovative approaches to construction of low carbon homes, including construction to Passivhaus standards, are strongly encouraged where development also complies with other policies of the Development Plan.

Encouragement is given to development proposals that accord with the City Council's Livewell Accreditation Scheme.

Development proposals in the Writtle neighbourhood development area will be supported which, where appropriate:

- a. have regard to the historic settlement pattern and makes use of materials present within the built environment that complement Writtle's character as set out in Table 3;*
- b. strengthens the verdant character of Writtle by retaining existing trees and incorporating open space in line with appropriate standards of provision, in accordance with the Chelmsford Local Plan;*
- c. uses boundary treatments that complement the street scene, rural character of the village and landscape setting, as set out in Tables 2 and 3;*
- d. minimises visual intrusion through the appropriate scale, design and siting of development, and through the planting of trees and hedgerows native to Writtle, including deciduous broad-leaved trees;*
- e. reflects the prevailing building height in the character area within which it is located, as set out in Table 2, and retains views of the Church Spire;*
- f. includes off-street parking wherever possible, combined with landscaping, to minimise the visual impact of vehicles on the street scene; and*
- g. as appropriate to their scale, nature and location, should incorporate sustainable drainage principles to ensure that flood risk will not be increased either on or off site. All new development proposals should be safe and flood resilient for their lifetime. Where practicable, sustainable drainage systems should be designed to be multi-functional and deliver benefits for wildlife, amenity and landscape.*

Design Review

4.13 The NPPF states (at paragraph 129) that Local Planning Authorities should have access to and make use of tools and processes to assess and improve the design quality of development, including making use of design review arrangements. Design review is a way of assessing the design quality of new developments by an independent panel of experts to help support high standards of design. Guidance on the Design Review process can be found via the Design Council Cobe and Essex County Council websites¹⁸.

4.14 In Writtle it is envisaged that major applications for development, as well as smaller schemes in sensitive or important locations, should be subject to design review. This might include residential, commercial and mixed-use development proposals, infrastructure, community facilities, public realm and open space proposals. Design review should take place at the pre-application stage to inform the design process and again following submission of the application, to help inform officer recommendations. The final proposals submitted should show how comments made during the design review have influenced the proposed development.

Project / Aspiration DA: Design Review

Emerging schemes for major development should be assessed through design review. Design review of smaller schemes is also encouraged, including those in sensitive or important locations, such as in, or in the setting of, the conservation area.

It is envisaged that schemes will be referred to the Quality Review Panel operated by Essex County Council (until such a time that Chelmsford City Council runs and operates a Design Review Panel). It is encouraged that design review takes place early in the process to allow scope for input into the emerging design. The final schemes submitted to the Council should include a report on the design review process and how the scheme has responded to this. Design Review of live applications is also encouraged.

Applicants are encouraged to participate in the Livewell Development Accreditation Scheme. Schemes following this process will be subject to review by the Essex Quality Review Panel.

¹⁸ <https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/what-we-do/built-environment/design-review> , and <https://www.essexdesignguide.co.uk/qualitypanel/about/>

The Telephone Exchange, Ongar Road

4.15 The Telephone Exchange is allocated in the Chelmsford Local Plan, at Growth Site Policy 5, for 'around 25 new homes of a mixed size and type to include affordable housing'. Supporting text (para 7.190) notes that 'the emerging Neighbourhood Plan being prepared in Writtle is envisaged to help shape this site allocation'.

4.16 Through work on the Neighbourhood Plan a series of design scenarios were prepared for the site, exploring how development might best respond to the site, constraints and surrounding context¹⁹. The site is located centrally within Writtle, in close proximity to a wide range of services and facilitates for day-to-day needs. Strong preference has been expressed (through initial consultation²⁰ and supported during the Regulation 14 feedback) for the provision of homes for the elderly on this site given changing demographics²¹ and the location of the site in proximity to local services and facilities, and which could include opportunities for downsizing, though acknowledging that, subject to viability, a mix of housing types could be accommodated.

4.17 A design-led approach to development of the site is required that responds positively to the following constraints:

- A strip of land adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site is in different ownership. Access to this land is via the BT site entrance from Ongar Road and needs to be retained.
- Proximity to Writtle Conservation Area, which runs along the north and eastern boundaries of the site.
- Presence of important trees, including those benefitting from Tree Preservation Orders, on the boundaries of the site.
- Presence of neighbouring properties and the need to respect amenity, particularly in terms of privacy, through application of appropriate back-to-back distances between existing and new homes.
- The form of development should not preclude opportunities for development on sites to the east and west of the site.
- Obtaining suitable vehicular access into the site from the junction of Ongar Road / Lordship Road and The Green.

¹⁹ Troy Planning + Design, November 2019, BT Site Workshop, Summary Report

²⁰ See for example the 2018 Community Questionnaire which had a response rate from around 30% of all households in Writtle and within which around one in five respondents suggested they would

likely need to relocate within Writtle in the next five years, indicating a need for downsizing to small properties, including 'retirement housing'.

²¹ See paragraph 2.7 and section 6 of the Neighbourhood Plan which present more information on demographic patterns and providing housing in response to an ageing population.

4.18 Although the Local Plan policy suggests development for around '25-units', it is important that development seeks to optimise potential for the site that reflects the constraints and the best qualities of the built form. Meeting the design principles for the site may result in delivery of fewer homes. The scale and form of development should refer to the codes and guidance within the Writtle Design Guide. Key points for this site include:

- The scale of surrounding buildings, which tend to be two-storeys in height and comprise a mix of detached, semi-detached and short terraces of no more than three buildings together.
- The importance of trees within the landscape.
- The form of public open spaces in Writtle.
- The building styles and materials present within the Writtle conservation area.

4.19 Design advice established in the Making Places SPD²² is also relevant and should be referenced in development proposals. Design principles for the site are established in Policy WNP D2 and illustrated in Figure 6.

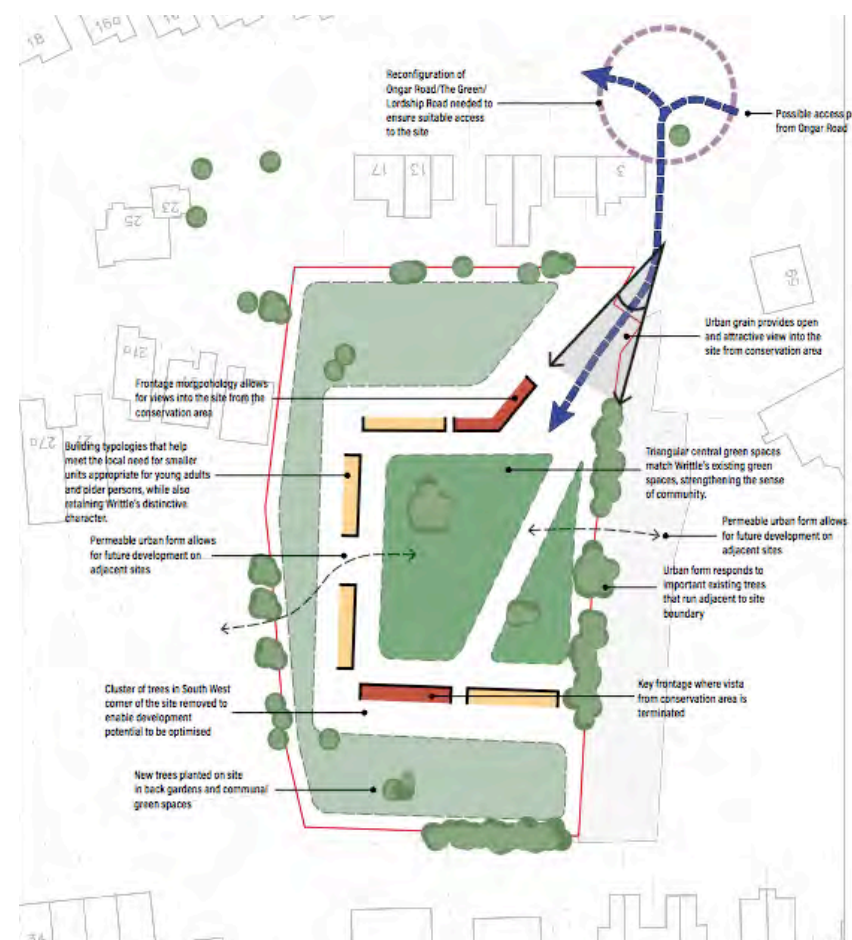


Figure 6: Illustrative design response to principles outlined in Policy WNP D2

²² Chelmsford City Council, January 2021, Making Places – Supplementary Planning Document

Policy WNP D2: Telephone Exchange

Development proposals will be supported which provide homes that align with local need, including dwellings designed for occupation by the elderly and small units offering opportunities for downsizing, and which confirm to the following key design:

- a. Offer a design-led approach clearly demonstrating how the proposal relates to local context, including the setting of the Conservation Area and listed buildings at 49 and 57 The Green.*
- b. Reflect the scale, grain and character of surrounding dwellings and respect neighbouring residential amenity.*
- c. Offer design innovation informed by the surrounding townscape, including the layout of open space, building heights and materials.*
- d. Foster a sense of community designed to provide:
 - i. a pedestrian-friendly environment with pedestrian connections to Ongar Road;*
 - ii. a green setting including public space that is fronted by new homes; and*
 - iii. siting of car parking designed to mitigate the visual impact of cars on the street scene.**
- e. Preserve all significant trees and those with Tree Preservation Orders. Where proposals include felling of other trees to facilitate development, the designs should incorporate re-provision with appropriate species on site, either within private gardens or public open space.*
- f. Include a permeable urban form sufficient to facilitate subsequent development to the east and west of the site, designed to facilitate walking and cycling routes and, where possible, link into existing networks.*
- g. Demonstrate that suitable vehicular access can be achieved into the site.*

The Warren Farm Growth Area

4.20 Land at Warren Farm is allocated in the Chelmsford Local Plan (Strategic Growth Site Policy 2) for a development of around 800 new homes and a Travelling Showpeople site for five serviced plots, as well as supporting on-site community infrastructure.

4.21 The Chelmsford Local Plan establishes a series of principles for the site, which have been further developed through a masterplan for the site adopted by the City Council in February 2021²³. Furthermore, the City Council has also adopted the Making Places SPD, which seeks to promote and secure high-quality sustainable new development. Taken together, these present the framework within which planning applications for development at Warren Farm will be prepared and considered against.

4.22 However, the Chelmsford Local Plan notes (at para 7.97) that:
“Although the development quantum and extent of the allocation is set out in the Local Plan, the site is located in the Parish of Writtle where an emerging Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared. It is envisaged that the Neighbourhood Plan will help to shape this site allocation”.

4.23 The Writtle Design Guide develops the site principles contained within the Local Plan further, establishing more locally specific design principles and considerations for the Warren Farm Growth Area. This approach is in line with ‘Planning for the Future’²⁴ which includes a commitment to local communities being able to produce their own design guides and codes that will help shape the places they want to see delivered. It states:

“We will ask local places to produce their own design guides and codes, informed by listening to local people and considering local context. This will embed standards in planning policy and give local communities the confidence to demand that they are met”

4.24 Design principles and considerations set out in the Writtle Design Guide for the Warren Farm Growth Area are presented overleaf. These expand upon the suite of Local Plan documents and are intended to assist in shaping the development, having regard to the existing character and context of the Neighbourhood Plan area.

²³ See: https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/_resources/assets/inline/full/0/5149492.pdf

²⁴ MHCLG, March 2020, Planning for the Future:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-for-the-future>

Design principles

- Development along the A1060 should carefully consider the approach to Chelmsford, and should provide active frontage to the road, deep front gardens and a landscape buffer should be provided to create a transition between the existing settlement of Chelmsford and the countryside (Figure 7).
- Built development on the periphery of Warren Farm should be of low density, with consideration of stepped building lines and vegetation to reduce the visual mass of the development and which preserves the visual boundary between the more intensely developed suburban areas of Chelmsford and the countryside.
- Green spaces with trees and other natural features integrating opportunities for children's play should be a prominent feature of estate development in Warren Farm.
- Soft landscaping on street facing aspects should be seen as more responsive to the existing streetscape character than hostile hard boundaries. Privacy can still be maintained using hedges and other soft landscaping which is more sympathetic to the character of the area.
- Driveways employing materials such as gravel, clay brick or hoggin surfaces are often more sympathetic to the rural character of the area than concrete or tarmac drives. However, use of loose materials which could result in them being taken onto the highway may be detrimental to highway safety. Use of any such materials used would thus have to be agreed with the relevant authorities.

Design considerations

- Development should provide active frontage to adjacent road and primary routes through the development.
- Screening to adjacent properties should be employed to maintain the privacy of existing properties.
- Existing landscaped boundaries adjacent to countryside should be retained and reinforced where necessary with enhanced hedgerow and tree planting, particularly to the south of the site, to screen the development from sensitive viewpoints such as public rights of way (PROW) in the open countryside.
- Ecological corridors should be integrated within the development, include mixed native species of woodland, hedgerow species and species rich grassland to support biodiversity and maintain a rural character.

4.25 The Local Plan includes a requirement for strategic growth areas to provide plots for self and custom house building. Where proposed a set of plot passports should be produced. These provide a summary of the design parameters for any given plot and help private homebuilders understand what they are allowed to build on the plot.

4.26 Applicants shall refer to ‘Design Code Template for Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding’ (May 2020) published by Chelmsford City Council in support of the Planning Obligations SPD²⁵ and which provides information on the role and content of a Plot Passport, including their relationship with the design codes prepared for the wider site at the planning application stage. A range of housing and delivery models might come forward on the self and custom build plots, including shared delivery through collaboration. To allow for this, any area of self and custom build should be no smaller than ten plots.

4.27 To assist the specific location and layout of new community facilities reference should be made to the ECC ‘Developers Guide to Infrastructure Contributions. (2020), specifically, Appendix D: Exemplar Layouts for Education and Community Facilities.

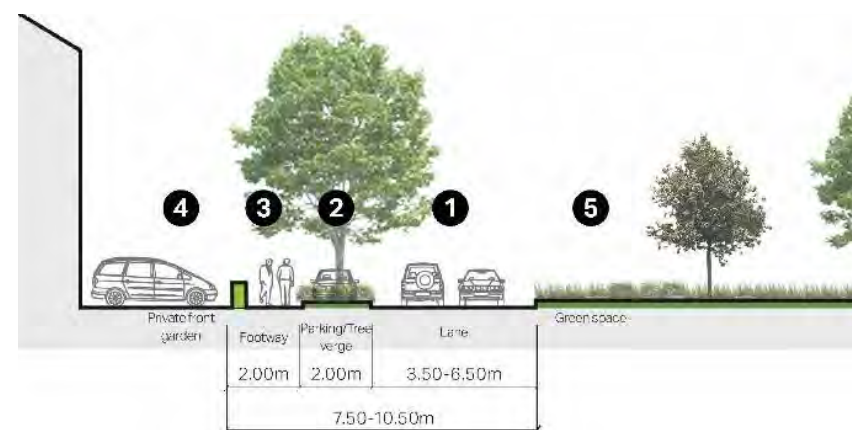


Figure 7: Cross section showing potential approach to Warren Farm development frontage along Roxwell Road as illustrated in the Writtle Design Guide. Key to image: (1) Shared Lane, (2) Verge, (3) Footway, (4) Residential gardens, (5) Landscaped green space. Opportunities for incorporating cycle lanes, potentially integrated within the green space, should also be explored. See the Writtle Design Guide for further information.

²⁵ Adopted January 2021

Policy WNP D3: Warren Farm Growth Area

To enhance local character, setting and distinctiveness, proposals within and adjoining the Warren Farm Growth Area conforming to the principles identified within the Writtle Design Guide at page 58, will be supported.

These are:

- a. development along the A1060 should carefully consider the approach to Chelmsford, and should provide active frontage to the road, deep gardens and a landscape buffer should be provided to create a transition between the existing settlement of Chelmsford and the countryside;*
- b. built development on the periphery of Warren Farm should be of low density, with stepped building lines with breaks of vegetation to reduce the visual mass of the development and which preserves the visual boundary between the more intensely developed suburban areas of Chelmsford and the countryside;*
- c. green spaces with trees and other natural features integrating opportunities for children's play should be a prominent feature of estate development in Warren Farm;*
- d. soft landscaping on street facing aspects should be seen as more responsive to the existing streetscape character than hostile hard boundaries. Privacy can still be maintained using hedges and other soft landscaping which is more sympathetic to the character of the area; and*
- e. driveways employing materials such as gravel, clay brick or hoggin surfaces sympathetic to the rural character of the area rather than concrete or tarmac drives.*

Sites outside the settlement boundary

4.28 Although land outside the defined settlement boundary of the village falls within the Green Belt there do exist a number of brownfield sites, including those in agricultural use, that have historically been subject to development and change. Policies DM6 – DM12 of the Chelmsford Local Plan establish the approach to development in the Green Belt and rural areas. These policies recognise that some infill development may be appropriate in these areas, including the provision of essential infrastructure. Infill development is that which is small in scale and which fits into an existing built-up area. For such development to be acceptable, it is unlikely to comprise more than the filling of small gaps within existing villages where it does not significantly impinge upon the openness of the Green Belt.

4.29 Proposals for change and development on sites outside the settlement boundary often come forward within Writtle. If a brownfield site in the Green Belt is deemed to be appropriate for development, the design principles within Policy WNP D4 shall be applied. These are set out further in the Writtle Design Guide, to which applicants should refer.

Policy WNP D4: Sites outside the settlement boundary

As defined on the Chelmsford Local Plan proposal map, proposals for development outside of (a) the defined settlement boundary of Writtle and (b) the allocated Warren Farm Growth Area, which satisfy Strategic Policy 11 in the Chelmsford Local Plan for infill development in the Green Belt and rural areas, and which also meet the following design principles, will be supported.

Development proposals should:

- a. demonstrate a sympathetic regard to the scale, height, roof line and distinctive architecture of neighbouring buildings, including the palette of materials;*
- b. provide an active frontage along the main streets or roads; and*
- c. where possible, maintain or make use of the footprints and envelopes of existing agricultural sheds and buildings.*

5. Landscape and Environment



Setting

5.1 The residents survey points to the importance attached to the sense of separation between Writtle and Chelmsford as well as the presence of areas of wildlife, natural areas, waterways and associated feeling of tranquillity.

5.2 This sense of separation is defined by the green corridor that exists between Writtle and the western edge of Chelmsford (Figure 8). This follows the natural course of the river corridors flowing through the area. The Green Wedge Study prepared for the City notes that the river valley acts as a 'clear wedge between Chelmsford and Writtle'²⁶.

5.3 The network of rivers and associated streams and tributaries, including the Rivers Can and Wid, Butlers, Roxwell and Sandy Brooks are a key feature of the landscape. The broad extent of flood zones 2 and 3 form an important part of the 'gap' between Chelmsford and Writtle, but also the wider morphology of Chelmsford, with river valleys and green fingers reaching into the city centre. One such finger, extending from Central Park and through Admirals Park comprises an important green lung for the city as well as an attractive walking and cycling route between Writtle and Chelmsford.

5.4 The sense of separation is strengthened through the presence of farmland and the network of parks, gardens and sports facilities in the 'gap', including the Old Chelmsfordians Sports Ground, Writtle College Sports Grounds, Hylands School and associated playing pitches, the Paradise Road Sports ground, and, to the south of the Greenbury Way (A414), Hylands House and Park.

5.5 The Warren Farm development area sits to the north of this 'gap'. The opportunity exists to reflect the green space network through provision of pitches and parks that connect into the green finger leading into Chelmsford, but which also reinforces the separate identity of Writtle and Chelmsford.

²⁶ Amec Foster Wheeler for Chelmsford City Council, February 2017, Green Wedges and Green Corridors: Defining Chelmsford's River Valleys, Review Report

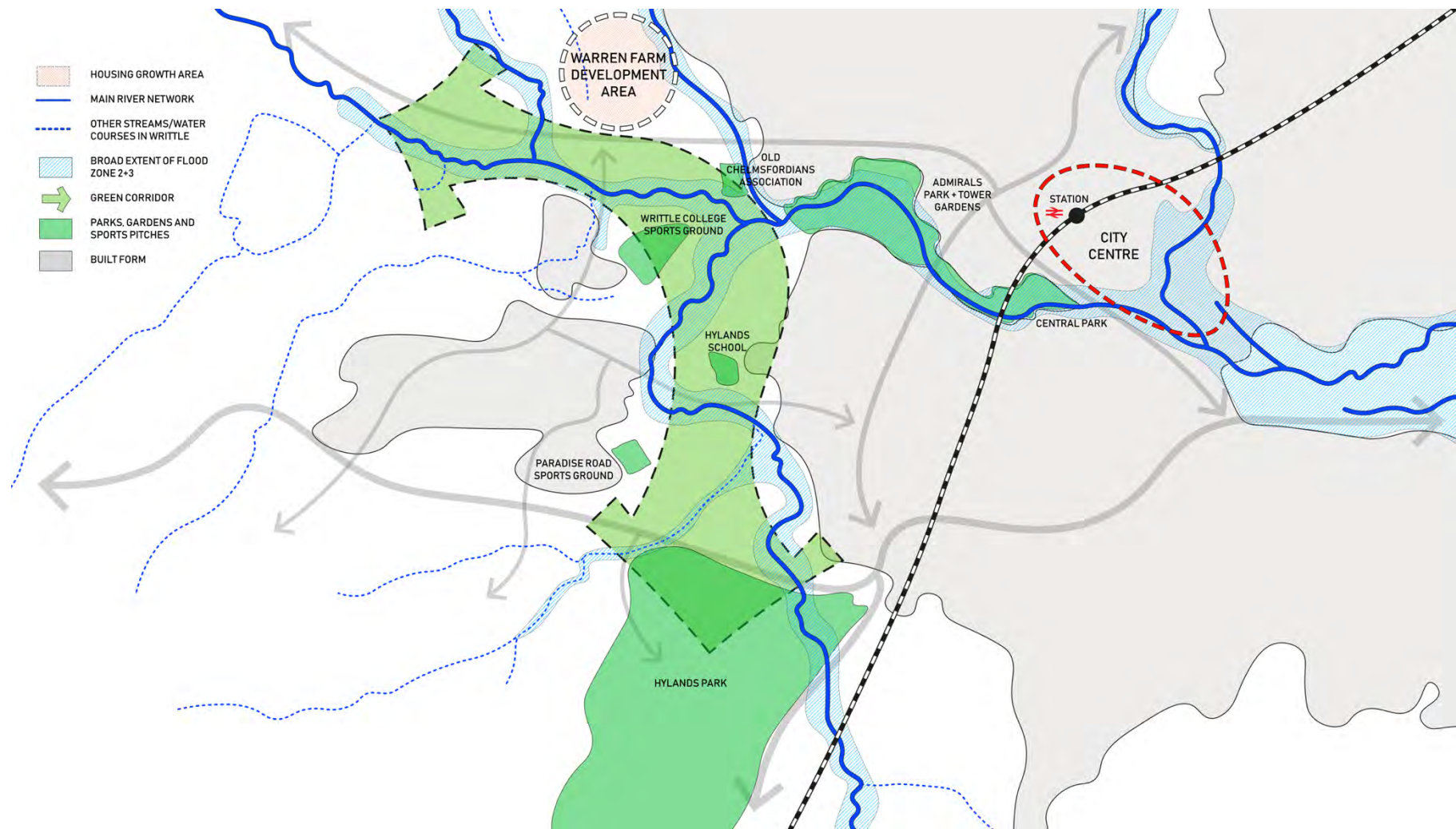


Figure 8: The green and blue corridor between Writtle and Chelmsford

5.6 This message is also made in the landscape sensitivity and capacity study for Chelmsford²⁷, which notes that new development should create a more sympathetic urban edge, and that there may be opportunities to reinstate landscape features. Equally, the Chelmsford Green Infrastructure Strategic Plan²⁸ recommends that development at Warren Farm should:

- Reinforce existing green corridors.
- Create a gateway at junction with Roxwell Road and Lordship Road.
- Improve pedestrian and cycle links across the main Roxwell Road.

5.7 The Landscape Sensitivity report notes that the Parish lies in three separate landscape character areas, each with their own characteristics and qualities, and which have been used to draw out wider points for future design and development in the broad ‘west of Chelmsford area’. Key points are:

- The main built-up area of the Parish falls within the Writtle Farmland Plateau Landscape Character Area²⁹. This describes Writtle as being separated from Chelmsford by the

floodplains of the Rivers Can and Wid, and that away from the main roads, there is a sense of tranquillity.

- The Church Spire within Writtle is noted as a visible landmark across the farmland plateau.
- Concerns are expressed in relation to disturbing the sense of tranquillity through increased traffic, the potential increased pressure on minor roads and lanes, and the visual intrusion of any new development.

5.8 The studies outlined above recommend that any new development responds to the historic settlement pattern and makes use of materials that are appropriate to local landscape character.

5.9 The defining features of the landscape are further explored in the Historic Landscape Characterisation study of Essex³⁰. This reflects on the historic settlement pattern and presence of greens and commons in the area, which might act as design cues for future growth and development. The study notes:

“This area [Historic landscape Character Zone 66] is located on the south facing side of the rolling plateau which lies between the River Wid to the south and the River Can to the north. The geology comprises Boulder Clays in the western half of the area, with head deposits to the north and outcrops of Claygate Beds to the south and east. Anciently, this area was

²⁷ Amec Foster Wheeler for Chelmsford City Council, March 2017, Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment, Report

²⁸ Amec Foster Wheeler for Chelmsford City Council, January 2018, Chelmsford Green Infrastructure Strategic Plan 2018-2036

²⁹ See Writtle Design Guide (Aecom, February 2020) for further information on the Landscape Character Areas

³⁰ English Heritage and Essex County Council, 2011, The Historic Landscape Characterisation Report of Essex

part of Writtle Forest, a medieval hunting forest. Substantial pockets of woodland survive, as does the historic settlement pattern of dispersed villages focussed on greens and commons, and scattered farmsteads in an irregular field and woodland pattern. Only within Writtle itself has development gradually spread to encompass two greens and take on the characteristics of a nucleated settlement in relatively modern times. There has been moderate boundary loss, creating some areas of large, but still irregular, fields. Hylands Park has been the focus of greatest boundary loss, but the park itself adds considerable character to the area”.

5.10 The Writtle Design Guide prepared alongside the Neighbourhood Plan has assessed the landscape character of the Parish further, the positive aspects of character and sensitivity to change. A set of design principles have been created for each landscape character area (Figure 9), which are presented in Appendix 1 (Items M, N and O) of this Neighbourhood Plan. These add a spatial dimension and clarity to policies in both the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan, and how they should be interpreted in Writtle. It is expected that proposals for development respond positively to these principles.



Figure 9: Landscape Character Areas within Writtle (source, Writtle Design Guide, Aecom, February 2020)

Policy WNP LE1: Setting

Proposals for development which would not diminish the separation and openness between Writtle and Chelmsford, nor between the village of Writtle and Writtle University Campus, and which demonstrate that proposals will:

- a. conserve and where possible enhance native hedgerows and mature woodland;*
- b. include screen planting of species native to Writtle around new development to minimise visual impact; and*
- c. incorporate materials that reflect local character as found in neighbouring buildings, will be supported.*



Figure 10: viewing looking north from Writtle towards Chelmsford (source: AECOM)



Figure 11: Footbridge over the River Can along Lawford Lane (source: AECOM)



Figure 12: View north-east along Highwood Road (source: AECOM)

Project / Aspiration LEA: Tree Planting

The planting of new trees in the landscape gap between Chelmsford and Writtle, and particularly along the edge of the Chelmsford area, is welcome, where it will help screen the extent of the urban area and help retain the separate rural character of Writtle. This could be achieved through actions emerging in response to the climate emergency declared by the City Council

Natural environment

5.11 The landscape character and setting of the Parish is defined by the network of green and blue infrastructure, comprising open spaces, fields, trees and hedges, rivers, brooks and ponds. Indeed, the topography of the countryside is gently undulating and dissected by several small brooks within relatively shallow valleys.

5.12 Many of the fields surrounding Writtle are delineated by hedges, often with gaps containing single mature deciduous trees. This affords open views across the countryside, arable fields and river valleys towards patches of woodland and, in the distance, the built-up area of Chelmsford. This gives Writtle a picturesque, rural character and identity separate from Chelmsford. These expansive views do however mean that the landscape is visually sensitive to new development.

5.13 Within the river valleys the presence of mature vegetation, including trees and scrub, provide a sense of enclosure. These create a sense of tranquillity and naturalness. The River Can is north of Writtle Village and runs from west to east. The River Wid is located east of the village and runs from south to north where it connects with the River Can north-east of Writtle Village. Both rivers form an important part of the landscape of the Parish and are a key habitat. There are many streams and brooks in the area including Butlers, Roxwell and Sandy Brooks which all contribute to the character of the landscape. Springs such as Reeds Springs are also an important characteristic.

5.14 Within the Village, well-vegetated front gardens contribute to the character of the streetscape though are sensitive to change, particularly through provision of off-street parking. Green boundary treatments around the front and rear of properties, including trees and hedgerows, are a strong feature of the area and give it a verdant character.

5.15 The village ponds (Figure 13) are also characteristic with the most significant being Wear Pond on The Green in the east of the village. It is a focal point within the village and is used by young and old. There are other ponds including Gore Pond and Tower Pond which provide important habitats, a pond at the Old Vicarage which could have an association with the Priory, as well as those on the outer edge of the Parish, such as that to the south of Admirals Park on the walking route to Chelmsford. Many of the ponds were originally man-made but have been reclaimed by nature.

5.16 Several lakes are visible from public footpaths, including those within the Writtle University Campus. Evidence of moated properties are also seen and include St John's Hunting Lodge, Montpelier, Moor Hall, and Newney Green. The network of rivers, brooks, ponds and lakes are important for biodiversity, providing excellent habitats for a range of species.

5.17 Any proposals impacting on the natural environment will be required to demonstrate the potential impacts and any mitigation measures that may be required to offset these. Such measures should result in a net biodiversity gain and improvement to the quality of habitats. Where off-site replacement is proposed, this should be as close as possible to the development site.

Policy WNP LE2: Natural Environment

Development proposals which are expected to retain and enhance the natural environment within the neighbourhood area including mature trees, hedgerows, ponds and other multi-functional green infrastructure and are expected to result in net environmental and biodiversity gains will be supported.



Figure 13: Ponds in Writtle

Access to the Countryside

5.18 Writtle is surrounded by attractive countryside, providing opportunities for leisure and recreation for all to enjoy, and benefits from an extensive pattern of footpaths radiating out of the village and crossing the village.

5.19 Several long-distance footpaths travel through the Parish. These include the Centenary Circle, a 21-mile route around Chelmsford established in 1988, passing through Sandon, Chignal Smealey, Galleywood, Writtle, and Broomfield. The section through the Parish provides views of the village from Lawford Lane and connect the village with Hylands Park. Part of the route is shared with the Saffron Trail, a 71 mile long-distance path stretching all the way from Southend-on-Sea in south-east Essex to Saffron Walden in the north-west.

5.20 National Cycle Route 1 also runs through the Parish, connecting the village with the centre of Chelmsford and east towards Heybridge, Tiptree and Colchester. Travelling west it provides a long distance cycle link to Harlow, the Lea Valley and Queen Elizabeth Park.

5.21 Essex County Council maintains a Definitive Map of Public Rights of Way (Figure 14). An interactive map³¹ is also available for general purposes. The Public Rights of Way include footpaths, bridleways, byways and cycle paths. For the purposes of the Neighbourhood Plan, these are termed 'green routes'.

5.22 All existing green routes should be retained and incorporated, wherever possible, within proposals for development. Any diversion or stopping up of an existing route will be subject to an application for permission.

5.23 Any proposed new routes that complement the existing network of public rights of way in Writtle, or improvements proposed to existing routes, should be delivered in accordance with best practice principles for design and maintenance. Sustrans, for example³², recommends that cycle routes should include a smooth surface with good drainage properties and long-term durability. Handbooks for cycle route design³³ and greenway management³⁴ published by Sustrans are a source of best practice for implementing and maintaining routes for all. Other relevant guidance includes the Essex Design Guide, providing information on how to create safe and suitable routes for cyclists in conjunction with the Highways Technical

³¹ See: <https://www.essexhighways.org/getting-around/public-rights-of-way/prow-interactive-map.aspx>

³² See: <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/our-services/our-expertise/route-design/sustrans-design-guidance> (accessed March 2018)

³³ Sustrans, April 2014, Sustrans design manual: Handbook for cycle-friendly design

³⁴ Sustrans, June 2016, Sustrans design manual: Greenway management handbook

Manual³⁵. Latest guidance published by the Department for Transport (Cycle Infrastructure Design LTN 1/20)³⁶ shall be referred to and is currently being implemented by ECC.

Project / Aspiration LEB: Access to the Countryside

The provision of improved green routes and, where possible, new green routes, is strongly encouraged. Where new routes, or improvements to existing routes, are provided, they should accord with best practice design principles, including that established by Sustrans in the 'Handbook for Cycle Friendly Design' and 'Greenway Management handbook'.

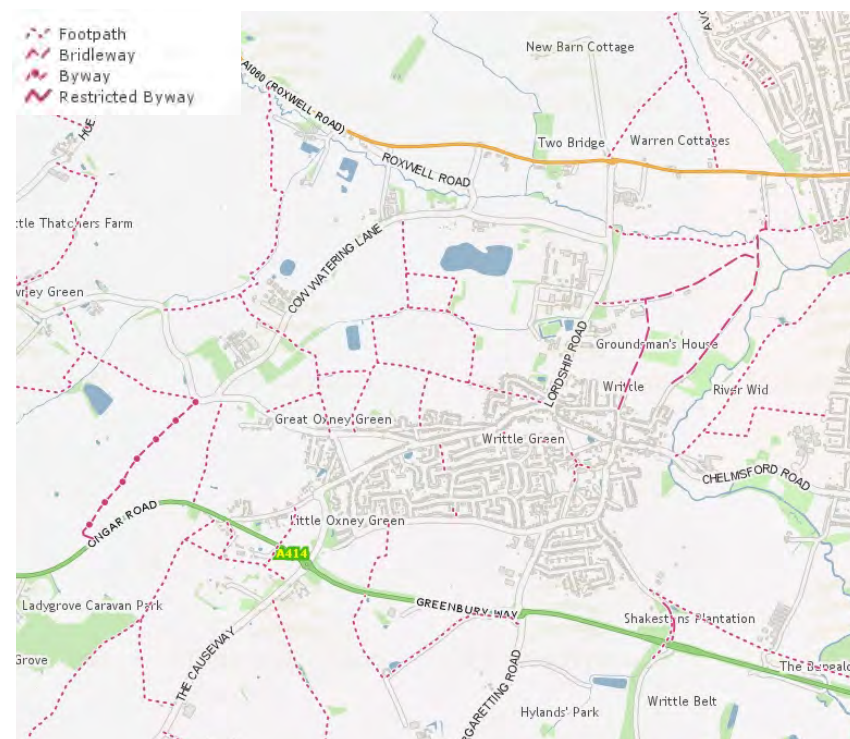


Figure 14: Public Rights of Way in Writtle (source: Essex County Council). In addition to the routes shown above, there are also many permissive footpaths, particularly within the grounds of Writtle University College.

³⁵ See: <https://www.essexdesignguide.co.uk/design-details/highways-technical-manual/>

³⁶ See: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-120>

Local Green Spaces

5.24 Through the residents survey attention was drawn to the retention and preservation of Writtle's landscape features. Improving the quality of the street scene was also considered particularly important. The Village Green for example, which is at the heart of the Village, and which is recognised as being one of the most attractive village greens in Essex, is somewhat undermined by the presence of car parking surrounding this. Solutions that improve these conditions are required.

5.25 There are a number of green spaces in and around Writtle, including, amongst others, the Village Green and ponds, Oxney Green and the Paradise Road sports ground.

"Writtle possesses one of the most attractive village greens in Essex"

Pevnsner, 1954, The Buildings of England

5.26 Under the NPPF, Neighbourhood Plans can designate Local Green Spaces which are of importance to the local community. The NPPF states that Local Green Spaces should only be designated where the green space is:

- a) *In reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;*
- b) *Demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquility or richness of its wildlife; and*
- c) *Local in character and is not an extensive tract of land'.³⁷*

5.27 Many of the green spaces in Writtle already benefit from some form of policy protection as established through the NPPF or through Local Plan policy. However, it is clear from public consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan that the local community would support designation of green spaces in Writtle as Local Green Spaces. Through a review of the Neighbourhood Plan, the Parish will seek to consult with the community and landowners to identify suitable green spaces for designation and how they satisfy the criteria.

³⁷ Paragraph 100, MHCLG, February 2019, National Planning Policy Framework

Project / Aspiration LEC: Local Green Spaces

The Parish is keen to identify potential green spaces in the Parish that are suitable for designation as 'Local Green Space' and which may form the basis of a policy in a future review of the Neighbourhood Plan.

The process for designation would involve consultation with the community and with landowners to better understand the suitability and appropriateness of any designation, and how the identified sites satisfy the criteria for designation established in the NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance.

6. Living and Working in Writtle



Housing

6.1 The Chelmsford Local Plan, at Policy DM1, requires all major developments (those being ten units or greater) to provide a mix of housing types. Supporting text to the Local Plan (see Table 5 of the Local Plan) sets out the indicative mix of housing types that should be delivered across the Chelmsford administrative area. Note is also made of needing to support an ageing population and those with a need for Specialist Residential Accommodation, including independent living for people over the age of 55 whose current home no longer meets their needs.

6.2 Through consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan strong messages have been made in respect of the need for housing for the elderly in Writtle, including opportunities for people to downsize, and which may then free up a larger home for families. The need to plan for an ageing population is emphasised through demographic data which shows that³⁸, across the Chelmsford administrative area, around a fifth of the total population growth in the ten-year period 2015-2025 will be in the over 65 age group³⁹. There are also anticipated to be increasing numbers of people over 65 with dementia, impacting upon the housing stock, with more places in supported and sheltered housing required.

6.3 This is reflected in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (2019)⁴⁰ prepared by ECC for Chelmsford which notes that the proportion of people aged 65+ across Chelmsford will continue to rise. This assessment also refers to information prepared used POPPI (Projecting Older People's Population Information) (2019) which highlights increasing concerns about mobility in the ageing population, hindering ability to get outdoors, to get up and down stairs and move around the house. This all points to a need for new housing that responds to changing demographics and associated health issues.

6.4 Planning Practice Guidance⁴¹ notes that there are a variety of specialist housing types that can meet the needs of older people. This includes, but is not limited to, (1) age-restricted general market housing, (2) retirement living or sheltered housing, (3) extra care housing or housing-with care, and (4) residential care homes and nursing homes.

³⁸ Essex County Council, Organisational Intelligence, May 2016, Essex Local Authority Portraits: A profile of people living in Chelmsford

³⁹ Also see para 2.7 of this Neighbourhood Plan and the adopted Chelmsford Local Plan (para 2.4)

⁴⁰ See: <https://data.essex.gov.uk/dataset/e73xk/chelmsford-jsna-profile-2019>

⁴¹ MHCLG, June 2019, PPG: Housing for older and disabled people <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-for-older-and-disabled-people> accessed December 2019

6.5 In Chelmsford, planning permission was granted in May 2019 for retirement accommodation on Rainsford Road⁴². The application included analysis prepared utilising the Housing LIN toolkit: Strategic Housing for Older People (SHOP@)⁴³. This notes that, across the Chelmsford administrative area, there will be a 60% increase in people aged over 75 living alone between 2014 and 2030. It also notes that most older persons currently own their own home and would be looking to purchase a property to be able to downsize and thus free up their existing house. Furthermore, it notes that, across Chelmsford, there is a current shortfall of accommodation for sheltered housing, and that this will increase from a current shortfall of 435 units to 2,236 in 2035.

6.6 It is thus clear that, as we plan for the future, so we need to consider the needs of an ageing population. Support is given in Writtle for provision of housing for the elderly, including schemes that provide smaller homes for those looking to downsize. Housing for the elderly should ideally offer easy access to community facilities, services and good public transport. Although this Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate sites for development, it does support the principle of development on the BT Site (as allocated in the Local Plan) for elderly housing, subject to viability matters.

6.7 Where housing for the elderly is to be provided it should meet the design criteria contained in Section 4 of this Neighbourhood Plan. Further guidance also exists which should be considered. This includes the principles of inclusive design outlined in Planning Practice Guidance⁴⁴, as well as those principles set out in the HAPPI (Housing our Ageing Population Panel for Innovation) report⁴⁵ which are applicable to housing for elderly people and age-friendly places.

6.8 Planning Practice Guidance notes that:

'accessible and adaptable housing enables people to live more independently, while also saving on health and social costs in the future. It is better to build accessible housing from the outset rather than have to make adaptations at a later stage – both in terms of cost and with regard to people being able to remain safe and independent in their homes.'

6.9 In line with this, opportunities to provide flexible housing types that can be adapted over time in response to changing lifestyles will be supported.

⁴² Planning Application reference: 17/01899/FUL

⁴³

<https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/browse/HousingExtraCare/ExtraCareStrategy/SHOP/SHOPATI/> accessed December 2019

⁴⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-for-older-and-disabled-people> accessed December 2019

⁴⁵ <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/browse/Design-building/HAPPI/> accessed December 2019

Policy WNP LW1: Housing type and mix

New housing within the defined settlement boundary of Writtle and within the Warren Farm Growth Area will be supported where the following criteria are met:

- a. The size and mix of the dwellings and the tenure of the affordable dwellings are consistent with the most up-to-date evidence of housing need.*
- b. Subject to Local Plan thresholds for the provision of affordable housing, proposals provide the maximum viable amount of affordable housing.*
- c. All affordable-housing is designed to be tenure-blind i.e.: it should be integrated into the design of the overall proposal and be of an equal quality in terms of its design and use of materials compared to the market housing element.*
- d. Provision is made for a mix of housing, including, where appropriate, bungalows, supported and sheltered housing, and independent living, that meets the needs of the ageing population. Such housing provision should be located within easy access of shops, facilities and public transport services. Housing should be well-integrated within the wider neighbourhood and be designed in accordance with the HAPPI principles.*

Support will be given to proposals for new homes that designed to be adaptable to meet future to accommodate needs of occupiers at different stages of their lifecycle.

Community Facilities

6.10 The presence and provision of social and community infrastructure is critical to sustaining and meeting the day-to-day needs of local residents, providing access to essential services and facilities, and helping to maintain a high quality of life. Such facilities, which include schools, healthcare, churches, sports⁴⁶ and community centres, also have an important role to play in strengthening social networks, sense of community and identity.

6.11 Writtle currently thrives socially because of its range of community facilities and services, which should be preserved. This message was highlighted through consultation exercises with residents expressing a high level of satisfaction with regard to available facilities. However, many thought more could be done to promote and improve the role and quality of facilities, local clubs and societies.

6.12 The Chelmsford Local Plan, at policies DM20 and DM21, recognises the importance of delivering new community facilities and protecting existing facilities. The Local Plan clarifies what is covered by community facilities and services. Policy WNP LW2 below lists important facilities within Writtle that should be protected from loss. Where appropriate, the neighbourhood portion of the Community Infrastructure Levy payable to the Parish Council may be used to

support the ongoing maintenance and improvement of these facilities. This might extend to the provision of publicly accessible water fountains and bottle refill points, which are important for health and well-being, as well as being a positive response to the climate change agenda.

6.13 Where facilities are to be provided, or improvements made, they should be accessible to all, with an emphasis placed on good walking and cycling links to these, as well as provision of secure, and dry, cycle parking provision. All facilities should be designed to reflect the character and qualities of the site and local setting, referencing key features identified in the Village Design Statement.

⁴⁶ Sports and Leisure facilities are a particular feature of Writtle and are addressed separately in Policy WNP LW3.

Policy WNP LW2: Community Facilities

(1) Important local community facilities

Existing community facilities will be protected from loss. Important local facilities in Writtle are:

- a. All Saints Church.*
- b. Writtle Library.*
- c. The Beryl Platt Community Centre.*
- d. Writtle Christian Centre.*
- e. Writtle Village Hall.*
- f. Doctors' Surgery.*
- g. Writtle Sports and Social Club.*
- h. Writtle Infant and Junior Schools.*
- i. Public Houses: The Chequers, The Rose and Crown, The Wheatsheaf, Horse and Groom*

(2) Loss of facilities

Proposals that involve the loss of any space used for community purposes will only be supported where an equivalent replacement for alternative provision is made for that use, and or where the application is supported by material which demonstrates the benefits to the community which outweigh the harm created by loss of that facility.

(3) New or improved facilities

Proposals for new or improved community facilities will be supported and should:

- a. include provision of flexible space that can be used for a variety of community uses;*
- b. be provided in locations that capitalise on opportunities to promote walking, cycling and use of public transport;*
- c. be easily accessible to all; and*
- d. respond to local character, design policies and guidance set out in the Neighbourhood Plan and the supporting Writtle Design Guide.*

(4) Community water taps

Proposals for provision of public water taps and water bottle refill points are welcome, though should be appropriately designed to reflect the setting and should not cause obstruction in the public realm. Potential locations for such facilities include:

- a. The Village car park adjacent to the Writtle Parish Office.*
- b. Paradise Road Sports Fields.*

Sports and Leisure

6.14 Writtle is home to a wide range of sports clubs and associations. These form part of the setting of the village, with grounds located in the green gap between Writtle and Chelmsford, and are also important to community cohesion, health and social well-being. Most of these facilities provide for outdoor sports and recreation. Through consultation, responses suggested a need for indoor facilities. These do exist, at Writtle University College, and the Parish is keen to work in partnership with the University to make these accessible to the community.

6.15 Strategic Priority 4 of the Chelmsford Local Plan seeks to protect and enhance leisure use, including sports facilities. This is also recognised at Strategic Policy S5, which seeks to protect such facilities from change of use or redevelopment.

6.16 As part of the Warren Farm growth allocation (Strategic Growth Site Policy 2) Chelmsford City Council requires the provision of new sports pitches. These are to provide for a wider shortfall across Chelmsford as a whole. The provision of such facilities is supported, subject to these being complementary to existing provision in Writtle, and where they are accessible to all for use, particularly younger members of the community. Safe walking and cycling routes should be provided to the proposed new sports pitches, with any associated buildings or structures designed in consideration of its surrounding context, helping to achieve a cohesive form of development, whilst minimising visual impact on the green gap and separation between Chelmsford and Writtle.

Policy WNP LW3: Sports and Leisure

Proposals for development which retain provision of existing and new sports and recreation facilities will be supported. Existing facilities to be protected for sport and recreation purposes include:

- a. Paradise Road Sports Fields (Writtle Sports and Social Club).*
- b. Writtle University College Sports Ground.*
- c. Old Chelmsfordians Association and Tennis Club.*

Proposals for the improvement of the existing sport and recreation facilities on these sites will be supported where they will not have a significant adverse impact on residential amenity, nor diminish the sense of separation between Writtle and Chelmsford.

Proposals that allow public use of indoor and outdoor sports facilities at Writtle University College are welcome.

The provision of new sport and recreation facilities at the Warren Farm Growth Area is encouraged but should be complementary to the existing sports and leisure facilities within the Parish.

Proposals for sport and leisure development including provision for:

- a. safe and direct walking and cycling, routes, enabling access for all; and*
- b. appropriate artificial lighting which will not impact on the living environment, will be supported.*

Writtle Village centre

6.17 Successful places benefit from the presence of local centres that comprise a range of services and facilities to cater for day-to-day needs, which allow people to shop within walking distance of the home, and to engage in other social activities and events.

6.18 Writtle is identified in the Chelmsford Local Plan as a 'key service settlement within the Green Belt'. This means it is a place that provides 'a range of services and facilities' for its residents, including convenience shopping and other community facilities. The Local Plan notes that growth in key service settlements should '*enhance their service role... promoting stronger communities*'. Shops are dispersed across Writtle though, with those at Long Brandocks and towards the eastern end of the Village providing for the main day-to-day convenience shopping needs of its residents.

6.19 The area around The Green, which is the heart of the village, also forms an important cluster of retail premises and other complementary local centre uses, including community facilities. However, this does not act as a traditional centre, and the main retail frontage is fragmented, with residential properties located between commercial properties and community facilities. This is clear from the Chelmsford Local Plan proposals map, which shows a discontinuous line along the northern side of The Green as comprising the Local Centre retail frontage. Policy DM5 (clause D) of the Chelmsford Local Plan states that in such locations, the change of use from ground floor units away from retail use will only be permitted where it would reinforce the role and function of the centre.

6.20 There has traditionally been a relatively high churn of businesses along The Green, partly related to the fragmented nature of the retail frontage, partly related to the volume of traffic along The Green. In this Neighbourhood Plan we support the retention and protection of retail and other local centre activities along The Green, and encourage new uses to locate here which complement the role and function of the area.

6.21 It also recognises that the setting of The Green could be improved, reducing the impact of vehicular traffic through public realm measures that slow speeds and improve the relationship between properties and The Green.

6.22 The presence of parked cars can be a physical and visual barrier between The Green and shops and services along it. The importance of parking spaces for local businesses in the centre is recognised, but the aspiration to improve the quality of the public realm, and thus the setting of businesses along The Green, can be achieved without loss of parking, through introduction of new materials to define the different uses of space, and through introduction of street planting and raingardens as appropriate that soften the impact of vehicular traffic.

Policy WNP LW4: Writtle Village centre

Proposals for new development and change of use within the area of retail frontage in the village centre, as shown on Figure 15, which provide active ground floor uses that contribute to the diversity of the centre, including shops, financial and professional services, cafes and restaurants (Use Class E(a) – E(c)), drinking establishments ('sui generis') and community facilities (Use Class E(e), E(f), F1, F2) will be supported.

Proposals for new retail premises along The Green will be supported where they complement the existing mix of uses in Writtle and where it can be demonstrated that the application:

- I. Contributes to the attractiveness, vitality and viability of the area.*
- II. Responds positively to the scale and grain of the existing built form as expressed in the Writtle Design Guide and design policies in this Neighbourhood Plan, and preserves and enhances the Conservation Area.*
- III. Either retains or creates active street frontages*

Proposals that result in the loss of such use will need to demonstrate that in the periods immediately prior to submission of a planning application, that:

- a. The land or premises in question has not been in active use for a period of at least twelve months.*
- b. Active marketing efforts have been made for a period of at least six months to attract alternative commercial uses, and that this is supported by evidence to demonstrate that marketing has been undertaken and subject to peer review.*

Project / Aspiration LWA: Public realm project – The Green

The Parish will investigate the potential for a public-realm improvement scheme along The Green in partnership with Chelmsford City Council and Essex County Council as appropriate. Any such scheme would be subject to community involvement, with the intention being to minimise the impact of vehicular traffic on the setting of The Green and connection between these and businesses.

Any scheme would seek to create a better balance between pedestrian and vehicular space, slow traffic down, rationalise and better define areas of parking and introduce new planting where possible. The scheme should make use of a simple and consistent palette of materials and street furniture that help define the centre, complement the materials and features within the conservation area, and which might provide opportunities for people to sit and relax.



Figure 15: Writtle village centre

Employment Opportunities

6.23 The Chelmsford Local Plan, at Policy DM4, seeks to retain employment uses, including those in 'Rural Employment Areas'. It notes that such uses make an important contribution to the economy of Chelmsford.

6.24 The Chelmsford Local Plan identifies two 'Rural Employment Areas' in Writtle, being (i) Reeds Farm, Cow Watering Lane, and (ii) The Warren Estate, Lordship Road. Through consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan, concerns were raised about traffic impacts, noise, safety and pollution associated with employment areas. In this Plan, proposals that retain and provide additional employment opportunities in the Rural Employment Areas are supported, subject to consideration of amenity, traffic and visual impact.

6.25 Writtle University College is also recognised for its contribution to the economy. At Strategic Policy S8 of the Local Plan, it is noted that there needs to be a provision of flexible local employment space to meet the employment and economic needs of Chelmsford. In Writtle there is a unique dynamic between the presence of the University, the need to support economic growth and to protect the setting of the village. The University is designated as a Special Policy Area in the Chelmsford Local Plan (at Policy SPA6). The intention of Policy SPA6 is to support the role and function of the University. The Neighbourhood Plan is supportive of new employment opportunities that are created as a result of linkages to the University and the economic benefits this brings. These need not necessarily be located within the University estate.

6.26 Within the Parish there are a number of examples of former agricultural buildings and estates that have been converted for employment use. These have enabled farm diversification, led to the sustainable re-use of vacant buildings and provided opportunities for the establishment and development of small businesses which generate income and employment opportunities for local people. Future conversions are supported within the Plan subject to consideration of visual impact and traffic volume issues.

6.27 To help maintain the local economy while protecting the character of the local area from inappropriate development, the Plan supports the sustainable growth and expansion of business and enterprise through the development and where appropriate conversion of existing buildings. Specifically, this is intended to:

- Promote viable and sustainable local businesses within the Writtle Parish.
- Promote the diversification of rural businesses.
- Encourage new businesses to provide a wider range of local produce, services and leisure facilities, to provide local employment and attract visitors to the Parish.

6.28 The Neighbourhood Plan also actively promotes the provision of faster broadband speeds and improved mobile reception, to support existing businesses, and facilitate opportunities for home working. This is addressed in Policy WNP LW6.

Policy WNP LW5: Local Employment Opportunities

Encouragement is given to proposals that maximise opportunities for local people to access employment, including training initiatives, and development that includes premises for micro and start-up businesses.

Proposals for new employment activities that are related to the specialist research and teaching at Writtle University College are supported subject to their accordance with the criteria of other relevant policies within the Development Plan.

Proposals that create new employment opportunities will be supported where:

- a. They do not result in a material increase in large and heavy vehicle traffic on non-strategic routes within the Parish.*
- b. They are well integrated with and complement existing businesses.*
- c. They do not have a significant impact on the local living environment and the amenities of adjacent residential properties or other land uses.*
- d. Their size and design respects the immediate surroundings within which they are to be located. Where located within the village proposals should reflect the guidance and key design characteristics and qualities identified in Tables 2-3 of this document and Table 1 and Appendix 1 of the Writtle Design Guide.*

Communication Technology

6.29 The NPPF states that *'advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social well-being'*.⁴⁷

6.30 Slow internet speeds were though cited as a local issue in the business survey undertaken by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. This is backed up in data from Ofcom which shows that average broadband download speeds in Writtle are far below those in Chelmsford⁴⁸. Improved broadband provision will help support the local economy and increased opportunities for working from home. Policy S10 of the adopted Chelmsford Local Plan states that all new properties should allow for the provision of superfast broadband as and when it is available. However, the quality of mobile reception also varies across Writtle, and by provider⁴⁹.

Policy WNP LW6: Communication Technology

Proposals for new development should be capable of receiving high speed and reliable mobile and broadband connections.

Where appropriate cabling and ducting is to be provided to the premises and linked to infrastructure networks to enable the fastest available connections, proposals will be supported.

⁴⁷ Para 112, MHCLG, February 2019, NPPF

⁴⁸ See <https://indicators.cdrc.ac.uk/digital/broadband-speed-map/> accessed June 2019

⁴⁹ See: <https://checker.ofcom.org.uk/mobile-coverage> accessed December 2019

7. Moving About



Active Travel

7.1 Results of the Writtle residents survey⁵⁰ indicate that the car is the main mode of transport for residents, but that residents also consider traffic to be one of the worst aspects of village life. Routes into Chelmsford City Centre and the station are important for employment, shopping, leisure and education purposes.

7.2 As an alternative to the car, it is possible to cycle between the village and city centre, along National Cycle Route 1, which is also branded as the Writtle Cycle Route (Figure 16). Parts of this have recently been upgraded and it offers an attractive route through parkland into the city centre. However, within Writtle itself, there is limited provision for cyclists. Although there is some provision along Paradise Road and linking to Hylands Park, it is the gaps in the network that are as much a determinant of how well any routes will be used. Critical gaps exist between Hylands Park and National Cycle Route 1, between Writtle and Hylands Secondary School on Chelmsford Road, and between Writtle University College and the Warren Farm Growth Area. Where new cycle routes are to be provided they should reflect best practice principles, drawing on examples from The Netherlands and Denmark⁵¹.

7.3 The distance that can be covered by bicycle in five or ten minutes is substantial, and efforts that help make this the 'norm' for short distances, rather than travelling by car, should be encouraged⁵²: particularly for those who may not have access to a car – children and younger members of the community for example: to put this into context, almost a quarter of all respondents to the Writtle residents survey said they used the car for the school run.

7.4 The Government's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy⁵³ points to the importance of and need for investment in new infrastructure to support active travel. Where investment is targeted towards improved routes and facilities they should be designed to benefit all and make short, everyday journeys easy and accessible. All walking routes should reflect the 'Five C's'⁵⁴:

- *Connected*: good pedestrian routes which link the places where people want to go, and form a network.
- *Convenient*: direct routes following desire lines, with easy-to-use crossings.
- *Comfortable*: good quality footways, with adequate widths and without obstructions.
- *Convivial*: attractive, well-lit and safe, and with variety along the route.
- *Conspicuous*: legible routes easy to find and follow, with surface treatments to guide pedestrians.

⁵⁰ IDA Consulting Limited for the Writtle NP Steering Group, Writtle Parish Council, February 2019, Summary Report on the 2018 Neighbourhood Plan Survey

⁵¹ The London Cycling Design Standards for example includes guidance and advice for the delivery of cycle friendly infrastructure based upon best practice lessons from cities across the globe.

⁵² Indeed, this is now required by the Department for Transport. See: Statutory Guidance, May 2020, Traffic Management Act 2004: network management in response to COVID-19

⁵³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycling-and-walking-investment-strategy>

⁵⁴ As first recommended by the Department for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, in Encouraging Walking, 2000

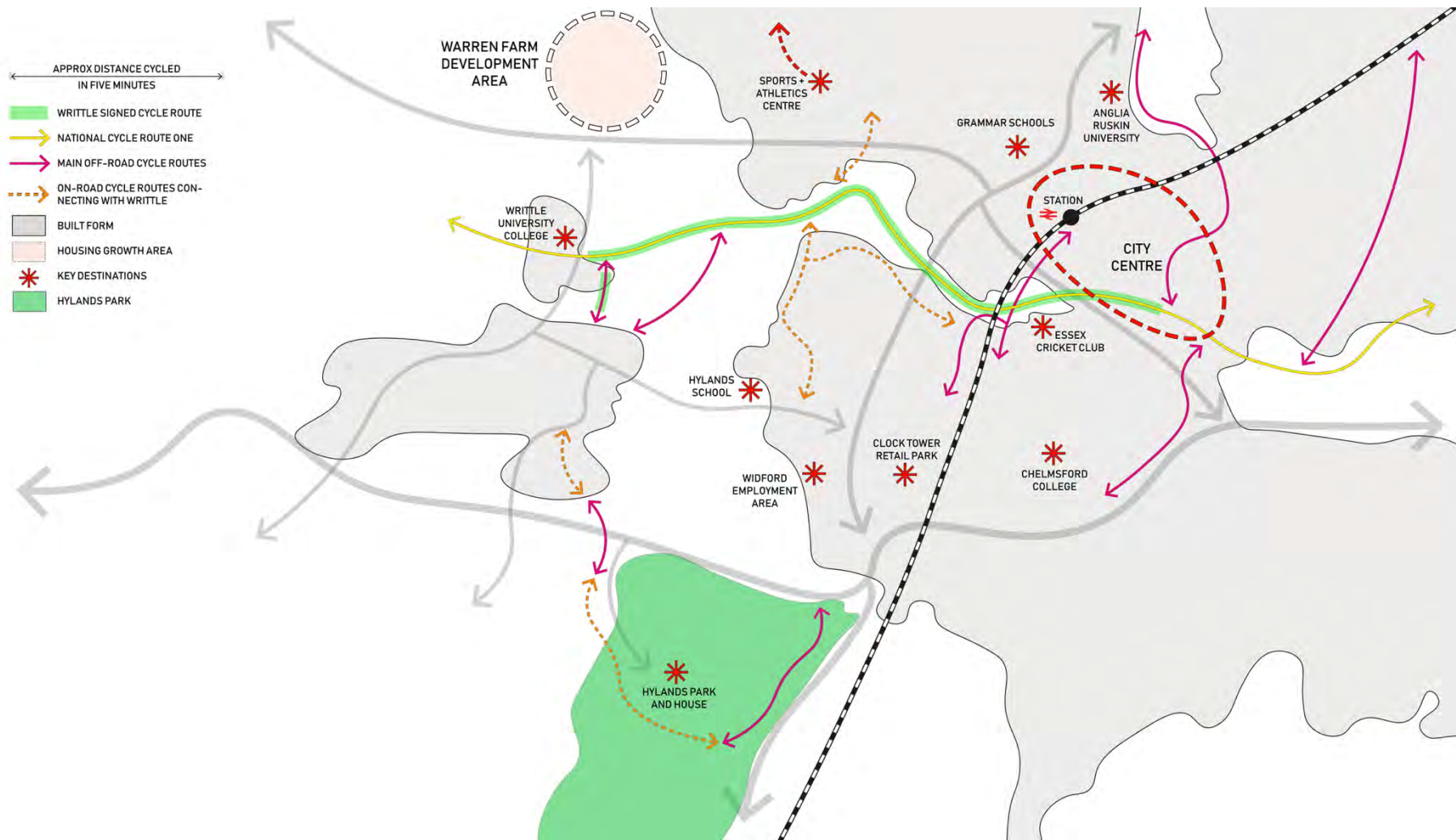


Figure 16: Existing cycle network in and around Writtle

Policy WNP MA1: Active Travel

Proposals for major residential and commercial development are expected to include Travel Plans in accordance with ECC Developers' Guide to Infrastructure Contributions (2020), or successor document, demonstrating where appropriate how they satisfy the active travel criteria below:

- a. Provide new walking and cycling routes that are direct, safe and convenient to use and designed for use by people of all ages and abilities.*
- b. Demonstrate how such proposals will integrate satisfactorily into existing adjacent walking and cycling networks, without reduction of capacity or safety of those routes.*
- c. Provide development layouts with active frontages which allow for the natural surveillance of routes through overlooking.*
- d. Reflect best practice principles for active travel design with the design of new cycle routes incorporating the guidance set out in DfT Cycle Infrastructure Design LTN 1/20, or successor guidance.*
- e. Proposals for residential development shall provide secure cycle storage assigned to the dwelling and located within or immediately adjacent to the property, fully enclosed and at ground-level.*

f. Proposals for commercial, leisure and community uses should support and enable active travel through inclusion of safe, secure, dry and convenient cycle parking and changing facilities where appropriate.

g. Streets within the Warren farm Growth Area must be designed to balance the needs of competing users and avoid conflicts between bus users, pedestrians and cyclists.

Proposals satisfying the active travel criteria above will be supported.

Project / Aspiration MAA: Walking and cycling routes

The Parish has identified the following locations for new and or improved walking and cycling routes, which it is keen to explore further in partnership with relevant delivery organisations including the City and County Council:

- 1. Across Roxwell Road to the Warren Farm Growth Area.*
- 2. Across Lordship Road, providing a link on National Cycle Route 1 between Writtle College Sports Ground and Writtle University College.*
- 3. An all-weather and off-highway link between the Paradise Road Sports Pitches towards The Green and Signed Writtle Cycle Route, providing a continuous and safe connection to Hylands Park.*
- 4. Across the River Wid to link the Westlands area and Hylands School with Hylands House.*
- 5. Between The Green and Hylands School, providing safe routes to school.*

Public Transport

7.5 Bus services are important, providing access to jobs, health services, shopping and leisure facilities. For longer distances, beyond which people might otherwise walk or cycle, good public transport can provide a viable and suitable alternative to the car. In Writtle existing bus services link the village with the City Centre, Bus and Railway Stations, Chelmer Village, Moulsham, Broomfield Hospital and Ongar (Figure 17).

7.6 The main focus of bus routes in Writtle is along The Green and Chelmsford Road, with four to five buses per hour into the city centre operating on this route. Routes to other destinations are less frequent and may involve a change in service. Although there is a route along Lordship Road there is no direct bus connection to Writtle via Roxwell Road / Rainsford Road.

7.7 The Warren Farm Growth Area Masterplan includes a package of active travel routes and public transport provision. In addition, and in response to the Government strategy for funding bus services⁵⁵, Essex County Council is pursuing an 'Enhanced Partnership'⁵⁶ approach with bus operators in Essex and which may identify opportunities for improved services for local communities. The Parish is keen to see further improvements to bus services and facilities

⁵⁵ DfT, March 2021, Bus Back Better

⁵⁶ ECC, 22 June 2021, Report to Cabinet, Bus Back Better: Proposed Enhanced Bus Partnership for Essex

across the Neighbourhood Area and to work with partner organisations to achieve this.

Project / Aspiration MAB: Bus Services

The Parish is keen to explore opportunities that arise with partner organisations, including the Highway Authority, City Council and bus operators, to identify public transport needs across the Neighbourhood Area. This might, for example, include new bus routing, new or improved waiting facilities, and improved access to services, such as crossing points close to bus stops.

Traffic Management

7.8 The sense of connection and, at the same time, separation, between Writtle and Chelmsford is key to the character and identity of the Parish and the main built-up area of Writtle.

7.9 The village is well connected to Chelmsford (Figure 18), with Chelmsford Road linking the centre of the village with Waterhouse Lane and New London Road in Chelmsford, which then link to the city centre and other main destinations in and around Chelmsford, including the railway station, retail areas, secondary schools, higher and further education establishments. Equally, routes north and south out of Writtle connect with the strategic road network and provide access to the A12 and thus onto London via the A414 to Harlow and M11.

7.10 However, although the junctions of the local road network in Writtle with the main road network around this comprise key gateways into the village, they can equally be points of congestion, with traffic from Writtle mixing with that from across Chelmsford. In particular, and at peak times, traffic along Roxwell Road / Rainsford Road from the junction of Lordship Road into the centre of Chelmsford is slow moving. Wherever possible, future development should bring forward a package of active and sustainable travel measures that encourage a shift to movement away from the car.

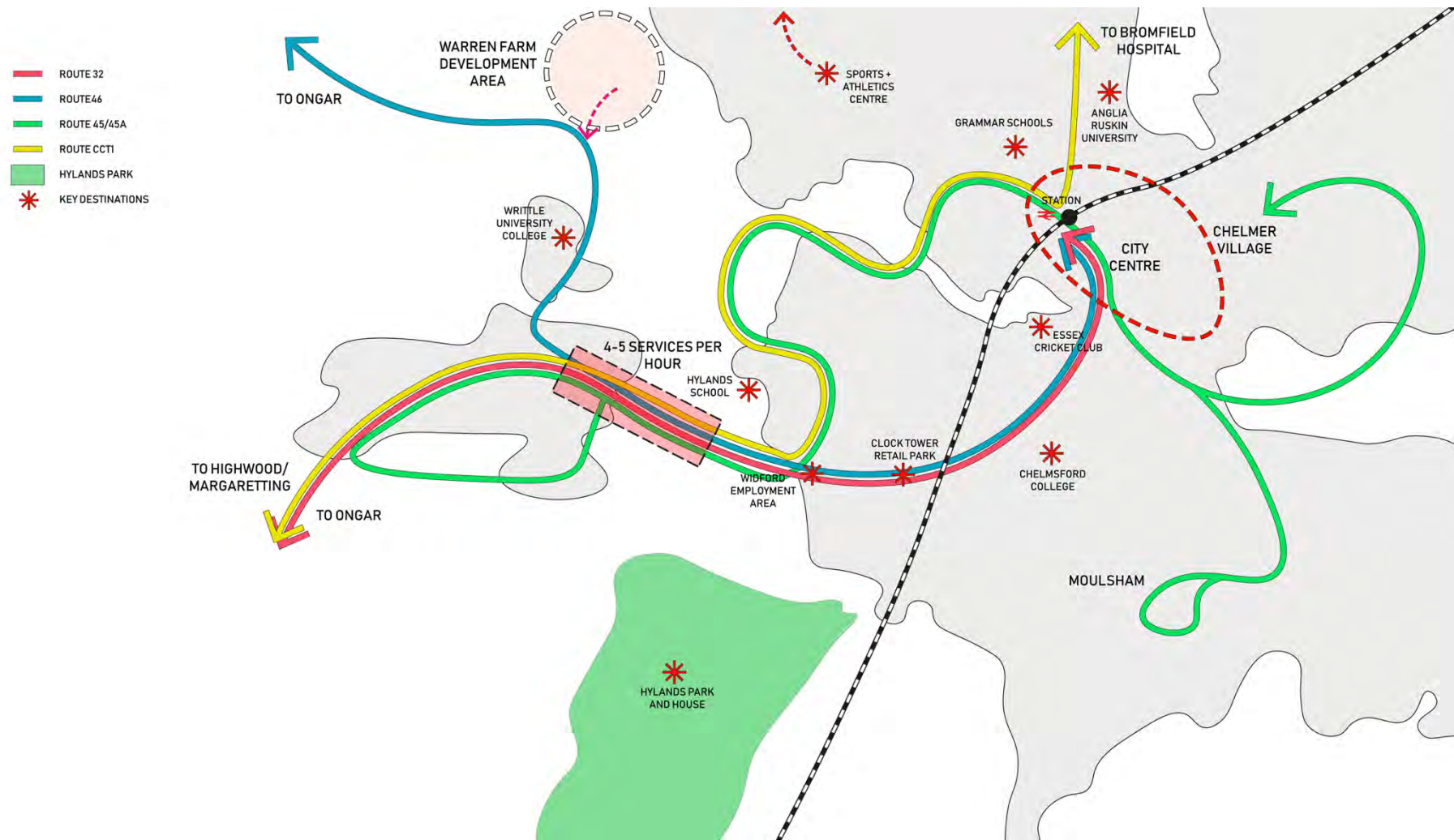


Figure 17: Current bus routes serving Writtle

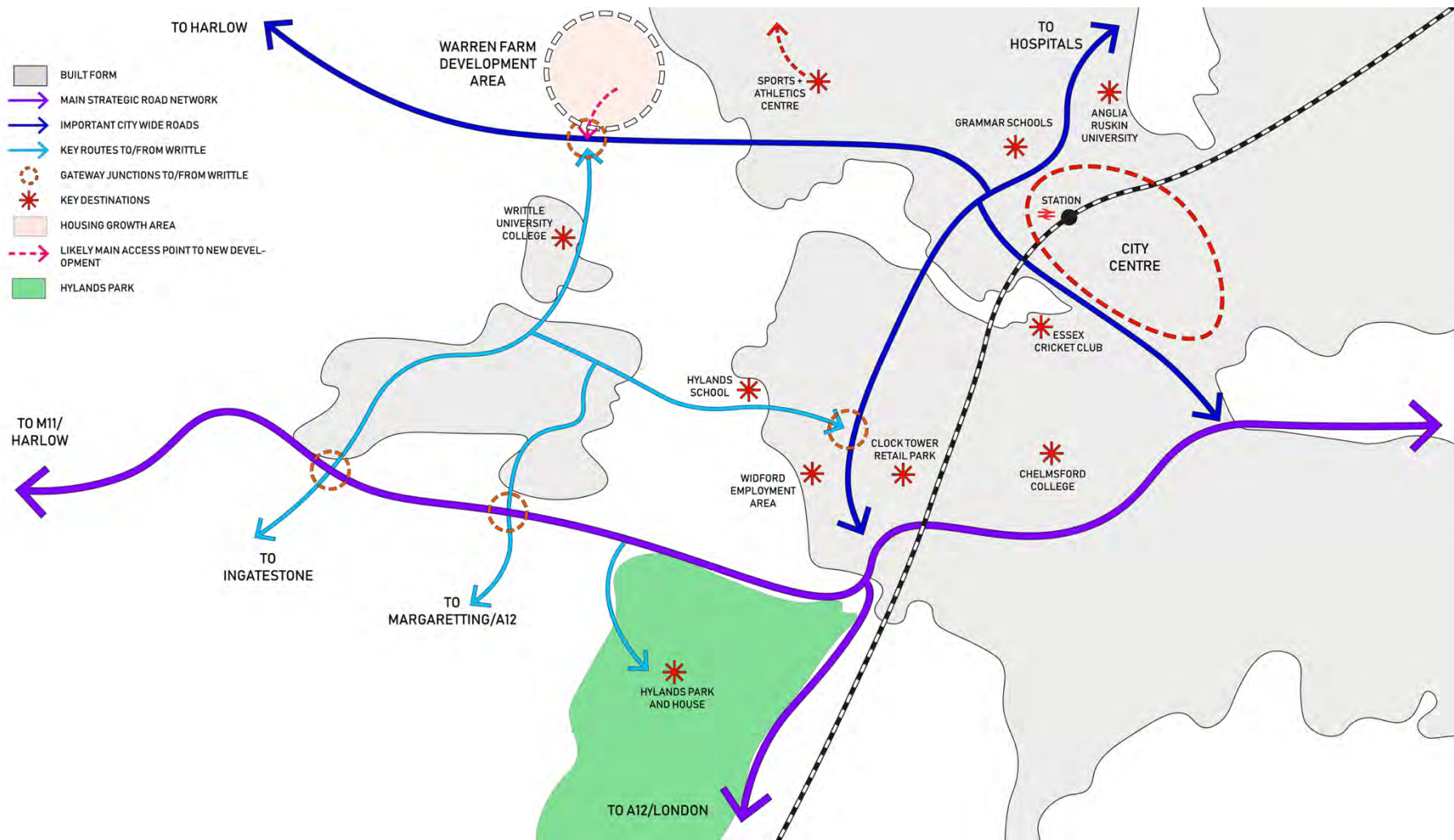


Figure 18: Main road connectivity to and from Writtle

7.11 Traffic along Waterhouse Lane and New London Road is also slow moving, and this can cause tailbacks along Writtle Road and continuing back to Chelmsford Road. Indeed traffic is slow moving at the junction of Chelmsford Road and Waterhouse Lane throughout much of the day. This is perhaps unsurprising: it is the key north south route through Chelmsford, connecting the A12 with the city centre via employment and retail areas (including the Clocktower Retail Park). Within Writtle itself, traffic along The Green, leading to Ongar Road, is also slow moving at times⁵⁷.

7.12 The volume and speed of traffic impacts on the quality of life in Writtle, particularly in terms of road safety and the ability for all to move around freely. With the new growth at Warren Farm including a mix of social and community facilities which may be used by existing residents of Writtle (such as playing pitches, the local centre, primary school and early years provision), it is important that good links between the village and growth area are provided. Equally, residents of the Warren Farm Growth Area may visit and use existing facilities in Writtle.

7.13 New and existing links across the Neighbourhood Plan area should be safe and attractive for all to use. Data⁵⁸ shows a high number of accidents along Roxwell Road, along Lordship Road by Writtle University College, along The Green and at the junctions with the A414 Greenbury Way. Efforts to improve the safety of the street network should be made: this could include a reduction in traffic speed coupled with redesign of the streets and junctions.



Figure 19: Junction outside Writtle Infant and Junior School

⁵⁷ See for example typical traffic flows presented on Google Maps

⁵⁸ See: <https://www.crashmap.co.uk>, accessed June 2019 (Map included in Appendix 5)

Policy WNP MA2: Traffic Management

Proposals for development which include appropriate mitigation measures that contribute towards traffic safety will be supported.

Project / Aspiration MAC: Road Improvements

The Parish has identified the following locations where road improvements, potentially through the use of design and highway treatments, might contribute to speed reductions and traffic safety for all users. The Parish is keen to explore potential opportunities in partnership with relevant delivery organisations including the City and County Council. Locations include:

- 1. The junction of Roxwell Road and Lordship Road.*
- 2. Along Lordship Road in the vicinity of the bridge across the River Can and alongside Writtle University College.*
- 3. Along The Green and Chelmsford Road.*
- 4. Along Lodge Road and Margaretting Road in the vicinity of Writtle Infant and Junior School.*
- 5. Along Ongar Road.*

E-vehicles

7.14 The Chelmsford Local Plan, at Policy DM25, requires all new dwellings and non-residential buildings to provide convenient access to Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points. The policy for land at Warren Farm also requires provision of and financial contributions towards car club facilities.

7.15 Technological solutions associated with mobility are evolving at a rapid pace. With the City Council announcing a Climate and Ecology Emergency, it is important that new development embraces new ideas that provide wider choice and opportunity for people to access a range of greener transport options.

7.16 The House of Commons cross-party Science and Technology Select Committee has recently reported⁵⁹ that, if the UK is to meet climate change targets, then transport solutions are required. It reports that 'in the long-term, widespread personal vehicle ownership does not appear to be compatible with significant decarbonisation'. Improvements in public transport, walking and cycling are supported.

⁵⁹ <https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/science-and-technology-committee/news-parliament-2017/clean-growth-report-published-17-19/>

7.17 The Government is committed, through the 'Road to Zero' Strategy⁶⁰, to half of all new car sales being ultra-low emission vehicles by 2030 (with the sale of all petrol and diesel vehicles phased out by 2040), whilst also rolling-out the necessary infrastructure to support provision of electric vehicles. The National Infrastructure Audit⁶¹ goes further than this and includes recommendations that are based on preparing for the sale of all new cars by 2030 to be electric. More recently, the Government has launched a consultation⁶² on proposals to make it mandatory for all new homes to be fitted with an electric car charging point.

7.18 It is recognised that people in Writtle will continue to own cars, and that they will continue to be used for some journeys. The provision of new technology and mobility solutions is though intended to provide wider choice and opportunity for all, reducing reliance on private car ownership and use, contributing to an improved environment.

Policy WNP MA3: E-vehicles

Proposals for communal e-vehicle charging points for personal and micro-mobility solutions, as well as shared mobility infrastructure within the public realm are welcome. Where proposed, they should be located sensitively to ensure that there are no harmful impacts upon pedestrian circulation or the immediate appearance of the street scene and wider townscape. Wherever possible, public EV charging infrastructure, such as cabling, should be provided in such a way that it can be expanded in the future to provide additional charging points.

Proposals for e-vehicle infrastructure will be supported in the following locations, subject to compliance with wider policies in the Development Plan:

- 1. Within the car park adjacent to the Parish Hall.*
- 2. The car park at the Paradise Road sports pitches.*
- 3. At the Beryl Platt Community Centre.*

⁶⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-launches-road-to-zero-strategy-to-lead-the-world-in-zero-emission-vehicle-technology>

⁶¹ <https://www.nic.org.uk/our-work/national-infrastructure-assessment/>

⁶² <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/electric-car-chargepoints-to-be-installed-in-all-future-homes-in-world-first>

8. Heritage



Heritage assets

8.1 Writtle, being a very old settlement has more than its fair share of historic buildings. This has featured clearly in consultation responses, with residents strongly indicating that it is important to preserve Writtle's historic buildings, archaeology and landscape features.

8.2 The Writtle Conservation Area covers much of the centre of the village (See plan in Appendix 2) and contains many of Writtle's most significant and important heritage assets. The extent of the Conservation Area respects the medieval Infra barras which is the ditch and bank around the town centre, and is still visible on Lodge and St. Johns Roads. The following are particularly notable:

- Greenbury Green (The Green) – The traditional focus of the village, The Green is surrounded by some of the oldest buildings in Writtle (many of which are listed). It also contains All Saints Church which dates from 1230. The buildings display a variety of architectural styles, reflecting the historical growth at the heart of the village.
- St. Johns Green – A smaller version of the main green, the skyline from this point is considered a significant visual feature.
- Lawford Lane – The part within the Conservation Area comprises a row of Victorian cottages.
- St. Johns Road – The part within the Conservation Area comprises a number of fully timber framed rendered cottages dating back to the early 17th Century.

- Lodge Road – The part within the Conservation Area comprises older houses and cottages.
- Romans Place – A single terrace of 18th Century brick clad timber framed houses.

8.3 The Essex County Council "Writtle - Historic Assessment 2001" lists some 56 buildings, mostly houses in the Parish which have Grade II status, though also including the Grade I Aubyns and Grade II* Hylands House. These all date from the medieval period, with the majority being post-medieval. Outlying ones are spread throughout the Parish and are now farmhouses, with associated barns etc. The majority however are within the Village boundaries, the centre itself and especially around the two Greens, where they are a prominent feature. They show the wide range of wealth of the Villagers.

8.4 Additionally, historic buildings and ancient roads that are now demolished (and where the interest in these is archaeological) or much altered must be considered as part of Writtle's built heritage. The Parish is preparing a local list of Heritage Assets for consultation and which the parish believes should be protected and enhanced. These include:

- King John's Hunting Lodge and associated buildings.
- Roman villa on WUC farm.
- Old barns on many farms.
- Priory.
- Round houses from Iron Age etc. at two or more locations.
- Manor houses such as Lordships.
- Several ale houses around the Greens, now in domestic use.

Policy WNP H1: Conservation Area and Heritage Assets

(1) Conservation areas, listed buildings and monuments

Development proposals in Writtle Parish are required to conserve and enhance:

- a. The special interest, character and appearance of the Conservation Area, including key assets such as Greenbury Green, St. Johns Green, Lawford Lane, St. Johns Road, Lodge Road and Roman Place; and*
- b. The significance of designated heritage assets and their settings including listed buildings and monuments in line with National and City Council Policy.*

Where it is proposed to retrofit historic buildings for the purposes of energy efficiency this will be encouraged where undertaken sensitively and safeguarding the special characteristics of the heritage asset.

(2) Non-designated heritage assets

Development proposals should protect and where appropriate enhance non-designated heritage assets which make a significant contribution to the historic fabric of Writtle. Non-designated heritage assets identified by the Parish Council are listed in Appendix 4.

Development proposals affecting non-designated heritage assets (or their settings) should be endorsed by appropriate analysis to enable a balanced judgment regarding the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of heritage asset to be made.

Heritage projects

8.5 Writtle benefits from a beautiful village green: one that is probably amongst the best preserved in Essex. This forms the heart of the village and conservation area, fronted by a wonderful variety of historic buildings. However, streets and roads around the green are home to many parked cars. These impact on the setting of the Green (and the Conservation Area), access to the Green and enjoyment of it.

8.6 As an ongoing project, the Parish is keen to identify projects that could formalise and or mitigate the impact of the parking, thus improving the setting of the green and surrounding buildings still further. This might involve the rationalisation of parking in some places and use of different materials to better define parking areas, as well as improved crossing points for pedestrians. This is set out as an aspiration in Project LWA above. The Parish Council is keen to work with partner organisations, including Chelmsford City Council and Essex County Council to explore the potential for a public realm project in this location.

8.7 As noted above, Writtle benefits from a large number of historic buildings, many of which are listed, but some which are not. Taken together, they contribute to the quality and character of Writtle and all historic buildings, listed or not, should be conserved and enhanced. A list of currently non-designated heritage assets has been identified, which the Parish, through partnership working with the Writtle Archives and Heritage Writtle, would wish to see added to the Register of Buildings and Historic Features of Local Value in Chelmsford. This draft list includes 57 entries on Part 1 (Archaeology) and 55 entries on Part 2 (Buildings and Structures), demonstrating the very long and important history of Writtle. These are presented in Appendix 4. They will be subject to review and update over time.

Project / Aspiration HA: Local Heritage Assets

The Parish is preparing a list of local heritage assets of importance to the growth of Writtle, local character and identity. The Parish Council is keen to work with Chelmsford City Council to add these to the Register of Buildings and Historic Features of Local Value, describing each building and its significance. This will raise awareness of the importance of these buildings and aid the City Council when discussing and determining planning applications.

*“WRITTLE, a large and well-built village, pleasantly situated on the west side of the River Can... has a spacious Green, ornamented with a sheet of water; and a small one, called St. John's Green. It has many good houses... Its parish is the largest, and **one of the finest in the county...***

Writtle is conjectured to have been a Roman Station... the road from London to Chelmsford is said to have passed through Writtle, until Maurice, Bishop of London, erected Moulsham Bridge, about A.D. 1100.

Near the village is a square plot of ground, enclosed by a moat, and supposed to have been the site of a palace erected by King John, about the year 1211.

In the time of Edward the Confessor, the extensive lordship of Writtle belonged to Earl Harold, and it was afterwards held by the Conqueror. It has since been held by various noble families, but it often reverted to the Crown, till Queen Mary granted it, and other estates, to Sir William Petre, Kt., an ancestor of Lord Petre, the present lord of the manor.”

White's Directory of Essex, 1848⁶³

8.8 Despite its size Writtle has had a significant role in industrial developments and buildings. Important sites include:

- Marconi Research at Lawford Lane where developments were carried out on marine and aircraft radios.
- Marconi Research made the first live broadcasts from station 2MT in 1922 (the hut number which was originally a WW1 RFC hut, now in Sandford Mill Museum),
- Marconi Research at Guys Farm (supposedly confidential)
- Marconi's very early aerials were at Beddles End/ Warren Farm since Chelmsford was too "radio noisy".
- WW1 airfields at Lawford Lane (Rugby Field) and near Shakestones Farm.
- Writtle Agricultural College (now University College) Carried out and taught important agricultural and horticultural research.
- Writtle had two mills near Skeggs Farm run by the same miller, one was a water mill and the other a sail mill.
- Writtle Brewery occupied several buildings in the area from St Johns Green to the river Wid.
- Writtle had its own gas works at St Johns Green /St Johns Road and the house of the manager of the gasworks still survives.

⁶³ <https://historyhouse.co.uk/placeW/essexw38a.html>

8.9 Equally, there are numerous religious buildings in Writtle which are considered important and contribute to the historic character of Writtle, as well as to social and cultural networks in the Parish. Religious buildings include All Saints Church, the Priory Buildings, The United Reformed Church, former Methodist Chapel and St Mary's Chantry Chapel. More information on these is presented in Appendix 3 of the Neighbourhood Plan.

8.10 Furthermore, the setting of the village and Parish, reflected in the network of fields and hedges is deep rooted, with the landscape being enjoyed by all.

8.11 There is evidence from pollen analyses and butchered animal bones that, 2000 years ago, the land was in arable and pastoral farming. Medieval field systems and workings have also been found. There are also several large areas of ancient forest in the Parish, which is managed as part of Writtle Forest. Additionally, there was a Napoleonic camp in Rugby Field close to Lawford Lane as well as a medieval market behind St John's Green, and other nearby fields were used for archery and rifle practice, such as Butt Field near Lordship Road.

8.12 Responses to consultation undertaken for the Neighbourhood Plan indicate that people are proud of the local history and that more should be made of this, through use of notices and information boards. Plaques commemorating the Airfields have been erected.

Project / Aspiration HB: Heritage Trail

The Parish Council will investigate the potential for introducing a heritage trail around Writtle, which would include information boards on the history of local buildings, sites and monuments. Plaques commemorating the former airfields currently exist and will be expanded as appropriate to other locations. The Parish will work with partners, including the Writtle Archives and Heritage Writtle, to develop ideas for the trail.



Figure 20: Example heritage plaque in Writtle

Locally Protected Lanes and Tracks

8.13 Writtle is rich with historic routes. There are several Green Lanes in the Parish: former roads that have become public footpaths, with trees, scrub and hedgerows demarcating routes and historically designated as 'Protected Lanes'. These are defined as Green Lanes in the Inventory of Landscape of Local Interest and Protected Lanes Studies.

8.14 Heritage Writtle (HW) has found evidence of roads or trackways that were probably pre-Roman. Four additional Roman roads have also been found by HW and all together these still form the basis for several of the present roads, one of which is potentially the main Londinium – Camulodunum (Colchester) road with Writtle at the half way point – hence the Mansio (rest house) in Moulsham on a spur. This road continues from Hylands Park, through the Village centre, down to the Lawford Lane ford then over Warren Farm and to north and east of Chelmsford.

8.15 Many of the footpaths in the Parish also have long, but un-recorded histories. Many are based on ancient roadways and tracks, and along which many current routes are aligned. Some tracks are seen on Chapman and Andre's maps of 1777.

8.16 The Chelmsford Protected Lanes Study⁶⁴ identified Nathans Lane and Newney Green as lanes which meet the threshold for Protected Lane Status. It was considered that Lawford Lane did not meet the required threshold for designation. However, Lawford Lane, previously called Lollefordstrat (Low Ford Street) and also known as 'The Kings Highway', dates back to Anglo-Saxon times. It was also probably a drovers road for the nearby Writtle market.

8.16 The Writtle Design Guide notes that Lawford Lane is the most important Green Lane in Writtle, forming a key gateway to the village. As such, it is considered to warrant 'Protected Lane' status. Similarly, the Writtle Design Guide also notes that other important Green Lanes include Coldhall Lane, connecting to Margarett Road, south of Southwood's Farm, and a Green Lane which connects Victoria Road and the A414.

8.17 The Parish Council is keen to review the status of lanes and tracks within the Neighbourhood Plan area, utilising the methodology outlined in the Chelmsford Protected Lanes Study to assess whether Lawford Lane and Coldhall Lane meet the criteria for designation as a 'Protected Lane'. Existing protected lanes in Writtle (Nathans Lane and Newney Green) are illustrated in Figure 22. This also shows the location of Lawfords Lane and Coldhall Lane.

⁶⁴ Essex County Council, September 2009, Protected Lanes Study for Chelmsford Borough Council

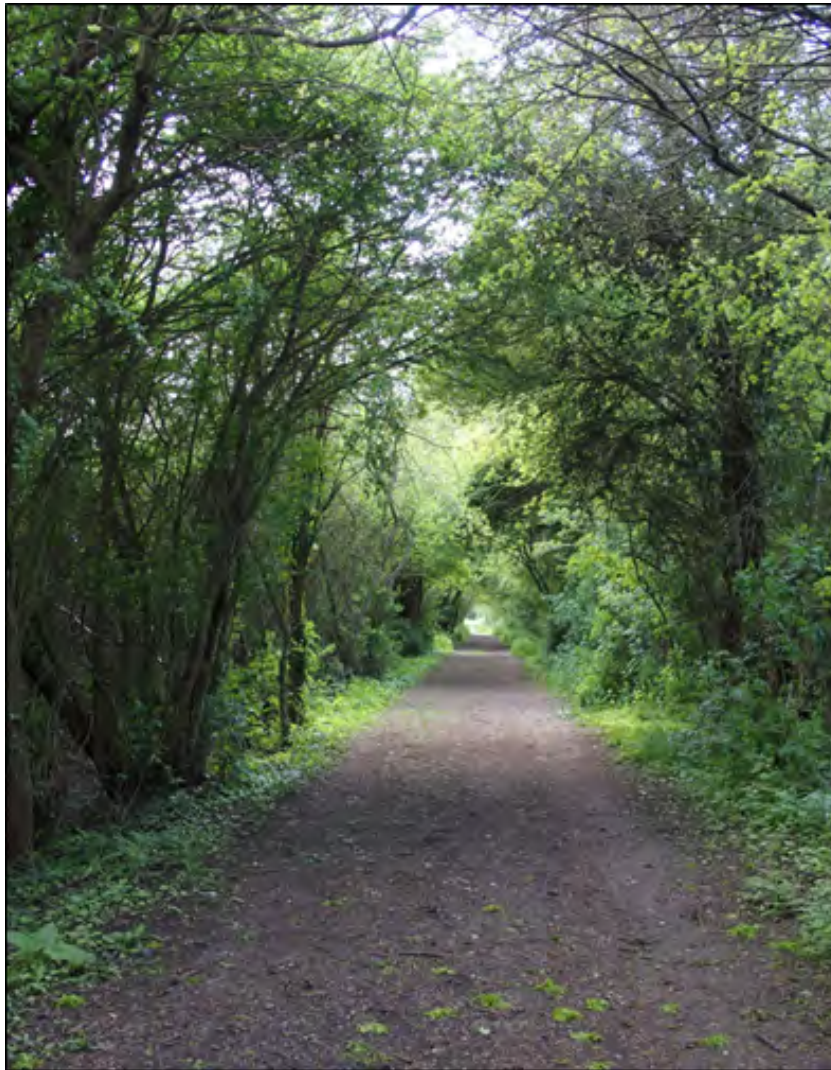


Figure 21: View along Lawford Lane

Project / Aspiration HC: Locally Protected Lanes and Tracks

The Parish Council is keen to assess the appropriateness of designating Coldhall Lane and Lawford Lane as 'Locally Protected Lanes' of important historical significance in Writtle. Such an assessment would follow the method established in the Chelmsford Protected Lanes Study prepared by ECC and be subject to engagement with partner organisations. Should the Lanes be assessed as meeting the criteria for designation they may form the basis of a policy to be included in a future review of the Writtle Neighbourhood Plan.

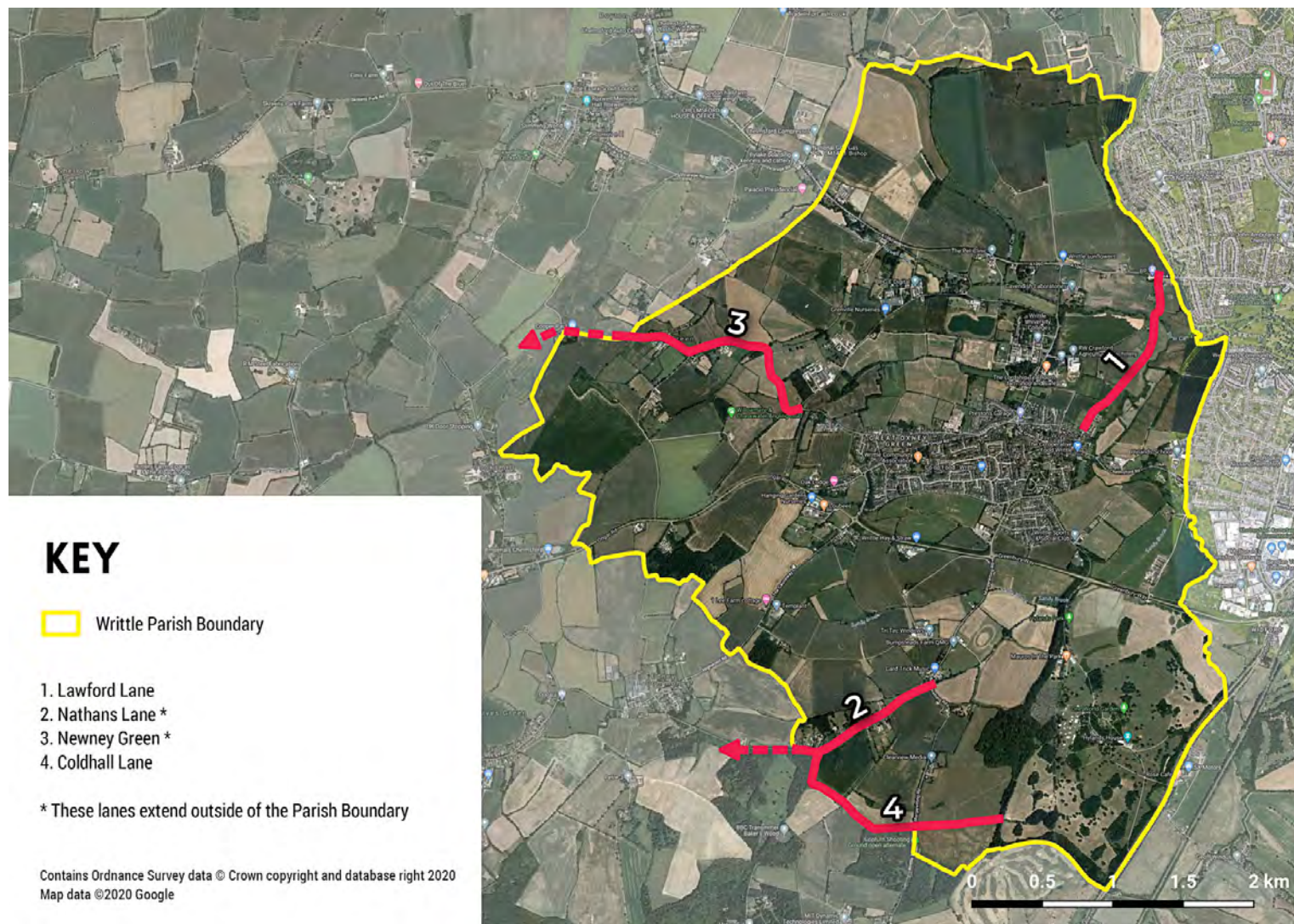


Figure 22: Historic lanes and tracks in Writtle parish

9. Community infrastructure



9.1 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a charge levied on development which is payable to the local authority and is intended to be spent on infrastructure projects across the Chelmsford administrative area that help address the demands placed on the area resulting from growth. This might include, for example, spending on new transport infrastructure, health and educational facilities, open spaces and sports facilities.

9.2 A portion of CIL is payable to the Parish Council for spending on local projects in the Neighbourhood Plan area. When the Neighbourhood Plan is made the Parish Council will receive 25% of all CIL monies paid to Chelmsford City Council from qualifying developments within Writtle. In regard to what this money can be spent on, advice suggests⁶⁵:

“The neighbourhood portion of CIL can be used for a wider range of planning issues than infrastructure as long as they are concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area.”

9.3 The Chelmsford City Council CIL Charging Schedule was approved in February 2014 and took effect on 1 June 2014⁶⁶. All applications for development that are above the necessary thresholds will be subject to this charging schedule, or any subsequent updates to it. Payment is linked to an instalments policy, related to the scale and commencement of development (following approval of detailed / reserved matters planning applications for development by the City).

⁶⁵ My Community / Locality, 2017, Community Infrastructure Levy; Neighbourhood planning toolkit

⁶⁶ <https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/community-infrastructure-levy/>

The City Council's CIL Governance document and annual monitoring reports⁶⁷ show how CIL receipts are allocated and spent.

9.4 Through consultation and work on the Neighbourhood Plan a series of projects have been identified which the Parish Council intends to direct the neighbourhood portion of CIL towards. These are referred to through the Neighbourhood Plan, in the blue 'projects' boxes. These projects will be kept under review by the Parish Council. They include, but are not limited to:

- a. Improvements to the quality of the public realm alongside The Green, including potential design solutions to reduce the visual impact of parked cars.
- b. Provision of new and improved walking and cycle routes, designed to best practice standards.
- c. Road and junction design that results in a reduction of traffic speed and volume of through traffic through Writtle.
- d. A local heritage trail.

9.5 Alongside CIL, the City Council will continue to negotiate Section 106 agreements with applicants which can provide funds or works to make development more acceptable in planning terms. The Parish Council will liaise with the City Council as to the most appropriate form of Section 106 agreement relating to applications within the Neighbourhood Plan area.

⁶⁷ <https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/community-infrastructure-levy/how-we-spend-cil/how-we-allocate-cil/>

9.6 The Chelmsford City Council Planning Obligations SPD⁶⁸ sets out how and when the City Council will seek planning obligations when negotiating planning applications. When negotiating Section 106 agreements reference should also be made to the ECC Developers' Guide to Infrastructure Contributions (2020) or any successor document to this.

⁶⁸ Adopted January 2021

10. What Happens Next?



10.1 This is the final 'made' version of the Neighbourhood Plan for Writtle Parish.

10.2 Chelmsford City Council formally consulted on the Neighbourhood Plan and appointed an independent examiner to review the Plan and any comments made in response to it. The Examiners report recommended that the Plan should proceed to referendum subject to the making of modifications. These have been made and the Plan was subject to referendum.

10.3 The City Council organised the referendum, which was held on 21st October. All people of voting age residing in the Parish were able to cast a vote on whether they thought the Neighbourhood Plan should be brought into force 'made'. With 93% of those people who turned out having voted 'yes', the Neighbourhood Plan was then 'made' by the City Council on 8th December 2021.

10.4 Having now been formally 'made', the Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the suite of policies used by Chelmsford City Council to determine future planning applications in the area.

Appendix 1: Design Principles and Codes

The following design principles and codes are extracted and summarised from the Writtle Design Guide (February 2020) and included here for reference.

These have been prepared to show how good practice principles and wider policies in the Chelmsford Local Plan and the Writtle Neighbourhood Plan should be applied in Writtle. They thus present a spatial interpretation of the policies.

They support policy and should be read in accordance with relevant guidance applicable in the authority area, including the National Design Guide, the latest iteration of the Essex Design Guide and associated technical standards.

The full Design Guide and supporting material should be used by applicants and decision makers to inform proposals and responses to these.

A: Settlement Pattern / development and landscape setting	B: Views and landmarks	C: Green spaces, public realm and streetscape	D: Streets - Residential streets
<p>1) <i>The open countryside should be maintained as distinct and separate from the village of Writtle and the commercial and campus areas of Writtle University College. Future development should generally augment existing settlement and not detract from Writtle as a distinct settlement within the Green Belt.</i></p> <p>2) <i>The Open fields and 'Green Wedge' which separates the village of Writtle from Writtle University College and the settlement of Chelmsford should remain undeveloped to avoid settlement coalescence.</i></p> <p>3) <i>Any future development should augment existing settlement or replace existing developments in the case of brownfield land and not detract from Writtle as distinct settlement within the Green Belt separate from Chelmsford.</i></p> <p>4) <i>New development should include off street parking provision, wherever possible, and if a development results in on-street parking its impact should be thoroughly assessed.</i></p> <p>5) <i>Development in close proximity to areas of open land and green space should be responsive to the historic rural setting.</i></p> <p>6) <i>The network of Public Rights of Way should be retained and enhanced as part of new developments, and opportunities to create connections between estates with additional green space to ensure the proposed development does not detract from the existing green space.</i></p> <p>7) <i>Careful consideration should be given to the interface between Warren Farm and Roxwell Road as it will create a new settlement edge for Chelmsford.</i></p>	<p>1) <i>New development should be in keeping with the surrounding landscape and consider the wider setting of the landscape.</i></p> <p>2) <i>Views of landscape on entering Writtle should be maintained to preserve Writtle's historic settlement pattern as a settlement within Green Belt.</i></p> <p>3) <i>New development proposals should not be visually intrusive. This should be achieved through the appropriate scale and design including screening where appropriate through the planting of trees and hedgerows.</i></p> <p>4) <i>New development should avoid forming the horizon from long distance views, especially from public rights of way.</i></p> <p>5) <i>Scenic values and the tranquility of Writtle's surrounding countryside should be retained and enhanced in relation to any future development.</i></p> <p>6) <i>Views of existing landmarks, and the framing views of the surrounding landscape should be considered as part of new developments to engender a sense of place.</i></p>	<p>1) <i>Protect the landscape setting of Writtle and the rural character of the village.</i></p> <p>2) <i>New development should provide sufficient open space appropriate to the location and size of the dwelling, preferably through including front and rear gardens, grass verges and shared green spaces.</i></p> <p>3) <i>Existing trees should be retained as part of new developments.</i></p> <p>4) <i>New developments should use boundary treatments which complement the street and the rural character of the village.</i></p> <p>5) <i>A mixture of shallow front gardens, which create a village character and deep front gardens with trees which contribute to the verdant character of the area should be provided as part of any new developments.</i></p>	<p>1) <i>Residential streets have a strong residential character and provide direct access to residences from the secondary roads. They must be designed for low traffic volumes and low speed.</i></p> <p>2) <i>Where carriageways include parking bays, such as unallocated visitor parking, these should be designed to also accommodate two-way traffic. They may also include green verges with small trees on one or both sides, which would be subject to commuted sums for maintenance. Verges may alternate with parking to form inset parking bays, subject to the necessary approvals. These roads must be designed to safely accommodate pedestrians and cyclists in accordance with the Essex Design Guide (EDG). Traffic calming features can be used to prevent speeding.</i></p>

E: Streets - Lanes / Private drives	F: Streets - Edge lanes	G: Vehicle parking - General	H: Vehicle parking - on-plot or front parking
<p>1) Lanes and private drives are the access-only types of streets that usually serve a small number of houses. They must be minimum 6m wide and serve all types of transport modes including walking and cycling, and allow sufficient space for parking manoeuvre.</p> <p>2) Opportunities to include green infrastructure, hedges, and/or private gardens to soften the edges must be maximized.</p> <p>3) The width of the carriageway should be reduced in areas to discourage parking.</p> <p>Note: The term 'Lanes' may also be termed a 'Mews Court' as referenced in the Essex Design Guide. Any such street type, as with all street types, should be designed to safely accommodate walking and cycling.</p>	<p>1) Edge lanes are low-speed and low-traffic roads that front houses with gardens on one side and a green space on the other. Carriageways typically consist of a single lane of traffic in either direction and are shared with cyclists.</p> <p>2) The lane width can vary to discourage speeding and introduce a more informal and intimate character. Variations in paving materials and textures can be used instead of kerbs or road markings.</p> <p>Note: Although this street type is not included within the Essex Design Guide it may be an appropriate design response to local context and should be considered as such.</p>	<p>1) When needed, residential car parking can be a mix of on-plot side, front, garage, and courtyard parking, and complemented by appropriately located on-street parking, including that for visitors.</p> <p>2) For family homes, cars must be placed at the side (preferably) or front of the property. For small pockets of housing, a rear court is acceptable if well designed and overlooked from dwellings.</p> <p>3) Car parking design must be combined with landscaping to minimise the presence of vehicles.</p> <p>4) Parking areas and driveways must be designed to minimise impervious surfaces, for example with permeable paving.</p> <p>5) When placing parking at the front, the area must be designed to minimise visual impact and to blend with the existing streetscape and materials. The aim is to keep a sense of enclosure and to break the potential of a continuous area of car parking in front of the dwellings. This can be achieved by means of walls, hedging, planting, and the use of quality paving materials.</p> <p>6) Parking bays and spaces must be designed for easy access by wheelchairs, loading carts, and buggies</p> <p>Note: Proposals for parking shall comply with the dimensions contained in the Essex Planning Officers Association (EPOA) parking standards or successor document. This also includes a range of solutions for cycle parking that might be accommodated.</p>	<p>1) On-plot parking can be visually attractive when it is combined with high quality and well-designed soft landscaping. Front garden depth from pavement back must be sufficient for a large family car.</p> <p>2) Boundary treatment is the key element to help avoid a car-dominated character. This can be achieved by using elements such as hedges, trees, flower beds, low walls, and high-quality paving materials between the private and public space.</p> <p>3) Hard standing and driveways must be constructed from porous materials to minimise surface water run-off.</p> <p>Note: Proposals for parking shall comply with the dimensions contained in the Essex Planning Officers Association (EPOA) parking standards or successor document. This also includes a range of solutions for cycle parking that might be accommodated.</p>

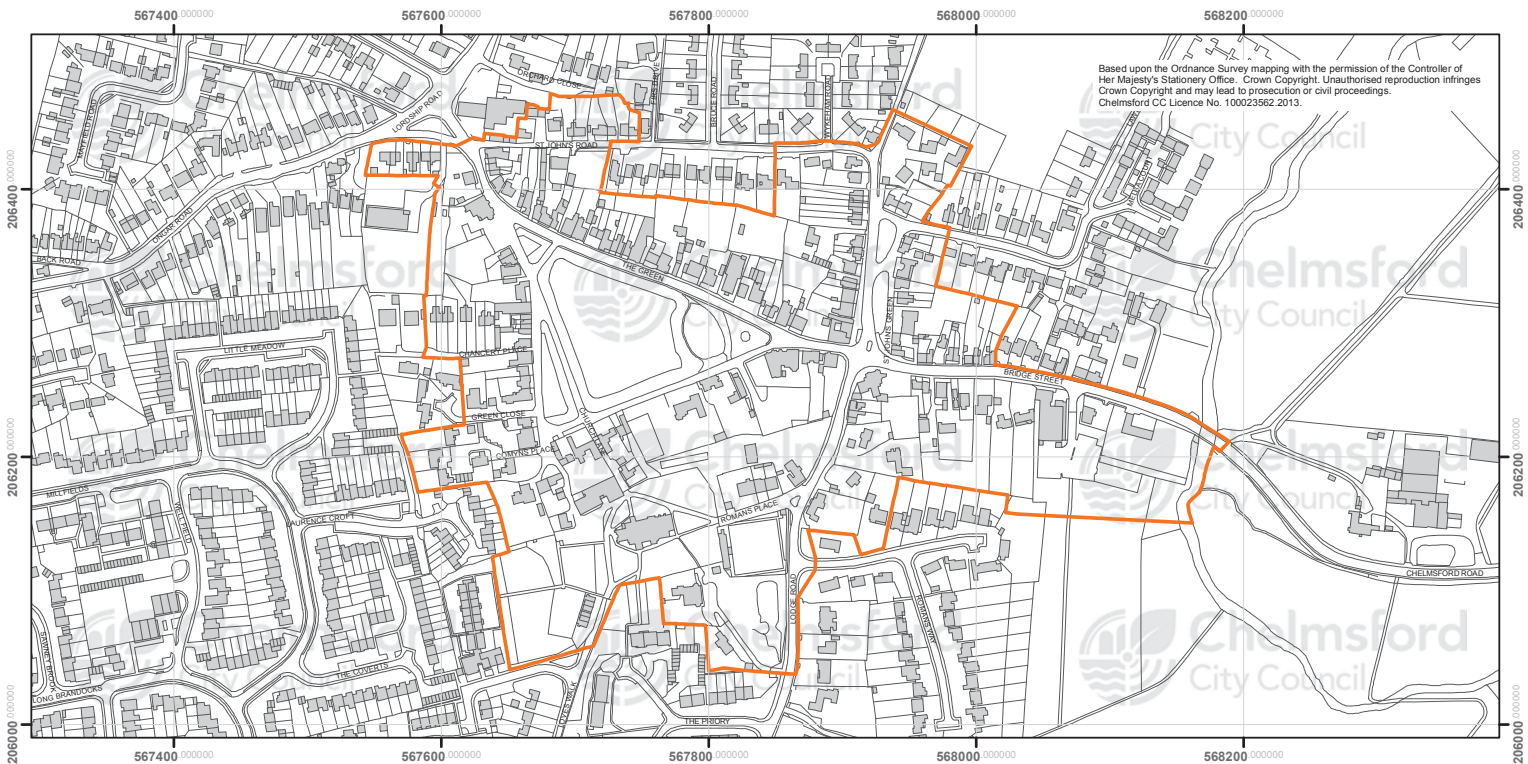
I: Vehicle parking - on-plot garages	J: Green infrastructure	K: Boundary treatments	L: Materials
<p>1) <i>Where provided, garages must be designed either as free-standing structures or as additive form to the main building. In both situations, it must complement and harmonise with the architectural style of the main building rather than forming a mismatched unit.</i></p> <p>2) <i>Often, garages can be used as a design element to create a link between buildings, ensuring continuity of the building line. However, it should be considered that garages are not prominent elements and they must be designed accordingly.</i></p> <p>3) <i>It should be noted that many garages are not used for storing vehicles, and so may not be the best use of space.</i></p> <p>4) <i>Considerations must be given to the integration of bicycle parking and/or waste storage into garages.</i></p> <p><i>Note: Proposals for parking shall comply with the dimensions contained in the Essex Planning Officers Association (EPOA) parking standards or successor document. This also includes a range of solutions for cycle parking that might be accommodated.</i></p>	<p>1) <i>The landscape corridor which separate Writtle Village from the settlement edge of Chelmsford should be protected from development which would detract from the landscape setting or would be visually intrusive.</i></p> <p>2) <i>Opportunities to augment the landscape corridor through the new development of Warren Farm should be explored in order to enhance the function of the green network for wildlife leisure and recreation.</i></p> <p>3) <i>Opportunities to increase biodiversity along the landscape corridor and river corridors to increase resilience is advised.</i></p> <p>4) <i>New properties with boundaries which border green space, particularly back gardens should be composed of hedgerows with trees to instill a rural character and avoid visually intrusive building in the landscape.</i></p> <p>5) <i>Strengthen east-west green landscape corridor to strengthen biodiversity and resilience across the area.</i></p> <p>6) <i>Encouragement is given to the planting of native appropriate tree species.</i></p>	<p>1) <i>New development should use boundary features which are complementary to the street and that enhance the rural character of the village. The use of panel fencing in publicly visible boundaries should be avoided.</i></p> <p>2) <i>The materials proposed for new boundary features should be of high quality, responding to the village character and have strong attention to architectural detailing.</i></p> <p>3) <i>Boundary treatments should reinforce the continuity of the building line along the street.</i></p> <p>4) <i>Traditional low fencing and railings are more appropriate for village settings.</i></p> <p>5) <i>The planting of indigenous species within the new developments should be encouraged to complement the existing hedgerows across the area.</i></p> <p>6) <i>Where boundaries constitute an important part of the street scene, the removal of such boundaries for the purposes of allowing off street parking should be discouraged.</i></p>	<p>1) <i>Materials used in new developments should demonstrate an understanding of local and regional character and build upon the sense of place.</i></p> <p>2) <i>High quality roof materials consistent with the rural character of the village should be used in new development. Concrete tiles and artificial slates should be avoided.</i></p> <p>3) <i>The choice of render colour should help to integrate a new building into its context and compliment Writtles' character.</i></p> <p>4) <i>Matching bricks, render or appropriate materials should be employed for extensions.</i></p> <p>5) <i>Materials for alterations and extensions should be high-quality and retain or if possible enhance the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area.</i></p>

M: Landscape character area - Writtle Farmland Plateau	N: Landscape Character area - Can and Wid River Valley	O: Landscape Character area - Blackmore Wooded Farmland
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) <i>Protect the landscape setting of Writtle and the rural character of the village.</i> 2) <i>Protect the landscape setting of Writtle University College as a campus within a rural setting.</i> 3) <i>Ensure new development responds to the historic settlement pattern and makes use of materials which respond to the character of the local built environment.</i> 4) <i>Ensure new development does not increase coalescence between Writtle and Chelmsford and between Writtle and Writtle University College.</i> 5) <i>Conserve and enhance existing hedgerows with native species particularly around the settlement edge to conserve and enhance the setting of the village.</i> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) <i>New farm buildings or extensions to properties should be carefully considered and their visual impact reduced through screen planting.</i> 2) <i>Ensure any new development does not increase coalescence between Writtle and Chelmsford and ensure new development is of a small-scale and responds to historic settlement pattern and form of the area.</i> 3) <i>To conserve the tranquil and undeveloped character of the floodplain, screening of visually intrusive elements of Chelmsford's urban edge should be considered.</i> 4) <i>Seek to manage and control potential run-off from nearby farmland into the River Wid and Can.</i> 5) <i>Seek to enhance existing floodplain habitats.</i> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) <i>Conserve the rural character of the area, and ensure any new development is appropriate in scale and responds to the historic settlement pattern, using materials which respond to the character of the local built environment.</i> 2) <i>Conserve the setting of Hylands Park and House, and look to screen elements of Chelmsfords urban edge which are visually intrusive.</i> 3) <i>Conserve and manage the existing network of mature hedgerows and woodland.</i> 4) <i>Conserve important views towards the Wid Valley.</i>

Appendix 2: Writtle Conservation Area

The map presented overleaf shows the extent of the designated Conservation Area in Writtle.

Writtle Conservation Area	Reference	G011	Second amendment	30.04.1991
	Designated	01.04.1969	Third amendment	-
	First amendment	19.06.1969	Fourth amendment	-



	0	100	Metres	Directorate for Sustainable Communities Civic Centre, Duke Street, Chelmsford, CM1 1JE Tel. 01245 606606 Fax. 01245 606642 Web www.chelmsford.gov.uk	
	JULY 2013				

Appendix 3: Religious buildings in Writtle

Responses to consultation undertaken on the Neighbourhood Plan showed that religious buildings were considered “very important” (69%) to “quite important” (22%) to the Parishioners.

The ancient Infra Barras (boundary ditch feature) encompassed All Saints Church, the old churchyard, the Priory, the present and older Vicarage, and fishpond. This Church built in 1230 was reconstructed and enlarged from a previous Norman church. The church walls also incorporate Roman brick and tile possibly from an even earlier building.

Additionally, there are records of St Mary’s Chantry Chapel which dates from the 11th-12th C, and was in a ruinous state in early 1500s and totally demolished, possibly at the Dissolution. The Chantry Chapel was in the churchyard to the north east of the Church, and the location has been found by dowsing.

The Priory buildings, known as the ‘Writtle Hospice’ occupied by lay brethren and a priest from Rome, were built in the time of King John in the early 1200s and a later house was built in 1668 and modified in the 1920s. However the Priory house was unfortunately demolished in 1969 and developed for housing. This has left a legacy of a tunnel to the Church running beside Loves Walk which was found during demolition.

The United Reformed Church (URC) on the west of the Green was built in 1885, but has recently closed its doors, due to a dwindling congregation.

Writtle also had a Methodist Chapel about which little is recorded. A building on the east side of Writtle Green was originally used and then later a small chapel was built on the triangle at East View in Oxney Green, long since demolished for housing.

Dowsing also showed that there may be graves outside the Church walls by Romans Place and also in the gardens south of the Main Green. These could be investigated further.

Appendix 4: Local Heritage Assets

This appendix includes a list of local heritage assets (buildings and assets of archaeological interest) of importance to the growth of Writtle, local character and identity.

This exercise was conducted over a two year period – January 2019 to January 2021- and drew on the knowledge and skills of members of the Heritage Writtle and Writtle Archive groups who engaged with numerous local householders, villagers and land owners. Organisations including Essex Records Office, Essex County Council, Chelmsford City Council and Historic England were consulted for advice in the development of the Register.

The initial listing of those buildings with potential for inclusion in the Register was drawn up by Heritage Writtle members based on sound local knowledge. The advice of the Chelmsford City Council's Conservation Officer was sought throughout the exercise.

Inclusion of buildings in the final Register was determined using an established set of criteria and a scoring system as prescribed by the Conservation Officer. The assessment form is shown below. Buildings credited with a score of 20 or more were eventually included in the Register.

This list will be reviewed with Chelmsford City Council and updated as appropriate. All planning applications should have regard to this list.

The full report is available in a free-standing document alongside this Neighbourhood Plan.

The heritage assets are mapped on the pages following the list. An interactive version of this is also available to view on the Parish Council website.

Criteria / Scoring Assessment Form

Map ref	Criterion	Address:	Score	Given
	A – Age of Construction	Pre 1840 easily recognisable 1840-1900 largely complete 1900-1940 unaltered Post 1940 wholly complete	6	
			4	
			2	
			1	
			0	
	B -Aesthetic or architectural value	Aesthetic or design merit, local character and distinctiveness, use of quality materials and workmanship, or contributing to village-scape /community	2	
			4	
			6	
			0	
	C-Group value	Does the asset form part of a group that contributes to character and distinctiveness of its locality or the Village	2	
			3	
			4	
			0	
	D - Historical association	Is the asset associated with a significant figure or event in terms of design, occupation or events e.g., war, inventions, people?	2	
			4	
			6	
			0	
	E - Landmark Status	Does the asset represent and important landmark	1	
			2	
			3	
			0	
	F - Social and communal value	Does the asset contribute to social or community's history and heritage due to its location, form or use	1	
			2	
			3	
			0	
	G - Rarity	Is this a rare or substantially unaltered example of type of building or structure or is the alteration itself, a significant example	2	
			4	
			6	
			0	
	H - Sustainability	A building/structure which is of robust construction with quality materials, and is useful/ adaptable for continuing or alternative uses	1	
			2	
			3	
			0	
		Comments:	TOTAL	

Buildings of Heritage interest

Bridge Street	Blue Bridge 1 Pakwaan 2-4 Cottages 17 Brewery Buildings 19 Malt Store 21 Malt House
Chelmsford Road	Skeggs Farm
St Johns Green	19 Gasworks Cottage 13-18 Terraced Cottage
St Johns Road	5 Old Forge 15-17 Cottages and Pump
The Green	War Memorial 2 Cottage with 1-2 St Johns Green 16 Village Hall 21 Maltings and Pump Green 25 Cottage 45 Library 49 United Reformed Church 66-70 Wheatsheaf Pub and Cottages Rumsey Row The Christian Centre Jubilee Cottage (by church gates)
Loves Walk	Alms Houses Priory Wall
Lodge Road	1 Deodora or The Lodge 36 The Meads
Paradise Road	Writtle Lodge

Ongar Road	11-17 Cottages Chase House 146-148 Mildred Cottages Longmeads House
Great Oxney Green	Chequers Rd: The Chequers Pub and The Firs East View – Fosters Farm Tower Road – 3 the Haven
Little Oxney Green	Range Cottage and Prospect Cottages
Lordship Road	Kitts Croft and Doctors Surgery Writtle University Cottage
Cow Watering Lane	Riverside Cottage, Sturgeons Farm Buildings
Roxwell Road	Horse and Groom The Manor House and Coach House New Barns Farm and Marconi Buildings
Newney Green	Moor Hall Cottages & Christophers Cottages The Duck and Cottages, Christophers
Margaretting Road	Montpelliers Farm and outbuildings Gable Cottages, Ropers Barn and Buildings
Highwood Road	Lee Farm and Barn
Fords and Crossings	
Cow Watering Lane	Ford
Lawford Lane	Ford and Crossing
Chelmsford Road	Skeggs Farm Ford & Water Meadows
Lordship Road	Culvert and Warren Bridge

Assets of Archaeological interest

Ancient Highways and Tracks

- Roman road runs parallel to Cow-watering Lane, across Foxburrows field, crossing the River Wid, and then the road heads towards the Roman Mansio in Moulsham
- Roman Road from St Johns Green to Foxburrows Field, junction with above
- The ancient roadway under Lawford Lane ford is possibly Roman or earlier, connecting to the Colchester Road
- Saxon Road- Lolleford Straat, now Lawford Lane, was a Kings Highway and possibly a drovers' road to Writtle Market by St John's Green
- Roman or earlier road continues from Lawford Lane north across Warren Farm land around North of Chelmsford. May be part of London - Colchester Roman Road
- Various green lanes which may be pre-Roman
- Various Roman or earlier byways/ tracks on fields around Writtle linking main ancient highways
- Victoria Rd to Newney Green- probably the old Epping & London road - see Chapman & Andre 1777
- Writtle Race Course 3 miles around village

Heritage assets- archaeology and "site of"

- The Roman Settlement, ancient hut circles and features back to Mesolithic (4000yrs BC) in three fields on College Estate (confidential)
- The C14 Chantry Chapel in NE of All Saints Churchyard
- King Johns Hunting Lodge, moat and fish ponds on Lordship Road. (Partly exposed)
- "The Lodge" medieval mansion in the Tudor walled garden, now the Bowling Green on Lodge Road

- The medieval Infra-Barras around the Village centre i.e. Lodge Road, St John's Road and St John's Green. Much is visible
- Manor of Lordship on Lordship Road - site of
- Napoleonic camp - Rugby Field by Lawford Lane - site of
- Old market in Rugby Field & beside drovers' road (Lawford Lane)
- WWII British Restaurant site at Ongar Rd/East View (was then Bonnet's general store, then a garage showroom)
- WWI airfield in Rugby Field – has a plaque at the site
- WWI airfield on Shakestones Farm – plaque on Sports Club Wall on Paradise Road
- Middle Ages militia practice area - Butt Field near Lordship Road
- Middle Ages militia practice area - Stoneyshots near Lordship Road
- Possible henge, probably wood, in Stoneyshots Field – Writtle College
- The Priory site, Walls, and Fish pond in Lodge Road. Now partly under "The Priory" houses. Walls still standing by Loves Walk, 11C pottery found on site.
- Warren Farm fields, Google/aerial photos show many crop marks / features. Field walking yielded brick, tile & pottery. Known Marconi/ WWII site. Pottery tile found.
- Skeggs Farm Field on Hilltop above house. Worked flint, hut circles burnt stones found by field walking/dowsing. Good settlement site on hill and near river.

Writtle's Industrial sites

- Victorian Gas Works Managers House at 19, St Johns Green and cottages for brewery and gasworks
- Maltings in Bridge Street
- Writtle Brewery sites on both sides of Bridge Street
- Gas works site in St John's Road & St John's Green
- Writtle Water Works & tower and pond late 1800s in Tower Road. (tower and works now demolished, pond remains)

- Maltings site Warren Farm - next to Malt house Cottage on Roxwell Rd
- 2 Mills at Skeggs (Southgate's), wind and water, for grain, on Chelmsford Road
- Southgate's Mill owners house Grade II, and terrace houses on Chelmsford Road
- Beaches water Mill, formerly called "Oil Mill" or "Much Mill" ("Mochel Mill" in Old English, therefore is old) on River Wid near Beaches Rd - leather, grain and bricks
- Marconi complex - Melba Court, Guys Farm, Rugby Field
- Experimental sound/radar location Rugby Field Lawford Lane (Marconi)
- Guys Farm, St Johns Road (Marconi).
- Aerials and buildings at Warren Farm / Bedells End radio WWII site (Marconi)

Manmade water sources for industry, water and food

- Pond on Greenbury Green, with hard bottom for transport uses e.g. dray horse/oxen watering and cart wheel soaking. Fresh Water source is from canal in Motts Graded II listed.
- Vicarage pond - was originally for the Priory, probably as a fish pond
- Medieval Fish pond at King Johns Hunting Lodge
- Pond at Skeggs Farm for domestic and possibly fish, and non-stock agricultural uses e.g. keeping willow whips pliable for rhubarb bunching use.
- Water works Pond, Tower Rd, Oxney Green. Tower etc all demolished.

Post Boxes GR Large

- Paradise Road
- The Green

Post Boxes EIIR Small

- Newney Green
- Cooksmill Green
- Oxney Green - Lodge Road
- Oxney Green - Ongar Road

Bridges

- Lordship Road over the River Can. Part of the Petre Estate. An ancient crossing for 2000 years.
- Cow Watering Lane - culvert for Butlers Brook. At Lordship Rd Junction. Probably built by German POWs in WWII
- Lawford Lane over River Can. Wooden one replaced 2009. Ancient crossing. Locally known as the "The Pooh Bridge".
- A 1060 bridge at Three Mile Hill over River Wid. Modern, but area is ancient and may have old artefacts/built structures in vicinity.
- The Blue Bridge on Bridge Street over River Wid. Decorative painted iron bridge

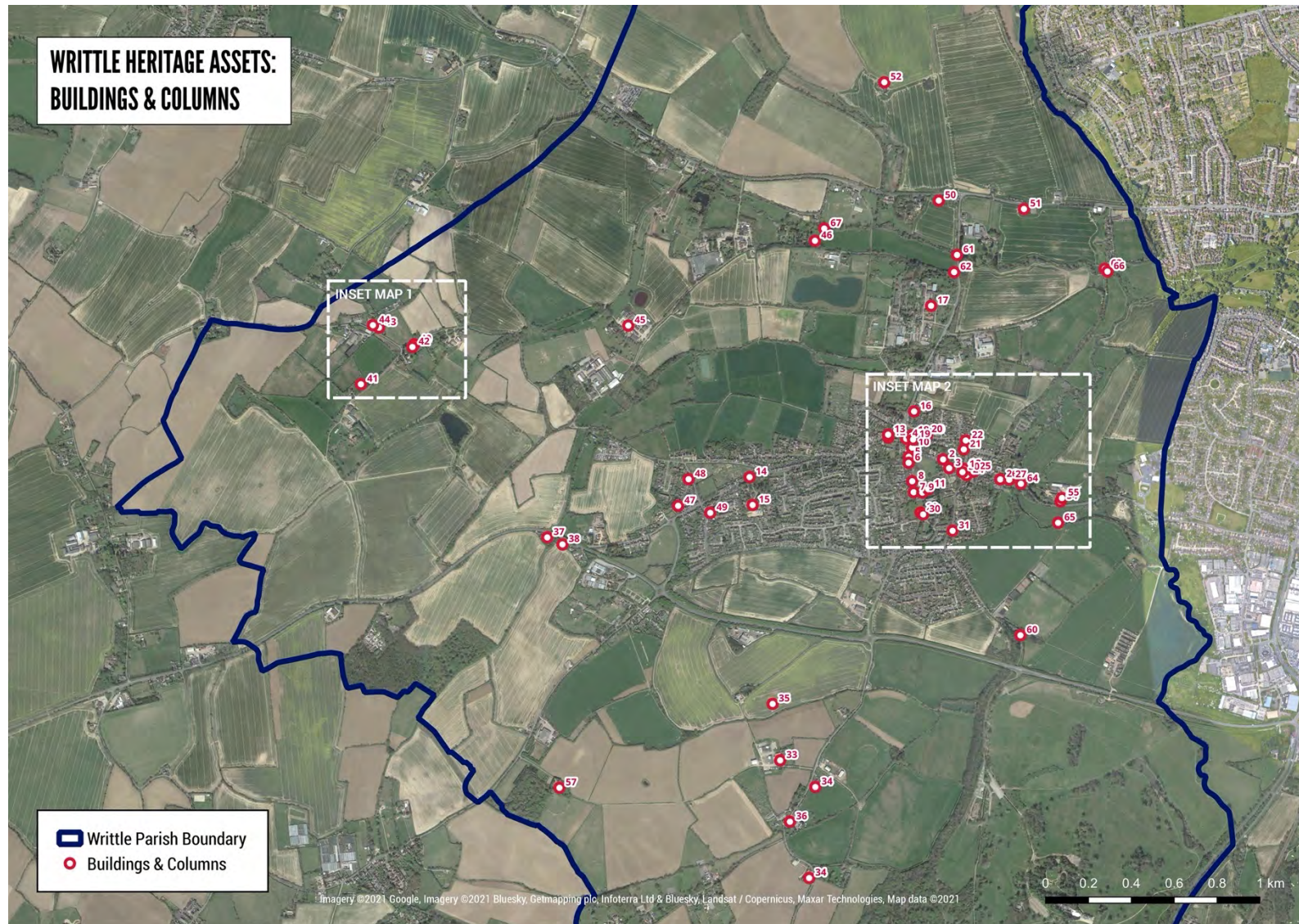
Fords

- Skeggs Farm on Writtle Rd, fording River Wid
- Lawford Lane, fording River Can, beside the bridge. Historic Kings Highway over 1000 yrs old. May be pre Roman
- Old Roxwell Road/ Cow Watering Lane, fording Roxwell Brook
- Skeggs river meadow to Lawford /Cowatering lanes, Roman agger and ditches when dry. Roman ford to south of Chelmer.

Key to heritage maps (buildings) on following pages:

LOCATION	Address	Ref
The Green	2 Mansmiths (inc Beresfords 1 & 2 St Johns Green)	1
The Green	The Village Hall no 16	2
The Green	The War Memorial	3
The Green	The Wheatsheaf and cottages	4
The Green	United Reform Church	5
The Green	The Library/Board School	6
The Green	No 21 / The Maltings (nr Pump Cottage)	7
The Green	No 25	8
The Green	The Christian Centre	9
The Green	Rumsey Row -specialist shops & businesses	10
The Green	Jubilee Cottage	11
Ongar Road	No's 11-17	12
Ongar Road	Chase House	13
Ongar Road	Mildred Cottages. Nos 146 & 148	14
Ongar Road	Longmeads House	15
Lordship Road	Kitts Croft - Doctors Surgery/ House	16
Lordship Road	Writtle Agricultural College (now Writtle University College)	17
St John's Rd	The Old Forge (no 1)	18
St John's Rd	Rumsey Row	19
St John's Rd	11, 15 -17 St Johns Rd	20
St John's Green	No's 13-18 Cottages	21
St John's Green	Gasworks Cottage no 19	22
St John's Green	1, Old Forge Cottage (includes no 2)	23
Bridge Street	The Cock and Bell (Pakwaan)	24
Bridge Street	No's 2 & 4 Bridge Street	25
Bridge Street	19, The Old Malt Store and brewery buildings	26
Bridge Street	21, Originally workhouse later known as "The Old Maltings"	27
Loves Walk	1,2 & 3 Almshouses	29
Lodge Road	No 1 Deodora	30
Loves Walk	Priory wall	30
Lodge Road	36 The Meads	31
Margaretting Rd	Montpelier's Farmhouse and outbuildings	33
Margaretting Rd	1 & 2, Montpelier's cottages	34
Margaretting Rd	Gables Cottages	34

LOCATION	Address	Ref
Margaretting Rd	Barns at Ropers Farm	35
Margaretting Rd	Barn at Bumpstead / Bumpstead farmhouse	36
A414	Range Cottage	37
A415	Prospect Cottage	38
Newney Green	Christopher's	40
Newney Green	Kingscroft Cottage , originally 1/2 Moor Hall cottages	41
Newney Green	Christophers Cottages	42
Newney Green	The Cottage adj to Duck Inn	43
Newney Green	The Duck Inn	44
Cow Watering Lane	Sturgeons Farm Buildings	45
Cow Watering Lane	Riverside Cottage	46
Gt Oxney Green	"Haven House" , 3 Tower Road	47
Gt Oxney Green	Fosters Farm, East View	48
Gt Oxney Green	The Chequers and house adjacent	49
Roxwell Rd	Coach House/Manor House etc	50
Roxwell Rd	Horse and Groom	51
Roxwell Rd	New Barns Farm and WWII/Marconi buildings	52
Chelmsford Rd	Skeggs Farm- Farmhouse	54
Chelmsford Rd	Skeggs Farm- range of farm buildings and barn.	55
Highwood Road	Lee Farm	57
Hand pumps for water	At 15 St Johns Road	59
Paradise road	Writtle Lodge	60
Bridges- see Archaeology	Lordship Road over the River Can	61
Bridges- see Archaeology	Cow Watering Lane - culvert for Butlers Brook	62
Bridges- see Archaeology	Lawford Lane over River Can	63
Bridges- see Archaeology	The Blue Bridge on Bridge Street over River Wid	64
Fords- see Archaeology	Skeggs Farm on Writtle Rd, fording River Wid	65
Fords- see Archaeology	Lawford Lane, fording River Can	66
Fords- see Archaeology	Old Roxwell Road/Cow Watering Lane, thro Roxwell Brook	67





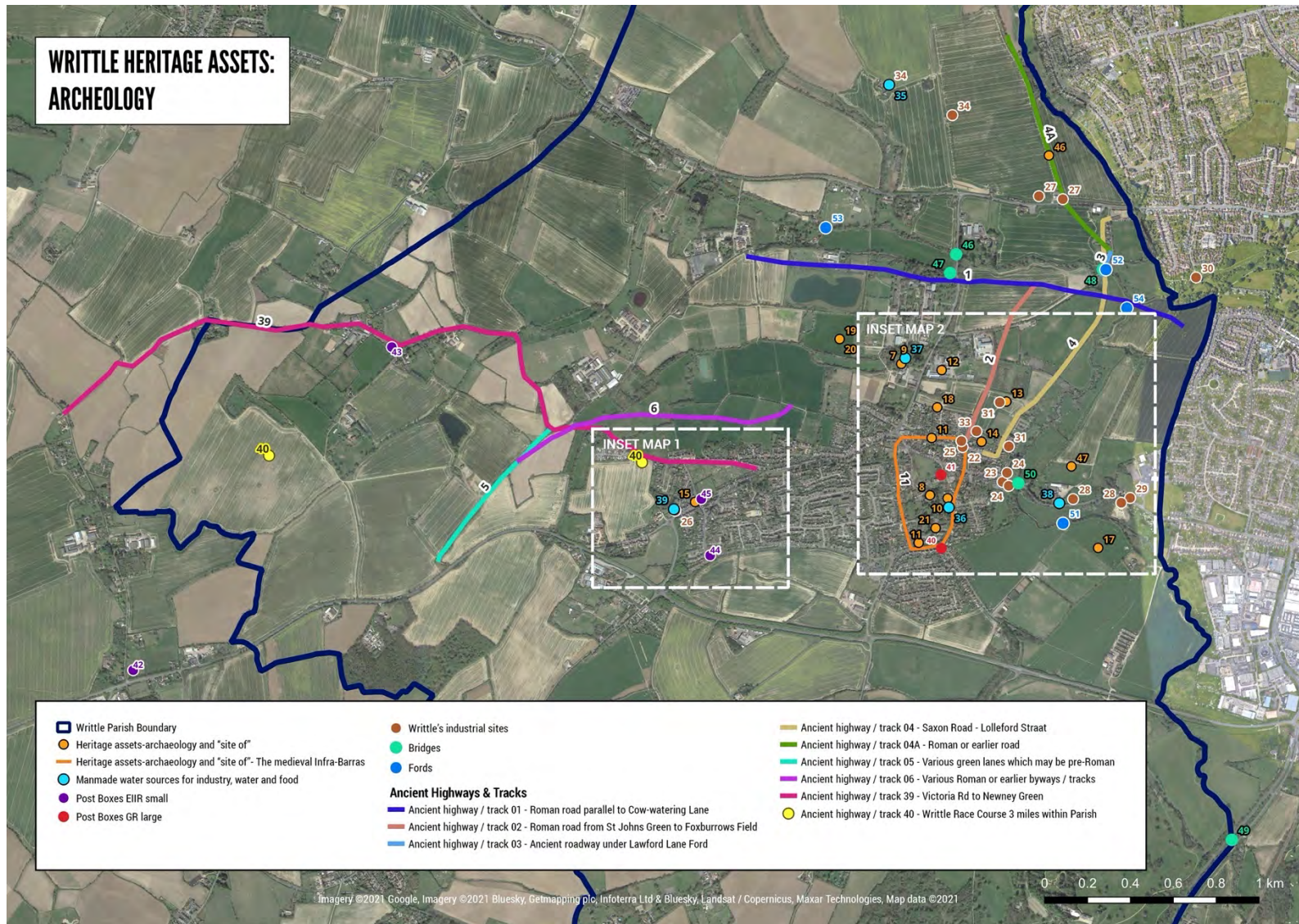


Key to heritage maps (archaeological interest) on following pages:

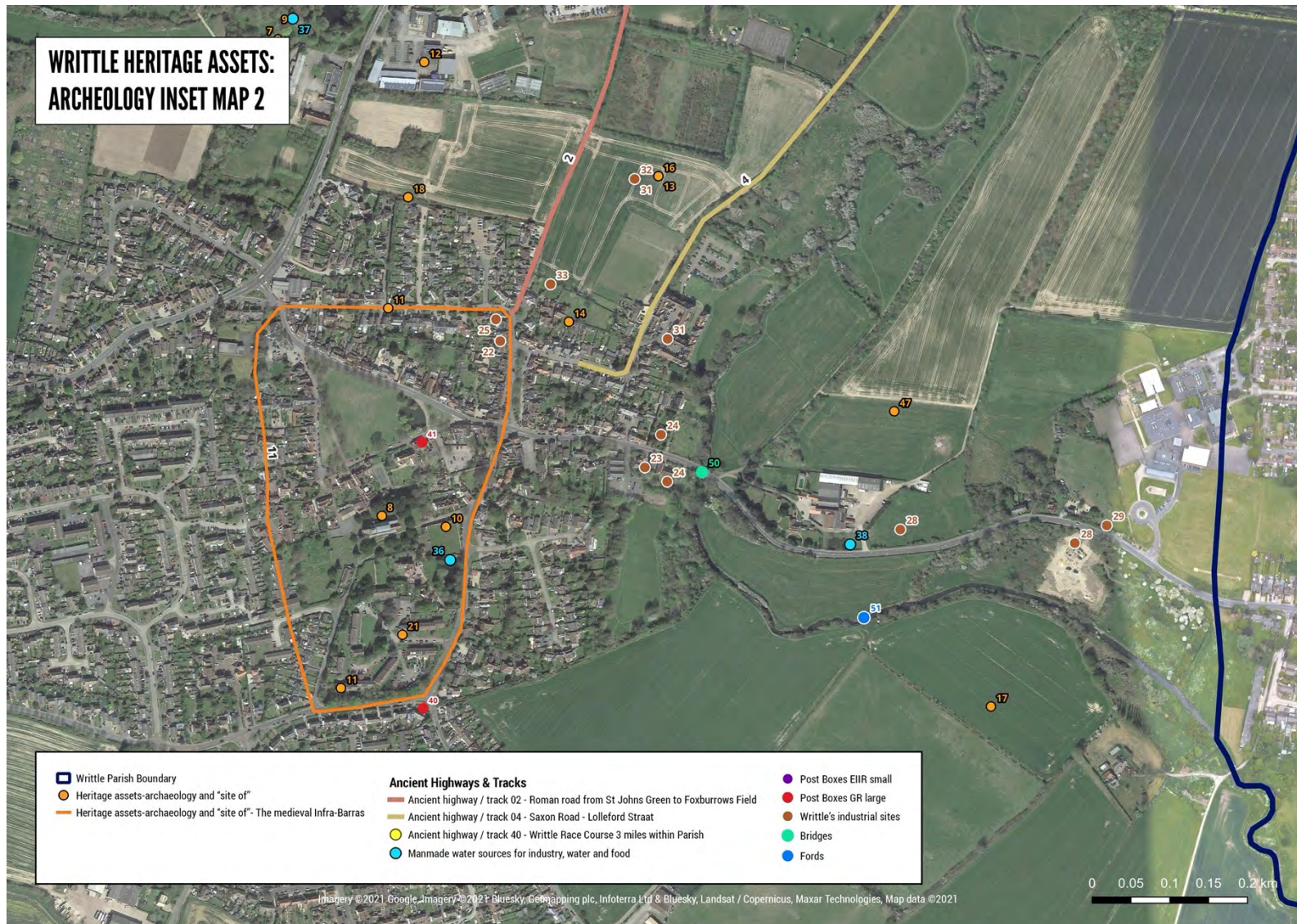
CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	REF
Ancient highways & tracks	Roman road runs parallel to Cow-watering Lane, across Foxburrows field, crossing the River Wid, and then the road heads towards the Roman Mansio in Moulsham	1
Ancient highways & tracks	Roman road runs parallel to Cow-watering Lane, across Foxburrows field, crossing the River Wid, and then the road heads towards the Roman Mansio in Moulsham	1
Ancient highways & tracks	Roman Road from St Johns Green to Foxburrows Field, junction with above	2
Ancient highways & tracks	Roman Road from St Johns Green to Foxburrows Field, junction with above	2
Ancient highways & tracks	The ancient roadway under Lawford Lane ford is possibly Roman or earlier, connecting to the Colchester Road	3
Ancient highways & tracks	The ancient roadway under Lawford Lane ford is possibly Roman or earlier, connecting to the Colchester Road	3
Ancient highways & tracks	Saxon Road- Lolleford Straat, now Lawford Lane, was a Kings Highway and possibly a drovers' road to Writtle Market by St John's Green	4
Ancient highways & tracks	Saxon Road- Lolleford Straat, now Lawford Lane, was a Kings Highway and possibly a drovers' road to Writtle Market by St John's Green	4
Ancient highways & tracks	Various green lanes which may be pre-Roman	5
Ancient highways & tracks	Various green lanes which may be pre-Roman	5
Ancient highways & tracks	Various Roman or earlier byways/ tracks on fields around Writtle linking main ancient highways	6
Ancient highways & tracks	Various Roman or earlier byways/ tracks on fields around Writtle linking main ancient highways	6
Ancient highways & tracks	Victoria Rd to Newey Green- probably the old Epping & London road - see Chapman & Andre 1777	39
Ancient highways & tracks	Victoria Rd to Newey Green- probably the old Epping & London road - see Chapman & Andre 1777	39
Ancient highways & tracks	Writtle Race Course 3 miles within the village	40
Ancient highways & tracks	Writtle Race Course 3 miles within the village	40
Ancient highways & tracks	Roman or earlier road continues from Lawford Lane north across Warren Farm land around North of Chelmsford	4A
Ancient highways & tracks	Roman or earlier road continues from Lawford Lane north across Warren Farm land around North of Chelmsford	4A
Heritage assets- archaeology and "site of"	The medieval Infra-Barras around the Village centre i.e. Lodge Road, St John's Road and St John's Green. Much is visible	11
Heritage assets- archaeology and "site of"	The medieval Infra-Barras around the Village centre i.e. Lodge Road, St John's Road and St John's Green. Much is visible	11
Writtle's industrial sites	Writtle Brewery sites on both sides of Bridge Street	24
Writtle's industrial sites	Writtle Brewery sites on both sides of Bridge Street	24
Writtle's industrial sites	Maltings site warren Farm - next to Malt house Cottage on Roxwell Rd	27
Writtle's industrial sites	Maltings site warren Farm - next to Malt house Cottage on Roxwell Rd	27
Writtle's industrial sites	2 Mills at Skeggs (Southgate's), wind and water, for grain, on Chelmsford Road	28
Writtle's industrial sites	2 Mills at Skeggs (Southgate's), wind and water, for grain, on Chelmsford Road	28
Writtle's industrial sites	Marconi complex - Melba Court, Guys Farm, Rugby Field	31
Writtle's industrial sites	Marconi complex - Melba Court, Guys Farm, Rugby Field	31
Writtle's industrial sites	Aerials and buildings at Warren Farm / Bedells End radio WWII site (Marconi)	34
Writtle's industrial sites	Aerials and buildings at Warren Farm / Bedells End radio WWII site (Marconi)	34

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	REF
Heritage assets- archaeology and "site of"	The Roman Settlement, ancient hut circles and features back to Mesolithic (4000yrs BC) in three fields on College Estate (confidential)	7
Heritage assets- archaeology and "site of"	The C14 Chantry Chapel in NE of All Saints Churchyard	8
Heritage assets- archaeology and "site of"	King Johns Hunting Lodge, moat and fish ponds on Lordship Road. (Partly exposed)	9
Heritage assets- archaeology and "site of"	"The Lodge" medieval mansion in the Tudor walled garden, now the Bowling Green on Lodge Road	10
Heritage assets- archaeology and "site of"	Manor of Lordship on Lordship Road - site of	12
Heritage assets- archaeology and "site of"	Napoleonic camp - Rugby Field by Lawford Lane - site of	13
Heritage assets- archaeology and "site of"	Old market in Rugby Field & beside drovers' road (Lawford Lane)	14
Heritage assets- archaeology and "site of"	WWII British Restaurant site at Ongar Rd/East View (was then Bonnet's general store, then a garage showroom)	15
Heritage assets- archaeology and "site of"	WWI airfield in Rugby Field - has a plaque at the site	16
Heritage assets- archaeology and "site of"	WWI airfield on Shakestons Farm - plaque on Sports Club Wall on Paradise Road	17
Heritage assets- archaeology and "site of"	Middle Ages militia practice area - Butt Field near Lordship Road	18
Heritage assets- archaeology and "site of"	Middle Ages militia practice area - Stoneyshots near Lordship Road	19
Heritage assets- archaeology and "site of"	Possible henge, probably wood, in Stoneyshots Field - Writtle College	20
Heritage assets- archaeology and "site of"	The Priory site, Walls, and Fish pond in Lodge Road. Now partly under "The Priory" houses. C11 pottery found on site	21
Writtle's industrial sites	Victorian Gas Works Managers House at 19, St Johns Green and cottages for brewery and gasworks	22
Writtle's industrial sites	Maltings in Bridge Street	23
Writtle's industrial sites	Gas works site in St John's Road & St John's Green	25
Writtle's industrial sites	Writtle Water Works & tower and pond late 1800s in Tower Road. (tower and works now demolished, pond remains - no 39)	26
Writtle's industrial sites	Southgate's Mill owners house Grade II, and terrace houses on Chelmsford Road	29
Writtle's industrial sites	Beaches water Mill, formerly called "Oil Mill" or "Much Mill" ("Mochel Mill" in Old English, therefore is old) on River Wid near Beaches Rd - leather, grain and bricks	30
Writtle's industrial sites	Experimental sound/radar location Rugby Field Lawford Lane (Marconi)	32
Writtle's industrial sites	Guys Farm, St Johns Road (Marconi)	33
Manmade water sources for industry, water and food	Pond on Greenbury Green, with hard bottom for transport uses e.g. dray horse/oxen watering and cart wheel soaking.	35
Manmade water sources for industry, water and food	Vicarage pond - was originally for the Priory, probably as a fish pond	36
Manmade water sources for industry, water and food	Medieval Fish pond at King Johns Hunting Lodge	37
Manmade water sources for industry, water and food	Pond at Skeggs Farm for domestic and possibly fish, and non-stock agricultural uses e.g. keeping willow whips pliable for rhubarb bunching use	38
Manmade water sources for industry, water and food	Water works Pond , Tower rd, Oxney Green	39
Post Boxes GR large	Paradise Rd	40
Post Boxes GR large	The Green	41
Post Boxes EIR small	Newney Green	42
Post Boxes EIR small	Cooksmill Green	43
Post Boxes EIR small	Oxney Green-Lodge Rd	44
Post Boxes EIR small	Oxney Green - Ongar Road	45
Heritage assets- archaeology and "site of"	Warren Farm fields , Google/aerial photos show many crop marks / features. Field walking yielded brick, tile & pottery	46
Bridges	Lordship Road over the River Can	46
Heritage assets- archaeology and "site of"	Skeggs Farm Field on Hilltop above house. Worked flint, hut circles burnt stones found by field walking/dowsing.	47
Bridges	Cow Watering Lane - culvert for Butlers Brook	47
Bridges	Lawford Lane over River Can	48
Bridges	A 1060 bridge at Three Mile Hill over River Wid. Modern, but area is ancient and may have old artefacts/built structures in vicinity.	49
Bridges	The Blue Bridge on Bridge Street over River Wid	50
Fords	Skeggs Farm on Writtle Rd, fording River Wid	51
Fords	Lawford Lane, fording River Can, beside the bridge	52
Fords	Old Roxwell Road/ Cow Watering Lane, fording Roxwell Brook	53
Fords	Skeggs river meadow to Lawford /Cowwatering lanes, Roman agger and ditches when dry	54

WRITTLE HERITAGE ASSETS: ARCHEOLOGY





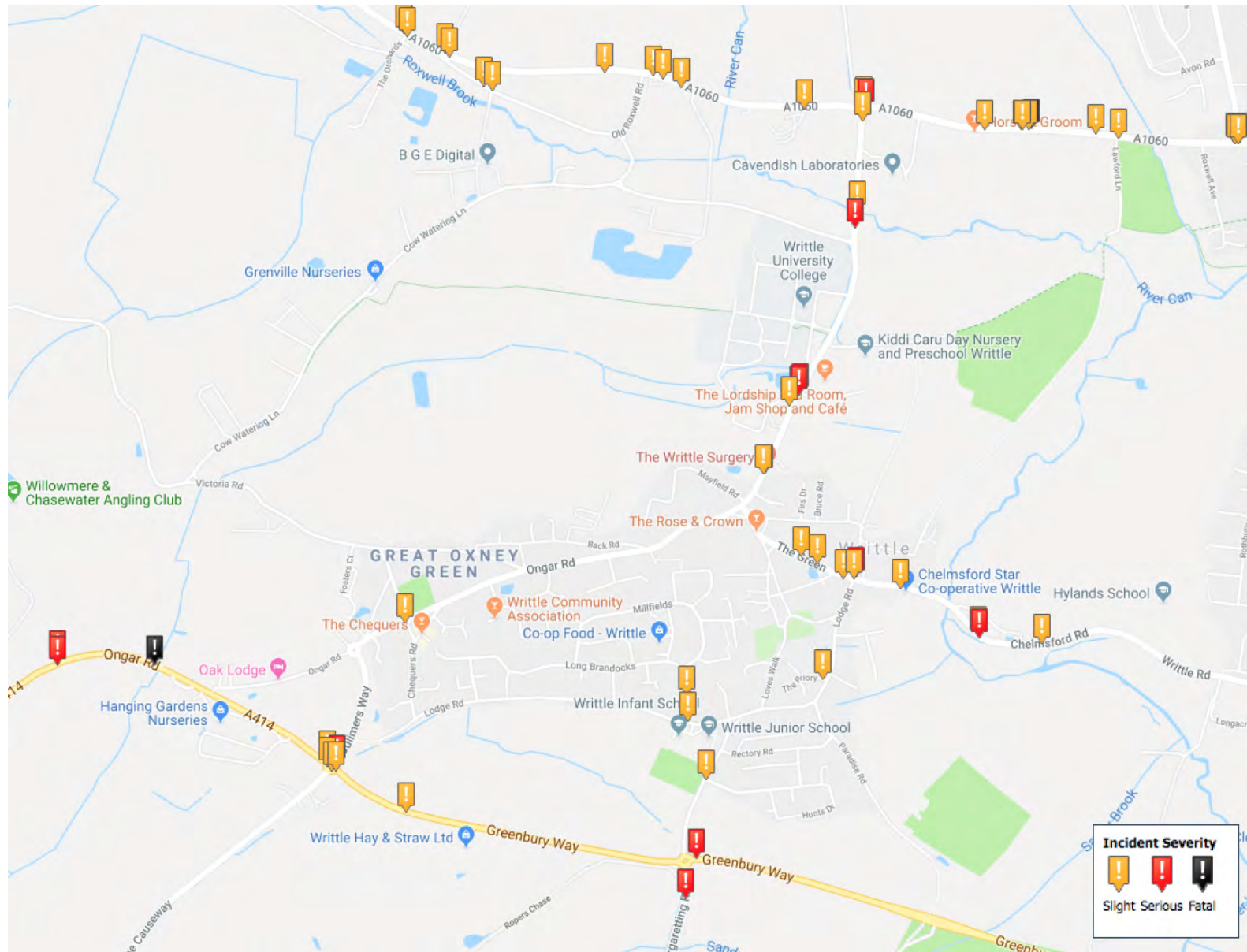


Appendix 5: Traffic Safety

The plan attached overleaf indicates the location and severity of all traffic incidents recorded over the five-year period 2014 – 2018 (inclusive), including all vehicle types and casualty types.

The information is taken from Crashmap.co.uk, which uses data collected by the police about road traffic crashes where someone has been injured. The data is approved by the National Statistics Authority and released by the Department for Transport.

The plan overleaf is taken from <http://www.crashmap.co.uk>, as accessed in June 2019.



Appendix 6: Waste and Minerals Local Plans

Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan (WLP)

Essex County Council is the Waste Planning Authority (WPA) for the Plan area, and is responsible for preparing planning policies and assessing applications for waste management development. The WLP was adopted in July 2017 forming part of the statutory Development Plan and should be read alongside the adopted Chelmsford Local Plan. The WLP covers the period from 2017 to 2032. It sets out where and how waste management developments can occur, and contains the policies against which waste management planning applications are assessed. Policy 2 of the WLP designates Waste Consultation Areas within 250m of active, allocated or permitted waste management facilities (400m in the case of Water Recycling Centres). These act to ensure that ECC are consulted on all non-waste related development proposals to ensure that there are no detrimental impacts which would compromise the operation of the existing facility or the newly proposed development.

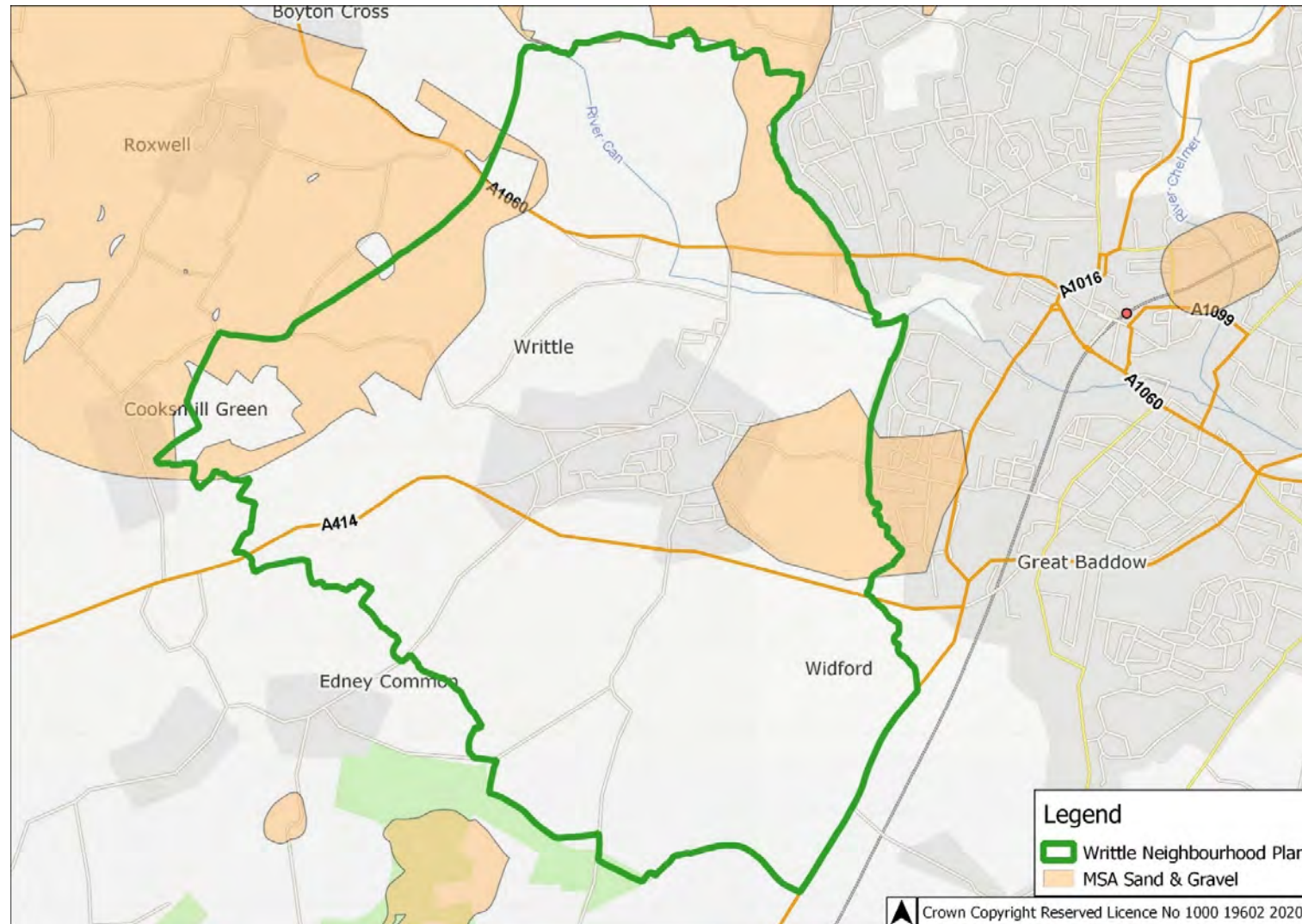
Essex Minerals Local Plan 2014 (MLP)

The Essex Minerals Local Plan 2014 (MLP) forms part of the statutory Development Plan and should be read alongside the Chelmsford Local Plan. Sand and gravel deposits are subject to a Minerals Safeguarding policy (Policy S8), which seeks to prevent deposits being sterilised by on mineral development.

Mineral Consultation Areas are also established through Policy S8 and these act to ensure that ECC are consulted on all non-mineral related development within a distance of 250m around active, allocated and permitted quarries, and other mineral infrastructure.

The map overleaf identifies areas in the North East, East and North of the Parish as being within a Minerals Safeguarding Area due to the presence of sand and gravel deposits beneath the ground. These areas are subject to the minerals safeguarding policy (Policy S8 of the MLP), which seeks to prevent deposits being unnecessarily sterilised by non-mineral development. All housing allocations, other than development at Warren Farm (see Policy WNP D3: Warren Farm Growth Area), proposed in the Plan fall below the site size threshold at which the provisions of Policy S8 are engaged. Consequently, there is currently no minerals and waste infrastructure existing, allocated or permitted in the Plan area.

Mineral safeguarding areas in relation to the Writtle Neighbourhood Plan Area:



Appendix 7: Supporting material

The Neighbourhood Plan draws on the following material, all of which can be found on the Writtle Parish Council website:

<https://writtle-pc.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plan/>

The documents include:

- Heritage Writtle / Writtle Archives, Register of Heritage Buildings for Writtle, January 2021
- Writtle Analysis Paper, June 2019
- Writtle BT Site, Workshop Report, November 2019
- Writtle Business Survey Report, December 2018
- Writtle Design Guide, Aecom, February 2020
- Writtle Key Views, January 2021
- Writtle Parish Plan, 2011, updated 2019
- Writtle Residents Survey Report, IDA Consulting Ltd, February 2019
- Writtle Village Design Statement, 2004

The Neighbourhood Plan also draws upon the Chelmsford Local Plan and the suite of technical evidence documents prepared in support of that. The evidence documents are available via the Chelmsford City Council website:

<https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy-and-new-local-plan/new-local-plan/evidence-base/>

The Neighbourhood Plan refers to the latest iteration of the Essex Design Guide. This is available online via the Essex County Council website:

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

Other documents referred to within the Neighbourhood Plan are sourced via the series of footnotes.

Glossary of Terms

Adoption – The final confirmation of a Development Plan by a local planning authority.

Affordable housing – Housing for sale or rent, or for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers), and which may comprise one or more of the following: (a) affordable housing for rent; (b) starter homes; (c) discounted market sales housing; or (d) other affordable routes to home ownership (e.g.: shared ownership and rent to buy etc). A full definition is available in the NPPF (2019).

Brownfield site – See Previously Developed Land.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – A levy that allows Local Authorities to raise funds from developers undertaking new building projects in their areas. Money can be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure such as transport schemes, schools, health centres, leisure centres and parks. .

Conservation Area - An area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which is preserved by local planning policies and guidance.

Development Plan – A document setting out the local planning authority's policies and proposals for the development and use of land and buildings in the authority's area. For Writtle, this includes the Chelmsford Local Plan (2020), the Essex Minerals Local Plan (2014) and the Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan (2017). Neighbourhood Plans, once made, form part of the Development Plan.

Evidence base - The background information and data that any Development Plan Document is based on and is made up of studies on specific issues, including physical, economic, and social characteristics of an area.

Green Belt – A designation for land around certain cities and large built-up areas which aims to keep this land permanently open or largely undeveloped. The purposes of the greenbelt is to (i) check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas (ii) prevent neighbouring towns from merging (iii) safeguard the countryside from encroachment (iv) preserve the setting and special character of historic towns (v) assist urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Greenfield site – Land, or a defined site, where there has been no previous development, often in agricultural use.

Green-space - Those parts of an area which are occupied by natural open space, parkland, woodland, sports fields, gardens, allotments and the like. Also often referred to as 'Green Infrastructure'.

Heritage Asset – A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage assets include designated assets (e.g.: listed buildings) and assets identified by the local planning authority, which may include a local list of assets. (Also see entry for Non-designated Heritage Assets below)

Housing Associations – Not-for-profit organisations that work with councils to offer affordable flats and houses to local people.

Independent Examination - An assessment of a proposed Development Plan carried out by an independent person to consider whether a Development Plan conforms with the relevant legal requirements.

Infill Development – Small scale development filling a gap within an otherwise built up frontage.

Infrastructure – The term infrastructure is defined in the adopted Chelmsford Local Plan (2020) at paragraph 6.70, explaining that it can include any structure, building, system facility and/or provision required by an area for its social and/or economic function and/or wellbeing including (but not

exclusively): footways, cycleways, bridleways and highways; public transport; drainage, SuDs and flood protection; waste recycling facilities; education and childcare; healthcare; sports, leisure and recreation facilities; community and social facilities; cultural facilities, including public art; emergency services; green infrastructure; open space; affordable housing; live/work units and lifetime homes; broadband; and facilities for specific sections of the community such as youth or the elderly.

Listed Building – A building of special architectural or historic interest. Listed buildings are graded I, II or II*, with grade I being the highest. Listing includes the exterior as well as the interior of the building.

Local Plan – The Plan for the future development of the local area, drawn up by the local planning authority. This forms part of the Development Plan.

Local Planning Authority - Local government body responsible for formulating planning policies and controlling development in a particular area, e.g.: a district council, metropolitan council, county council, a unitary authority or national park authority. For Writtle this is Chelmsford City Council.

Made – Terminology used in Neighbourhood Planning to indicate whether a Plan has been adopted.

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government - Government department with responsibility for planning, housing, urban regeneration and local government (MHCLG). Previously known as the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - sets out government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The current version of the NPPF was published in February 2019.

Neighbourhood Plan – A plan prepared by a Town or Parish Council, or a Forum, for a particular Neighbourhood Area, which includes land use topics. Once made this forms part of the Development Plan.

Non-designated Heritage Asset - buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets

Outline Application – A general application for planning permission to establish that a development is acceptable in principle, subject to subsequent approval of detailed matters. Does not apply to changes of use.

Permitted Development – Comprises certain categories of minor development as specified in the General Permitted Development Order, which can be carried out without having first to obtain specific planning permission.

Planning Permission - Formal approval granted by a local planning authority (e.g. Chelmsford City Council) in allowing a proposed development to proceed. Permission may be sought in principle through outline planning applications, or be sought in detail through full planning applications.

Previously Developed Land - Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures; land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time.

Public Open Space - Open space to which the public has free access and which fulfils, or can fulfil, a recreational or non-recreational role (for example, amenity, ecological, educational, social or cultural uses).

Public Realm – Those parts of a city, town or village, whether publicly or privately owned, which are available for everyone to use. This includes streets, squares and parks.

Public Right of Way – Paths on which the public has a legally protected right to pass and re-pass.

Raingarden – An area designed to receive surface water run-off from roofs and other hard surfaces, and thus manage the risk of surface water flooding. Species of plants used in the raingarden will typically be able to stand waterlogging for up to 48 hours at a time.

Registered Social Landlords (RSL) – See Housing Associations

Section 106 Agreement – A legal agreement under Section 106 of the 1990 Town & Country Planning Act. These are agreements between a planning authority and a developer, or undertakings offered unilaterally by a developer, that ensure that certain extra works related to development are undertaken.

Settlement Development Limits Boundary – Settlement or development boundaries (village envelopes) seek to set clear limits to towns and villages. They are designed to define the existing settlement and to identify areas of land where development may be acceptable in principle, subject to other policies and material planning considerations.

Soundness – The soundness of a statutory local planning document is determined by the planning inspector against three criteria: whether the plan is justified (founded on robust and credible evidence and be the most appropriate strategy), whether the plan is effective (deliverable, flexible and able to be monitored), and whether it is consistent with national and local planning policy.

Stakeholder – People who have an interest in an organisation or process including residents, business owners and national organisations and government departments

Sustainability Appraisal – An appraisal of the economic, environmental and social effects of a Plan from the outset of the preparation process to allow decisions to be made that accord with sustainable development.

Sustainable Communities – Places where people want to live and work, now and in the future.

Sustainable Development – An approach to development that aims to allow economic growth without damaging the environment or natural resources. Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Urban Design – The art of making places. It involves the design of buildings, groups of buildings, spaces and landscapes, in villages, towns and cities, to create successful development.

Use Classes Order – The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) is the statutory instrument that defines the categories of use of buildings or land for the purposes of planning legislation. 'Change of use' can occur within the same use class or from one use class to another. Depending on the specifics of any proposed change of use, including any building work associated with the proposal, it may require an application for planning permission or prior approval. The Use Class Order was most recently updated in September 2020 and can be accessed via the link below:

https://www.planningportal.co.uk/info/200130/common_projects/9/change_of_use

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- Writtle Heritage
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Writtle Parish Council

Neighbourhood Plan for Writtle Parish, 2020-2036

Made version: December 2021

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