

Shouldham Neighbourhood Plan 2025-2040



**Local Green Space Assessment
March 2026**

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View of Shouldham that shows its natural green centre

INTRODUCTION

1. Shouldham is preparing a neighbourhood plan which will include a policy designating areas of Local Green Space which are particularly valued by the community.
2. In consultation with the community in late 2023, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group identified ten areas of green space. Each of these was visited and further evidence gathered on them to determine whether they meet the national criteria for Local Green Space designation.
3. This document provides the assessment and reasoning of all seven areas of green space visited or suggested for us to investigate to include in the neighbourhood plan; however, those we wish to take forward have been separated from ones which were eliminated to make this easier for readers.
4. Chapter 3 and 4 provides the assessment and explanation of the seven green spaces we feel are justified and supported to be a LGS in the Neighbourhood Plan.
5. Chapter 5 sets out in a summary table followed by the assessment forms of the seven green spaces we did not think met the criteria to make an LGS designation for the plan.

POLICY CONTEXT

6. Local Green Space designation is a way to provide special protection for green areas of particular importance to local communities. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in 2012 (revised 2024) introduced the concept of Local Green Space designation¹.

7. Paragraph 106. of the NPPF sets out that communities should be able to identify green spaces of particular importance through neighbourhood plans, with para 107. Determining:

The Local Green Space designation should only be used 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), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and,*
 - c) *Local in character and not an extensive tract of land.*
8. In addition, the National Planning Practice Guidance states:
- Local Green Space designation will rarely be appropriate where the land has planning permission for development. Exceptions could be where the development would be compatible with the reasons for designation or where planning permission is no longer capable of being implemented.*
9. Other designations, such as Special Areas of Conservation, do not necessarily preclude or support designation as a Local Green Space. However, it is necessary to consider whether the additional designation is necessary and would serve a useful purpose.
10. In applying the NPPF criteria, close proximity would normally mean easy walking distance, which based on Natural England standards would mean 1.25 miles or less.
11. Consideration of whether the green space is local in character, and not an extensive tract of land, suggests spaces within a locality, rather than for example, extensive green areas in the countryside.

12. The Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk Local Plan includes strategic policies for the neighbourhood area. Planning Practice Guidance on Neighbourhood Planning sets out that plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan if it is to meet the basic conditions. The local plan sets out that new development should incorporate green space to safeguard wildlife, provide recreational opportunities and improve the quality of life for people living in the area. Planning Practice Guidance on Neighbourhood Planning sets out that plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan if it is to meet the basic conditions.

ASSESSMENT OF THE DESIGNATED GREEN SPACES

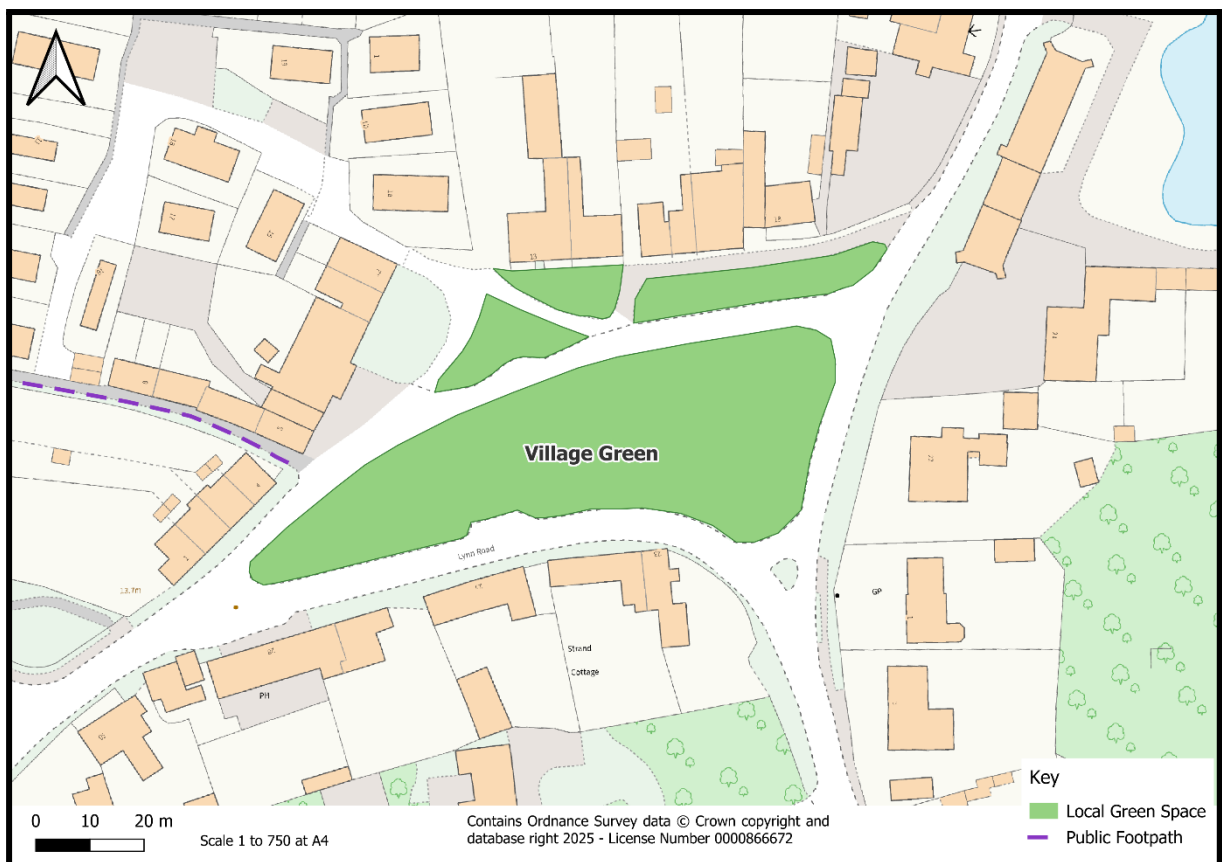
13. The Local Green Space Assessment Tool from *My Community: Neighbourhood Planning Local Green Spaces*¹ has been used as the basis to assess each site identified by the community. This includes:

1. Village Green;
2. George V Playing Field;
3. Bowling Green;
4. Grounds of All Saints' Church;
5. Rhubarb field;
6. Community Orchard;
7. School playing field;

1

<https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/toolkits-and-guidance/making-local-green-space-designations-neighbourhood-plan/>

VILLAGE GREEN



Site Details

Description and purposes	Used for the beer festival, village fate, classic cars meet, MacMillan coffee morning. Heart of the community, people sit on it. Has benches, telephone box, electricity point. Memorial copper beech. Christmas tree and carols at Christmas. Any village celebration or charity event is on the village green.
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Checklist

Statutory designations - i.e. CWS, listed status, SSSI, SPA, NNR, SAC	Telephone Kiosk- Listed Building Grade II
Site allocations	None
Planning permissions	None

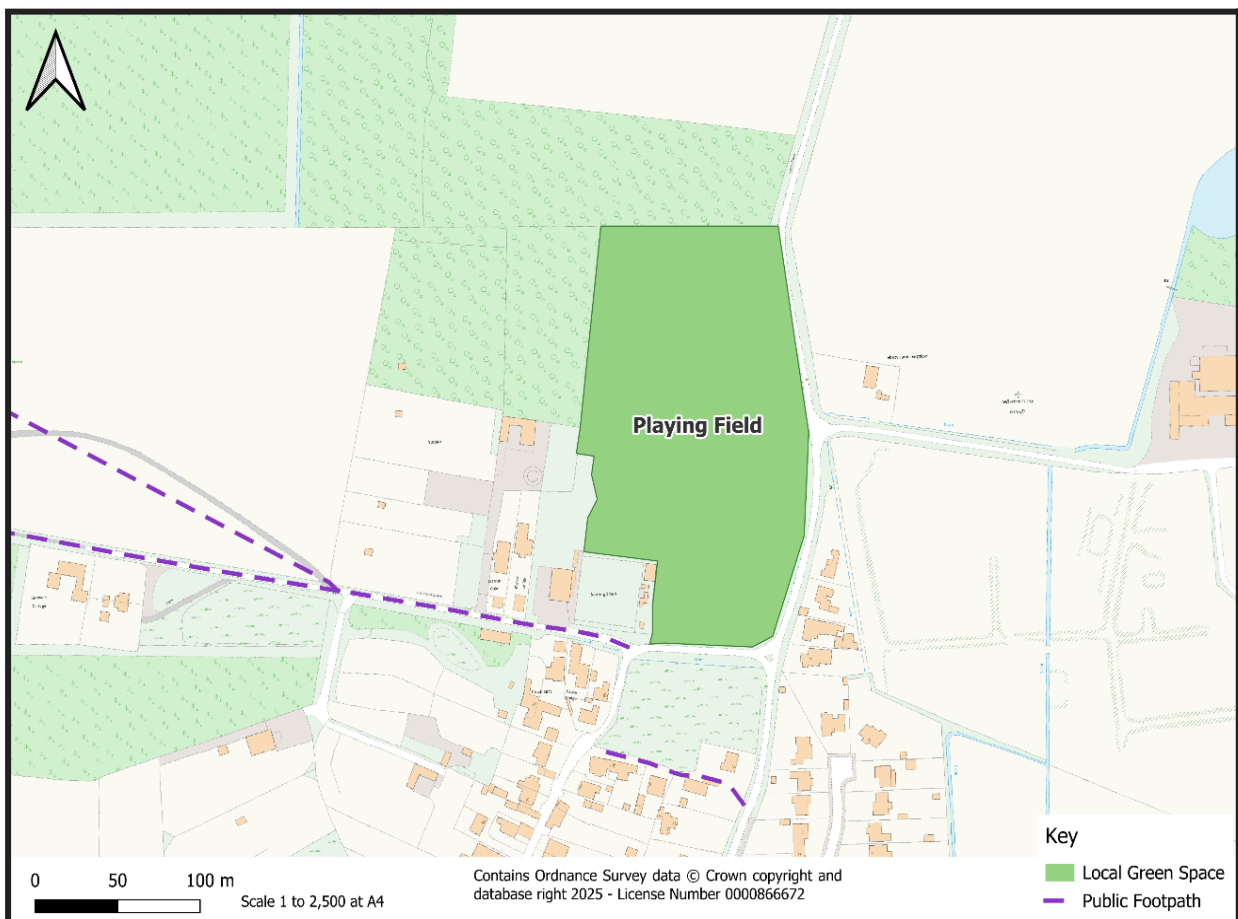
NPPF Criteria

Close to the community it serves.	The green space is at the heart of the village, situated within the historic core, and within the Conservation Area
Demonstrably special to the local community (beauty, historic significance, recreational, tranquillity, wildlife or other)	Recreational value – used for various village events Historic value – part of the original historic core of the village
Local in character and not extensive tract of land.	Overall the Village Green measures around 0.5ha which would not be considered an extensive tract of land.

Reason for Designation

For its recreational benefit and the contribution it makes to the historic character of the village.

George V Playing Field



Site Details

Description and purposes	Village playing field is open to all and includes sports pitch and a children's playground. There is also a public toilet and benches. The field is used regularly by the Shouldham football and cricket clubs which can attract 200 children and adults from a wide geographic area. The field is also used for village fates and camping is available here the first weekend in September to support the annual Beer Festival, which is a big event in Shouldham. There is new play equipment for children. It is used by dog walkers. There are many trees with TPOs which line the eastern and southern edge of the playing field, it's an area of designation.
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Checklist

Statutory designations - i.e. CWS, listed status, SSSI, SPA, NNR, SAC	None
Site allocations	None
Planning permissions	None

NPPF Criteria

Close to the community it serves.	Located at the northern end of the village, within close proximity of many homes on Westgate Street, New Road and Eastgate Street.
Demonstrably special to the local community (beauty, historic significance, recreational, tranquillity, wildlife or other)	Recreation – used year-round for a variety of sporting and recreational activities including football, running, dog walking and playing. Used by people of all ages. Wildlife – there are a good number of trees planted along the edge of the green space, many of which have TPOs.
Local in character and not extensive tract of land.	The playing field measures 2.8ha which would not be considered an extensive tract of land.

Reason for Designation

For its wildlife and recreational value that it provides to both residents and the wider local community.

Bowling Green



Site Details

Description and purposes	Parish Bowling Green. There is an active bowls club that has presence in the bowls league. It's also the home of the Shouldham Bowls and Social Club, there is Bingo, Tuesday lunch club, community friendship, quiz night, Sunday lunches, carpet bowls. It is also used as excess parking for the football that takes place on the playing field.
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Checklist

Statutory designations - i.e. CWS, listed status, SSSI, SPA, NNR, SAC	None
Site allocations	None
Planning permissions	Application recently permitted by KLWNBC for rear extension to form a multi-use area and accessible w/c.

NPPF Criteria

Close to the community it serves.	Located at the northern end of the village, within close proximity of many homes on Westgate Street, New Road and Eastgate Street.
Demonstrably special to the local community (beauty, historic significance, recreational, tranquillity, wildlife or other)	Recreational value – widely used by members of the community for bowls and also home to the social club.
Local in character and not extensive tract of land.	The bowling green measures 0.5ha, which would not be considered an extensive tract of land.

Reason for Designation

For the recreational value that it provides to residents of the village.

The grounds of All Saints' Church



Site Details

Description and purposes	Green space and graveyard surrounding All Saint's Church. Contains a scheduled monument in front of the church.
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Checklist

Statutory designations - i.e. CWS, listed status, SSSI, SPA, NNR, SAC	Grade I Building- Church of All Saints Grade II Listed Buildings include: - Headstone to Allen Mills - Headstone to Margaret Mills - Shouldham War Memorial
Site allocations	None
Planning permissions	None

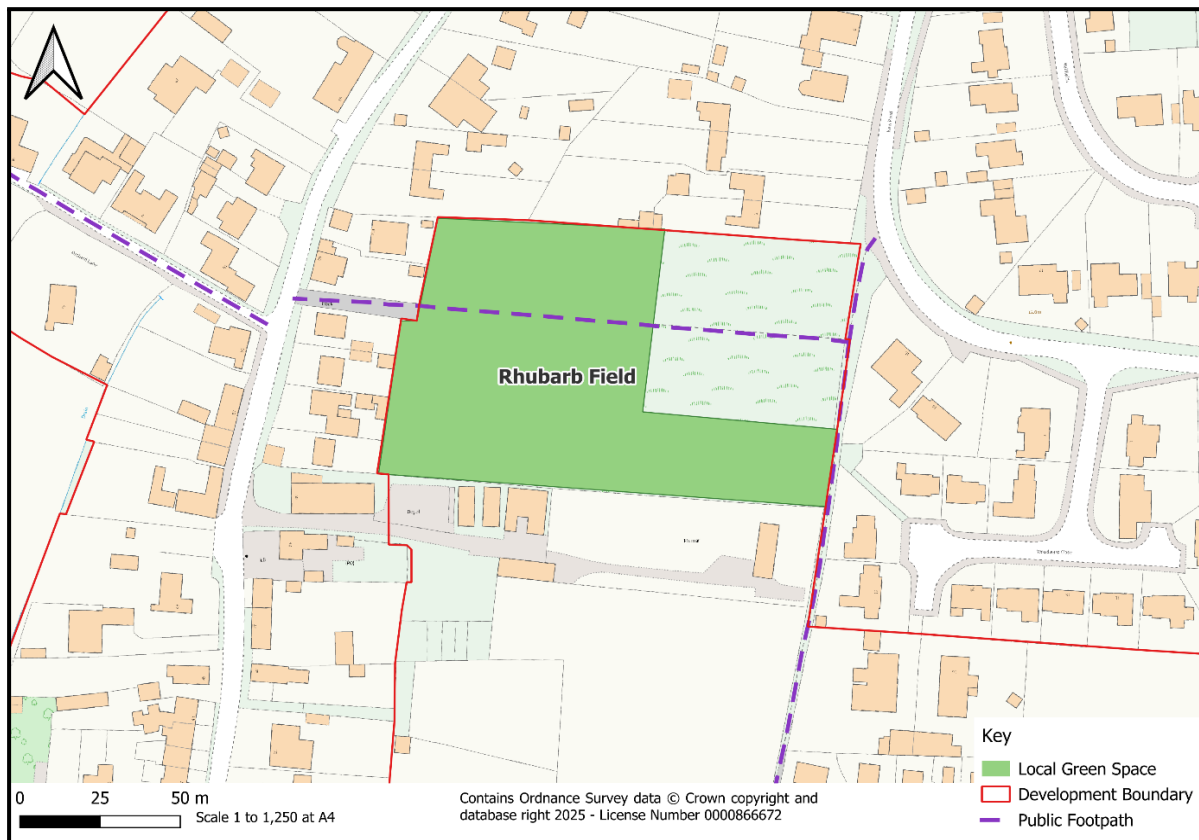
NPPF Criteria

Close to the community it serves. Add distance to centre of village	Located approximately 250m to the east of the main village settlement, easily within walking distance using the public footpath.
Demonstrably special to the local community (beauty, historic significance, recreational, tranquillity, wildlife or other)	Historic significance – this space is the grounds of the Grade II listed parish church, which includes the burial ground. Wildlife – the many trees and hedgerow within the church grounds that make it an ideal place for local wildlife.
Local in character and not extensive tract of land. Add site of green space	The green space measures 0.75ha, which would not be considered to be an extensive tract of land.

Reason for Designation

For its wildlife benefit and the contribution that it makes to the historic character of the village.

Rhubarb field



Site Details

Description and purposes	This field historically had rhubarb growing on it, hence the name. This stopped around 15 years ago. There is public access to the field and it is well used by locals as a cut through and for people out on walks. The field also provides a sense of openness within the settlement.
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Checklist

Statutory designations - i.e. CWS, listed status, SSSI, SPA, NNR, SAC	None
Site allocations	Top right-hand corner of the larger field is an allocated site in the local plan. This is excluded from the LGS.
Planning permissions	None

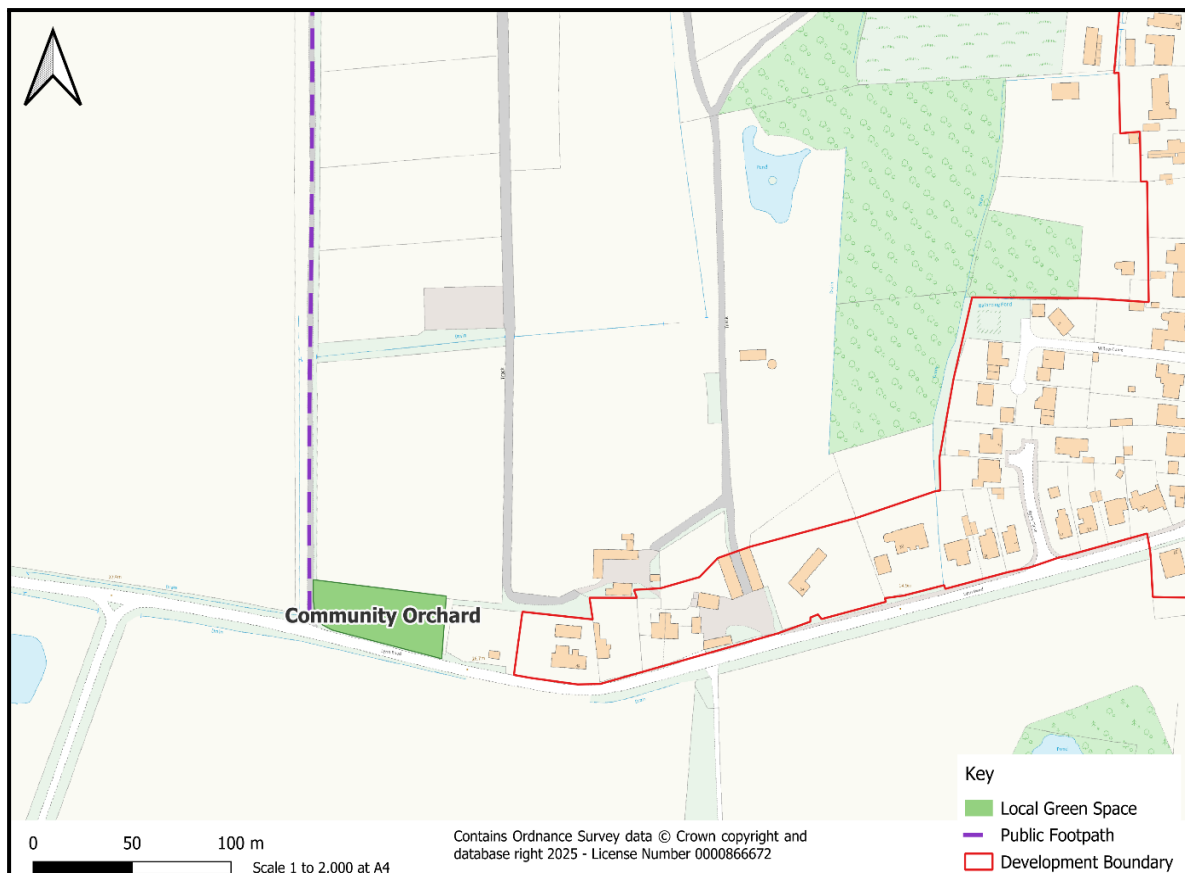
NPPF Criteria

Close to the community it serves.	Rhubarb field is a greenspace in the centre of residential development off Westgate Street and New Road.
Demonstrably special to the local community (beauty, historic significance, recreational, tranquillity, wildlife or other)	Recreation – a public footpath runs through the green space and is used daily by people to walk their dogs or others out for a walk. Historical – this field was previously always planted with Rhubarb, hence the name, it's an important part of the history of Shouldham. Historical – This open space is part of the historic character of Shouldham, it provides openness and green within the centre of the built-up part of the village. The Conservation Area Appraisal for Shouldham notes that the village comprises attractive groupings of buildings, open spaces, walls and trees.
Local in character and not extensive tract of land.	Rhubarb field measures 0.8ha, which would not be considered an extensive tract of land.

Reason for Designation

For its recreational benefit and the contribution that it makes to the historic character of the village.

Community Orchard



Site Details

Site	Community Orchard
Description and purposes	This is Poors Trust Lands. It was allotments and is now a managed community orchard – with a variety of fruit trees, plus soft fruits and a mixed hedge has gone in along the edge. There is a bench. Once or twice a year there are community events. The school is involved, and they have drawn the map for the planting scheme. Bees are kept up there. There is public access anyone can go in there.

Checklist

Statutory designations - i.e. CWS, listed status, SSSI, SPA, NNR, SAC	None
Site allocations	None
Planning permissions	None

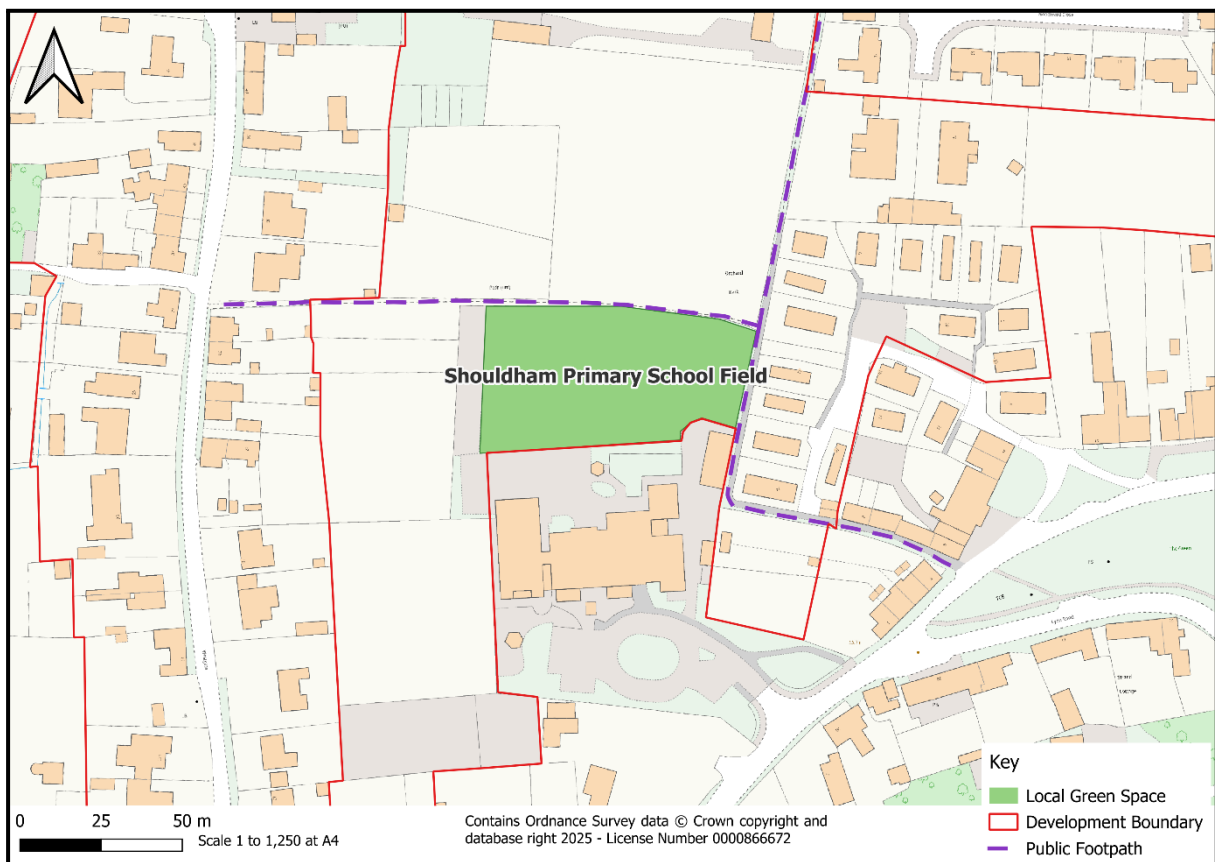
NPPF Criteria

Close to the community it serves.	Adjacent to houses at the southern end of the village, around 750m from the centre.
Demonstrably special to the local community (beauty, historic significance, recreational, tranquillity, wildlife or other) Add as much here as possible to determine whether the green space is demonstrably special.	Recreation – the orchard is looked after by people living in the village, it's a nice place for people to visit and everyone has access. Wildlife – it's a good spot for local wildlife and bees are kept there.
Local in character and not extensive tract of land. Add site of green space	The orchard is 0.15ha

Reason for Designation

For its wildlife and recreational benefit that it provides to residents.

School playing field



Site Details

Description and purposes	This is the grassed playing field within the grounds of Shouldham Primary School. It provides daily recreational and sporting space for pupils, including football, athletics, outdoor games, and informal play. The field is also used for annual school sports days, outdoor learning activities. Its location at the heart of the village ensures it is highly valued as a safe, accessible green space for children.
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Checklist

Statutory designations - i.e. CWS, listed status, SSSI, SPA, NNR, SAC	None
Site allocations	None
Planning permissions	None

NPPF Criteria

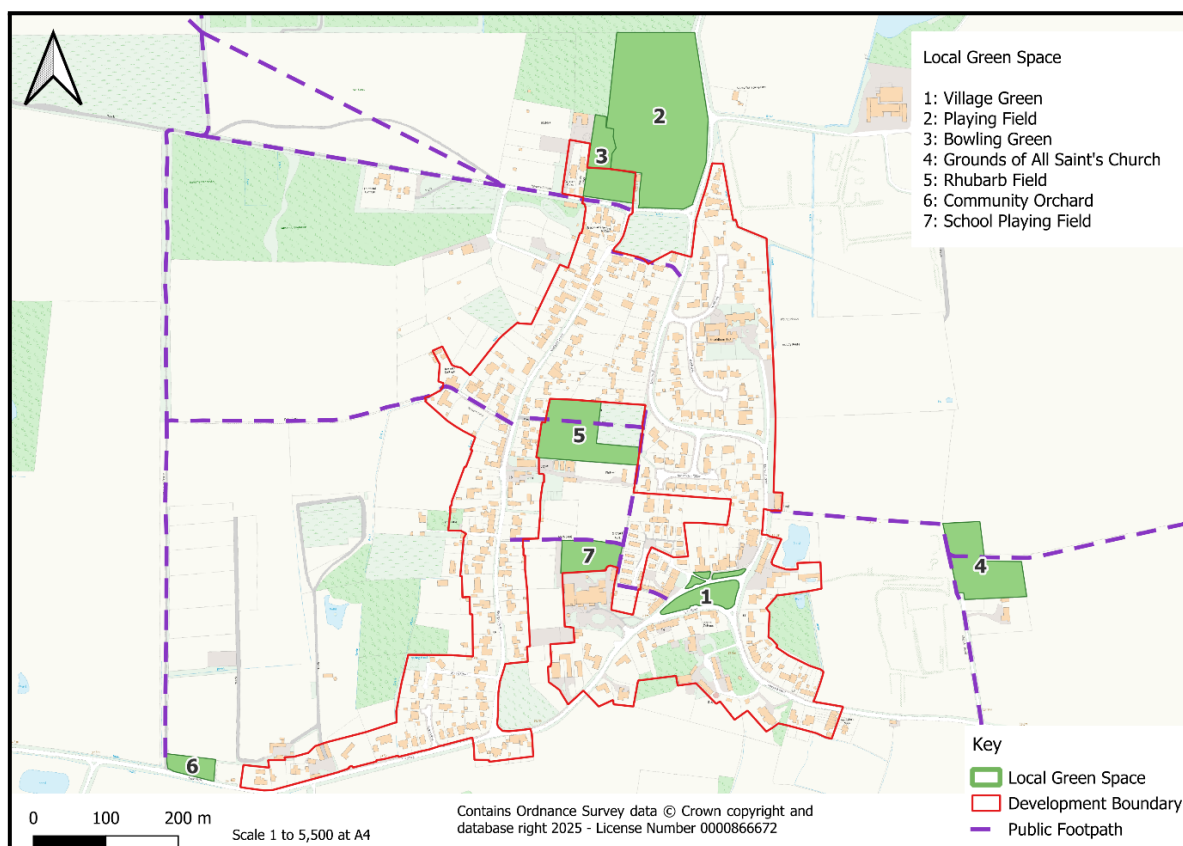
Close to the community it serves.	The school field is located within the main built-up area of the village, directly serving pupils and families from Shouldham and the surrounding area.
Demonstrably special to the local community (beauty, historic significance, recreational, tranquillity, wildlife or other) Add as much here as possible to determine whether the green space is demonstrably special.	Recreational value – a provides daily outdoor recreation for children and hosts key school and community events. Tranquillity - offers a safe and secure green space for play and learning. Wildlife - the open grassland and boundary planting provide habitat for local bird species and insects.
Local in character and not extensive tract of land.	The field is 0.6ha, which would not be considered an extensive tract of land.

Reason for Designation

For its value as an area to support school and community activities and associated wellbeing, while contributing to the village's historic pattern and green character.

Summary of Designations

14. From the assessment work, seven Local Green Spaces have been determined to meet the national criteria for designation. These are highlighted on the map below, with their reason for designation outlined in the table.



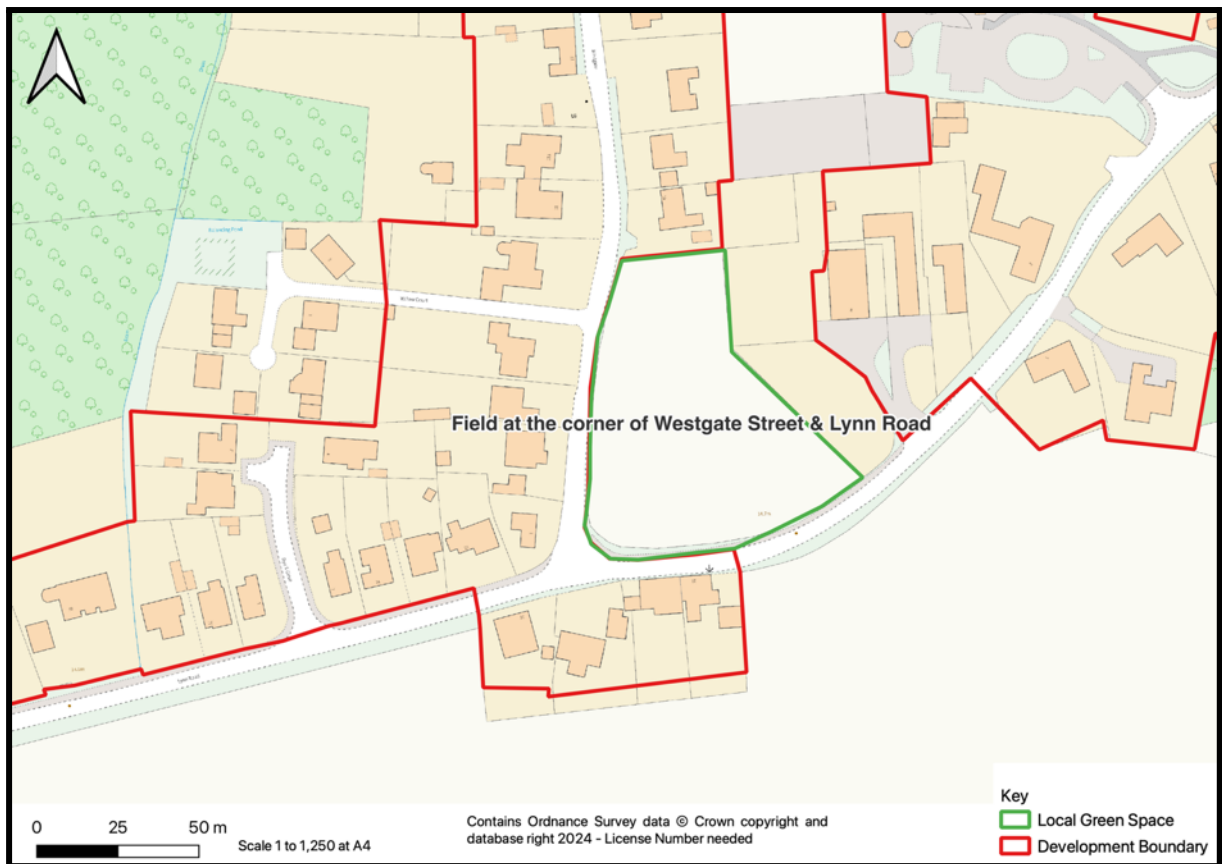
No.	Green Space	Reason these green spaces have been designated
1	Village Green	For its recreational benefit and the contribution that it makes to the historic character of the village.
2	George V Playing Field	For its wildlife and recreational value that it provides to both residents and the wider local community.
3	Bowling Green	For the recreational value that it provides to residents of the village.
4	Grounds of All Saints' Church	For its wildlife benefit and the contribution that it makes to the historic character of the village.
5	Rhubarb field	For its recreational benefit and the contribution that it makes to the historic character of the village.
6	Community Orchard	For its wildlife and recreational benefit that it provides to residents.
7	School playing field	For its value as an area to support school and community activities and associated wellbeing, while contributing to the village's historic pattern and green character.

Appendix A

The sites shown below were proposed as Local Green Spaces. After an informal consultation with each land owner, these sites were withdrawn from the draft neighbourhood plan.

The field at the corner of Westgate Street and Lynn Road





Site Details

Description and purposes	This area of land, currently a field, helps to create a sense of openness in the centre of the village. There are several mature trees on the space, one of which has a TPO in place.
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Checklist

Statutory designations - i.e. CWS, listed status, SSSI, SPA, NNR, SAC	None
Site allocations	None
Planning permissions	None

NPPF Criteria

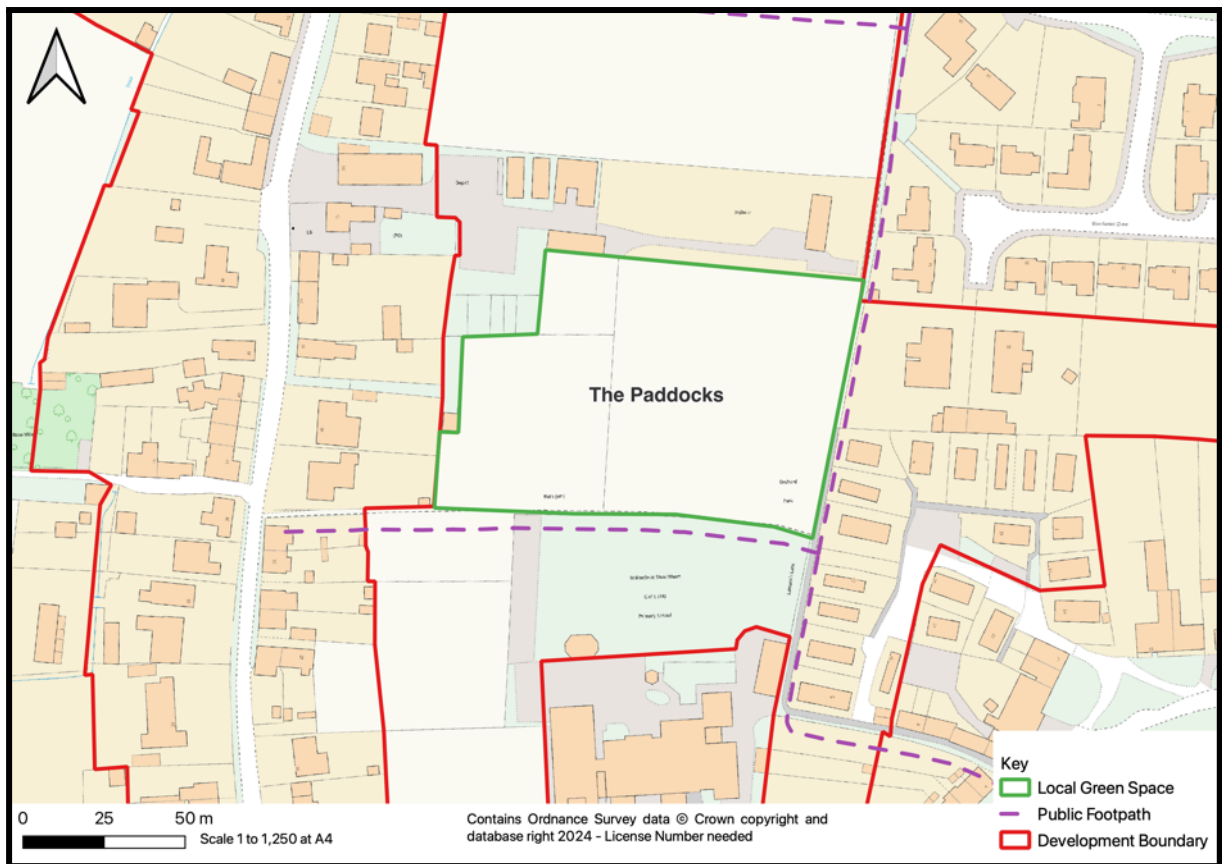
Close to the community it serves.	Located at the southern end of Westgate Street, surrounded by existing residential and around 250m from the centre of the village.
Demonstrably special to the local community (beauty, historic significance, recreational, tranquillity, wildlife or other)	Historical – This open space is part of the historic character of Shouldham, it provides openness and green within the centre of the built-up part of the village. Wildlife - It helps to connect areas of habitat within the village. There are several mature trees on the green space, which have TPOs.
Local in character and not an extensive tract of land.	The green space measures 0.5ha, which wouldn't be consider an extensive tract of land.

Reason for Designation

For its wildlife value and it forms a natural indentation in the heart of the settlement, bringing the countryside into the village.

The Paddocks





Site Details

Description and purposes	The Paddocks have been grazed by horses for many years. They are an area of green open space within the centre of the built-up area, surrounded by houses. There are footpaths that run to the side and bottom of the paddocks, and these are well used by residents as a cut through to the centre of the village. The paddock serves to keep this part of the village open, with the built environment blending into the open space. It gives a sense of openness and green, which is part of the historic character of Shouldham.
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Checklist

Statutory designations - i.e. CWS, listed status, SSSI, SPA, NNR, SAC	None
Site allocations	None
Planning permissions	None

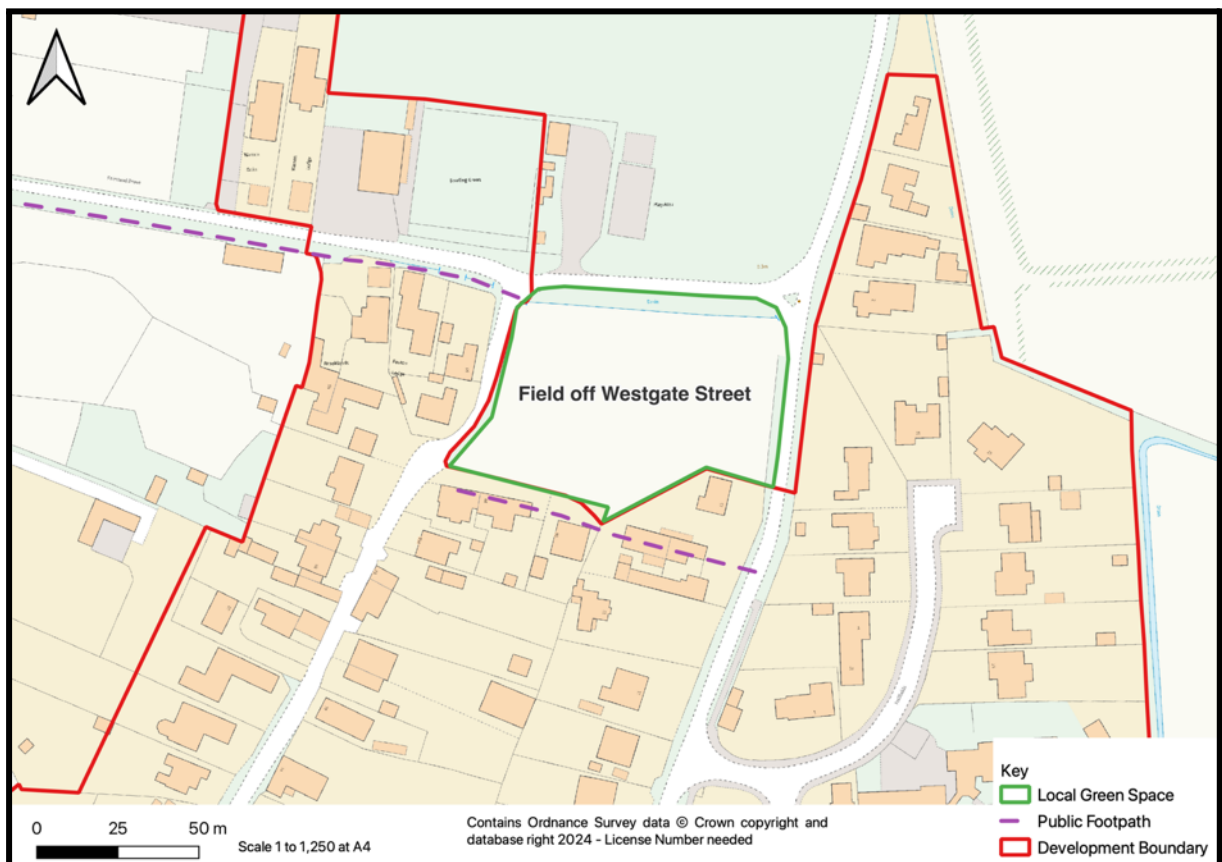
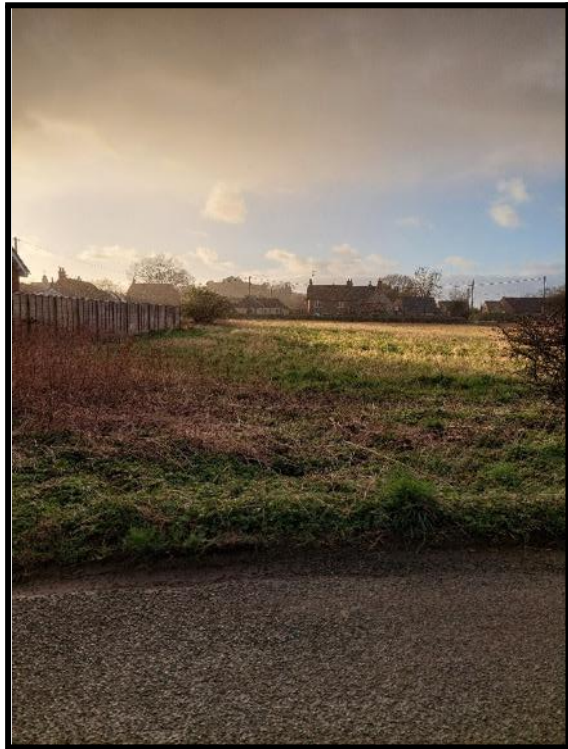
NPPF Criteria

Close to the community it serves.	The paddocks is a greenspace in the centre of residential development off Westgate Street and New Road.
Demonstrably special to the local community (beauty, historic significance, recreational, tranquillity, wildlife or other) Add as much here as possible to determine whether the green space is demonstrably special.	Recreation – a public footpath runs through the green space and is used daily by people to walk their dogs or others out for a walk. Historical – This open space is part of the historic character of Shouldham, it provides openness and green within the centre of the built-up part of the village. The Conservation Area Appraisal for Shouldham notes that the village comprises attractive groupings of buildings, open spaces, walls and trees.
Local in character and not an extensive tract of land.	The field is 0.5ha, which would not be considered an extensive tract of land.

Reason for Designation

For its recreational benefit and the contribution it makes to the historic character of the village.

Field adjacent to Westgate Street and opposite the playing field



Site Details

Description and purposes	Field at the top of Westgate Street, currently left fallow. There is a footpath on the southern edge of it that provides access to a couple of dwellings, but otherwise no public access into the field. The field serves to keep this part of the village open, with the built environment blending into the open space. It gives a sense of openness and green, which is part of the character of Shouldham.
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Checklist

Statutory designations - i.e. CWS, listed status, SSSI, SPA, NNR, SAC	None
Site allocations	None
Planning permissions	Planning permission for residential development refused June 2023

NPPF Criteria

Close to the community it serves.	Located at the northern end of the village, within close proximity of many homes on Westgate Street, New Road and Eastgate Street.
Demonstrably special to the local community (beauty, historic significance, recreational, tranquillity, wildlife or other) Add as much here as possible to determine whether the green space is demonstrably special.	Historical – This open space is part of the historic character of Shouldham, it provides openness and green within the centre of the built-up part of the village. The Conservation Area Appraisal for Shouldham notes that the village comprises attractive groupings of buildings, open spaces, walls and trees.
Local in character and not an extensive tract of land.	The field is 0.5ha, which would not be considered an extensive tract of land.

Reason for Designation

For its contribution to the historic character of the village.

Appendix B

In relation to the removal of Local Green Spaces, the response from the Borough Planning Officer is shown below. It was discussed at length during a meeting of the Steering Group and recorded in item 139/26.

139/26 To consider the response from the Borough Planning Officer KLWNBC (dated 27-01-26), in respect of the actions that arose from the online meeting held on 27th November 2025.

The response from the Borough Planning Officer was discussed at length. The conclusion was reached that the concerns of the members of the SG had not been satisfactorily answered with regards to personal liability in law. SG members expressed disappointment that:

1. despite pursuing a planning objective set down in legislation and following professional guidance at all times; and
2. having been appointed by the Parish Council to achieve the objective, they now find they are not covered by the PC's indemnity insurance; and,
3. the Borough Council, being the final party which had authority to approve a neighbourhood plan, was not able or willing to provide legal support or indemnity to SG members.

This has resulted in members feeling vulnerable and exposed in a manner that was not appreciated when the SG was formed.

SG members felt pressured to withdraw proposals for which objections had been received even though they believed that decision should be made by the Borough Council, which is the highest level of authority able to approve or reject the whole plan or elements of it. Instead ultimate responsibility to resolve potential conflict is being devolved to ordinary parishioners who work in a volunteering capacity.

There was a concern that if contentious proposals were to be withdrawn, some people who had contributed in early public consultations might be unhappy that their views were being over-ridden so early in the process.

Each member reflected upon their own position going forward. After much discussion all members AGREED to continue progressing the Neighbourhood Plan and take it to the public consultation stage. Having removed from the draft Plan those LGSs and NDHAs for which objections had been made, the draft v10 is in effect the finalised document ready for public consultation. It was further AGREED that in view of SG members' concerns about vulnerability, should any other LGS or NDHA

owner raise objections, the SG would be prepared to make further withdrawals.

It was AGREED that a copy of the notes for the November meeting and the subsequent response from the Borough Council should be appended to these minutes for clarity around the decisions that members of the SG have had to make.

Abbreviations used in Appendix B

KLWNBC : King's Lynn West Norfolk Borough Council

SG : Steering Group (for Shouldham Neighbourhood Plan)

PC : Parish Council (for Shouldham)

LGS : Local Green Space

NDHA : Non-designated Heritage Asset

END