

# RACKHEATH Neighbourhood Plan

2017-2037



Final version  
Adopted July 2017

**Preserving our heritage,  
securing the future of  
our neighbourhood.**



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[clerk@rackheathparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:clerk@rackheathparishcouncil.org.uk)  
or telephone 01603 758249**

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Figure 1 below: Banner to promote the Neighbourhood Plan workshops and exhibitions.



# 1. Introduction

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The Rackheath Neighbourhood Plan is a community-led document for guiding the future use and development of land over the next 20 years. It is the first planning document put together by the community of Rackheath. This is the final version of the Plan following a majority vote at the local referendum held on 19 July 2017 and subsequent adoption at the Full Council meeting of Broadland Council on 20 July 2017.

The Plan has been developed under the Localism Act (2011) and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulation (2012), which was introduced to regulate the formation and approval of Neighbourhood Plans, giving communities the right to shape future development at a local level. The Rackheath Neighbourhood Plan complements existing local, national and strategic planning policy, providing valuable detail that has come directly from residents of Rackheath. It is written to shape development for the period 2017 to 2037.



Commissioned and part funded by Rackheath Parish Council, the Neighbourhood Plan has been developed by a Steering of local residents (see Appendix 1) under the banner 'Rackheath into the Future'. The policies in the Plan reflect the views of local people, gathered through a series of consultation events and desk research. The Group is grateful to residents and organisations that have given their time to develop ideas for the Plan. More detail can be found in Section 3.

Early on in the process, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group established a set of aims for the Plan, as outlined below.

<b>AIMS OF THE PLAN</b>	<p><b>By undertaking a Neighbourhood Plan, the community of Rackheath aims to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Give a voice to residents to shape development, in terms of location, scale and style.</b></li><li>• <b>Develop policies that will</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>Enable the community to grow whilst retaining the village feel and community spirit.</b></li><li>○ <b>Integrate the new Rackheath development with the existing village.</b></li><li>○ <b>Manage the impact of additional vehicles through Rackheath.</b></li><li>○ <b>Enhance Rackheath's community and businesses.</b></li><li>○ <b>Identify community needs for the use of developer contributions and other possible funds.</b></li></ul></li></ul>
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## Accompanying documents

The Rackheath Neighbourhood Plan is accompanied by the following documents. These can be found on the Rackheath Parish Council website.

- Basic Conditions Statement
- Consultation Statement
- Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report
- Sustainability Appraisal
- Habitat Regulation Screening Report.

## Examination and Referendum

- The Neighbourhood Plan was submitted to Broadland District Council in December 2016. It underwent further consultation (regulation 16).
- Broadland District Council and Rackheath Parish Council jointly appointed an independent planning examiner, Richard High to examine the Neighbourhood Plan. The examiner's final report was issued in April 2017. Some modifications were made to the plan. Paragraph 126 of his report states, *'The Plan is a wide ranging and substantial undertaking and it is efficient that there has been a thorough and consistent approach to the engagement of the community. The small number of objections to the submission version of the Plan indicates the support of the community for the contents of the Plan'*. The examiner recommended that the Rackheath Neighbourhood Plan should proceed to referendum subject to the modifications he recommended.
- At the local referendum every resident of Rackheath parish had the opportunity to vote on whether or not they agree with the Neighbourhood Plan. There was a 17.4 per cent turn out. 214 voted 'yes' and 43 voted 'no' on 19 July 2017. The Neighbourhood Plan was therefore made.



Figure 2 above: Rackheath Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group members.

## 2. Rackheath

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The parish of Rackheath lies within the Broadland district of Norfolk, located 9.7km north east of Norwich city centre. In 2011 the population of Rackheath was 1972 people, an increase from 1551 in 2001. The mean age of Rackheath is 39 years old, compared to the 43-year-old average across Norfolk.<sup>1</sup>

Rackheath lies along Salhouse Road beyond the historic parklands of Rackheath Hall. Until 1802 the area was predominantly heathland, part of a much larger Mousehold Heath. The parish has a long history and was well established by the time of the Norman Conquest, its population, land ownership and productive resources being extensively detailed in the Domesday Book of 1086, where it is recorded as entry number 191 under the name of Rackeitha. Pre-dating the Battle of Hastings, Rackheath was also known as Ra-Cheisham, Racheia and Rackey, meaning 'a land on a watercourse'.

Development of the southeastern part of Rackheath village occurred in the aftermath of World War II. The northwest part of the village was built in the later 20th Century. Development of Rackheath continued after the war, taking the population from circa 400 to more than 1,000 in the early 1980s with the addition of 'New Rackheath', consisting mainly of bungalows and a few houses. More recent development has seen the population of Rackheath rise further.

The introduction of a significant amount of new housing to the parish of Rackheath means that the village is likely to turn into a settlement the size of a small town. This will be the most significant growth in the history of Rackheath.



Figure 3 above: Aerial photographs of Rackheath (circa 2009).

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<sup>1</sup> Office for National Statistics census data 2011.

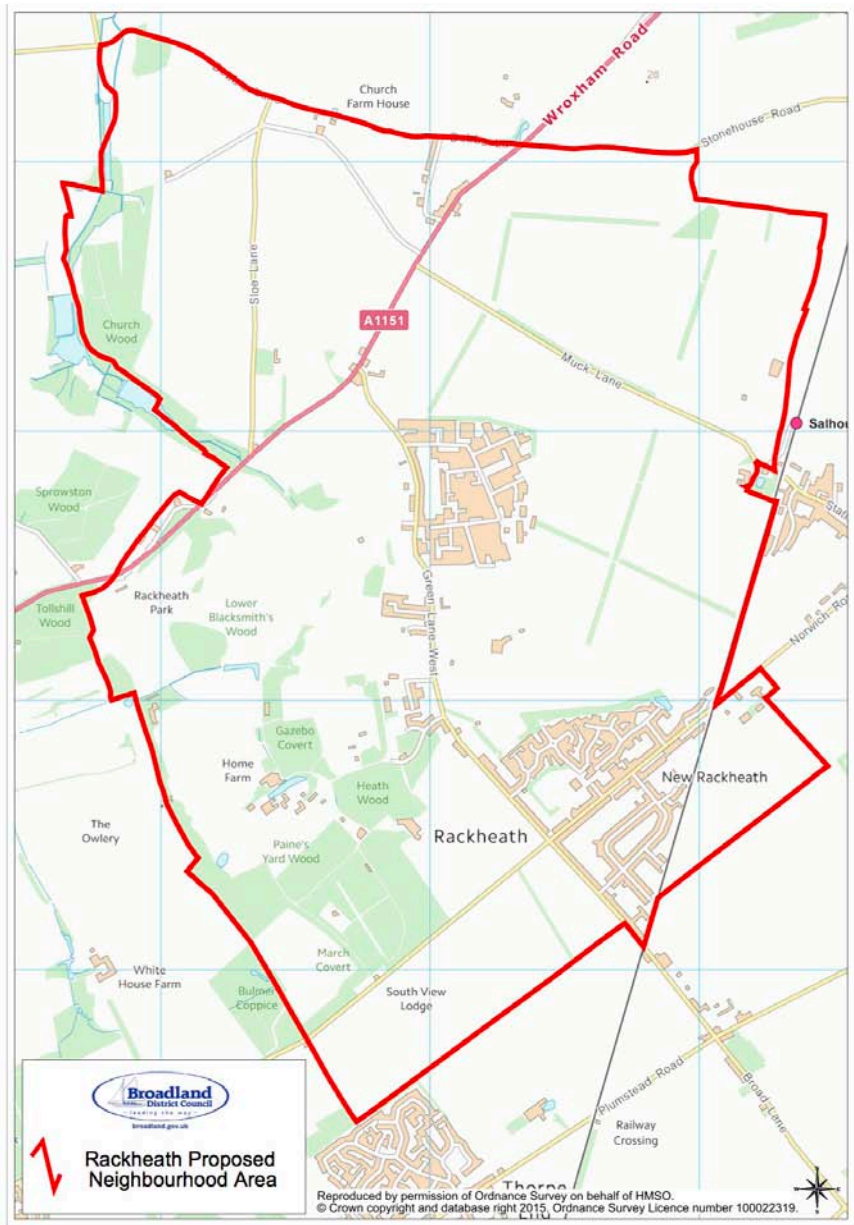


Figure 4 left: Administrative boundary of Rackheath (source: Broadland District Council). Red line denotes the parish boundary and the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area.

The designated Neighbourhood Area for the Rackheath Neighbourhood Plan is the whole of the civil parish of Rackheath.

### Spatial and strategic policy context

The 'National Planning Policy Framework' (NPPF) was published in March 2012 and sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied.

The 'Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk' (JCS) is the key planning policy document for the sub-regional Greater Norwich area. It forms part of the Local Plans for the districts of Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk setting out the broad vision for the growth of the area and containing strategic policies for the period 2008 to 2026. Rackheath is featured in this strategy.



Figure 5 left: Planning policy hierarchy in relation to Rackheath Neighbourhood Plan. DPD is 'Development Plan Document'.

Rackheath village is located within the Norwich Policy Area and is identified as a location for major new or expanded communities (Policy 10). Rackheath is part of the 'Growth Triangle', which is made up of Old Catton, Sprowston, Rackheath and Thorpe St Andrew. The purpose of the Growth Triangle Area Action Plan (GTAAP) is to enable and co-ordinate sustainable strategic scale development to the North East of Norwich in accordance with the requirements of the JCS. The JCS describes the Growth Triangle as a major urban extension

providing 'a concentration of growth, which can support local services, facilities and infrastructure including secondary education, high quality public transport links and significant green infrastructure'.

The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to provide a further level of detail specific to the parish put together by local people. All Neighbourhood Plan policies are, and must be, in conformity with national, sub-regional and district policy. This is detailed in the Basic Conditions Statement.

### Proposed developments

At the time of writing the Neighbourhood Plan, there are a number of proposed sites and planning permissions equating to some 3500 new homes. This equates to a population growth of some 8050 more people living in the parish (based on average household size in the UK of 2.3)<sup>2</sup>. Over the 20-year life of the Plan, there are likely to be further planning applications that come forward. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to respond appropriately to all further housing growth, in a sustainable way.

The following tables summarise the proposed developments. For more detail, please refer to the Growth Triangle Area Action Plan<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> Office for National Statistics census data 2011.

<sup>3</sup> Growth Triangle Area Action Plan Adopted July 2016: [https://www.broadland.gov.uk/downloads/file/1143/growth\\_triangle\\_area\\_action\\_plan\\_adopted\\_july\\_2016pdf](https://www.broadland.gov.uk/downloads/file/1143/growth_triangle_area_action_plan_adopted_july_2016pdf).



## Summary of proposed Rackheath developments outlined in the Growth Triangle Area Action Plan

### **GT16: North Rackheath (approximately 3000 homes)**

An area of approximately 293ha

- 160ha to be developed as mixed-use development.
- Residential development (33% affordable housing).
- At least 25ha of land for employment uses.
- Local transport improvements – internal roads, road widening and improvements, extended local bus services, off carriageway cycling facilities and crossings.
- Social and physical infrastructure – nursery facilities, two primary schools, at least one community building, a Police beat base, home waste recycling centre, a Health and Social Care facility, and a secondary school.
- Local centre for a range of facilities, services and employment units.
- Sports pitches and children’s play space, public open space, tree belts, and green infrastructure linkages.
- Layout to be determined through a participative masterplanning process.

### **GT17: Land adjacent to Salhouse Road, Rackheath (approximately 79-95 homes)**

A site of approximately 3.5ha to the north of Salhouse Road

- Residential development (33% affordable housing).
- Pedestrian and cycle links within the site and to others.
- Recreation areas and public open space.

### **GT18: Land South of Green Lane West (approximately 300 homes)**

A site of approximately 14ha to the south of Green Lane West

- Residential development (33% affordable housing).
- Pedestrian and cycle links across the frontage of the site.
- Road widening in the village.
- Recreational areas and public space.
- Extensive landscaping along the western edge of the site.

### **GT 19: Land South of Green Lane East (approximately 149 homes)**

A site of approximately 7ha to the south of Green Lane East

- Residential development (33% affordable housing).
- Pedestrian and cycle links across the frontage of the site.
- Recreational areas and public space.
- Extensive landscaping along the western edge of the site.

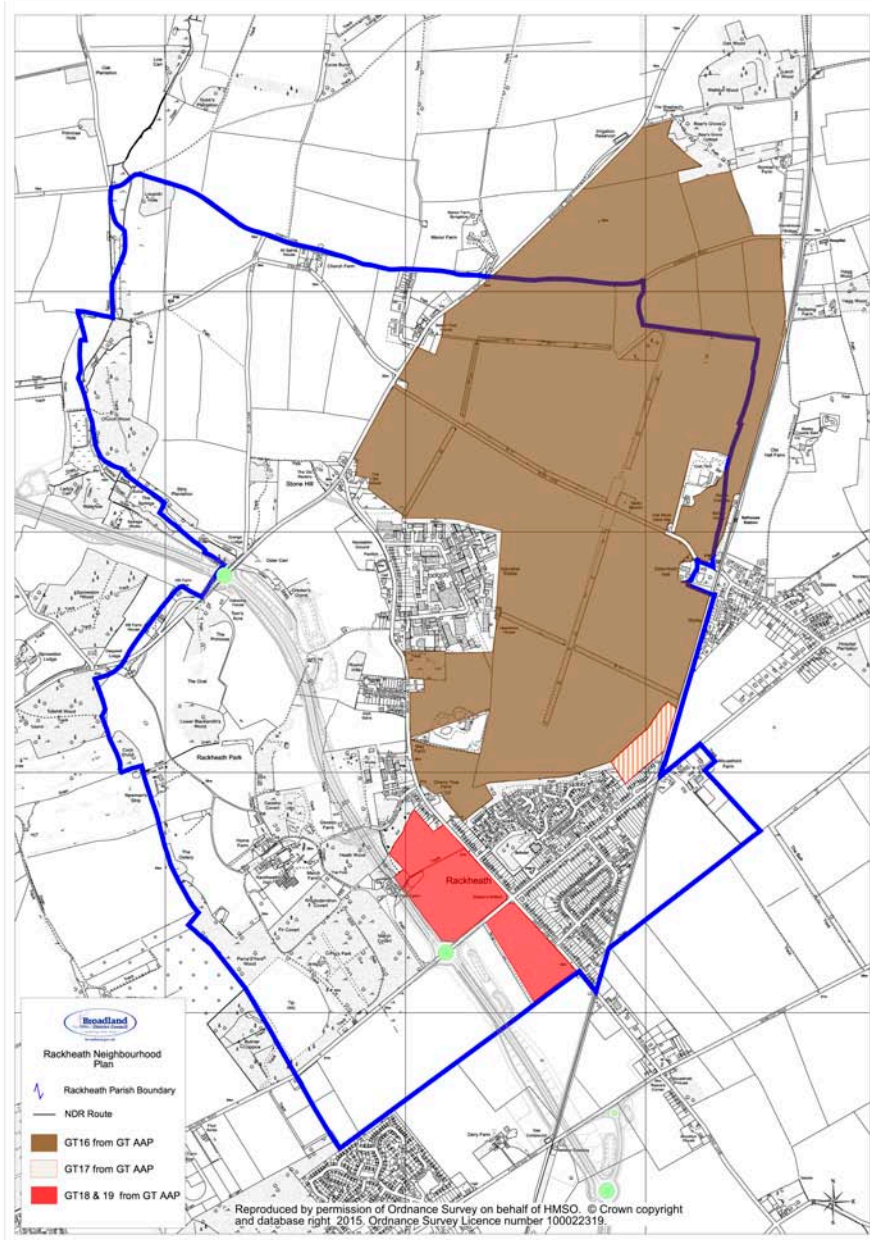


Figure 6 left: Allocated areas of development (source: Broadland District Council).

### Upcoming masterplan for GT16 North Rackheath

Broadland District Council is working with Barratt Homes and the landowner, Manor Farm, to draft a masterplan for the proposed development to the north of Rackheath. This is separate and independent of the Rackheath Neighbourhood Plan.

Although a similar exercise was carried out for the previously proposed eco-town, Broadland District Council now consider that this is out of date and that it would be good to work with others, including local people, to prepare a new masterplan. It is anticipated that the whole process will finish at the start of 2017 after which more detailed plans for the first phase of the development are likely to be prepared by Barratt Homes.

# 3. How the Plan was prepared

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The Neighbourhood Plan has been commissioned and part funded by Rackheath Parish Council. Other funding has come from a Locality grant from central government, and a grant from Broadland District Council. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group have prepared the Plan, supported by two independent consultants. A list of Steering Group members can be found in Appendix 1.

In order to inform and involve residents, the Rackheath Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group developed a project plan, communication plan and community engagement plan. For full details on communication and engagement, a Consultation Statement has been prepared prior to submission of the Neighbourhood Plan to Broadland District Council. The information below provides a summary of the work undertaken to date.

## Communication

The Steering Group has used the following means of communication to inform residents and businesses through the process:

- **Digital** – Neighbourhood Plan website, Parish Council website, extensive email distribution list.
- **Printed** – flyers for workshops and business events (delivered door to door), event posters (in village hall, pub, parish noticeboards, pharmacy, chip shop, church, telegraph poles), Parish Council Newsletter, Rackheath Life (parish magazine), Rackheath Primary School newsletter, Bombers Preschool newsletter, press releases.
- **Social media** – Facebook, StreetLife.
- **Other** – written and verbal update at all Parish Council meetings, speaker at Rackheath annual meeting, word of mouth.

Central to the Neighbourhood Plan process, is the project website, [www.rackheathintothefuture.co.uk](http://www.rackheathintothefuture.co.uk). The website has updated residents during each phase in the development of the Neighbourhood Plan. It contains information on what a Neighbourhood Plan is, up-coming events, a news-feed blog, maps, information about the North Rackheath masterplan, results of consultation, Steering Group papers, Neighbourhood Plan documents and contact information.

## Community engagement stages

There are four clear stages in which residents of Rackheath have been engaged.

### Stage 1: Introducing the Neighbourhood Plan

Events were held on Saturday 28th June 2014 at Holy Trinity Church, Saturday 14th March 2015 at the Village Hall, and Sunday, 29 June 2014 and Sunday, 5 July 2015 at Rackheath Live, to explore the support for undertaking a Neighbourhood Plan and identifying key issues. From these events, the Neighbourhood Plan started in earnest and the Vision, Aims and Objectives of the Plan were drafted.

### Stage 2: Development of ideas

To test the Vision, Aims and Objectives of the Plan and to develop initial policy ideas, the following were undertaken:

- a. February/March 2016 'consultation conversation' meetings with a range of interest groups to discuss the aims and objectives of the Plan and to gather ideas for policy. The following were visited: Bombers Preschool committee; Holy Trinity Church Rackheath Parochial Church Council; Plymouth Brethren; Rackheath Cricket Club; Rackheath Parish Council; Rackheath Players; Rackheath Village Hall Management Committee; Rackheath Young at Heart Group; Rackheath Youth Club
- b. Drop in session for Rackheath businesses, held on 2 March 2016 in the B-24 cafe on the Rackheath Industrial Estate. Attendees were invited to put flags into a map and answer three questions. The questions were also available to answer online.
- c. Email correspondence with key stakeholders.



Figure 7 above: Poster for business drop in event.

### Stage 3: Development of policies

To test the emerging policy ideas and gather further detail the following were undertaken:

- a. Three public workshops for residents and businesses to drop in to comment on policy ideas for the Neighbourhood Plan. These were held on Saturday morning, 9 April at Holy Trinity Church, Monday evening 11 April at Rackheath Village Hall, and Wednesday lunchtime, 13 April 2016 in the B-24 cafe on the Rackheath Industrial Estate. 145 people attended the events and a further 73 people responded to the same material online. Flyers promoting the events and the online consultation were delivered to every household.
- b. Further engagement with young people on specific policies – Rackheath Primary School (Years 5 and 6) and Broadland High School (Year 8 Geography lesson).
- c. The Steering Group also undertook a mock-masterplanning exercise and did four visits to other new large housing developments.



Figure 8 above: Poster for public workshops.



Figure 9 above: April 2016 workshops with residents and businesses.

#### Stage 4: The Draft Plan

The draft Neighbourhood Plan was shared with residents through the formal pre-submission six-week consultation, running from Friday, 14 October to Friday, 25 November 2016.

An exhibition of this draft Neighbourhood Plan took place on Saturday, 15 October, 10am-1pm at Rackheath Village Hall, Monday, 17 October, 5pm-8pm at Holy Trinity Church, Rackheath and Thursday, 20 October, 12noon-2pm at B-24, on Rackheath Industrial Estate.

Hard copies of the plan were made available in a number of community locations and an electronic copy put on the Neighbourhood Plan website. Amendments were made prior to submission of the Plan to Broadland District Council.



Figure 10 above: Poster for public workshops.

# 4. The Vision: 2037

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The Vision sets out what the people of Rackheath wish their parish to be like in 2037, 20 years from writing the Neighbourhood Plan. It shapes the Objectives, Policies and Projects set out in the Plan. This was written in response to consultation sessions with residents. There was particular interest in responding to the proposed development in the parish whilst retaining the rural village feel.

All planning applications should demonstrate how they have addressed the Vision. The Neighbourhood Plan Vision is set out below.

<b>VISION</b>	<p><b>By 2037 Rackheath will be a small attractive rural town with a village feel, developed in a way that is sensitive to its rural location and heritage. It will have a strong and vibrant resident community and thriving local businesses. There will be an excellent range of services and facilities with good connections within Rackheath and between other settlements. It will be a place where people want to live, work and get involved, now and for future generations.</b></p>
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Figure 11 below: Combine harvesting in Rackheath fields.



# 5. Objectives of the Plan

From the various consultations, a series of Objectives were developed to achieve the Aims and deliver the Vision in a sustainable way. The Objectives address how to enhance the community, manage change and provided a starting point for the development of policies, as shown below.

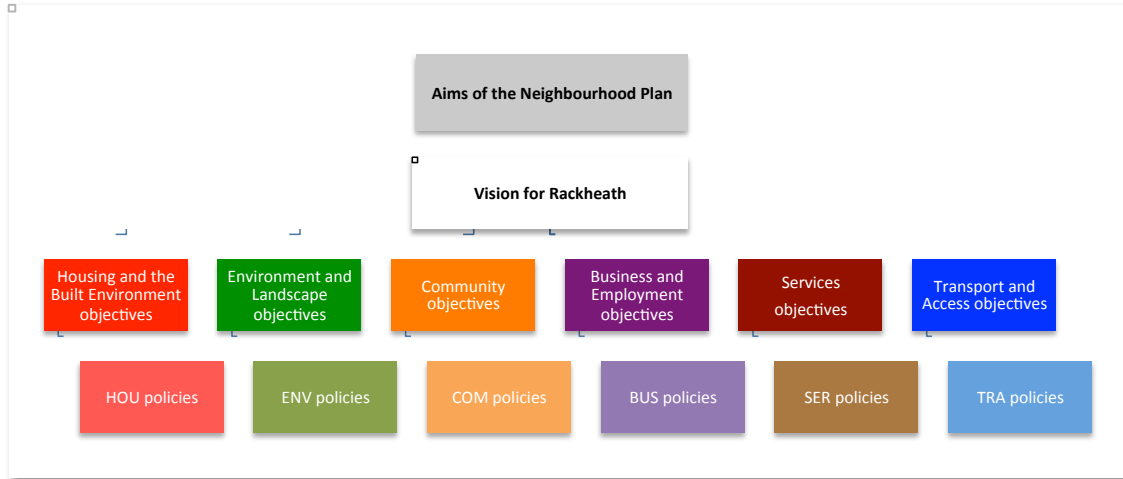


Figure 12 above: structure of the Neighbourhood Plan.

The community understands the need to accommodate housing growth. However, there is great concern at the extent of growth planned for Rackheath. New developments in Rackheath could erode the very qualities that make the parish a community if it is not carefully managed in terms of scale, design and impact. Rackheath’s growth must be more than about meeting housing numbers; new developments should contribute to the character of the parish and provide greater local benefits. Therefore the objectives set out to enhance the existing community as well as design new quality places.

To reflect the results of the community engagement during preparation of the Plan, and to ensure a cross section of areas that make up a sustainable community, the Objectives have been grouped into the following six themes – Housing and the Built Environment, Environment and Landscape, Community, Business and Employment, Services, Transport and Access.

The objectives are set out below.

### **HOUSING AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT** objectives

**Objective 1: To provide sufficient diversity of affordable and adaptable high quality housing within a balanced housing market.**

**Objective 2: To provide appropriate size, scale, density, design and layout, including mixed-use developments, which complement the character of Rackheath.**

### **ENVIRONMENT AND LANDSCAPE** objectives

**Objective 3: To protect the environment, by minimising flooding and pollution on land, in water and in the air.**

**Objective 4: To protect and improve biodiversity (e.g. wildlife habitats), whilst facilitating access to the countryside.**

**Objective 5: To respect the history and heritage of Rackheath.**

**Objective 6: To create a high quality and green public realm.**

### **COMMUNITY** objectives

**Objective 7: To enable friendly, co-operative and helpful behaviour in neighbourhoods.**

**Objective 8: To enable social inclusion, good community engagement, feeling safe and a sense of community identity.**

**Objective 9: To provide opportunities for cultural, leisure, community, sport and other social activities, for all ages.**

### **BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT** objectives

**Objective 10: To provide sufficient land and buildings to support local economic development.**



**Objective 11: To create an economically viable and attractive centre.**

### **SERVICES** objectives

**Objective 12: To ensure sufficient provision of educational and training facilities, including early years childcare.**

**Objective 13: To ensure sufficient provision of accessible local health care and social services.**

**Objective 14: To provide widely available and effective telecommunications and internet access.**

### **TRANSPORT AND ACCESS** objectives

**Objective 15: To enable transport facilities, including public transport, that help people travel within and between communities and reduce dependence on cars.**

**Objective 16: To create facilities to encourage safe local walkways, cycle ways and bridleways.**

**Objective 17: To provide an appropriate level of parking for residential and business development.**



# 6. Policies and Projects

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To deliver the Plan’s objectives (Section 5), a set of policies and projects have been developed with the community to ensure Rackheath Parish develops in a sustainable way.

## **Policies**

The Neighbourhood Plan is first and foremost a land-use document for planning purposes. Policies in the Neighbourhood Plan are based on a series of consultation events, detailed stakeholder sessions and desk research. Policies seek to achieve the vision and objectives of the Plan and are separated into the same six themes – Housing and the Built Environment, Environment and Landscape, Community, Business and Employment, Services, Transport and Access.

The Neighbourhood Plan policies follow the government’s guidance, they exist to:

- Set out requirements in advance for new development in an area.
- Inform and guide decisions on planning applications.
- Ensure that the multitude of individual decisions add up to something coherent for the area as a whole.<sup>4</sup>

To aid interpretation for decision makers and planning applicants, each policy is accompanied by supporting text, which includes context for the theme, the views of residents, guidelines and reference to strategic plans.

## **Projects**

As expected, during consultation events, the local community identified a number of projects that fall outside the remit of the planning system. These appear in boxes in Appendix 2 and will be taken forward outside the Neighbourhood Plan process. These are included for each topic where relevant. This is not an exhaustive list. The Parish Council will also develop a range of projects as a result of development, over the lifetime of the Neighbourhood Plan.

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<sup>4</sup> Tony Burton, Writing Planning Policies, Locality.

### A note about references to 'centrally located'

A number of policies make reference to being 'centrally located' within the settlement of Rackheath. This thinking is designed to integrate new and existing Rackheath residents, so that it is one community connected, in part, through the sharing of services. For clarification, the central location is likely to be, but not limited to, the area shown in figure 13, the southern end of GT16 North Rackheath.

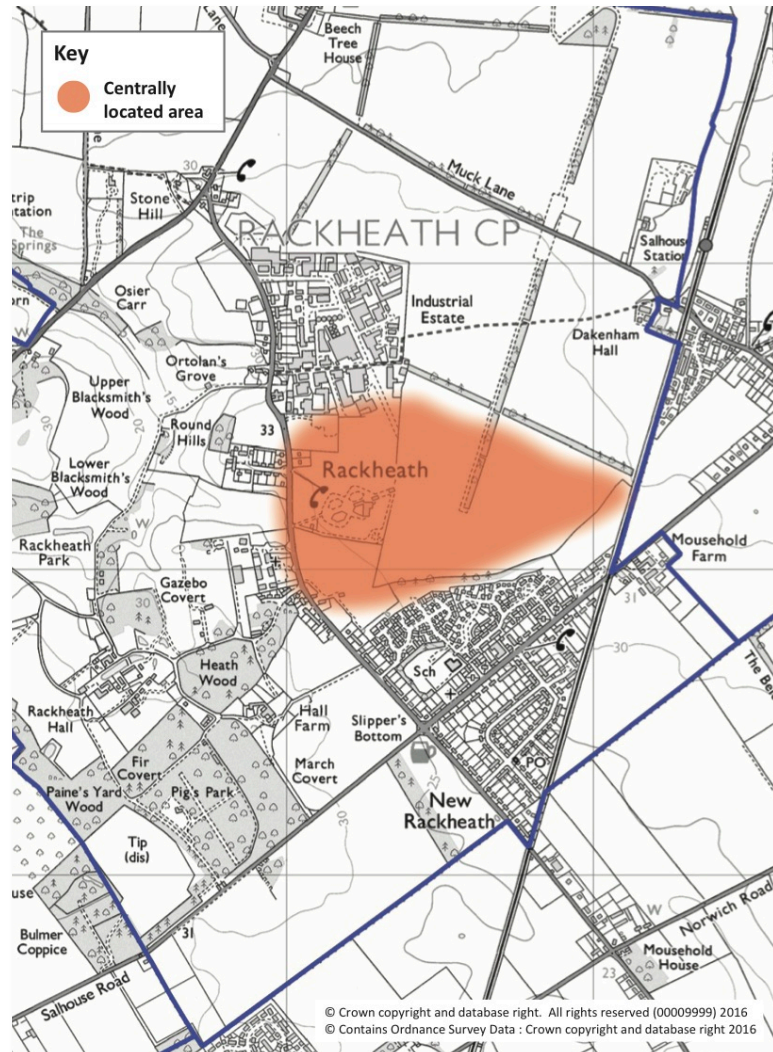


Figure 13 left: Centrally located area (source: Parish Online mapping with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.



## 6.1 Housing and the Built Environment

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There are 779 homes in Rackheath parish according to the 2011 census. Currently 97 per cent of households in Rackheath parish are houses or bungalows and 62 percent are detached, 29 percent are semi-detached and 7 per cent are terraced. Only 3 percent of households are flats, maisonettes or apartments. This combination of housing types contributes to giving Rackheath a rural village feel, which current residents are keen to maintain.

As the parish grows it should continue to be a strong, coherent and inclusive community that works for the people of Rackheath as a whole. This can be achieved, in part through a high quality built environment.

**Objective 1: To provide sufficient diversity of affordable and adaptable high quality housing within a balanced housing market.**

Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes is essential to support a sustainable, mixed and inclusive community. Consultation showed that residents want to have a range of types of accommodation within the Parish to meet their changing needs, with families wishing to move to larger homes, older residents able to down-size and young people to have independent accommodation. New homes should be of the very highest quality, meeting community aspirations for new and existing residents.

For first-time buyers within the parish, it is important that they can buy locally and are not required to look beyond their own community. This is important not only for current residents, but for generations to come within Rackheath. Housing of all tenures should be built to allow for changes in needs and lifestyles so that as circumstances and ages change, residents can remain fully included in Rackheath parish life.

The Neighbourhood Plan supports an appropriate level of affordable housing. All future development must comply with national and district guidelines for affordable housing. At the time of writing, 10-15 dwellings must have 30 per cent affordable housing, and on sites of 16 dwellings or more 33 per cent must be affordable housing. The Growth Triangle Area Action Plan requires 33 per cent affordable housing in GT16 North Rackheath.

In current Broadland District Council policy, up to a third of the Affordable Rent tenure will be allocated with a local lettings policy. This gives households who currently live, work or need to move to the parish, priority for these properties.

Finally, there is an increasing trend within the district for working from home. New residential development should be delivered with this in mind. Adaptable and flexible housing should be provided that offers occupiers the opportunity to modify and personalise their homes and workplaces. This again may enable residents to stay within their community and not have to move to a new area.

**POLICY**

**HOU1: Mixed type and tenure of housing**

In any new development there will be provision of mixed type and tenure of housing, appropriately located to ensure exclusive enclaves do not occur. Proposals for new residential development should not include large scale amounts of flatted accommodation to contribute to a rural village feel.

To meet housing need and enable social diversity, the mix of the housing across the parish should include the following:

- Starter homes.
- Family homes, with a range of garden sizes.
- Affordable housing, including social housing.
- Housing for older people and the disabled, suitable for independent living.
- Supported housing (a range of housing types for people with support needs).
- Bungalows.

**Objective 2: To provide appropriate size, scale, density, design and layout, including mixed-use developments, which complement the character of Rackheath.**

The Neighbourhood Plan supports the National Planning Policy Framework's (NPPF) objective to achieve excellence in design, especially design that will help establish a 'strong sense of place' and 'create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit' (NPPF paragraph 58).

The trend in the last few years has been for new developments to be built at high densities. Proposals must plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design and should enhance the quality of the environment whilst retaining the prevailing character of a rural village.

The public realm is the 'parts of a village, town or city that are available, without charge, for everyone to see, use and enjoy, including streets, squares and parks'<sup>5</sup>. It is essential that these are designed to the highest possible standard. There is however a balance between private and public space. There have been new developments on the edge of Norwich, which have provided significant amounts of open public space, but little private space in front of housing, therefore looking incongruous within the local area. Equally the Steering Group have observed the dominance of streets by wheelie bins where no storage solutions have been planned.

**POLICY**

**HOU2: Character, density and massing**

New development should maintain a green and rural village feel. In accordance with JCS policy 2, proposals for all forms of new development must plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design; at the same time demonstrating they have sought to conserve local distinctiveness and the aesthetic qualities of a village environment. There should be connected and coherent themes through developments, whilst simultaneously strengthening local identity.

Density and massing should vary, with some higher densities around local shops and transport routes, to provide the full range of house types that are needed. New residential dwellings are expected to respect the scale and character of existing development in Rackheath, which are two storey houses and bungalows. Lower height dwellings will enable ENV6 to be achieved. This should be demonstrated for larger developments and at a masterplan stage.

Where possible main routes through developments should be laid out to create efficient vehicle, cycle and pedestrian connections. Any residential cul-de-sacs should still incorporate pedestrian and cycle connectivity through the developments.

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<sup>5</sup> The Dictionary of Urbanism, Robert Cowan, 2005.

**HOU3: High quality public realm**

All new development will be expected to deliver the very highest quality in public realm design which fits with a rural village feel, including the following:

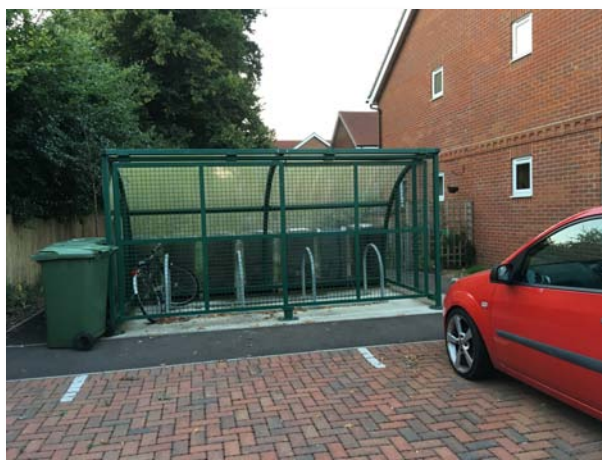
- Cycle parking.
- Some generous private front gardens, particularly on main thoroughfares (main routes through new developments, Green Lane East and West, and Salhouse Road).
- Appropriate high quality boundary edging, with a preference for walls rather than fences.
- High quality street furniture and lighting where this is necessary.

Pedestrian routes should remain open and uncluttered in order to retain a sense of pride in the area. Where there is no provision for direct access to the rear of a new dwelling other than through the dwelling itself, a suitable waste store must be incorporated at the front of the dwelling so that wheelie bins for household refuse and recycling are discreetly located to ensure the quality of the public realm is not undermined.



Figure 14 left: Country lane created using existing trees and green verges in some routes – Roundhouse Way development, Cringleford.

Below: Cycle parking – Roundhouse Way development, Cringleford.





## 6.2 Environment and Landscape

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The conservation, enhancement and creation of wildlife and habitats have an important role to play in the achievement of sustainable communities. The prospect of major new development in Rackheath provides the opportunity not only to conserve and enhance the area's natural assets, but also to create new ones. During public consultations, residents overwhelmingly identified that the rural character and atmosphere of the village and wider parish is of great value to them and is therefore a priority for the Neighbourhood Plan.

There are no international or national environmental designations within Rackheath parish. There are however 3 County Wildlife Sites in Rackheath, which are an important element of the ecological network for Norfolk. These include:

- Paine's Yard Wood, The Owlery and March Covert.
- Ladies Wood, Church Carr and Springs, of which Church Carr and parts of the springs are within the parish.
- Tollshill Wood – a very small section is within Rackheath (the majority being in Sprowston parish).

There are also 3 areas of woodland that are on the Natural England Database as being Ancient Woodland (AW) or Plantation on Ancient Woodland sites (PAWS). These areas together, represent a significant proportion of ancient woodland within Norfolk and should be protected and enhanced. The areas are:

- Church Wood – Northern part of which is described as AW and the southern section as PAWS.
- Ortlan's Grove – AW.
- Tollshill Wood – AW.

Broadland District Council's Landscape Character Assessment (September 2013) identifies Rackheath as 'Wooded Estatelands'.



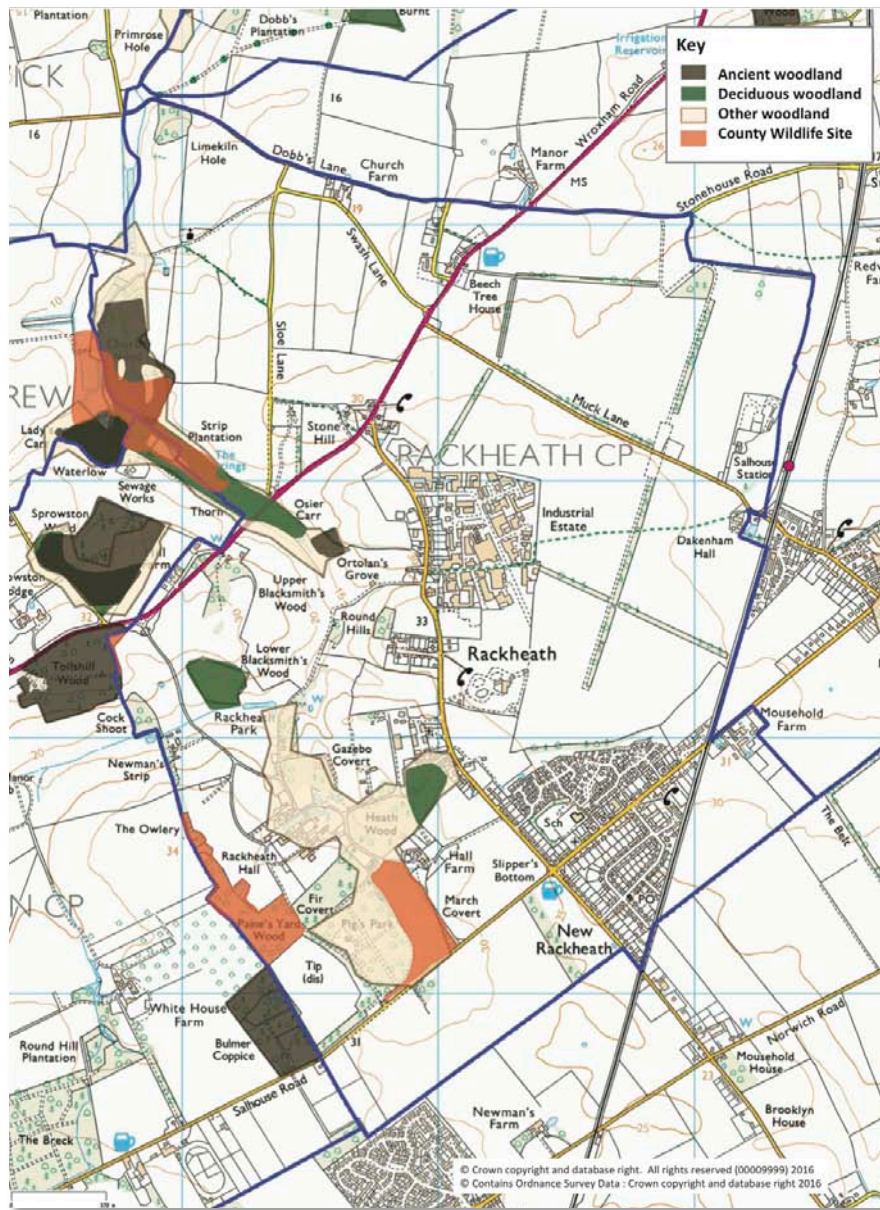


Figure 15 left: Woodland and County Wildlife sites (source: Parish Online with County Wildlife Sites drawn on). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

**Objective 3: To protect the environment, by minimising flooding and pollution on land, in water and in the air.**

There are a number of points within the parish where localised surface and fluvial water flooding occurs. In some locations this can occur frequently during periods of modest rainfall. In the face of climate change, the risk of surface water flooding is likely to increase. The sewerage system is also subject to overflowing and backflow locally. The need for new developments to avoid flood plains and surface water flood zones was noted by a number of residents through consultation.

With regard to foul drainage there is sufficient capacity at the Whitlingham waste water treatment works to accommodate the amount of development envisaged. With regard to water supply the Rackheath area is over abstracted at the time of

writing. Plans to address this should be part of outline planning applications<sup>6</sup>.

The Water Framework Directive (WFD) through the River Basin Management Plan (RBMPs) sets out the environmental objectives which will need to be met for surface and ground water bodies in order to comply with the requirements of the Directive.

The Environment Agency welcome the proposal to incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) into the proposed developments in Rackheath. SuDS are an approach to managing surface water run-off which seeks to mimic natural drainage systems and retain water on or near the site as opposed to traditional drainage approaches which involve piping water off site as quickly as possible. SuDS involve a range of techniques including soakaways, infiltration trenches, permeable pavements, grassed swales, ponds and wetlands. SuDS offer significant advantages over conventional piped drainage systems in reducing flood risk by attenuating the rate and quantity of surface water run-off from a site, promoting groundwater recharge, and improving water quality and amenity including habitat creation.

Buildings should be designed to minimise the impact of climate change and be adaptable for the future.

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<sup>6</sup> Environment Agency comment at pre-submission consultation stage.

**ENV1: Drainage**

Reflecting the Local Plan, all developments should take advantage of modern drainage methods to prevent and where necessary alleviate localised flooding. Future development must not cause or contribute to the problem of flooding or drainage issues, or water pollution. New large developments must provide a foul drainage strategy at the planning application stage, which will be implemented prior to occupation.

Identified localised flooding areas include (figure 16), but are not limited to:

- a. Green Lane West, in front of the old school house site.
- b. Green Lane West, outside the entrance to the Stracey Sports Park car park.
- c. Green Lane West, Mahoney Green Industrial Estate entrance.
- d. Sole and Heel roundabout.
- e. Vera Close.
- f. Salhouse Road, cul-de-sac before the railway line.
- g. Muck Lane, at various points along the road, particularly at dips.

Sustainable Drainage Systems associated with any planned development should appear natural and be able to be colonised by the local fauna and flora whilst still maintaining their design purpose. These must not impact on the Norwich Airport flight path.

Permeable materials must be used on freestanding areas, such as parking bays, vehicle laybys, and new play areas, where appropriate.

**ENV2: Climate change**

Developers will be encouraged to build business premises and community buildings that are designed to anticipate climate change. They should be capable of being upgraded and adapted to minimise resources used in both their construction and operation, and to cut down on pollution.

The Neighbourhood Plan supports cost effective and efficient passive solar gain and solar PV panels on residential, industrial, commercial and community premises.



Figure 16 left: Localised flooding sites (ENV1) (source: Parish Online mapping with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.



Figure 17 above: flooding on Mahoney Green/Green Lane West (top) and Muck Lane/Wroxham Road junction (bottom).

**Objective 4: To protect and improve biodiversity (e.g. wildlife habitats), whilst facilitating access to the countryside.**

Tree belts are a key strategic feature of the Rackheath landscape. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group agreed a definition for tree belts as ‘an accessible cluster of trees wide enough to accommodate pathways, suitable to enable biodiversity, recreation and which are aesthetically pleasing’.

The Neighbourhood Plan encourages the preservation and extension of the existing tree belts in the parish to connect housing developments and opening up access to the countryside. Broadland District Council’s Landscape Character Assessment SPD planning guidelines seek to ‘conserve and enhance the landscape structure with the area, including blocks and belts of woodland, copses of mature trees, mature

parkland trees and intact hedgerows'.<sup>7</sup> It also seeks to 'conserve the landscape setting of villages and seek to screen (where possible) harsh settlement edges and existing visual detractors'.

The Green Infrastructure Strategy for the GT AAP identifies the important local green infrastructure corridors (i.e. ecological connectivity – based on considerable data). In keeping with the rural village feel, Rackheath residents are keen to retain all trees where possible and have an edge to each new development that is soft and blends well into the surrounding countryside, whilst allowing accessibility between developments.

POLICY

**ENV3: Tree belts and wildlife habitats**

Where possible existing strategic tree belts (shown in figure 18) should be protected, extended and linked to other existing tree belts, creating circular routes within the parish. Any development that contains tree belts should facilitate access to and through them with footpaths, cycle ways and/or bridleways.

Development should support the creation of wildlife habitats for enhancing ecological networks and promote the preservation, restoration and recreation of priority habitats.

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<sup>7</sup> Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), adopted 2013.

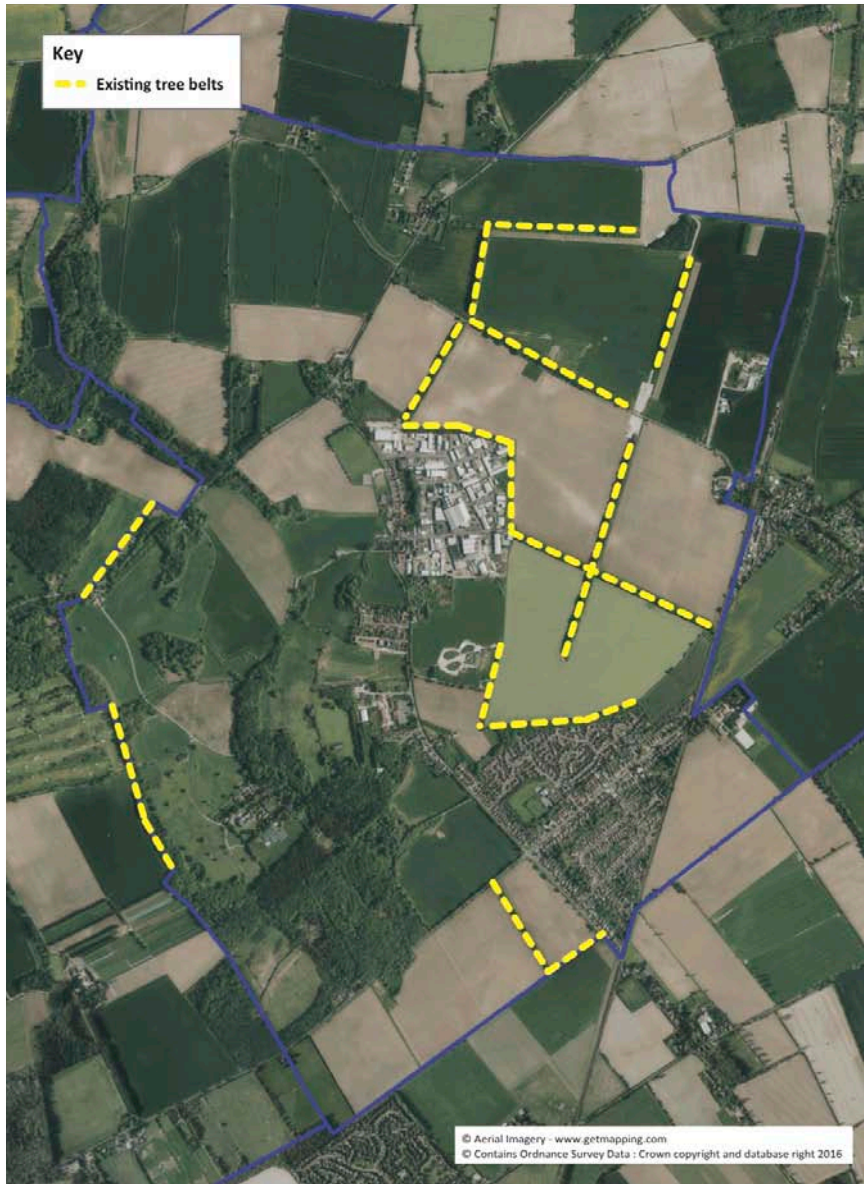


Figure 18 left: Rackheath tree belts (source: Parish Online mapping with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

The tree belts in Rackheath are considered locally important, but are not limited to those indicated on the map opposite.

**POLICY**

**ENV4: Trees and soft site boundaries**

Development proposals should seek to retain mature or significant trees, groups of trees or woodland on site. New developments should incorporate significant tree planting to retain the rural feel, improve biodiversity, extend amenity value and soak up rainwater. Suitable tree landscaping should be incorporated into developments.

Where site boundaries and entrances are adjacent to the countryside they should be soft, using trees and native hedgerows, giving a rural character to the development edge.

## Objective 5: To respect the history and heritage of Rackheath.

Development should respect the local environment, taking account of the local landscape character and its historical development. In the parish there is one Grade I listed building, Church of All Saints, sited to the north side of the Wroxham Road. It was built in the early 1300s and was declared redundant in 1971, now in the care of the Norfolk Churches Trust. There are three Grade II listed buildings, Rackheath Hall set in parkland; the gateway to Rackheath Park; and a bridge approximately 100 metres north east of Rackheath Hall<sup>8</sup>.

It is the rich history that gives Rackheath its physical shape and identity. During the Second World War, Rackheath Airfield, to the north of the current village, was constructed as a base for the United States Army Air Force (USAAF), 467<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group. Rackheath was the UK's nearest airfield to Germany. After the war the airfield was returned to agricultural land, but a line of trees fringe what was the former main runway on the airfield. The associated technical site is now Rackheath Industrial Estate<sup>9</sup>. The Control Tower was restored during 2006/2007.



Figure 19: Rackheath Airfield technical site, WWII.

There are many buildings and sites in Rackheath parish that make a positive contribution to its local character and sense of place because of their heritage value. Local people have drawn up a list of those that could be protected or enhanced. These are in ENV5. Any further historic buildings, structure or remains identified following the adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan should be considered at the time.

Views across the parish that are of particular community importance should be protected. To contribute to the rural village feel of the new town, Rackheath residents need to be able to see the countryside as views and vistas within the parish.

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<sup>8</sup> [www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk](http://www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk).

<sup>9</sup> [www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk).

**ENV5: Local landscape character and historical development**

All developments will be required to demonstrate how landscape character, historical development and features of local significance (as identified in Broadland District Council's Landscape Character Assessment) have been considered and have been used to influence the development's layout and design.

Proposals requiring consent which affect any of the buildings and structures of historic interest (as identified below) must take account of their significance and, where possible, avoid harm to or the loss of them. The renovation or alteration of the buildings or structures below should be designed sensitively and with careful regard to the heritage asset's historical and architectural interest and setting.

Where the proposal would result in the loss of or significant harm to one of these buildings or structures the harm should be weighed against the potential benefits in terms of sustainable development of the proposals.

The following locally important Local Heritage Assets (figure 20) should be protected from loss or significant harm:

- a. The old airfield runway (identified and defined by the tree belt), and the Turning Circle.
- b. The Old Scout Hut (Colonel Showers).
- c. All Saints Church.
- d. Sole and Heel public house, an art deco building.
- e. The Green Man public house.
- f. Village sign.
- g. Memorial Gates at Holy Trinity Church.
- h. USAAF War Memorial on the Rackheath Industrial Estate.

**ENV6: Views and vistas across the parish**

The view from Stone Hill looking North West towards All Saints Church is considered particularly important. Development within this view that is overly intrusive, unsightly or prominent, to the detriment of the view as a whole, will not be supported.

Also, to enable a rural feel, views and vistas along streets and/or open spaces to the surrounding countryside should be kept and created within new developments where there are opportunities to do so.



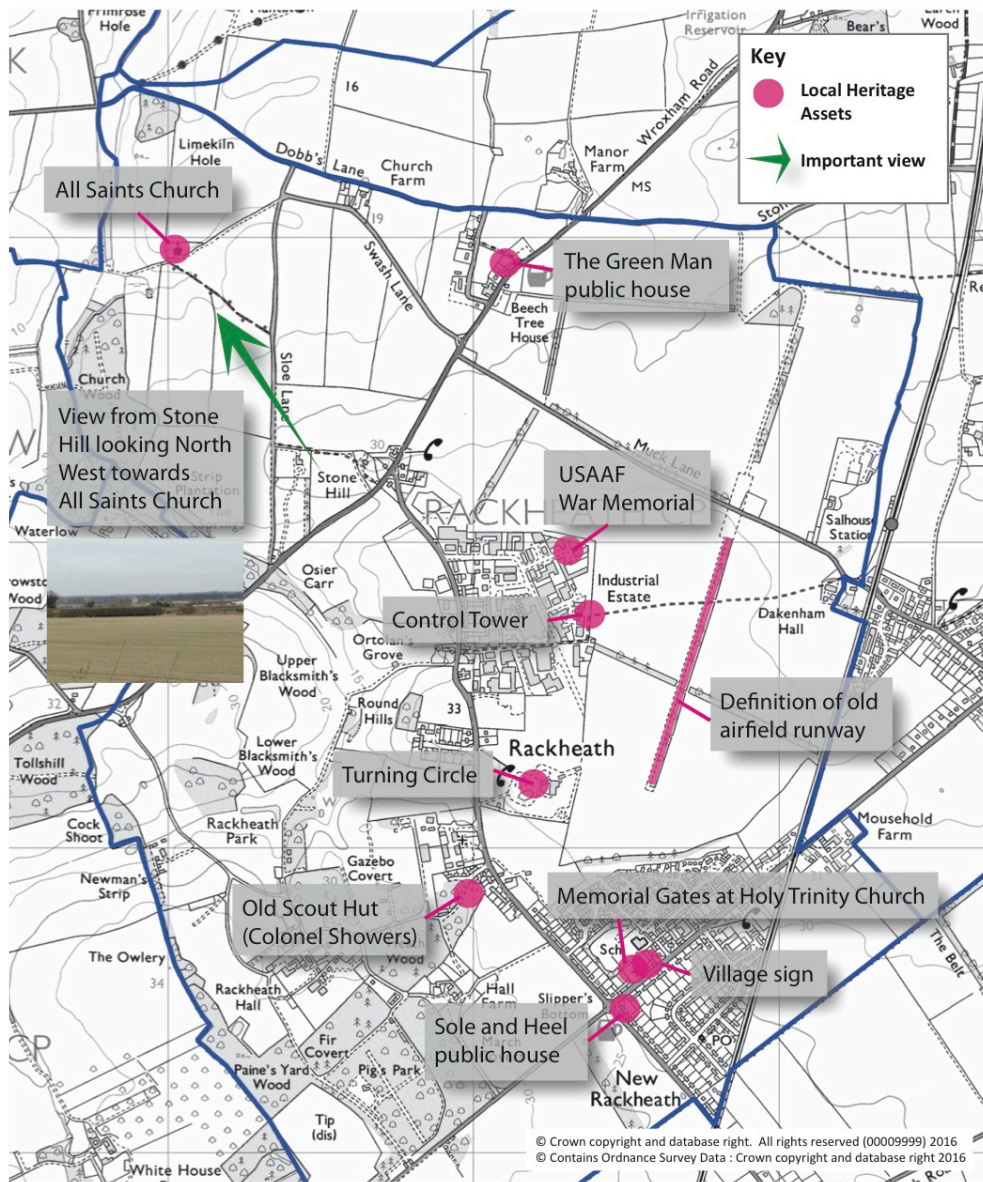


Figure 20 left: buildings and structures of historic interest and important views (source: Parish Online with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

**Objective 6: To create a high quality and green public realm.**

There should be green space throughout new developments, which incorporate existing features of the landscape and contributes to a green public realm. A centrally located village green has been suggested as a way of ensuring a large amount of green space, and keeping the rural village feel. Equally a cricket pitch has been suggested.

The Neighbourhood Plan has the opportunity to designate areas as Local Green Space for special protection (i.e. where the community is able to rule out new development other than in very special circumstances, for example, for reasonable expansion of the existing facilities to meet growing needs). These have come through community consultation. Newman Woods came through as important in

consultation with the community, in need of conservation and expansion. Newman Woods contains the Old Scout Hut (Colonel Showers) and has potential for a project and greater community use.

POLICY	<p><b>ENV7: Green space</b></p> <p>Proposals for new housing developments should include quality outdoor green amenity space.</p> <p>Detailed proposals for the area identified in the Growth Triangle Area Action Plan as GT16 North Rackheath should include a green space, large enough to function as a village green and possibly a cricket pitch, which is centrally located (see figure 13 and related text) within the settlement of Rackheath and provides a focal point for the Parish.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan designates the following as Local Green Spaces (as shown in figure 21):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Newman Woods.</li> <li>b. Jubilee Park.</li> <li>c. Stracey Sports Park.</li> </ul> <p>In these spaces development will not be permitted unless it is compatible with their character and function as Local Green Spaces.</p>
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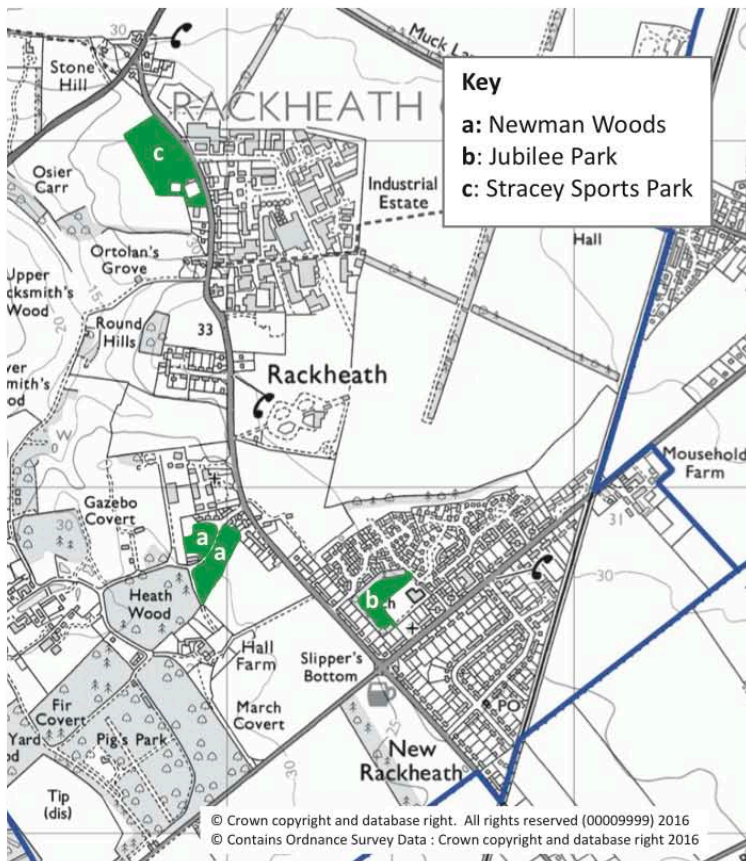


Figure 21 left: green space (source: Parish Online with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

**ENV8: Approaches to Rackheath and village landscape**

New developments located at the village entrances will be encouraged to enhance the approaches to Rackheath, for example through the provision of signage, tree, shrub and flower planting.

Within developments, new junctions, roundabouts, footpaths, car parks and arrival points should have high quality landscaping to create a village feel. Where there are existing or new community green spaces, the Neighbourhood Plan encourages houses to look out onto them.



## 6.3 Community

Rackheath residents have the opportunity to enjoy a vibrant community life. When Rackheath Primary School Year 5 and 6 pupils were asked what they love about living in Rackheath, many referred to the community, 'good events', 'lots of lovely people', 'how we all know each other' and 'Rackheath is a great and friendly place'.

Through consultation it was identified that there is a need to ensure that new development in Rackheath is fully integrated into existing communities and settlements, to the benefit of all. Policies within the Plan aim to improve physical, environmental and social linkages between existing and planned new places to ensure that Rackheath develops as a whole rather than in a fragmented, disparate form.

**Objective 7: To enable friendly, co-operative and helpful behaviour in neighbourhoods.**

All new developments will be required to connect with the existing settlement of Rackheath as well as develop community infrastructure for the parish as a whole. A well laid out place with good community facilities has the potential to be a great neighbourhood with community spirit. It is important to existing residents that Rackheath should be developed as one community and not appear as a series of distinct estates.

POLICY

### **COM1: Linked community**

Developments should contribute to an enhanced and joined-up movement network of roads, footpaths, pavements, tree belt routes, cycle ways and bridleways to connect Rackheath as one parish.

**COM2: New community facilities**

The Neighbourhood Plan supports the provision of further community infrastructure, providing focal points and encouraging a strong sense of community identity.

A new community hub building, which complements and enhances existing provision will be supported. This should be located at the southern end of the GT16 North Rackheath development, centrally located (see figure 13 and related text) for the settlement of Rackheath, near a school. A location should be identified in the North Rackheath masterplan. Such a facility should be built as early as possible.

**Objective 8: To enable social inclusion, good community engagement, feeling safe and a sense of community identity.**

Crime levels are relatively low in Rackheath. For Wroxham Ward in the period July 2014 to June 2015 the total crime per 1,000 population was recorded at 38.<sup>10</sup> However, fear of crime remains within the community.

The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to ensure that social spaces are built into new developments, where people will naturally meet and to encourage social interaction. These need not be buildings. It is very important that specific spaces and shelters for young people are built into the design of a place from the outset, so they feel some ownership of the neighbourhood.

Different kinds of spaces should be provided to give character to the parish. These spaces do not need to be large, but must be of high quality. These should be designed as an integral part of any public realm strategy, ensuring that there is a strong interface with the surrounding new and existing landscape, limiting the possibility of them becoming a focus for anti-social behaviour.



Figure 22 left: Natural surveillance of play area space by homes – Roundhouse Way development, Cringleford.

<sup>10</sup> Norfolk Constabulary, [www.norfolkinsight.org.uk](http://www.norfolkinsight.org.uk).

POLICY

**COM3: Social spaces, play spaces and parks**

All developments are expected to include new landscaped play areas and parks. Rackheath seeks to have a small number of large play areas or parks, as well as pocket play areas throughout developments.

Larger play and park provision should have sufficient parking, and where possible, be located near community buildings. All play areas and parks should have good road access, be near family housing and benefit from natural surveillance. In addition to the provision of play equipment for children of all ages, facilities must be provided for teenagers and adults.

Major developments will be expected to provide enhanced facilities, including children's play areas, water features, covered areas for sitting and stopping, nature conservation and sports. Any water feature must not impact on the Norwich Airport flight path.

POLICY

**COM4: Community safety**

New developments should be designed with good natural surveillance, active frontage, permeable routes and buildings that face onto the public realm and open spaces/play areas. Development proposals will be expected to meet the requirements of 'Secured by Design'<sup>11</sup> unless they can demonstrate a clear justification for any departure or an alternative approach that would not compromise community safety.

**Objective 9: To provide opportunities for cultural, leisure, community, sport and other social activities, for all ages.**

Rackheath parish has a number of community facilities, which service the needs of the local community and play a vital role in supporting the Parish's sense of identity.

The Parish Council is responsible for the Stracey Sports Park on Green Lane West, a 3 acre field with 2 maintained football pitches, bowls facility, a pavilion and multi-purpose sports area. There are plans to upgrade the pavilion, multi-use games area and fitness equipment. The Parish Council also maintains the Jubilee Park, near the school off Willoughby Way, which has a variety of play equipment for the use of children from toddlers to teenagers. Rackheath has a village hall on Green Lane West, which is managed by a group of trustees (a registered charity). Holy Trinity Church is also used for community activities through the week as well as worship. There is a Plymouth Brethren Meeting Place on Green Lane West.

<sup>11</sup> [www.securedbydesign.com](http://www.securedbydesign.com).

Improvement and extension to all these facilities would be welcomed as the community grows. However, it is recognised that some 3500 new homes should expect a growth in provision too. It is particularly important to provide facilities that can be accessed by young people.

Consultation with residents, and in particular young people, showed an enthusiasm for the provision of a variety of new sports facilities. With regard to a cricket pitch, there is a desire by Rackheath Cricket Club to be relocated back in Rackheath. There has been suggestion that this would make a good central feature of the community, in keeping with the rural village nature.

The placement of new sports facilities is particularly important in ensuring that young people who cannot drive can access them. They should therefore be delivered close to public transport routes and connected to the wider footpath and cycle network. Where it is likely that a facility will attract visitors from a wider area than the parish, sufficient parking is needed.

The community has also expressed an interest in the provision of new allotments, rented to individuals by the Parish Council.

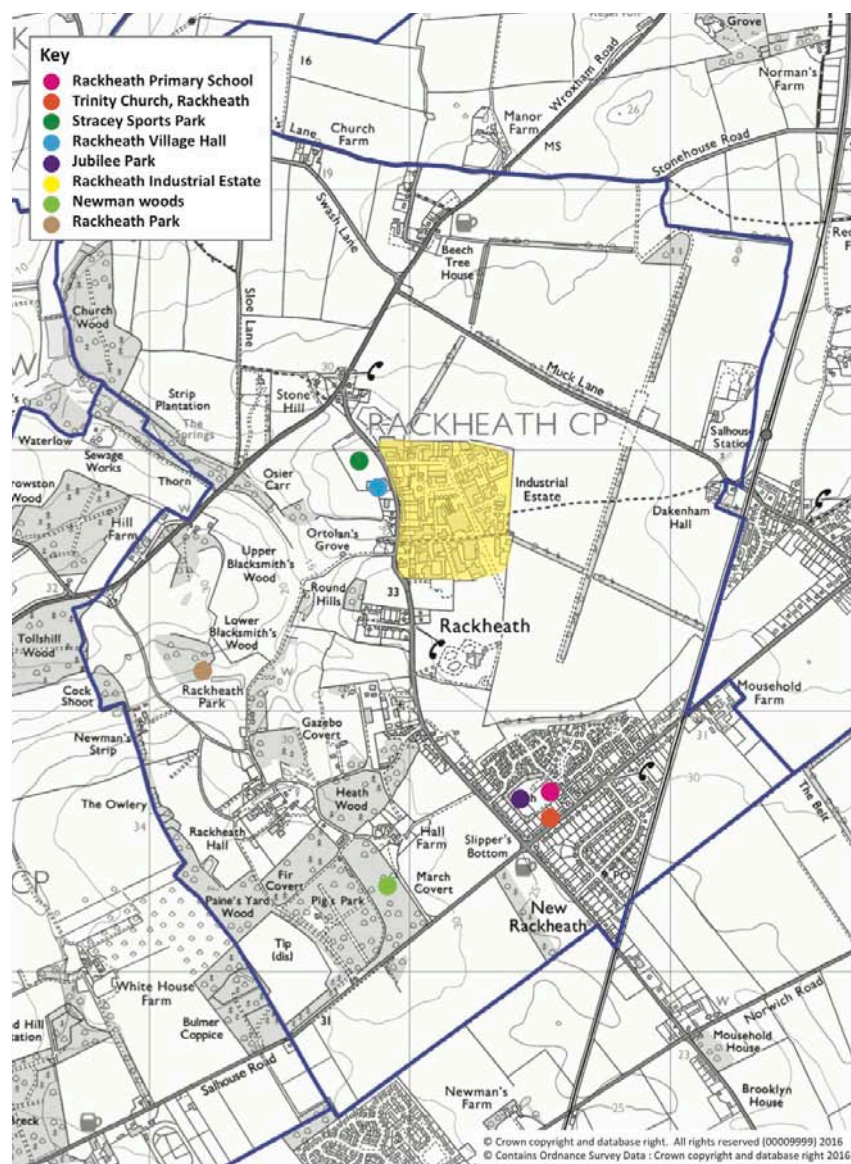


Figure 23 left: Community facilities in Rackheath (source: Parish Online with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

**COM5: Existing community facilities**

The Neighbourhood Plan supports the improvement and extension of current community facilities, in particular Rackheath Village Hall, Jubilee Park, Stracey Sports Park and Holy Trinity Church/Centre (figure 23).

Proposals that would result in any loss of community facilities will not be supported unless:

- It can be demonstrated that the facilities are no longer needed or viable;
- It can be demonstrated that suitable alternative provision exists; or
- Suitable alternative provision will be delivered by new development.

The construction methods and furnishing of community buildings will be encouraged to minimise energy and water use, and promote the use of alternative energy sources.

**COM6: New sports facilities**

The Neighbourhood Plan encourages the provision of new indoor and outdoor sports facilities. There is particular support for the following:

- Football pitch(es).
- Cricket pitch.
- Multipurpose courts, including netball and tennis.
- Pavilions with changing rooms.

New sports facilities should be located within reasonable distance of main link roads, cycle and footpaths and public transport, as well as providing sufficient parking provision.

**COM7: Allotments**

Major developments should make appropriate provision for allotments. Proposals for allotments that are near the industrial estate, alongside the Northern Distributor Road, gas pipeline or the railway line, or provide a buffer for residential development, will be supported.





## 6.4 Business and Employment

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The Joint Core Strategy establishes Rackheath as a growth location, in part because of its existing employment opportunities, railway line and the Northern Distributor Road (NDR). Rackheath is considered a strategic employment location, helping to revitalise the area's economy.

At the time of writing there are 330 businesses listed for Rackheath. Rackheath Industrial Estate, to the east of Green Lane West, occupies an area of about 48 acres. The estate was built on the former airfield and its buildings date from the 1950s. In addition to the main industrial estate in Rackheath, there are 2 smaller industrial estates – Mahoney Green, the opposite side of Green Lane West consisting mainly of modern speculative units, and units on the former Charringtons Depot off Muck Lane. All are occupied by small local businesses<sup>12</sup>.

Existing retail uses on Salhouse Road, include a general store, care home, hairdressers, fish and chip shop, garage and the Sole and Heel public house. Vera Road has a Post Office, pharmacy and general store. The Green Man public house is located on Wroxham Road. The nearest significant shopping facilities are in Sprowston, around 3km to the west which includes a large Tesco supermarket, and Wroxham, about 5km to the north.

The Neighbourhood Plan is positive about new business and employment development provided it is on an appropriate scale appropriate to a growing rural village.

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<sup>12</sup> Concept Statement in respect of Rackheath Eco-community, Barratt Strategic Manor Farm Rackheath Ltd, February 2009.



Figure 24 left: Rackheath Industrial Estate showing single access point (source: Parish Online with own annotations).

**Objective 10: To provide sufficient land and buildings to support local economic development.**

As the population of Rackheath grows, so must the opportunities to employ and be employed locally. Through consultation, there was support for land to be provided for more industrial units and offices for local employment, training and apprenticeships, particularly where linked to local education provision. Residents and businesses there was concern about new industry being in keeping with a rural village. There was no community support for heavy or polluting industry (such as incineration, chemical treatment, hazardous waste, landfill and potentially contaminative land uses).

Good access to and from the Rackheath Industrial Estate onto the A1151 and the NDR is very important for existing businesses and to maintain a sense of any new development contributing to retaining the village feel. This was unanimously supported through consultation. Equally there was strong business and community support for a second access point onto the Rackheath Industrial Estate for businesses and emergency services. This relates to the two gas explosions that have taken place on the estate in the last five years.

Parking provision is also required for any business expansion, which is limited at the time of writing.

In any mixed-use development, careful consideration needs to be given to the location and relationship between industry and residential uses. A buffer between

the two uses is suggested below, an idea presented through initial business consultation and later more widely supported.

Home working is also encouraged, where appropriate, linked to HOU1.

<b>POLICY</b>	<p><b>BUS1: New and expanding businesses</b></p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan supports the provision of land for light industry and offices, which enable local employment and/or training and apprenticeships. Any new or expanding business must provide adequate off-road parking.</p> <p>Proposals for heavy or polluting industry (such as chemical treatment and potentially contaminative land uses) will not be supported. The development of new businesses should be located within easy access of public transport provision and/or main link roads.</p> <p>Industrial traffic movements should be designed to lead away from residential areas towards the most direct route onto the Northern Distributor Road.</p>
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<b>POLICY</b>	<p><b>BUS2: Buffer between residential and industrial</b></p> <p>A significant and effective buffer must be provided between all residential development and all existing or proposed industrial uses other than B1 uses<sup>13</sup>.</p>
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### **Objective 11: To create an economically viable and attractive centre.**

To enable Rackheath to be one community, for new and existing residents, an attractive centre is required. The centre should have small retail units providing convenient shopping on a scale, which meets local needs, be a public transport node, be locally distinct and have access to proportionate parking. Some recent and large developments on the edge of Norwich have developed with no retail provision.

The creation of a 'high street' was not supported through consultation, with residents concerned that Rackheath would lose its village feel, having "the potential to create an inappropriate urban feature if not carefully designed" (resident quote). Rather than a large retail park style development, residents have a preference for smaller scale retail units. In order for it to be viable, attractive and active the centre needs to be located where there is passing pedestrian traffic and central to the settlement of Rackheath, not just to one development.

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<sup>13</sup> B1 uses are office, research and development and light industry.

Whilst current Rackheath residents welcome new employment opportunities, they are also concerned for existing businesses, particularly those located off the Salhouse Road. In order to resist the decline of the shops and services already serving the parish, the policy also seeks to set criteria to retain shops and other retail facilities within the community.

**POLICY**

**BUS3: Local Centre with a rural village feel**

Within GT16 North Rackheath, the Plan supports the creation of a new Local Centre, which is mixed-use (homes, shops and businesses), located along main movement routes and within walking distance of homes. This should be centrally located (see figure 13 and related text), with a range of retail units. Proposals with living space above these units should be supported.

**POLICY**

**BUS4: Retention of retail premises**

Proposals that seek to retain commercial premises in Rackheath will be supported. The loss of existing retail premises on Salhouse Road and Vera Road will be resisted, unless the current use is demonstrably no longer viable.



## 6.5 Services

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Rackheath should be well served with public, private, community and voluntary services that are appropriate to people's needs and accessible to all. As the settlement of Rackheath grows, so should the services. There is concern amongst existing residents that the services they depend on will be over stretched before new provision is made for new residents.

There are many examples of new developments where the services have lagged behind housing growth, or where they have never materialised. If Rackheath is going to be a small attractive town there needs to be an excellent range of services. The Growth Triangle Area Action Plan (GTAAP) requires the masterplanners to include a 'phasing plan indicating the orderly sequence of development, including how infrastructure and services are to be co-ordinated with development'<sup>14</sup>.

The GTAAP also states that GT16 North Rackheath should have 'two primary schools of no less than 2ha in size and one secondary school site, if required, of no less than 12ha in size, at least one community building, a police beat base and the provision of at least 0.4 ha site for a community waste recycling centre and a health and social care facility (page 67). Existing residents of Rackheath would welcome this level of service provision.

Housing and other development will be expected to contribute towards improving local services and infrastructure (such as transport, education; library provision, fire hydrant provision, open space etc.) through either the payment of a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL); planning obligations (via a s106 agreement / s278 agreement); or use of a planning condition/s. New or improved infrastructure will generally be funded/delivered through CIL and/or S106/s278 agreements (including use of planning conditions) having regard to the Greater Norwich Growth Board (GNGB) and the Greater Norwich Infrastructure Plan (GNIP).

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<sup>14</sup> Growth Triangle Area Action Plan Adopted July 2016, page 67.

**Objective 12: To ensure sufficient provision of educational and training facilities, including early years childcare.**

Rackheath Primary School is situated on Willoughby Way and takes children from Reception to Year 6, with 171 children currently on the register. At the time of writing, Rackheath Primary School is almost at capacity. With some 3500 new homes planned, there is a need for significant further provision, unanimously supported through community consultation.

Most secondary school aged children go to Broadland High School in Hoveton. The Growth Triangle Area Action identifies the need for a secondary school in the vicinity. This would be welcomed within Rackheath parish.

Any new school provision of open space on school sites should be available for local community use. School parking is also of concern to the residents of Rackheath, therefore policy requires applications to demonstrate parking provision which is linked to other community provision.

Rackheath Bombers Preschool, in a building adjacent to Rackheath Primary School, provides early years facilities in Rackheath parish. There is no childcare provision on Rackheath Industrial Estate. In order to support residents and business, further provision of preschool facilities should be planned for and were unanimously supported through consultation. Preschool provision should be near other educational buildings to maximise the use of available facilities.

**POLICY**

**SER1: Preschool and school provision**

The development of North Rackheath in accordance with policy GT16 North Rackheath should be phased to ensure that land is made available in time for schools to be completed when they are needed.

Where possible, the location of primary schools should be linked with community sports, leisure and other facilities, and provide additional parking.

The Neighbourhood Plan supports the provision of a secondary school in Rackheath.

**Objective 13: To ensure sufficient provision of accessible local health care and social services.**

Primary Health Care provision is very limited in Rackheath with the Hoveton and Wroxham Medical Centre holding a satellite surgery located once a week in

Rackheath and Salhouse. This is of considerable concern to local residents as the population grows.

Any new provision must be located central to the settlement of Rackheath, to enable access by all Rackheath residents. A medical centre could also share the building of other community provision, such as a community hub building.

**POLICY**

**SER2: Primary Health Care**

The new healthcare facility required by policy GT16 North Rackheath will be centrally located (see figure 13 and related text) with adequate car parking and easily accessible on foot or by public transport. The location will be identified on the masterplan for the development of North Rackheath and the facility will be completed as soon as the demand justifies it.

**Objective 14: To provide widely available and effective telecommunications and internet access.**

Community consultation showed overwhelming support for more efficient and effective broadband and mobile connectivity throughout the parish, which at the time of writing remains sporadic. Businesses in particular identified this as very important. Business units, residential dwellings and community facilities all need to be equipped for the best internet connectivity available now, and with the potential to adapt to future technologies.



## 6.6 Transport and Access

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With some 3500 houses proposed for the parish at the time of writing, the community is concerned about the impact that this will have on local traffic and transport infrastructure.

As a rural parish, there is a dependency on the car. Car ownership is high, with only 7 per cent of households having no car or van. 40 per cent of households have one car or van, 41 per cent of households have two, 9 per cent have three and 3 per cent have four or more cars or vans per household.<sup>15</sup> This is combined with limited bus routes and operating times, plus poor access to Salhouse Railway station by pedestrian and cycle routes from Rackheath.

The policies that follow are designed to ensure that new and existing residents in the parish are not as reliant on the private car and have realistic sustainable transport options. There is also recognition that any new estate developments need good parking provision for those that are car dependent.

The village settlement of Rackheath lies to the north of the Northern Distributor Road (NDR), which goes through the southern part of Rackheath parish. It is important that access to the NDR is built into any new schemes. At the time of writing the NDR is under construction.

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<sup>15</sup> Office for National Statistics, Census 2011.



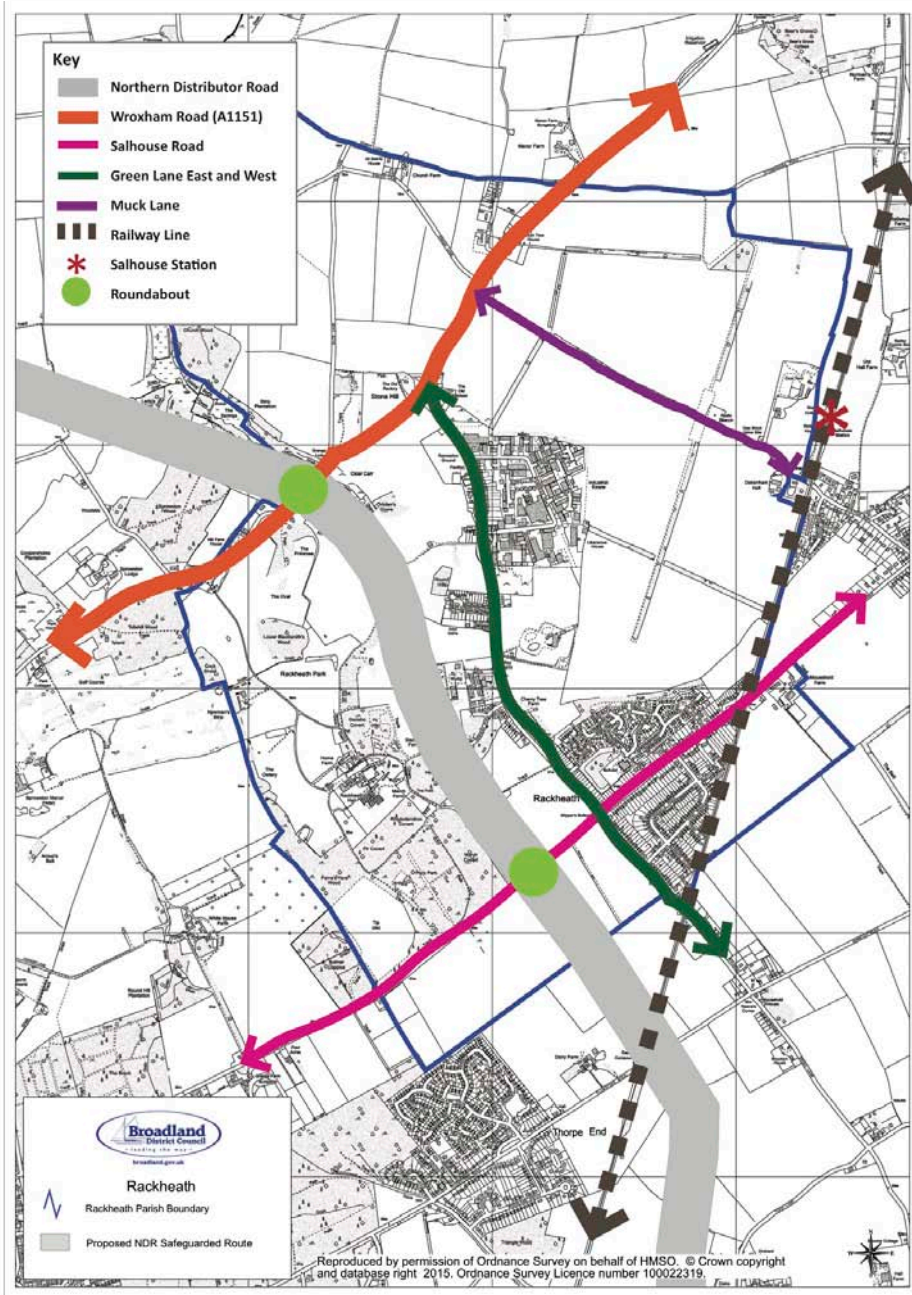


Figure 25 left: Main routes and transport for Rackheath (source: Broadland District Council with own annotations). Blue line denotes parish boundary.

**Objective 15: To enable transport facilities, including public transport, that help people travel within and between communities and reduce dependence on cars.**

The Plan encourages development that addresses the impact of climate change by reducing the reliance on the private car. Development that is not located near to sustainable transport will not be supported.

Sufficient bus stops should be built into developments, with clear and direct walkable routes, including well-placed crossings on major roads. Bus stops should be located where activity takes place, near shops and junctions.

At the time of writing the JCS (policy 9) states that a new rail halt at Rackheath is

required to deliver growth and support the local economy. The Growth Triangle Area Action Plan requires the master planners to ‘consider the feasibility for enhanced passenger rail services, a new rail halt and a freight rail facility to be delivered as part of the proposed development’ (page 67). A Rackheath halt would be welcomed and supported by Rackheath residents and businesses. However, should it not be feasible, good access to and from the Salhouse station is an essential requirement.

**POLICY**

**TRA1: Public transport**

Road infrastructure should be developed to enable bus provision to key services and employment areas.

The layout of new development should make provision for easy access to Salhouse station by footpath, cycle way and bus service.

**Objective 16: To create facilities to encourage safe local walkways, cycle ways and bridleways.**

Linked to other policies, local services, facilities and employment should be connected to residential areas by safe and convenient routes. New developments should create a network of different street types with characters that reflect their relative importance, using the principles set out in ‘Manual for Streets’<sup>16</sup>, to ensure that streets are designed as places first but with effective accessibility. It states that ‘Streets are the arteries of our communities – a community’s success can depend on how well it is connected to local services and the wider world’.

The community does not want road humps, road tables and comparable measures.

‘Broadland Way’ is a proposed strategic off-carriageway cycle and pedestrian route, which will pass through the North East Norwich Growth Triangle, linking east Norwich with the Northern Broads at Wroxham. This is included in the Green Infrastructure Strategy within the GTAAP. Sections of this route are being delivered at the time of writing as part of the NDR mitigation, including a section underneath the NDR adjacent to the railway line. As part of the NDR works, there will also be a pedestrian bridge crossing the NDR near Newman Woods/Newman Road.

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<sup>16</sup> Manual for Streets – Department for Transport 2007.

**POLICY**

**TRA2: Pedestrian, cycle and bridleways**

Where the legal requirements for s106 agreements are met, developments will be expected to contribute to sustainable transport by:

- a. Providing safe, attractive, convenient and, where possible off-road pedestrian routes, cycle ways and bridleways. Routes must follow desire lines and clearly link potential destinations, particularly bus stops, schools, employment, shops, community facilities and access to the countryside;
- b. Providing a crossing point from the developments with boundaries on Green Lane West and East development to the other side of the road to enable as safe passage by pedestrians within the village and to schools.

On-site footpaths, crossing points and parking bays should be designed to accommodate the needs of people with mobility difficulties and pushchairs.

**POLICY**

**TRA3: Layout and traffic calming**

In order to retain a rural feel, development design and layouts should promote a street hierarchy which is sensitive to users' needs and which prioritises the safety of pedestrians. Development must demonstrate a high degree of permeability and maximise pedestrian access throughout. There should be more than one route in and out of any large developments.

Measures to ensure vehicles are driven at a safe and appropriate speed through the village will be supported. Where traffic-calming measures are necessary to achieve this, they should be integral to highway design and include the use of road width restrictions and highway demarcations.



Figure 26 left: pedestrian and cycle routes through the development – Queens Hill development, Costessey.

**Objective 17: To provide an appropriate level of parking for residential and business development.**

Rackheath residents are concerned about parking on new developments. On-street parking can cause problems on estate roads. It is therefore necessary to incorporate parking into the overall design of the local environment. Streets can be made to incorporate a certain level of unallocated on-street parking in the form of parallel or angled parking bays or parking squares. However, consideration must be given to location, proximity to accesses, sightlines and manoeuvring requirements so that indiscriminate parking and the obstruction of footways and carriageways is avoided. It is also important that the requirements of emergency and other service vehicles are catered for together with the needs of people with disabilities. Bus routes within residential developments will require a clear passage of 6.75 metres, which must be available where on-street parking is proposed.

Community parking is also an important consideration in the development of a well functioning place, in particular for easy access to shops, schools and community facilities. Whilst the Neighbourhood Plan encourages sustainable transport options, it is also a reality that private cars will be used, as current public transport provision is only to Norwich and Wroxham.

**POLICY**

**TRA4: Residential car parking for new developments**

Parking areas should be designed to minimise the visual impact of the car on the street scene and on the amenity of residents.

Additionally, in recognition that on-street parking could occur, streets should be designed to safely accommodate unallocated on-street parking. The level of provision should be such that indiscriminate parking and the obstruction of footways and carriageways are avoided.

Where parking is provided in the form of garaging, carports or any other type of enclosed area it should be capable of accommodating a range of modern vehicles.

# 7. Implementation Plan

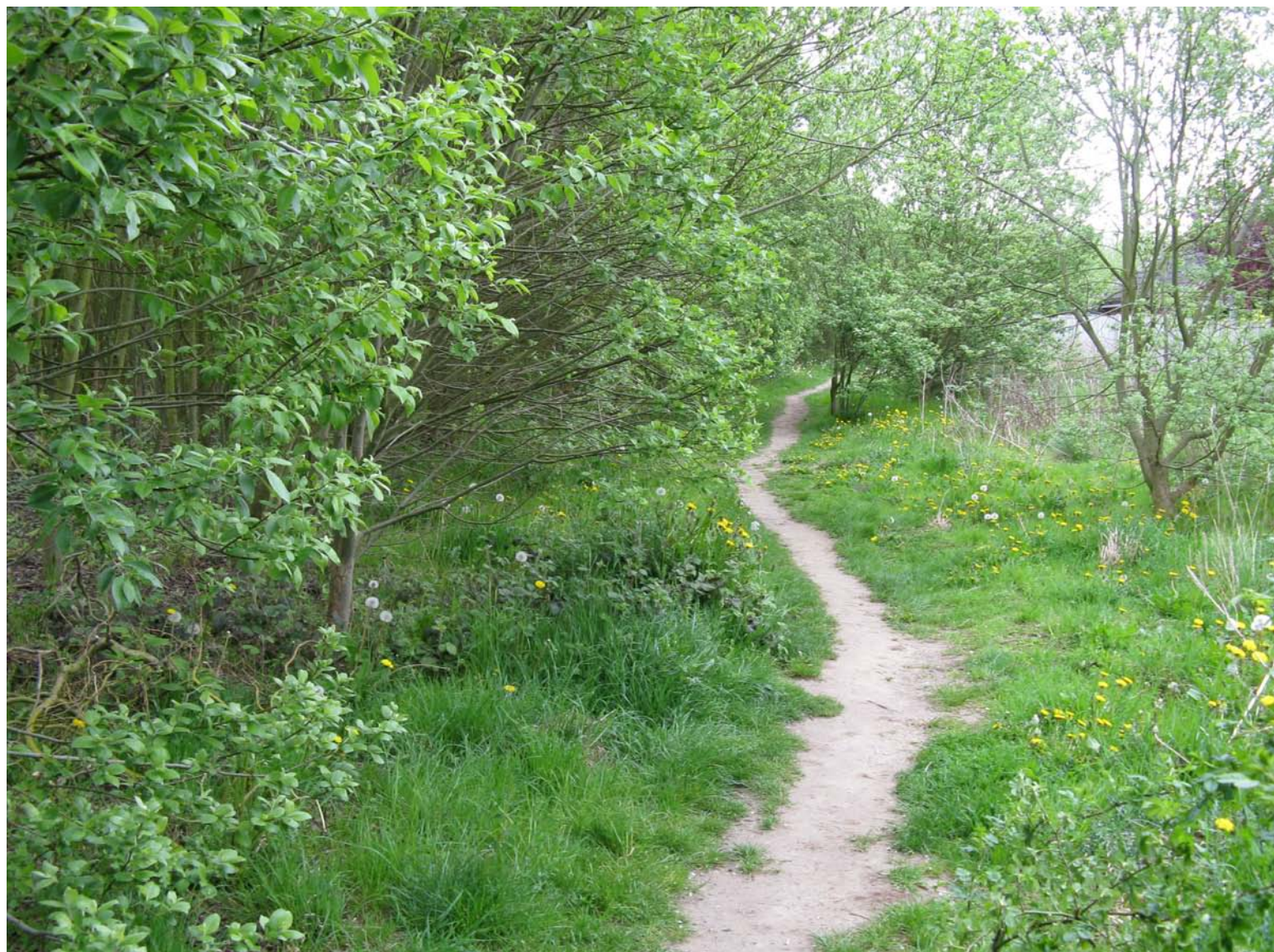
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The Neighbourhood Plan covers the period 2017 to 2037. Further development is highly likely to take place during this time. Each development will differ in size and detail. Each will need to consider the Neighbourhood Plan policies. It is important to ensure this is monitored and community projects are achieved.

As part of the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan, an Implementation Plan is being developed by Rackheath Parish Council. This will require the coordinated input of the community and statutory agencies.

Rackheath Parish Council will lead and monitor the implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Figure 27 below: Footpath along the edge of tree belt, situated at the end of Wilde Road.



# Appendix

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## Appendix 1: Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group members

- **Nicola Curle** – Rackheath resident and Commercial Property solicitor.
  - **Sandy Dutton** – Rackheath resident and Priest in Charge to the Rackheath and Salhouse Benefice.
  - **Brian Gardner** – Rackheath resident, Parish Councillor, Chair of Parks and Leisure Committee, local business (Vice-chair of Steering Group).
  - **Jenny Howard** – Rackheath resident, Secretary to Rackheath Players and Rackheath Village Hall Trustee.
  - **Tony Howard** – Rackheath resident, Rackheath Village Hall Trustee (Treasurer of Steering Group).
  - **Pippa Nurse** – Rackheath resident, Youth Club and local business.
  - **Julie Playford** – Rackheath resident and Parish Councillor (Chair of Steering Group).
  - **Julia Turner** – Rackheath resident, Parish Councillor and Pub landlady.
  - **Emma Whymark** – Rackheath resident and Chair of Parish Council.
  - **Fran Whymark** – Rackheath resident, Parish and District Councillor.
  
  - **Diana Dring** – Rackheath Parish Clerk (Secretary of Steering Group).
  
  - **Rachel Leggett** – Principal independent consultant for the Neighbourhood Plan.
  - **Emma Harrison** – Independent consultant for the Sustainability Appraisal.
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## Appendix 2: Projects that have arisen through consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan.

### HOUSING AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT PROJECT

- **Adopted roads:** Work towards having all new roads and rights of way adopted by Norfolk County Council.

### ENVIRONMENT AND LANDSCAPE PROJECTS

- **Community woodland:** Investigate the potential for creating new community woodland.
- **Newman Woods:** Investigate options for opening up Newman Woods to wider community use.
- **Allotments:** Space should be set aside for the provision of allotments to meet any future demand. The Parish Council will monitor the need for the provision of allotments in Rackheath.
- **Private green space:** Investigate future community use.
- **Local Heritage Assets:** Investigate the potential for improvements. Investigate the renovation potential for the Old Scout Hut (Colonel Showers).

### COMMUNITY PROJECTS

- **Stracey Sports Park:** Upgrade and update the area with more equipment and a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA).
- **Rackheath Village Hall:** Modernisation and refurbishment.

### BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT PROJECT

- **Assets of community interest:** Rackheath Parish Council to compile and register a list of Assets of Community Value.

### SERVICES PROJECTS

- **Schools:** Work with the Local Education Authority to ensure sufficient school provision is in place for Rackheath.
- **Primary Health Care:** Work with the Clinical Commissioning Group and deliverers of Primary Health Care to consider provision of sufficient health care to meet the needs of Rackheath.

## **TRANSPORT AND ACCESS PROJECTS**

- **Access and signage:** Encourage the development of a new access point from the Industrial Estate onto A1151 Wroxham Road, to avoid heavy goods vehicles coming through the village. Signage from the Northern Distributor Road will be sought at:
  - Salhouse Road roundabout, restricting heavy goods vehicles entering Rackheath village.
  - Wroxham Road roundabout, directing heavy goods vehicles to the industrial area and Wroxham.
- **Community transport:** Investigate the feasibility of setting up demand responsive community transport provision within Rackheath with surrounding villages, for example, a community car scheme or dial-a-ride mini bus service.
- **Crossing points:** Investigate the potential for new crossing points on Green Lane West and other roads.
- **New bus routes:** Encourage the provision of new bus routes/expansion of existing routes.





[www.rackheathintothefuture.co.uk](http://www.rackheathintothefuture.co.uk)