

Dickleburgh and Rushall Neighbourhood Plan 2021

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Section 7 Environmental Policies

7.1 Biodiversity in the Parish

The Parish of Dickleburgh & Rushall is rural, a place of open fields and views, sitting among high-quality agricultural land.

It is home to several County Wildlife Sites. These are, predominantly, ancient woodlands. It is also home to Dickleburgh Moor, a wetland nature reserve of emerging importance and a site of historical significance.

The fields have largely escaped the enlargement seen elsewhere in the county, and many of these have remained unchanged for hundreds of years, probably reflecting original Iron Age field divisions. Consequently, the area is blessed with extensive corridors of narrow lanes, ancient hedgerows and verges. This network gives the Parish its character and provides an interconnected thoroughfare for animals and a home for rare plant species.

This Green Infrastructure draws wildlife experts and enthusiasts into the Parish, and a small army of wildlife volunteers works constantly recording the incredible diversity of bird species, bats, orchids and other plant-life.

In public consultations, it was clear that the protection of this Green Infrastructure was of the utmost importance to residents. The active participation by such a high percentage of Parishioners under the age of thirty shows the desire for a long-term vision for biodiversity in the Parish.

7.2 Green Infrastructure

Green Infrastructure is the umbrella term used to describe all the different elements that form the natural and semi-natural spaces within and around our settlements and in the open countryside. Beyond the obvious connotations of woodlands and fields, the term can be used to embrace a wider range of spaces and includes rivers, streams and other water features; parks, gardens, green lanes, hedgerows, trees, public rights of way, churchyards, sports facilities and so on.

The Green Infrastructure in the Parish of Dickleburgh & Rushall is fundamental to a sense of place and quality of life.

It is often assumed that rural areas must be well blessed with green assets, given the relatively low density of population and the large swathes of open land that contribute to the character of the local landscape. However, much of this land is given over to agriculture and is not primarily managed for wildlife or public access.

Settlements have often developed incrementally over long periods, with a significant amount of development coming forward in the form of individual plots or small developments, limiting the opportunities to plan for the benefit of the community. We need to address that issue.

Given current levels of accessible green space, it is vital that we safeguard what we presently have.

We will support projects by the community or other local groups to create accessible green space throughout the Parish and are keen to look to secure some form of shared public space within Rushall which presently lacks such an amenity.

7.3 Environmental Project 1

It is the intention to acquire land for the benefit of residents and to use such land in a positive, constructive fashion. As part of the drive for ongoing improvement of facilities within the community, sites could be used for wildlife, education or enjoyment (where this does not disturb wildlife) by the creation of woodlands, orchards, open areas to enhance vistas and recognised and registered Local Nature Reserves.¹

Rationale / Justification

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/create-and-manage-local-nature-reserves>

The resident's desire for E. Project 1 is expressed in Questionnaire Q17, Q18, Q19, Q20, Q21. Evidence from Consultation exercise April 2019 Section 'Help us set the Vision', 'Wildlife & Flora', 'Existing Green Spaces and Habitats', 'Trees and Hedgerows'. Further Evidence from Public Open Days 18th & 20th January 2020 Section 'Protecting and Recording the Parish 2', 'Protecting Parish 3', 'Protecting Parish 4', 'Transport 4', 'Biodiversity Objective 1 & 2 (access to green spaces & protection of Green Assets)', 'Biodiversity Objective 3 (Natural Habitat and Hedgerows', 'Biodiversity Objective 4'.

7.4 Protecting existing green spaces

We will seek to protect existing green space and will look for opportunities to link existing sites creating a network of natural walkways and Quiet Lanes between these sites and any new developments and the centre of the village. This will create a communal feeling and should help to avoid any feeling of isolated and enclosed development.

The importance of the connectivity of green corridors used by wildlife for movement, feeding and navigation cannot be over-emphasised. Longer-term, we would also look to work with adjoining Parish Councils to ensure that these vital green corridors form connected networks beyond the Parish boundary.

The linking of sites and the creation of access corridors, and the maintenance of green corridors can be supported by the Public Rights of Way network, which provides valuable connections between locations for both wildlife and people.

7.5 Environmental Policy 1: Green Infrastructure

All development proposals for New Houses must demonstrate how Green Infrastructure networks and assets are harnessed, identified and enhanced, in order to be supported. To facilitate this, they will be required to demonstrate a robust and comprehensive green infrastructure strategy and management plan that;

- a) demonstrates that it includes green infrastructure that protects and reinforces the Parish's distinctive landscape and enhances green and open space provision in the Parish, addressing needs arising from the new development and providing good connections for people and wildlife.
- b) Retains, and where possible, enhances natural features on the site, for example, trees, woodlands, orchards, hedgerows, brooks, springs, ditches or ponds, protecting them from damage, destruction and a deterioration in quality and ensuring their continued survival;
- c) provides new landscape works that integrate successfully with the local environment and existing natural features, using local materials and plant species and making provision for future maintenance of new landscape works associated with new developments; and
- d) ensures sequences of green spaces are maintained to provide corridors for wildlife, recreation spaces and important visual amenity for local residents. These green spaces contribute significantly to the identity of the Parish.

Development that is likely to have a direct harmful impact on the Parish's biodiversity, priority habitats and species will be refused unless appropriate mitigation and/or compensation is provided. Mitigation and or compensation should be delivered on-site where possible. Where this cannot be delivered, off-site green infrastructure and habitat creation can be agreed upon as an alternative condition of development.

Rationale / Justification

The resident's desire for E. P1 is expressed in Questionnaire Q3, Q4, Q7, Q8, Q9, Q18. Evidence from Consultation exercise April 2019 Section 'Help us set the Vision', 'Housing for Next Generation', 'Thinking about Environment when Building New Homes', 'Wildlife & Flora, Existing Green Spaces and Habitats', 'Trees and Hedgerows'. Further Evidence from Public Open Days 18th & 20th January 2020 Section 'Biodiversity Objective 16 (Beautification)', 'Biodiversity All Key Objectives', Biodiversity Objectives 1 & 2 (Access to Green Spaces & Protection of Key Green Assets)', 'Biodiversity Objective 4 (Settlement Gaps)', Biodiversity Objective 3 (Natural Habitat and Hedgerows)'.

7.6 Key Natural Environment Assets (Local Green Spaces)

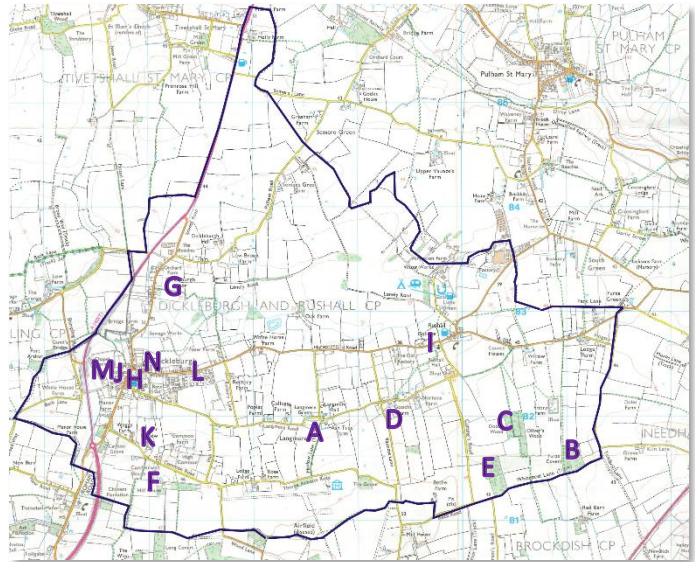
Within this Parish, key natural environmental assets are identified as: Areas of rich biodiversity, areas of environmental significance, areas of historical significance, areas of cultural significance, areas that define place, areas that contribute to the wellbeing of people, areas that enhance the local environment.

7.6.1 Environmental Policy 2: Key Natural Environment Assets (Local Green Spaces)

For a relatively small Parish, we are fortunate to have a high number of County Wildlife Sites in addition to the ‘jewel in the crown’, which is Dickleburgh Moor. Most of these assets are privately owned and therefore not accessible by the public other than those which contain public rights of way. However, the sight and sound of these assets can greatly enhance a feeling of well-being and place. These key assets, which include other green spaces which are used by residents, are valued by the community and should be protected and, where possible, added to.

The areas listed are protected from new development:

- A) Langmere Green
- B) Furze Covert
- C) Dodd’s Wood - Oliver’s Wood
- D) St. Clément’s Common
- E) White Post Lane Wood
- F) Hall Farm Pond
- G) Dickleburgh Moor
- H) Dickleburgh Village Green, opposite the church
- I) The Churchyard of St. Mary’s Church, Rushall
- J) The Churchyard of All Saints Church, Dickleburgh
- K) Dickleburgh Village Hall Playing Fields
- L) The Green on Rectory Road/Catchpole Walk
- M) The field and former allotment area (managed by the Townland Trust) behind Dickleburgh Church. Part of a parcel of land that was put in trust for the village in 1843.²
- N) The Green around the Gables and between the Gables, number 43, and the water treatment plant.



7.6.2 Policy

Any development proposals which may adversely impact any of the identified environmental assets (LGS) will not be permitted. All successful developments will clearly demonstrate they contribute to, rather than detract from, the biodiversity value of the LGS.

Rationale / Justification

The resident’s desire for E. P2 is expressed in Questionnaire Q3, Q8, Q17, Q18, Q21. Evidence from Consultation exercise April 2019 Section ‘Help us set the Vision’, ‘Existing Green Spaces and Habitats’, ‘Thoughts on Land not used for Housing’. Further Evidence from Public Open Days 18th & 20th January 2020 Section ‘Biodiversity Objective 16 (Beautification)’, ‘Biodiversity All Key Objectives’, Biodiversity Objectives 1 & 2 (Access to Green Spaces & Protection of Key Green Assets), ‘Biodiversity Objective 4 (Settlement Gaps)’, Biodiversity Objective 3 (Natural Habitat and Hedgerows)’.

7.6.3 Protection of Quiet Lanes

² Dickleburgh Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Guidelines. South Norfolk Council 2017. p.4

The Parish is creating a network of Quiet Lanes. As these are created, they will be recognised as environmental assets. They will therefore be protected through the Environmental Asset policy. Evidence from Consultation exercise April 2019 Section ‘Settlement Gaps’. Further Evidence from Public Open Days 18th & 20th January 2020 Section ‘Transport Poster 2’, ‘Transport 3’, ‘Transport 4’, ‘Green Spaces’. Additional evidence from the Quiet Lanes consultation July 2020.

For maps and further details, please see supporting documentation: Appendix I Biodiversity Policy 2 and Appendix N Section 4 Quiet Lanes proposal

7.7 Environmental policy 3 Biodiversity net gain

We want to achieve bigger, better, more joined-up and resilient habitats which support wildlife and species and improve ecosystem functions whilst respecting the evolution of the cultural landscape. We aim to protect biodiversity, as demonstrated within this Plan, and deliver biodiversity net gain. We aim to:

- protect our important habitats, sites and animal and plant species
- achieve improved, joined up and resilient habitats

This will be achieved by:

- supporting proposals which conserve and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems processes and,
- applying the mitigation hierarchy (*Avoid* being the most favourable outcome; if this is not possible, then *Mitigate* and, as a last resort if all else fails, then *Compensate*) to all proposals

Since the 1930s, 97% of wildflower meadows have disappeared.³ Almost one in ten British butterfly species has become extinct due to meadow destruction.⁴ Eight per cent of species have been lost in the UK, with the overall butterfly population declining by half since the 1970s.

In the past two decades, research by Plantlife shows we have lost 20% of our roadside wildflower species.⁵

This decline is real, and residents expressed their concern about further pressures which might add to these losses. But these are visible casualties of pressures on habitats. What about the invisible?

On average, five acres of grassland contain about one ton of insects. The number of predatory invertebrates such as beetles may exceed 2000 per cm² of ground. 1 acre of hay meadow may contain 2.25 million spiders.⁶ Insects are vital components in the production of food and maintaining human health. There is now clear evidence that insect numbers and varieties are declining. Currently, there are estimated to be around 1 million insects per acre of land.⁷

These visible and invisible biodiversity losses will only be exacerbated by building developments. The ideal situation is to have significant offsetting at the place of development, and the Plan has already set out a number of solutions that, quite rightly, go beyond token landscape planting.

Where on-site solutions are proven to be impossible or provide insufficient mitigation, we intend to be creative and look at off-site compensation that might involve:

- a. Works to connect existing wildlife corridors, or
- b. The creation of new public green spaces is one of the listed key objectives

If this cannot happen because of a lack of suitable available sites (since the Parish Council’s intent to acquire sites for such use may take time), then we move to negotiation with developers to carbon

³ Professor Dave Goulson: Reversing the Decline in Insects. The Wildlife trusts.

⁴ <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/environment/2021/01/11/almost-one-ten-butterfly-species-extinct-uk-due-lost-wildflower/>

⁵ <https://www.countryfile.com/wildlife/wildlife-stories/guide-to-britains-road-verges-history-why-they-are-important-and-threats/>

⁶ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/earth-and-planetary-sciences/holocene-epoch>

⁷ http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2005/10_october/20/life_facts.shtml

compensate by assisting the Parish to undertake works of repair and renovation. For example, we could seek their financial and/or physical assistance in:

- c. Hedge restoration (filling some of the gaps in existing hedgerows), or
- d. Re-planting complete hedgerows and /or filling in stretches where these have been removed due to farming practices between the 1940s and 1970s (obviously that also requires landowner/council and highways approval), or
- e. Planting wildflower meadows. When considering planting a meadow, generally, the higher the plant diversity in meadows, the greater the chance of a higher diversity of animals, or
- f. Joining existing woodlands together by planting trees, shrubs to create woodland corridors, this could include integrating roses. This not only improves habitats for wildlife it will also help connect people with the natural environment.⁸
- g. Projects which expand or improve existing woodland, since this serves the existing wildlife better, rather than creating a standalone area of woodland.
- h. A series of works that might involve ditch clearing, pond clearing or verge repairs and the like.

Ongoing surveys of the village could identify locations for these works, and a list, in order of priority, could be prepared in readiness. If aims 1 and 2 cannot be fulfilled, then we cascade down our list and hopefully end up with a re-invigorated, greener, leafier Parish where ditches flow, and ponds don't flood and choke the life out of the water by congestion.

7.7.1 Policy

As a minimum, all development must demonstrably have retention of biodiversity and the additionality of biodiversity at its core. Any development that involves the building of a new home or converting an existing industrial building into a house will be required to demonstrate a net ecological and biodiversity gain of at least 10% across the area they are developing.⁹ This will be achieved by measuring, understanding, and reporting the ecology of the environment in its natural state prior to the proposal. The developer will need to include in their proposals evidence of how the development will achieve a minimum of 10% gain.

Actions to support the net gain can be found in Appendix Q

Rationale / Justification

The resident's desire for E. P3 is expressed in Questionnaire Q3, Q4, Q5, Q8, Q9, Q18, Q19, Q20. Evidence from Consultation exercise April 2019 Section 'Help us set the Vision', 'Thoughts on Land not used for Housing', 'Housing for Next Generation', 'Thinking about Environment when Building New Houses', 'Wildlife & Flora', 'Existing Green Spaces and Habitats', 'Settlement Gaps', 'Trees and Hedgerows'. Further Evidence from Public Open Days 18th & 20th January 2020 Section 'Biodiversity All Key Objectives', 'Carbon Offsetting', 'Green Spaces', 'Biodiversity Objective 3 Natural Habitat and Hedgerow). 'Thinking about the Environment when Building Houses'.

7.8 Environmental Policy 4 Carbon Capture and Offsetting within the environmental context.

In order for a strategy to be able to claim it is a carbon capture and offsetting strategy, meeting the challenge of utilising biodiversity as a means of Carbon Offsetting it will need to encompass the following requirements:

- a proper programme of maintenance.
- the use of suitable species which are typical within the Parish.
- the use of planting trees and bushes which are as mature as is reasonably practical, especially if established trees/hedges have been removed on a development site.

⁸ <https://forestrycommission.blo.go.uk/2020/08/26/wonderful-woodlands-and-why-you-should-create-them/>

⁹ Biodiversity Net Gain Good practice principles for development © CIEEM, CIRIA, IEMA, 2016

Planting/offsetting must provide amenity or clear added value to existing green infrastructure. We would wish to avoid the situation where offsetting consists of token planting, provided in a remote location.

7.8.1 Policy

All development that includes the building of a new home, industrial or commercial unit, must include carbon capture aspects that are equal to the carbon outputs of construction and continuation of operation once inhabited. Where a development is unable to meet this requirement of demonstrating a net gain of carbon capture, then the developer will be required to provide off-site compensation, as close to the development as is possible and certainly within the Parish.

Rationale / Justification

The resident's desire for E. P4 is expressed in Questionnaire Q5, Q8. Evidence from Consultation exercise April 2019 Section 'Wildlife & Flora'. Further Evidence from Public Open Days 18th & 20th January 2020 Section 'Carbon Offsetting'. Further Evidence from Public Open Days 18th & 20th January 2020 Section 'Biodiversity All Key Objectives', 'Carbon Offsetting', 'Green Spaces', 'Biodiversity Objective 3 (Natural Habitat and Hedgerow)' 'Thinking about the Environment when Building Houses', 'Transport 2', 'Transport 3', 'Transport 4', 'Transport – Environmental Impact', 'Poster Green Spaces', 'Biodiversity Objective 4 (Settlement Gaps)', 'Thinking about the Environment when Building New Houses'.

7.9 Environmental Policy 5 Dark Skies

7.9.1 Protecting the ecology of the area

Dark Skies are an essential part of the natural biosphere. It provides plant life with growth and rest time (dormancy). It provides small mammals, birds and the insect world greater safety from predators. It provides feeding opportunities for those creatures that are night hunters. Equally, the absence of dark skies puts the existence of many nocturnal creatures, including mammals and insects, at risk of jeopardy. There is clear evidence within the Parish that over-lit areas deter the likes of bats, a key indicator species.¹⁰ Good lighting practice can help restore healthy ecosystems.

The privilege of viewing the dark sky is one that should be available to all. We live in a society where currently dark skies can be a matter of economy; this policy should go some way to equalising this imbalance.

Whilst the NP recognises the value of Dark Skies for maintaining the biodiversity balance and enabling a deeper understanding of place, there can be no compromise of safety or security for the residents of the Parish.

For further information, refer to Appendix J Parish Light Management Plan

7.9.2 Policy

The Parish of Dickleburgh will be designated a Dark Skies Community¹¹. We will remove light pollution whilst retaining a safe environment for all residents. All new housing developments will be required to sign up to the Dark Skies principles. The Parish will work with landowners to create Dark Skies Sanctuaries¹².

Rationale / Justification

¹⁰ Bat feeding map J. Patching

¹¹ www.darksky.org/our-work/conservation/idsp/reserves/ International Dark Sky Community Designation Guidelines June 2018

¹² www.darksky.org/our-work/conservation/idsp/reserves/ International Dark Sky Sanctuary Program Guidelines June 2018

The resident's desire for E. P5 is expressed in Questionnaire Q4, Q8, Q9, Q21. Evidence from Consultation exercise April 2019 Section 'Wildlife & Flora'. Further Evidence from Public Open Days 18th & 20th January 2020 Section 'Biodiversity Objective 5 (Dark Skies)', 'Dark Skies (AG's poster with Detailed Zone Map)'.

For more information, see supporting documentation Appendix J Environmental Policy 5 Dark Skies Lighting Management Plan, Appendix K Environmental Policy 5 Dark Skies

7.10 Hedgerows, Ditches, Trees and Verges

The hedgerows and verges are one of the defining characteristics of the Parish. Following the lines of largely unchanged single-track roads and field boundaries, they provide important habitat and navigation routes for wildlife.

7.10.1 Hedgerows, Ditches, Trees and Verges

Verges have served as; habitats, safety margins, biodiversity depositaries, the first point of carbon capture from road vehicles and home for some rare plant species. Like ditches and hedgerows, they provide a context to the land and the environs, therefore adding to an understanding of place and encouraging emotional and psychological health and wellbeing.

Verges in the parish are classified as silver, gold or nature reserve the status of the verge will depend upon the range of biodiversity present within the verge over the course of a year (see appendix W Verge status). In addition, there are Heritage verges (see Heritage policy 7 and 8 for more information and support documentation)

7.10.2 Achieving higher status verges

This can be managed through careful, thoughtful cutting policies being part of the mix of measures to increase biodiversity and health of verges, so they evoke even more a sense of place and memory.

*"One noticeable trend is that, with the move to earlier and earlier cutting in spring, we're erasing summer from our verges. Only plants that flower early have a chance to set seed before the mowers arrive. As a result, some spring flowers are thriving and spreading, but summer flowering plants – many of which typify our beautiful meadows – are disappearing. This isn't just bad news for flowers, it is bad news for the bees, beetles, butterflies and birds that rely on plants for food."*¹³

All developers are strongly encouraged to look to increase the quantity and quality of verges in the Parish and include the establishment of new verges in relation to any development.

7.10.3 Hedgerows

As well as being central to the visual character of the Parish, hedgerows, ditches and trees play an important role in helping to prevent soil erosion and water run-off, providing shelter, and protecting crops from the wind. Additionally, they offer a traffic-speed calming measure and help absorb noise and particulate pollution. They are absolutely crucial for wildlife.

*"Hedgerows provide food and shelter for many species. Because they often link small woods, they are essential corridors along which wildlife can travel... Hedges may support up to 80 per cent of our woodland birds, 50 per cent of our mammals and 30 per cent of our butterflies. The ditches and banks associated with hedgerows provide habitat for frogs, toads, newts and reptiles."*¹⁴

Most rural hedgerows receive automatic protection because of the Hedgerow Regulations 1997. It is illegal to remove most countryside hedgerows without first seeking permission from the Local Planning Authority.

Surveys show that the vast majority of our Parish hedgerows meet the criteria for protection in terms of length, location and importance as set out in the Hedgerow Regulations.¹⁵ For the purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan, it may be assumed that any hedgerow in the Parish already meets these criteria,

¹³ Plantlife: The Good Verge Guide

¹⁴ RSPB: The Value Of Hedgerows For Wildlife

¹⁵ The Hedgerows Legislation 1997 -Schedule 1, Part II Criteria, paragraph 7(1)

and it is incumbent upon the developer to demonstrate that the hedgerow does not. Any hedgerow which meets this criterion is deemed to be a Heritage Hedgerow. In addition, any verge which sits alongside a Heritage Hedgerow shall be deemed to be a Heritage Verge and therefore protected under Heritage policy 7.

7.10.4 Trees

Similarly, it is the intention that trees of significance be afforded Tree Preservation Orders, where these make a significant contribution to amenity and/or biodiversity or the cultural heritage of the area and/or where such a tree is believed to be threatened by removal. All ancient, veteran and notable trees should be protected and managed to sustain them in the long term. Where their loss cannot be avoided, suitable replacement planting that will provide a similar landscape and wildlife benefit should be secured.

Veteran trees, along with ancient woodland, are considered to be irreplaceable habitats. Proposals should be designed to preserve them, and a tree survey that establishes the health and longevity of any affected trees should be undertaken. A survey of preliminary bat roost assessment should also be carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist. Where removal of a tree(s) of recognised importance is proposed, a replacement of similar amenity value should be provided on-site.

Development that damages or results in the loss of mature and veteran trees that are afforded policy protection under the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 should not be permitted.

Notwithstanding provisions relating to road safety, we would like to see a programme which reduces cutting to once every two or three years and at the right time of year or season. We aim to ensure a similar arrangement for the verges in the Parish. Badly timed and sometimes brutal cutting of hedges have deprived birds, and other wildlife, vital food sources, and similarly ill-timed verge cutting has seen orchids disappear from our lanes in recent years.

All of these measures are deemed reasonable and sit in line with Norfolk County Council's own biodiversity plan for the county.¹⁶

Where/when a development of a site occurs, the developer will be required to edge the development with hedges and ditches as part of the mitigation process for the destruction of habitats, feeding grounds and animal routeways in, through and around the development.

7.10.5 Environmental Policy 6 Hedgerows, Ditches, Trees and Verges

Policy

All hedgerows' ditches and verges should remain intact. Any reason for destruction or change must be fully explained and mitigation made. Where a development takes place that compromises the integrity of the hedge and/or ditch, mitigation and compensation must be put in place prior to that compromise. Compensation will consist of the creation of a new ditch or hedgerow with the same opportunities to wildlife the original hedgerow or ditch afforded. Replacement hedge plants will be mature and reflect the species mix of the original hedgerow and include agreed maintenance measures (see Environmental and Biodiversity objectives NB¹⁷) to ensure their protection during the course of development and their continued survival in the long term.

All new roads must be built with ditches and verge unless it can be demonstrated that this would be impossible.

Rationale / Justification

The resident's desire for E. P6 is expressed in Questionnaire Q4, Q5, Q8, Q9, Q17, Q18, Q21. Evidence from Consultation exercise April 2019 Section 'Help us Set the Vision', 'Thinking about Environment when Building New Homes', 'Wildlife & Flora', 'Existing Green Spaces and Habitats'.

Further Evidence from Public Open Days 18th & 20th January 2020 Section 'Transport 2', 'Transport 3', 'Transport 4', 'Biodiversity Objective 3 (Natural habitat and hedgerows)', 'Protecting and Recording

¹⁶ <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/news/2019/05/balance-of-safety-and-nature-driving-verge-cutting-plans>

¹⁷ <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/advice/care/>

the Parish 2’, ‘Biodiversity Objective 4 (Settlement Gaps)’, ‘Green Spaces’, ‘Housing across the Parish 2 (Policy 4)’.

For further information, see support documentation Appendix L.

7.11. Green Corridors and Protection of Species

Context: A wildlife habitat corridor, or ‘green’ corridor, is an area of habitat connecting wildlife populations separated by human activities or structures.

The Neighbourhood Plan aims to protect both the species that live within the boundary and fauna and birds that visit the Parish. There are a number of areas identified on the map (see supporting documentation) that should be protected.

Around the village of Dickleburgh, planners and developers need to ensure that the free movement of flora and fauna is maintained and enhanced by the development. Isolation of species can result in inbreeding and a breakdown in ecological resilience. Identifying and securing wildlife or green corridors is essential to ensure the necessary replenishment and maintenance of species diversity for healthy ecological functioning.

For more information, including maps, see Appendix T

7.11.1 Environmental Policy 7: Green Corridors and Protection of Species

Development proposals must demonstrate that they will enhance the connectivity of all green corridors that are affected directly or indirectly by the development.

Planning applications for new dwellings must clearly demonstrate how they have incorporated appropriate measures to secure the connectivity of the corridor and the freedom of movement for species on and through the site.

Rationale / Justification

The resident’s desire for E. P7 is expressed in Questionnaire Q1, Q3, Q8, Q16, Q17, Q21. Evidence from Consultation exercise April 2019 Section ‘Help us set the Vision’, ‘Thoughts on Land not used for Housing’, ‘Transport Policies’, ‘Key Thoughts on Housing’, ‘Housing for Next Generation’, ‘Thinking about Environment when building New Houses’, ‘Wildlife & Flora’, ‘Existing Green Spaces and Habitats’, ‘Trees and Hedgerows’. Further Evidence from Public Open Days 18th & 20th January 2020 Section ‘Transport 3’, ‘Poster Green Spaces’, ‘Biodiversity Objective 3 (Natural habitat and hedgerows)’, ‘Biodiversity Objective 4 (Settlement Gaps)’, ‘Green Spaces’, ‘Thinking about the Environment when Building New Houses’, ‘Housing across the Parish 2 (Policy 4)’.

7.12 Footpaths and Rights of Way

In order to embrace the notion of rurality, developers should utilise the opportunity afforded them by introducing green public rights of way, such as walkways, footpaths and bridleways into, through and out of the development. Measures such as these will encourage the natural world and increase the biodiversity of the development, assisting in carbon capture and meeting biodiversity targets and further encourage walking within the Parish and improving public health and wellbeing.