

Barrowden & Wakerley Neighbourhood Plan

Character & Landscape Assessment

Summary

The parishes of Barrowden and Wakerley occupy a unique setting in the Welland Valley. Each village has evolved through the centuries in response to economic and social change to produce the environments we find today. Both contain a variety of significant buildings and dwellings typical of the range of architectural styles common to Rutland and East Northamptonshire. The use mainly of local building materials has contributed to the homogeneous nature of the settlements and their place within the rural environment.

Key characteristics and features of the neighbourhood area include:

- Linear villages parallel to the river with, in the case of Barrowden, streets radiating out from two village greens
- Consistent character of buildings within the historic core of both villages with harmonious mix of styles and materials including a variety of housing typologies from merchant's houses, farmhouses, barns and terraced cottages
- Tightly knit settlement patterns with irregular siting and building lines
- Green and open spaces which are integral to the character and identity of the historic settlement patterns
- Historic street patterns largely intact with fine grained network of lanes and footpaths
- The relationship between the River Welland water meadows, arable land, wildlife areas and woodland
- The Welland valley landscape setting of water meadows and pastureland
- Wildlife ecological corridors – the disused railway line and River Welland
- The soft interface between the countryside and settlements as pockets of paddocks and pastures penetrate into the villages
- Narrow lanes bounded by grass verges
- Locally important views both into and from within the settlements
- Sustainable use of green spaces used as allotments
- Public rights of way networks providing access to the wider countryside and surrounding villages
- Boundary treatments of stone walls with range of copings, rows of hedges and wooden fencing

Threats to the environment include:

- Incremental changes that have eroded the character of the conservation area i.e. inappropriate building materials and UPVC windows not in keeping with existing properties
- Infill development affecting the scale and density of housing
- Cul de sac developments in Barrowden lacking permeability and not integrated well with historic core
- Impact of quarrying above Wakerley on the southern side of the Welland Valley

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Recommendations

The special character of the villages including the local architecture, building materials, landscape, open spaces and vistas both publicly and privately owned are maintained for present and future generations.

New developments should relate to the local context, complement the existing built and natural environment and protect local distinctiveness. They should also reflect the key defining characteristics, design features and building materials identified in both villages.

Infill sites are sensitively integrated into the settlements and surrounding area in such a way as to not detract from the character of surrounding properties.

The special nature of the villages including existing lanes, footpaths, green and open spaces, views and the wider surroundings are retained as housing, recreation and the village economies evolve.

The wooded and more enclosed areas of the local valley landscape are conserved to protect and enhance both natural and historic man-made river features, including the bridges and wetland habitats and to protect the form and landscape setting of the riverside villages so they do not become more intrusive in the valley.

The open spaces and their connectivity to the surrounding countryside are maintained and enhanced in order to improve pedestrian access, enjoyment and biodiversity.

That full recognition of the special nature of the landscape of the Plan area is made when considering potential development.

Public Rights of way are protected and well maintained.

All areas of green space, private and public, throughout the Villages are protected and enhanced in order to sustain their open visual character and to provide sites for recreation and wildlife habitat and that all planning applications will consider the impact on wildlife 'Local Green Corridors' within the Villages.

The verges along the whole of Back Rd & Luffenham Rd in Barrowden are recognised wildlife habitats and should be protected from the adverse impact of development in these locations.

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Outline map of Wakerley & Barrowden settlements (CD to provide illustration)

History

Barrowden became a conservation area in 1975 and has 54 grade two listed building two of which are Grade 2*

The eastern end of Wakerley became a conservation area in 1995 and contains 15 listed building including the 12th century church which is now cared for by the Churches Conservation Trust.

Both villages show evidence of settlement from Neolithic times through to the modern day. Both passed through a period when they were owned by the large estates of the day; hunting and farming were the dominant occupations and there was a certain, attractive uniformity to the building and layout of both villages typical of the Rutland area. Most of the older houses are built of creamy, grey lower Lincolnshire limestone with Collyweston slate roofs. The lesser building are built from stone rubble and dressed stone.

Barrowden has a compact centre based around the old medieval village and the more recent estate farms, church and larger houses. **Wakerley** has a more linear format along the contour of the valley following the railway and expanding fields traveling away from the original triangular centre of the village based around the old manor house and the church. The forest areas form a barrier between Wakerley and the rapidly expanding nearby towns of Corby and Kettering.

Both villages have some Saxon and early medieval evidence of charcoal and iron works which seemed to have petered out by the 14th century. Wakerley saw a resurgence with the coming of the railway and a period when ironstone was quarried. These now disused quarries form a semi-natural habitat of fragmented calcareous and mesotrophic grassland which has its own specific flora and fauna.

Barrowden also profited from the railway and at one time eels were transported daily to London and there was a regular service right through to Paris. Adjacent to the site of the old mill there was a large tannery for many years replaced by a lime, slag and fertilizer spreading company followed by a plastics company, Linecross Plastics, which expanded and finally moved to South Luffenham in 1973/4.

Land Use

Currently there is no industry in either village although Barrowden has long been the home of the Pridmore Haulage Firm and Valley View Boarding Cattery. Neither village has a school. Barrowden has a village pub, shop and doctor's surgery used by the inhabitants of both village. The village church, cricket club and children's playground are also shared. There is one remaining working family farm in Wakerley and in Barrowden Redhill Farm lies a mile to the west of the village. Arable fields around Wakerley are managed by Velcourt for a rotation of cereal crops.

The fields surrounding the village are for the most part used for sheep, oil seed rape, some cereals and root crops.

Quarrying for road stone was resumed to the south of Wakerley in 2018, creating new employment opportunities and ultimately further grassland habitat.

The Jurassic Way footpath and the Rutland Round footpath both pass through both villages and attract

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visitors. There is an active local fishing club enjoying the banks of the Welland and the village cricket club is well supported.

As well as the cricket field and children's play area bordering the northern edge of Barrowden there is also a large allotment area and many local villagers enjoy producing a huge variety of fruit and vegetables.

Layout, Roads, Streets and Routes

Barrowden consists of a number of streets radiating out from two village greens which are connected by Main Street running from east to west with Back Road and Back Lane running along the northern edge of the village and Tippings Lane and Wakerley Road connecting the north of the village with Main Street. A key feature is the village environment are the narrow lanes connecting the smaller greens and contributing to the rural feel of the village.

There are a number of footpaths in and around the village including two long distance footpaths, one of which, the Jurassic Way leads south via the mill pond across the meadows to Wakerley.

The village of Wakerley as mentioned previously also has a linear development with narrow lanes and footpaths connecting the village to the surrounding countryside. At the eastern end lanes lead to the A43 with connections to Duddington and Fineshade. To the west a lane following the southern edge of the Welland Valley leading to the village to Harringworth

Barrowden has good road links with neighbouring communities with three routes leading to the A47 and further connections to the villages of Harringworth, Seaton, Morcott and South Luffenham.

Both villages have developed with a wide variety of dwellings ranging from smaller cottages to substantial properties situated on plots of varying size. In Barrowden with its maze of interconnecting lanes the arrangement of properties preserves the rural feel of the village. Development during the last 50 years has included the building of a number of small developments and individual properties a couple of which for example Pollards Close, have been developed on the site of former farms.



The village also includes a number of barn conversions as does Wakerley with the developments at Manor House Farm.

Green & Natural Features, Views and Spaces

Green spaces and links to the surrounding farm land enhance the character and feel of both villages. In Wakerley the local green spaces contribute to the open nature of its rural environment and in Barrowden the village greens are in integral part of the layout of the village with valuable amenity space being provided by the Recreation Field and allotments situated to the north of Back Lane.

A key feature of the local landscape is River Welland and associated water meadows which separate the two villages. In addition the disused railway with its thick hedges and overgrown areas provides an important wild life corridor as do the wide variety of roadside verges and hedgerows both within and on the approach roads several of which are designated as conservation zones supporting a range of wild life including an extensive range of wild flowers and glow-worms. Other important areas for wildlife are the village ponds, especially the mill pond, the water meadows, the rookery to the south of Welland Farm and the spinneys along the A47.

The greens and open spaces give rise to a number of important views, for example the views across the Welland Valley from Barrowden towards Wakerley and those within the villages, for example, looking from the Exeter Arms across the village green to the duck pond and looking south from Back Road over the village and further views across the small green between Kings Lane and Wakerley Road. In Wakerley there are significant views across the Welland Valley, particularly the view in the direction of Harringworth towards the disused brick kilns and views from the junction of Wakerley Road and Main Street to the west looking towards Barrowden.

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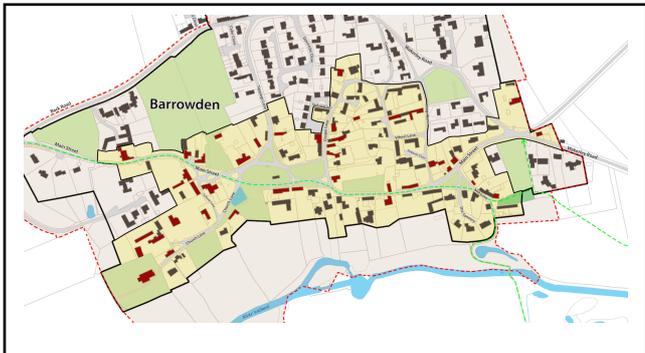
Include comprehensive list of views both from within and into both villages in addition to map indicating the location of the views.



Gardens, garden frontages and hedges also contribute significantly to the environment of both villages by providing green infrastructure that adds to the quality of the local environment.

Buildings

Housing in **Barrowden** has developed considerably during the latter part of the 20th century until the present day, however the core or heritage area of the village including the vicinity of the village pond, along Main Street and extending in the east to include Mill House and Mill Lane and to the north including the properties on Chapel & Wheel lanes encompass the majority of the listed properties and those of historical interest dating from medieval times to the late 19th Century. (See Map)



The variety of buildings including former farm houses, the village pub and numerous cottages within the historic core of the village provide a very attractive environment confirming its conservation area status.

Since the 1970s there has been considerable development and infill on former farm sites, gardens and open spaces. This has included, Dovecote Close, Redland Close, properties along Back Road & Wakerley Road as well The Hay and Hay Court. Many older properties have been upgraded using traditional styles and materials. On Morcott Road is a collection of former council houses and situated off Back Road is the 1950s council development of Cider Close and

adjacent to this the affordable homes development of Drift Close completed in xxxx.

Photograph of Drift Close & or one of the other more recent developments



Throughout the village there is a great variety to the size and style of homes ranging from larger detached four, five and six bedroom houses to smaller dwellings and terraced cottages such as those situated on Wheel Lane. The majority of properties are of two or three stories including some with dormer windows; a small number of bungalows are situated in two or three locations around the village.

Barrowden has a number of significant buildings with historical interest including St Peter's Church dating from the 13th Century and the old Baptist Chapel situated at the top of Chapel Lane, which is now a domestic property as is the Old School and School House adjacent to the village green.

Carey's House Barrowden



Mill House



The village Hall built in the 1920s and situated on Wakerley Road provides a venue for village events. Throughout the village are a number of significant domestic properties, including the former rectory Carey's House, Durant Farmhouse, Windmill House, Knob Hall and Mill House.

Wakerley has a number of listed buildings within its small stock of housing that taken together provides for an interesting and attractive view along Main Street. The housing is a mix of private ownership and a significant property portfolio managed by Burghley Estates.

A number of current properties have elements dating from the 17th century - the ruined Jacobean Manor Hall providing stones at this time for the present

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Manor House and Rectory. Development continued throughout the 18th century with buildings such as The Laurels Farm House at the western end of the village and carried on through the 19th and early 20th centuries. Recent development has seen conversions of the old farm buildings into four linked bungalows at Wakerley Court, conversion of Manor Farm barns to provide a bungalow and adjacent detached house, and the replacement of a small derelict cottage in the middle of the village with a new build stone house. Many older properties have been upgraded using traditional styles and materials.

Throughout the village there is a great variety to the size and style of homes ranging from larger detached houses to smaller dwellings. The majority of properties are of two or three stories including some with dormer windows; a small number of bungalows have been recent valued additions to the village.



Wakerley has a number of significant buildings with historical interest including St John's Church with its Norman origins. Throughout the village are a number of significant domestic properties, including the Manor House, Manor Farm House, the old rectory, the Station and Station Masters Houses, and Wakerley House.

Building Materials and design

The majority of the buildings in both villages are built of stone, with sawn stone for quoins and lintels. Some have decorative brickwork around doors and windows as an alternative. Recent development has included the use of brick, Bradstone and Stamford Stone with a few examples of late 19th century brick properties including the old engine sheds on Back Road and Red House at the top of Wakerley Road. Houses are tiled with Collyweston, blue slates or tiles although there is evidence that many were once thatched, now only a couple of thatched properties remain in both villages. Most roofs are of simple gable ended design with two examples of mansard roofs in Barrowden. More

modern houses have slate or clay tiles of different designs.



The majority of older properties have chimneys of a similar dressed stone construction situated on the gable ends usually integral to the building. Outside stacks are very rare and this has also been reflected in the design and build of newer properties

There is a wide range of size and shape of windows throughout the older houses. Some have original stone mullioned windows, though there are some recent additions. One or two houses have blocked up mullioned windows. Most of the remaining older houses have wooden windows with casement openings though there is a great range of styles and sizes. Sash windows are predominant in certain houses which reflect the period in which they were built.

Doors are usually wooden in the older houses and are of a similar style, with one or two exceptions. Some have glass panels and some a window above the door, but the majority are solid. Newer houses usually have glass panels. Porches are not common in either village and where they do exist they are of a simple nature.

Streetscape

Both villages benefit from a relatively uncluttered streetscape with signage being limited to 30 mph speed restriction notices on the approaches to the settlements as well as finger boards giving directions and mileage to neighbouring villages and way marked footpath signs, in addition Barrowden has well located signs to the village shop. Informal seating is positioned at key points around both villages,

Barrowden benefits from two wooden bus shelters and a village notice board.

Streetlights either attached to buildings or on modern steel lamp posts are situated along Main Street and one or two of the lanes in Barrowden, but on dark

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nights in other parts of the village as in Wakerley, carrying a torch is a good idea.

Road surfaces throughout the villages are of tarmac. Pavements with glazed brick, granite and in a few instances concrete kerb stones line a few of the routes in Barrowden, the majority of the smaller lanes have grass verges with the provision of concrete kerbs at key points to prevent erosion by traffic. Wakerley has a pavement lined with concrete kerb stones to one side of Main Street and grass verge on the opposite side. A variety of surfaces for driveways exist in both villages with the most common being gravel or natural looking paving.

In both villages, plots and boundaries with the roads and lanes are demarcated with attractive stone walls

capped with either traditional “Cock and Hen” irregular stones, tiles or rounded concrete. There are a many examples of hedges formed from a variety of trees and shrubs as well as brick walls, post and rail wooden and metal fencing in both villages.

