

# Built-Up Area Boundary Rationale

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# Great Gransden Built-up Area Boundary

## Summary

This document explains the rationale used to establish a proposed Built-Up Area Boundary for the settlement area of the village of Great Gransden, as part of the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Together with other proposed policies in this NDP, the Built-Up Area Boundary provides clarity on the geographic extent of development in the Parish. In particular, it enables the Parish to fulfil its contribution to the housing development needs of the HDC Local Plan, while providing additional protection to green field sites and agricultural land surrounding the village. These will be excluded from development unless in exceptional circumstances, consistent with HDC Local Plan Policies LP 10 'The Countryside', LP 19 'Rural Economy', LP 20 'Homes for Rural Workers', LP 22 'Local Services and Community Facilities', LP 23 'Tourism and Recreation', LP 28 'Rural Exceptions Housing', LP 33 'Rural Buildings' and LP 38 'Water Related Development'

During the plan period, housing completions and commitments, where planning permission has been granted, currently amount to 93 houses in Great Gransden. This significantly exceeds the level of sustainable housing and windfall expected for Great Gransden; HDC advised the GGNP Steering Group in October 2021 that the housing requirement figure for the designated Great Gransden Plan area – the whole parish of Great Gransden – is 64 new dwellings during the period 2011 to 2036. Consequently no additional areas are allocated for significant development and the development boundary should mirror the boundary of the current built-up area.

The proposed boundary has been developed using the principles and guidance in the current HDC Local Plan for defining the built-up area. It is shown in Figure 1 Great Gransden Built-Up Area Boundary

## Context

Rather than establishing a development boundary for a settlement, the HDC Local Plan defines the “Built-Up Area” to guide decisions on suitability of land for development.

The reason for this approach is defined in Paragraphs 4.81 and 4.82:

*Paragraph 4.81 The fundamental purpose of defining the built-up area is to provide guidance on interpretation of the boundary to inform the answer to the question 'does a specific parcel of land situated on the periphery of a settlement relate more to the built environment of that settlement in its use, form, character and connectivity or does it relate more to the surrounding countryside?'*

*Paragraph 4.82 The distinction between settlements and areas of countryside is vital to interpretation of the Spatial Planning Areas, Key Service Centres and Small Settlements policies. A criteria based definition is favoured as, among other benefits, it avoids the perception that any form of development on any land within a drawn boundary would be acceptable and the pressure for every piece of land within the boundary to be developed. This is undesirable as it could damage the loose knit character of many settlements in Huntingdonshire by creating harder, more regular edges to settlements.*

A key factor in defining the built-up area is the scale of the settlement:

Paragraph 4.84

*“A built-up area is considered to be a distinct group of buildings that includes 30 or more homes. Land which relates more to the group of buildings rather than to the surrounding countryside is also considered to form part of the built-up area.”*

The HDC Local Plan characterises Great Gransden as a Small Settlement. Policy LP9 details the considerations for Development Proposals in Small Settlements:

**LP 9 Small Settlements**

Each Small Settlement to which this policy applies is defined above.

**Development Proposals within the Built-up Area**

A proposal that is located within a built-up area of a Small Settlement will be supported where the amount and location of development proposed is sustainable in relation to the:

- a. level of service and infrastructure provision within the settlement;
- b. opportunities for users of the proposed development to access everyday services and facilities by sustainable modes of travel including walking, cycling and public transport;
- c. effect on the character of the immediate locality and the settlement as a whole.

**Development Proposals on Land well-related to the Built-up Area**

A proposal for development on land well-related to the built-up area may be supported where it accords with the specific opportunities allowed for through other policies of this plan.

## The need for a Built-Up Area Boundary

The parish of Great Gransden differs from many other Small Settlements in that the only distinct group of buildings including 30 or more homes is the village itself. The rest of the Parish consists of more isolated agricultural buildings, and some homes built adjacent to the principal roads serving the village.

NDP consultation has shown the desire to protect agricultural land and open countryside around the village. Further development on green field sites around the village is not supported. The focus for future sustainable development should instead be on small infill and brown field sites.

The number of houses in the Parish is currently around 400. Housing completions and commitments, where planning permission has been granted, currently amount to around 87 additional houses in the HDC Plan period. This increase of over 20% exceeds the level of sustainable housing and windfall expected for Great Gransden, HDC advised the GGNP Steering Group in October 2021 that the housing requirement figure for the designated Great Gransden Plan area – the whole parish of Great Gransden – is 64 new dwellings during the period 2011 to 2036.

Further major development in Great Gransden is therefore not warranted. Future development should be small-scale infill and brown field developments within the proposed development boundary. Decisions on suitability of development applications will be made according to the policies in the HDC Local Plan and this Neighbourhood Development Plan, including the specific policies covering the conservation area that occupies a large part of the village.

Proposed development outside the Built-Up Area boundary will not be supported except in exceptional circumstances, consistent with the HDC Local Plan.

#### Establishing the Built-Up Area boundary

It is proposed to establish a Built-Up Area boundary for the village of Great Gransden, consistent with the Principles and Implementation Guidance for built-up areas (Section 4.85) and the small settlement policy LP9 in the current HDC Local Plan. Where possible the proposed boundary is drawn tightly around built form, aligned with easily identifiable landscape features, including roads, streams, hedgerows, and property boundaries.

<b>Principle - HDC Local Plan (Section 4.85)</b>	<b>Implementation Guidance - HDC Local Plan (Section 4.85)</b>	<b>Great Gransden Built-Up Area Boundary Proposal</b>
The Built- up Area will include		
Residential, community, retail and employment buildings which are predominantly surrounded by other buildings.	The majority of buildings within the built up area boundary will fall within this category. It is included for the sake of completeness as most attention is paid to determining where the edges of the built-up area are.	The large majority of dwellings in the parish are within the village boundary. The only distinct group of buildings including 30 or more homes is the village itself.
Buildings on the edge of settlements which relate closely to the economic or social function of the settlement but excluding sports and recreational facilities addressed below	Industrial and community buildings such as church and village halls are an integral part of the social and economic success of a settlement and are considered as much part of the built-up area as residential properties. The buildings and any associated hardstanding such as surfaced carparking are part of the built-up area	The Sand Road Industrial Estate and The Hardwicke Road Industrial Estate are designated Established Employment Areas in the HDC Local Plan. As such they are subject to specific development guidelines. Neither is contiguous with the residential area of the village. Both are outside the Development Boundary. The Sand Road Industrial Estate site is separated from the village by a field acting as a buffer zone, designated at the time of development of Audley Close. The buffer zone will be outside the development boundary, to maintain this separation from the houses in the village.  St Bartholomew's church, the

		Baptist Chapel and the Reading Room are all situated within the Built-Up Area Boundary.
Open space, sports and recreational facilities, allotments, caravan sites, churchyard and cemeteries which are predominantly surrounded by and integral to the built up area and defined by strong boundary features	Some greenfield uses such as recreational or amenity open space churchyards, wide grass verges and allotments, can form an integral and valuable part of the built-up area and its character. These must have buildings on at least two sides and have a clear physical and visual relationship with the built-up area rather than any adjoining countryside. Examples of strong boundary features include a tree belt or substantial stone or brick wall.	<p>The Playing Field, including the Bowls Club, MUGA and children's playground, is in the heart of the village, adjacent to the Primary School and Reading Room, and bounded by housing and a footpath. This is within the built up area and Built-Up Area Boundary. As it is a much valued asset it should be further protected from the possibility of development, consequently it is proposed to designate this as a Local Green Space.</p> <p>The churchyard of St Bartholomew's Church and the old Baptist Meeting House graveyard are no longer in use. Both are located within the Built-Up Area boundary.</p> <p>Great Gransden benefits from wide verges alongside the main streets in the village, and at junctions. These often have specimen trees. These are included in the built up area, but should be protected from development.</p>
Existing commitments for residential community, retail and employment uses on sites which are physically/functionally related to the settlement	Where development for residential, community, retail or employment use has commenced or has outstanding planning permission the principle of development has been approved. The precise boundary around such sites is determined with regard to the detailed guidance within this table.	<p>There are five sites* within the built up area that have been granted planning permission for new dwellings.</p> <p>*Sand Road development (Dutton Gardens)</p> <p>**"Behind 6 West St"</p> <p>* Rippington Manor Barn conversion</p> <p>*Kingspan Potton Timber site</p> <p>* Mandene Gardens</p> <p>These areas designated for housing on these sites are included within the proposed Built-Up Area boundary. Dutton Gardens and Potton Timber sites include attenuation areas, essential for water management. These attenuation areas are inside the Built-Up Area boundary.</p> <p>A field adjacent to Dutton Gardens is currently being used during development stage as a construction compound. A condition</p>

		<p>of planning permission is that this must be returned to agricultural land following development. It is outside the Built-Up Area boundary.</p> <p>Two other sites** have received planning permission but are considered to be more related to the surrounding countryside and so are outside the proposed Built-Up Area boundary.</p> <p>** Leycourt Farm  ** adjacent 37 Meadow Road</p>
<p>Individual plots and minor scale development opportunities which would provide infill and rounding off opportunities on land which is physically, functionally and visually related to existing buildings, taking account of any environmental development constraints subject to the exclusions below</p>	<p>Pockets of undeveloped land exist in some locations which relate to nearby buildings. Often well contained by existing hedgerows or tree belts, the character of such land is influenced by the buildings such that it is not perceived to be part of the surrounding countryside but relates primarily to the built form of the settlement. Small parcels of land such as this can offer opportunities for organic growth of settlements.</p> <p>The built up area will include elements of the grounds of large curtilages that relate closely to the buildings, for instance formal gardens, ancillary parking and hard tennis courts</p>	<p>Potential infill development sites that are within the proposed Built-Up Area boundary are included, subject to planning guidelines. Potential sites within the Conservation Area will have particular scrutiny to ensure that its essential character is conserved and enhanced.</p> <p>Properties on the edge of the proposed Built-Up Area boundary have been individually considered against this criterion. The appropriate parts of the curtilages are included where they relate closely to the buildings, rather than the countryside.</p>

<b>Principle</b>	<b>Implementation Guidance</b>	<b>Great Gransden Built-Up Area Boundary Proposal</b>
The built up area will exclude:		
Open spaces and sports and recreational facilities, allotments, caravan sites, churchyards and cemeteries which extend into the countryside and are not well contained by strong boundary features, or primarily relate to the countryside in their use, form or character	Areas of open space, sports and recreational facilities, paddocks, allotments, caravan sites, churchyards and cemeteries provide a visual buffer between the built form and the open countryside, softening the visual impact and linking the built-up area with its rural context. Such land is generally considered to primarily relate to the countryside where it is surrounded by built development on less than two sides.	<p>Gransden Sportsfield and The Allotments are remote from the village, in close relationship to the countryside and lie outside the development boundary. It is proposed to designate the Sportsfield and Allotments as Local Green Spaces. Consideration should be given to designation of a formal buffer zone between the Sportsfield and the Sand Road Industrial Estate</p> <p>The cemetery lies within the parish of Little Gransden.</p> <p>A commercial touring caravan site is located outside the village boundary, primarily related to the countryside, and is outside the Built-Up Area boundary.</p>
Undeveloped land that affords important views from a public vantage point to or from a listed building or conservation area connecting the building or area to its countryside setting.	To protect the character of a settlement and maintain the integral relationship between the settlement and its countryside context, land which offers or facilitates visual connections between designated heritage assets and their countryside setting is excluded from the built-up area to protect its role in providing a transition between the settlement and the countryside	<p>There is a clear demarcation of agricultural land surrounding the village, which provides a countryside context appropriate for the rural nature of Great Gransden. Footpaths and minor roads link to the SSI Gransden Woods, Gransden post mill, the Sportsfield and the allotments. Land adjacent to the Riddy (an ancient highway) gives views over historic meadowland and over open countryside. The valley of Gransden Brook is an important area for biodiversity in addition to providing attractive views. These all help define the limits of the built-up area, and provide viewpoints both into the countryside, and towards the heritage assets and conservation area of the village, and are outside the Built-Up Area Boundary.</p>
Isolated properties or areas of ribbon and fragmented development which are physically and visually detached from the main built form	To avoid areas of intervening countryside being included within the built-up area properties which are physically and visually	<p>The proposed boundary respects this principle.</p> <p>No isolated properties or those which form ribbon development are included in the Built-Up Area boundary.</p>

	detached should be excluded	
Farmyards and associated agricultural buildings which extend into the countryside or primarily relate to the countryside in their use, form, character or connectivity.	Agricultural buildings tend to relate more to the surrounding countryside when still in use for agricultural purposes. However, if the building comprises a long standing traditionally built building and is well-related in terms of scale and positioning to eligible properties with a defensible boundary it may be included where it is likely to be deemed suitable for reuse under permitted development rights.	No remote agricultural buildings are included in the development boundary. Development proposals in these areas would be considered subject to the requirements of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036.
Agricultural land, woodland, meadow, areas of water and natural habitats that penetrate the built form or sections of large residential curtilages where the character of the land primarily relates to the countryside.	<p>These spaces can provide a visual buffer between built development and the open countryside, softening the visual impact and linking the built up area with its rural context.</p> <p>Large curtilages with grounds stretching away from the rest of the built-up area are excluded to prevent sub-division of the plot for new development. The built-up area will include elements of the grounds that relate closely to the buildings, for instance formal gardens, ancillary parking and hard tennis courts but not those parts with a more natural rural character.</p>	<p>These open spaces are a valued part of the rural environment, and are excluded from the proposed Built-Up Area boundary.</p> <p>Only the formal gardens of dwellings on the boundary of the village are included, paddocks and open fields are excluded.</p>

## Conclusion

A Built-Up Area boundary (Figures 1 & 2 below) is proposed for Great Gransden, which will deliver the sustainable housing contribution required by HDC while protecting the surrounding countryside and sustaining the rural environment. The Planning Policies in the HDC Local Plan would be applied to determine specific applications within the boundary, with particular emphasis on proposals affecting the Conservation Area. Proposed development outside the Built-Up Area boundary will not be supported except in exceptional circumstances, consistent with the HDC Local Plan.

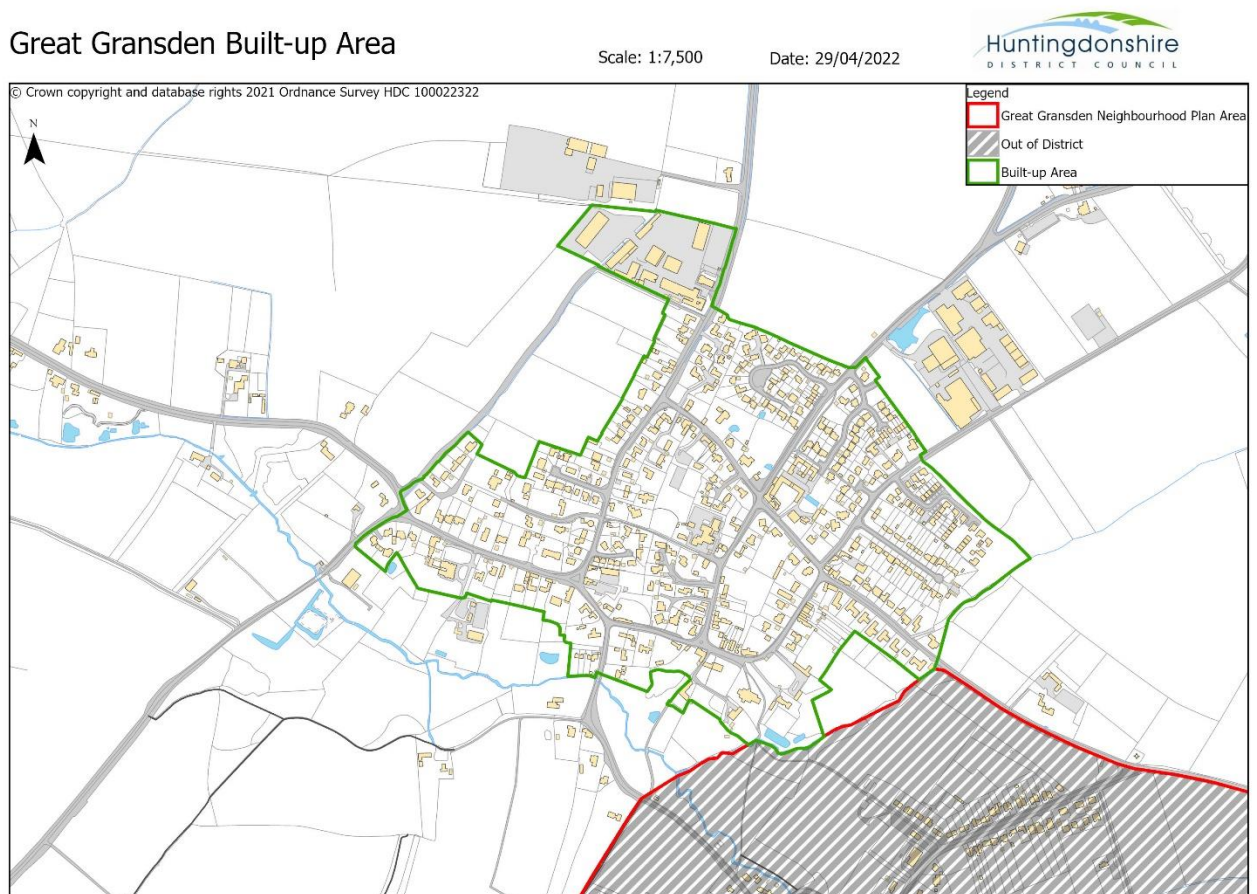


Figure 1 Great Gransden Built-Up Area Boundary

## Great Gransden Conservation Area and Built-up Area

Scale: 1:7,500

Date: 29/04/2022



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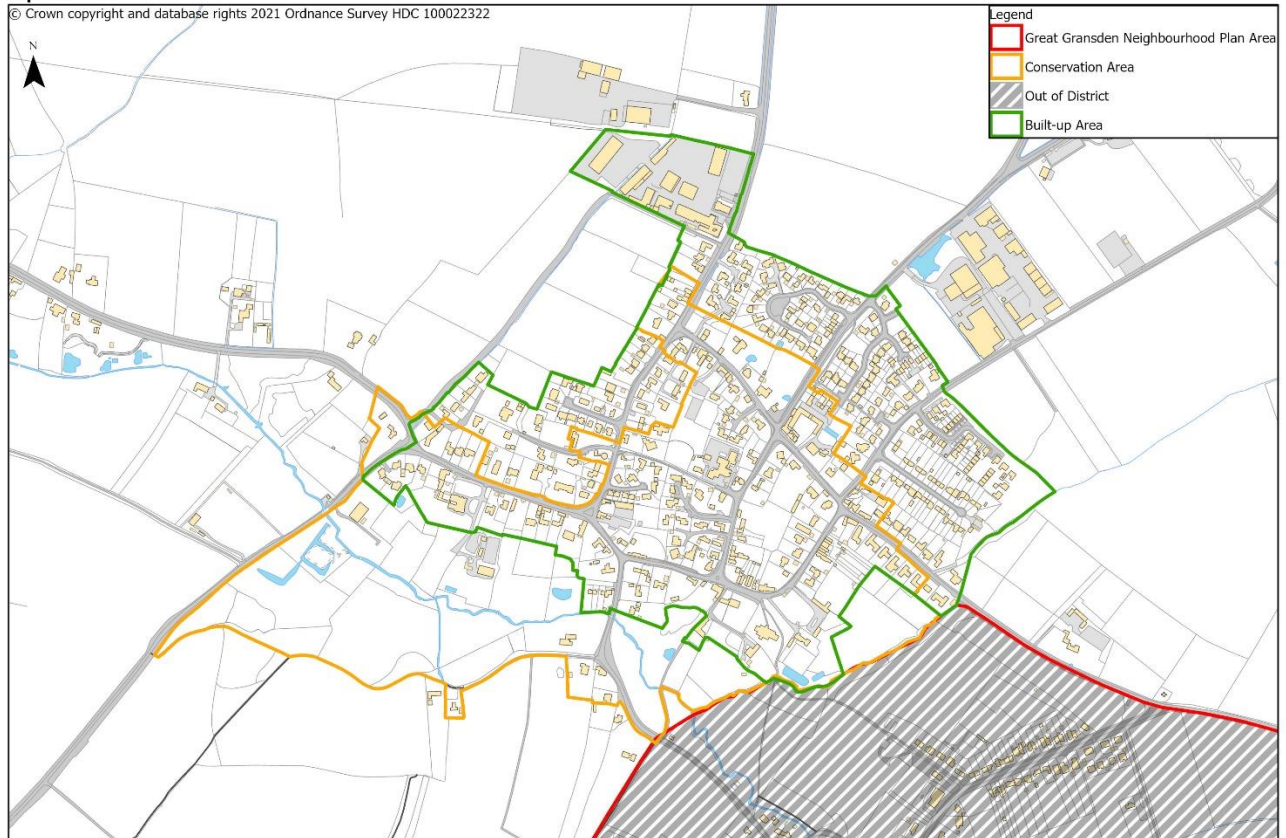


Figure 2 Great Gransden Built-Up Area Boundary (Green) and Conservation Area (Orange).