



Gayton Neighbourhood Development Plan

by

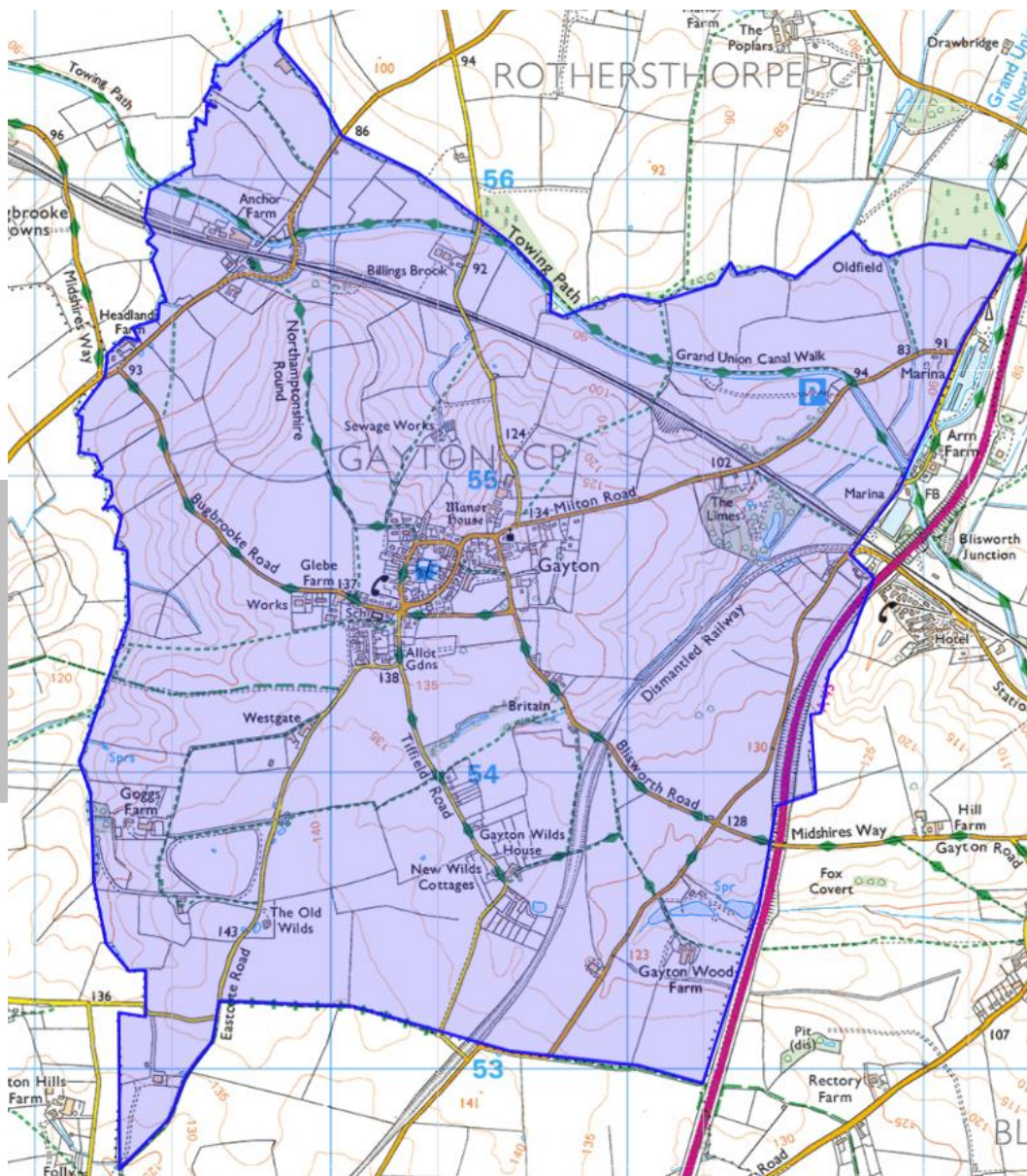
Carl Hamilton, Gayton Parish Council Chairperson
Roger Clarke, Gayton Parish Councillor
David Burrows, Technical Consultant
Leandra Bramham, Residents Consultant

1. The Gayton Parish Map	3
2. The Gayton Village Confines	3
3. Parish Context and Key Characteristics.....	5
3.1 Neighbourhood Area and Location.....	5
3.2 Settlement Pattern and Topography	5
3.3 Landscape Setting and Strategic Infrastructure	5
3.4 Relationship with Surrounding Settlements	5
3.5 Historic Environment and Designations	5
3.6 Population and Housing	6
3.7 Local Economy and Employment	6
3.8 Community Facilities and Services	6
3.9 Recreation, Open Space and Leisure	6
3.10 Key Issues for the Neighbourhood Development Plan	6
4. Planning Policy Framework – on government website.	7
5. WNC Local Plan (WNCLP)	7
6. What's been done? A summary of progress.	8
7. What happens next – A plan for phase 2	9
8. Key Issues	10
8.1 Village Amenities & Facilities	10
8.2 Future Housing Growth.....	12
8.3 Local Business Interest	13
8.4 Rural Economy & Farm Diversification	15
8.5 Recreation & Open Spaces	16
8.6 Road Safety & Infrastructure	17
8.7 Wildlife Conservation	18
8.8 Renewable Energy	19
9. Monitoring and Review	20
Annex B. Street Light Map	23

Annex C. Planning Priorities	23
Annex D. Monitoring Summary	24
Annex E. Site Assessment Methodology	25
Annex F. Site Submission Form	27
Confidentiality	29
Annex G. Housing Site Self-Assessment Matrix (Template)	30

DRAFT

1. The Gayton Parish Map



The map above shows the Gayton Parish Boundary. The designated Neighbourhood Area consists of everything within that boundary.

2. The Gayton Village Confines

The defined Village Confines for Gayton provide an important framework for managing development in a sustainable manner, consistent with the development strategy of the West Northamptonshire Local Plan.

Development Within the Village Confines

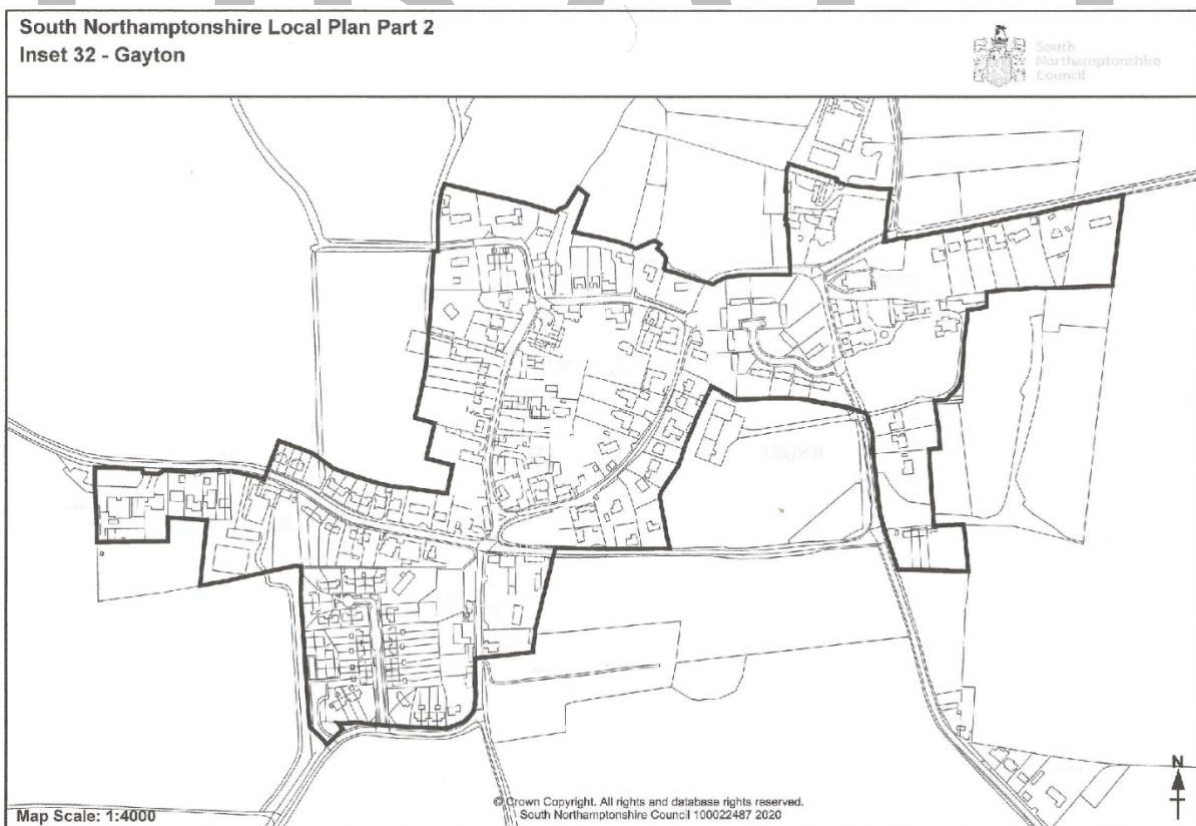
Land within the Village Confines is considered part of the built-up area of Gayton and is generally the most sustainable location for development.

- Within the Village Confines, development is supported in principle, subject to compliance with relevant Local Plan and Neighbourhood Development Plan policies.
- Given Gayton's role as a small rural village, development should be small scale, proportionate, and sensitive to the village's character, form, and setting.
- Appropriate development may include infill development, conversions, and limited residential development, where these integrate well with the existing built environment.
- All development must respect local character and heritage, including the Gayton Conservation Area, where proposals must preserve or enhance its character and appearance.

Development Outside the Village Confines (Open Countryside)

Land outside the Village Confines is treated as open countryside and is subject to significantly greater levels of restraint.

- In accordance with the West Northamptonshire Local Plan, there is a strong presumption against new development in the open countryside to protect the rural landscape and the setting of Gayton.
- Development will only be supported where it meets specific policy exceptions, such as development requiring a rural location to support agriculture or other appropriate countryside uses.
- This approach helps prevent unsustainable or sporadic development and safeguards Gayton's distinct rural identity.



3. Parish Context and Key Characteristics

Gayton Neighbourhood Development Plan Area

3.1 Neighbourhood Area and Location

The Gayton Neighbourhood Development Plan Area comprises the civil parish of Gayton, covering approximately 1,725 acres of predominantly rural land. The parish lies five to six miles southwest of Northampton within the administrative area of West Northamptonshire Council.

The parish is characterised by open countryside, with land use dominated by arable farming alongside some cattle and sheep farming. The village of Gayton forms the main settlement within the parish and contains the majority of residential development.

3.2 Settlement Pattern and Topography

Gayton village is centrally located within the parish and occupies a prominent elevated position on a ridge of Northamptonshire sandstone. This topography gives the village a strong visual presence in the surrounding landscape and provides extensive views from the settlement edge, particularly:

- to the northwest across the upper Nene Valley; and
- to the northeast towards the western and southern suburbs of Northampton.

The village retains a compact settlement form, with development largely contained within a clearly defined built up area.

3.3 Landscape Setting and Strategic Infrastructure

The parish landscape is influenced by several major infrastructure corridors that run in an arc from the north to the east of the parish. These include:

- the main railway line connecting Birmingham with the northwest of England;
- the Grand Union Canal; and
- a major oil and gas pipeline.

These features form strong physical boundaries and contribute to the separation of Gayton from surrounding settlements, reinforcing its distinct rural character.

3.4 Relationship with Surrounding Settlements

Gayton is surrounded by several villages within a three-mile radius, including Tiffield, Eastcote, Bugbrooke, Kislingbury, Rothersthorpe, Milton Malsor and Blisworth. Despite this proximity, Gayton stays clearly defined as a separate rural settlement.

There are six roads or lanes providing access to and from the village, reflecting its connectivity with neighbouring villages while keeping a sense of containment and separation.

3.5 Historic Environment and Designations

Gayton has a strong historic identity and a well-preserved historic environment. Key heritage assets include:

- a manor house dating from 1540;
- the Church of St Mary the Virgin, which marked its 800th anniversary in 2005; and

- several listed buildings dispersed throughout the village.

The village also has important groupings of mature trees that make a positive contribution to local character and visual amenity. A Conservation Area was appointed in 2001, covering the historic core of the village and recognising its architectural and historic significance.

3.6 Population and Housing

The parish has just over 200 households, the vast majority of which are found within Gayton village. There are [number] residents on the Register of Electors for 2025, and the local authority estimates the total population to be approximately 500.

Over the past five years, new residential development has taken place in the form of high value housing delivered through brownfield redevelopment and infill within the existing settlement. No large scale or greenfield housing development has occurred, and further proposals are currently under consideration.

3.7 Local Economy and Employment

Employment within the parish is primarily provided by agriculture, stables, the village public house, the primary school and the garage. In addition, a significant number of residents are self-employed, including those working from home, reflecting wider changes in rural employment patterns.

3.8 Community Facilities and Services

Gayton is relatively well served by local facilities for a village of its size. These include:

- a church;
- a village hall;
- a primary school;
- a public house;
- a garage;
- an active Neighbourhood Watch scheme;
- limited public transport provided by the Gayton and Tiffeld minibus service, which is entirely dependent on volunteer drivers;
- daily newspaper delivery; and
- a parish magazine, Gayton News, published quarterly.
-

These facilities play an important role in sustaining village life and supporting community cohesion.

3.9 Recreation, Open Space and Leisure

The parish offers a range of leisure and recreational opportunities, including an allotment society, horse riding, table tennis, an “Evergreens” group (an informal club for the 55s and over) and social activities centred around the public house.

A play area is located adjacent to the village hall and includes swings and a slide, while the Village Green is used by the school and village children. Both facilities are in need of updating. Gayton Marina is a narrow-boat storage, repair and hire business which lies within the parish boundary.

3.10 Key Issues for the Neighbourhood Development Plan

Despite the range of facilities and the strong community identity of the village, several issues have been identified as relevant to the Neighbourhood Development Plan, including:

- the continuing decline in public transport provision;

- poor and deteriorating conditions of roads, pavements, bridleways and footpaths;
- concerns regarding the reliability of the mains water supply; and
- a significant increase in traffic volumes and vehicle speeds through the village.

These matters provide important context for the development of Neighbourhood Development Plan objectives and policies.

4. Planning Policy Framework – on government website.

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally prepared plans can provide for housing and other development in a sustainable manner. Preparing and maintaining up-to-date plans should be seen as a priority in meeting this objective.

[National Planning Policy Framework](#)

5. WNC Local Plan (WNCLP)

West Northants Council have received over 900 responses to the Local Plan consultation (May 2026) each submission has to be considered and therefore all available planning officers are being seconded to the robust review. The Local Plan has to be completed before the end of the year.

West Northants Council are 'calling for sites'. 'Call for Sites' (CFS) form is for the public to make suggestions for site locations where development should be considered within the WNCLP area up to 2043. This will inform the further consideration of preferred options as part of the next stage of plan preparation.

Nonetheless WNC has in mind to propose 47,000 new homes during the period (2025-2043) to meet increased needs. This will include major sites near Long Buckby Station (1,100 homes and employment land), and Towcester (1,400 homes north of Burcote Road), plus significant growth in Daventry (720 homes north of Middlesmore), Brackley (3,050 homes part of a 1,650 homes increase) and Northampton (33,000 homes allocated within the town), replacing old plans with a unified strategy for sustainable development and infrastructure. The draft plan (which has updated guidance increasing the required housing by about 20%) is undergoing public consultation, aiming to create a single consistent framework for development, though it faces concerns over green spaces and existing infrastructure. The overall goal is to produce 2,504 homes annually.

Local Government "Regulation 18" refers to the Regulation 18 stage of the local plan-making process in England. This stage involves local authorities engaging with the community to develop the local plans, which outline the vision and requirements for development in the area. A Regulation 18 draft was published, followed by consultation in early 2026 with a submission for examination planned for late 2026.

Key Concerns Raised

- Infrastructure: Questions about sufficient schools, GP Surgeries and hospitals to provide for the new housing
- Green Spaces: Local concern over development on valued green spaces, such as near Harlestone Firs

Where To Find More Information: [West Northants Council website has details on the new Local Plan and Housing Allocation Scheme.](#)

6. What's been done? A summary of progress.

- a. Approval was sought and granted by the Gayton Parish Council
- b. A group of individuals were recruited to form a core team.
- c. Contact was made with WNC and a working relationship established.
- d. The guiding principle was agreed by the core team.

“Guiding Principle – Protect and support our rural community to ensure it thrives and stays vital through prudent development planning.”

- e. The content and structure of the Plan was agreed.
 - f. A questionnaire based on the guiding principles, was designed and distributed to every household in the Parish.
 - g. The feedback from the survey, which was done by hard copy and online, were collated and examined.
 - h. A Parish meeting was planned to discuss the findings of the questionnaire.
 - i. The Parish meeting was held to discuss the planned way forward with the residents. Some 70 people attended.
 - j. (WNC agreed to the Gayton NDP, (also add # replies to survey & meetings))
-

7. What happens next – A plan for phase 2

Gayton Neighbourhood Development Plan (GNDP) PHASE 2													
		Jun-26	Jul-26	Aug-26	Sep-26	Oct-26	Nov-26	Dec-26	Jan-27	Feb-27	Mar-27	Apr-27	
Understand key issues based on survey													
Agree and clarify the Objectives for the GNDP													
Agree scope with WNC													
Confirm further survey/research work to progress key													
Carry out Call for Sites							AII	AII	ACRE				
Carry out a housing survey					ACRE	ACRE	ACRE	ACRE					
Develop draft GNDP	AII	AII	AII	AII									
Arrange Parish Meeting to share GNDP					AII								
Hold Parish Meeting with draft GNDP					AII								
Adjust plan according to resident feedback						AII	AII	AII					
Finalise GNDP					AII	AII	AII	AII					
Adopt GNDP with WNC									WNC	WNC	WNC		
Present Finished GNDP to Village												AII	
Project Team and outside agencies.	Roger Clark (RL)												
	Carl Hamilton (CH)												
	Leandra Bramham (LB)												
	David Burrows (DB)												
	ACRE												
	WNC												
STATUS KEY													
	In Hand												
	Completed												
	Potential problem												
RISK NOTE5													
Recent change of government may cause holdup on housing needs study.													
Dependency on outside agencies, i.e. WNC and ACRE, may cause delay.													
Feedback from residents may require resolution, resulting in delay.													
Achieving the end date by April 27 is medium risk as outside agencies are involved and resident issues are as yet unknown													

8. Key Issues

8.1 Village Amenities & Facilities

The survey results highlighted a strong demand for local retail, with many residents requesting a general store or farm shop. Feedback also strongly supported a new village hall featuring a community café, shop, and post office. Additionally, respondents requested upgraded park amenities, better play areas for children, a deli-style café, inclusive sports facilities, and broader arts and culture initiatives.

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
General Store	52.7%	86
Facilities for young people	30%	49
New village hall	28.8%	47
Café	26%	43
Post office	22%	36
Sports facilities and grounds	20%	33
School playing field	19%	31
Larger recreation area	17.7%	29
Healthcare	12%	20

Residents have expressed strong support for the improvement and expansion of village amenities and facilities. A range of initiatives has been suggested, aimed at strengthening community life, supporting local enterprise, and enhancing overall quality of life.

Local Food and Retail Provision

Suggestions include the development of local food and retail options, such as a general store, farm shop and a deli-style café, to promote local produce and support the rural economy.

A successful farm shop could attract visitors to the village and generate more custom for the local pub. See Rural Economy & Farm Diversification. However, it would bring additional traffic and footfall to the village.

Children's Play Facilities

There is a clear desire for improved play equipment, offering modern, accessible and more challenging options for children and young people of different ages and abilities. See Recreation and Open Spaces.

Village Hall and Community Hub

There is much support for the development of a new village hall to serve as a central community hub.

This could incorporate a community café and a small shop, providing a focal point for social interaction and opportunities for local enterprise.

The existing village hall is a 1957 prefabricated building regarded as unattractive and unsuitable for events such as weddings and other celebrations. As a result, it is underused and generates diminishing income. A modern, attractive facility would better meet current and future community needs.

Post Office

A post office would provide critical day-to-day banking for individuals and small businesses and would ensure vulnerable or older residents can access pensions, state benefits, and postal services locally. It could also be incorporated into a farm shop or general store.

Children's Sports and Activities

Residents have highlighted the need for a children's sports club, offering regular and affordable opportunities for physical activity, teamwork and wellbeing. Large undertakings such as this need to be funded by lottery grants or as part of a development project.

Parks and Green Spaces

Residents would like to see enhanced park and green space facilities, including improved seating, better landscaping and safer, more inclusive areas suitable for all age groups. See Recreation and Open Spaces.

Public House

The last surviving Pub in the village is both well run and equally well supported. It is in the interest of the community to keep this social hub open.

Arts and Culture

There is also interest in art and cultural initiatives, including space for exhibitions, workshops, performances, and community-led creative projects. A space for this would be dependent on a new village hall being built.

Such provision would help to strengthen local identity, encourage participation and support community cohesion.

Overall Benefits

Together, these improvements would enhance quality of life for residents, encourage social connection and support the long-term sustainability and vitality of the village.

GNDP Policy: Village Amenities & Facilities (VA&F)

1.1 Village Hall: Develop a plan to replace the village hall, either through a community-led fundraising project or a commercial development, to provide a suitable venue for celebrations, meetings, and other events. This should include an exhibition space to encourage local artists and crafters to meet and display their work and could include a general store/café.

1.2 Sports Facilities: Support the development of sports facilities for adults and older children, especially if opportunities arise through local landowners. The Parish Council would back planning applications in suitable locations.

1.2 Public House: Support any reasonable scheme that would ensure that Gayton's last pub stays open.

8.2 Future Housing Growth

As part of our initial survey in 2025 many residents advocate for modest growth, emphasising affordable housing for young families and retirees rather than high-cost developments. However WNC have mandated us to arrange a more in-depth housing study.

The Gayton Neighbourhood Development Plan (GNDP) looks to support modest, proportionate, and locally appropriate housing growth that reflects the size, character, and function of Gayton as a rural village, while aligning with the strategic aims of the West Northamptonshire Local Plan.

Community engagement has consistently shown support for managed growth, provided that development prioritises affordable housing, homes suitable for young families, down sizers, and older residents, and avoids high cost or inappropriate forms of development.

Recent Development and Existing Commitments

Gayton has experienced a level of incremental growth in recent years, primarily through in-fill development. As of 23 February 2026, 13 dwellings have been completed. In addition, planning permission exists for a further 12 dwellings, of which:

- 3 dwellings have been completed, and
- 8 dwellings plus 1 barn conversion are yet to start.

Evidence shows that these recent and consented developments do not adequately meet the needs of young families or first-time buyers, reinforcing the need for the GNDP to guide the scale, type and phasing of future growth.

Housing Need Evidence

The Gayton Housing Questionnaire (132 respondents) identified clear and consistent demand for smaller and family sized dwellings:

- 68% expressed a need for 2 bedroom homes
- 75% expressed a need for 3 bedroom homes
- 40% wished to downsize to 2–3-bedroom homes
- 22% identified a need for 1–2-bedroom bungalows or elderly friendly accommodation
-

This shows a balanced requirement across different life stages and supports the delivery of a mixed and inclusive housing stock.

Primary School Sustainability

Housing provision in Gayton is intrinsically linked to the long-term viability of the local primary school, a key community asset. Current data shows that:

- The school has 57 pupils

- Only 24% of pupils currently live within the village
- Pupils travel from eight surrounding settlements within approximately six miles
- An annual intake of 6–10 pupils is required to maintain sustainability

This indicates that Gayton currently does not generate sufficient primary age pupils from within the parish alone.

If it is assumed that new dwellings are affordable and attractive to young families, and that each new home yields an average of 1.5 primary age children, then approximately six new dwellings per year over a six year period would be required to stabilise pupil numbers. This supports the justification for an initial housing figure of approximately 36 dwellings.

Scale of Growth and Strategic Alignment

The West Northamptonshire Local Plan does not allocate specific housing numbers to smaller villages such as Gayton, instead relying on windfall development, infill opportunities and Neighbourhood Development Plans to shape delivery. The GNDP therefore proposes a locally justified, proportionate level of growth that:

- Does not exceed strategic expectations
- Does not allocate sites or undermine the settlement hierarchy
- Supports the delivery of affordable and mixed housing
- Contributes to the sustainability of local services and facilities

Infrastructure and Community Benefits

New housing development presents opportunities to secure infrastructure and community benefits, including:

- Improved pedestrian and transport infrastructure
- Public open space and recreation facilities
- Sports provision, including changing facilities
- Contributions towards enhanced or new community buildings

Such measures will ensure that growth contributes positively to village life and community cohesion.

GNDP Policy: Future Housing Growth (FHG)

The policy for future housing growth will be developed after we receive the results of the housing study that will be carried out by Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE), over the next 2-3 months.

2.3 FHG.3 Site Assessment. In order to ensure that only sites that meet the needs of the local community are considered, the Site Assessment Methodology described in Annex E was used. Annex F presents the Site Submission Form. Annex G presents the Housing Site Self-Assessment Matrix (Template).

8.3 Local Business Interest

Some respondents show interest in relocating businesses to Gayton if appropriate facilities (such as co-working spaces or a café with Wi-Fi) were available

In the 2025 NDP survey, 31 business owners (from a total of 161 survey responses) replied. 16 of these were based in Gayton (of which 14 were home-based) and 15 outside the village. Most of the

businesses (27) were classed as Micro Business (10 or fewer employees) and 4 as Small Businesses (11-49 employees).

The range of activities the businesses were involved in was varied:-

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Primary e.g. agriculture	6.45%	2
Construction	3.23%	1
Retail and/or wholesale	6.45%	2
Transport and/or storage	9.68%	3
Information and communication	6.45%	2
Real estate	6.45%	2
Professional	6.45%	2
Education	9.68%	3
Human health	9.68%	3
Arts and entertainment	3.23%	1
Other (please specify)	32.26%	10
TOTAL		31

The "Other" category included activities such as Beauty Therapy, Public House, Industrial and Commercial gas metering, Riding School, Motor Trade, PR, Marketing & Fundraising, Swimming Teaching, Health and Wellbeing Yoga and Mental Health support.

There was a large variation in the ages of the businesses, with 40% being 1-5 years old, 30% being 6-20 years old and 30% being more than 20 years old.

Roughly half the business were engaged in some sort of e-commerce or had a website.

Over the next 5 to 10 years 30% of the businesses were expected to be closed or transferred. Also over the next 5 to 10 years 13% (4) of the businesses were looking for more space at their existing location, 3% (1) for more space within the parish and 3% (1) outside. 80% (24) of the businesses were not looking for more space.

14% (5) of the respondents said they were likely or very likely to set up a new business within the parish over the next 5 to 10 years.

From *all* the survey respondents, the following "Rural Economy" activities were supported in Gayton:-

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Home working	74.05%	97
The re-use of rural buildings for business use	72.52%	95

Farm diversification (e.g. retail/accommodation/tourism)	64.12%	84
New, small-scale buildings for business use	32.06%	42
Co-working office space	12.98%	17
Other (please specify)	10.69%	14
Large scale business development	0.00%	0
TOTAL		349

The comments associated with this response were generally supportive of micro- and small-scale businesses & business developments provided they didn't stretch the village infrastructure (especially traffic and parking). However, an increase in the volume of traffic coming to the village will be necessary to support new facilities and amenities. Solutions therefore need to be considered and implemented to manage the expected increase in the volume of traffic and to minimise the impact on the village

Concern was expressed about the development of medium & large sized businesses needing large workshops or storage units.

GNDP Policy: Local Business Interest (LBI)

3.1 Micro & Small Businesses. Micro business development (10 or fewer employees) will be encouraged and Small business development (11-49 employees) will be considered where they require modest sized buildings and the impact on the village infrastructure and visual impact is minimised.

3.2 Repurposing. The re-purposing of existing agricultural buildings for conversion to offices, studios and such-like will be supported as long as the conversion is in keeping with related premises.

3.3 Medium & Large Businesses. Medium and large-scale developments of offices, workshops, storage units and such-like will not be supported.

8.4 Rural Economy & Farm Diversification

Support exists for a farm shop selling local produce, but there are concerns about business expansion potentially increasing traffic and industrialisation.

There is no evidence of local farmers supporting a local shop with produce. Since there is no local shop, this is likely to be a chicken and egg situation.

We are already faced with a parking issue in the village and that is a problem yet to be solved. With new housing the traffic is bound to increase anyway, we must include in the GNDP that new housing provides for two cars and that road's widths are not reduced to accommodate more houses on the given piece of land.

Rural Economy

There is a row of dilapidated stables opposite the pub, which ideally could be converted to small dwellings or bespoke retail units, this would tie-in with our questionnaire for additional commercial space.

Farm Diversification

The GNDP would support development in converted farm buildings if they provided improved facilities for the residents to enjoy, such as a modern village hall, or small commercial ventures such as a cafe or gallery. Opportunities will become more apparent once the “Call for Sites” has been completed.

GNDP Policy: Rural Economy & Farm Diversification (RE&FD)

4.1 Any Farm Diversification will depend upon the plans of local landowners and farmers. This will be a policy that will be developed once we receive feedback from the call-for-sites.

8.5 Recreation & Open Spaces

Introduction

Residents favour maintaining footpaths and outdoor spaces, potentially expanding the Millennium Spinney into a wildflower meadow and improving play areas.

Recreation and open spaces are vital in rural villages, where access to nature, tranquillity, and shared spaces forms the heart of community life. In these settings, open spaces are not just amenities but essential aspects that nurture wellbeing, social ties, and a sense of belonging among residents.

Benefits of Recreation and Open Spaces for Rural Communities

1. **Physical Health:** Ready access to the outdoors encourages regular activity, from gardening to walking, supporting healthier lifestyles.
2. **Mental Wellbeing:** The peace and beauty of rural open spaces can relieve stress and anxiety, making them invaluable for mental health.
3. **Environmental Stewardship:** Well-cared-for open spaces support local wildlife, protect heritage landscapes, and encourage community involvement in conservation.
4. **Social Cohesion:** Shared spaces in villages are gathering points for traditions, festivals, and daily encounters, reinforcing social networks and a shared identity.
5. **Economic Vitality:** Attractive, well-kept open spaces can help draw visitors, support local businesses, and even encourage younger generations to remain in or return to the village.

Types of Recreation and Open Spaces in Rural Villages

- **Village Greens:** Traditional grassy areas where community events, picnics, and informal sports can take place, providing a central gathering spot for all ages.
 - Gayton has both a Village Green and a “Pound”, a small area with seats, the village sign and Parish Notice Board. The Pound is not a village green in the traditional sense, but more could be done to make it attractive
- **Playgrounds:** Small, often locally maintained play areas allow children to develop social and physical skills in a safe, familiar environment.
 - The village has a small playground suitable for younger children, even such a small amenity is expensive to keep.
- **Sports Fields:** Open fields used for football matches, cricket, or seasonal fairs, usually serving as a hub for both organised and spontaneous activities.
 - The Village Green is uneven and quite small. It's used by the school as well as the village children and doubles up as a green if we have outdoor events.
- **Woodlands and Nature Trails:** Rural villages often border or contain patches of woodland and footpaths, ideal for walking, birdwatching, and connecting with the landscape.

- Gayton is the centre of a network of ancient footpaths, and they need to be walked, maintained and preserved for future generations. Volunteers to look after stiles etc, walking groups and cooperation from local farmers are all important
- Community Gardens and Allotments: Spaces where villagers can grow vegetables, fruits, and flowers, fostering sustainable practices and strengthening neighbourly bonds.
 - Gayton is fortunate to have a flourishing and well-run allotment.
- Ponds and Streams: Natural water features offer habitats for wildlife and tranquil spots for relaxation or fishing, further enhancing the rural environment.
 - Gayton has no ponds or streams in the village. There was a discussion about having one in the millennium Spinney but it was considered too high risk in these safety conscious times. However, there is no doubt that a pond would attract a wide variety of wildlife and, if the Millennium Spinney were to be extended, a closed off pond would be worth considering.

Challenges and Considerations

Rural villages face unique challenges in maintaining open spaces, such as limited funding, reliance on volunteers, and the need to balance tradition with changing community needs. Ensuring accessibility for all and safeguarding spaces from development pressures remain ongoing concerns.

Conclusion

Open and recreational spaces are the lifeblood of rural villages, supporting health, happiness, and a strong sense of community. By valuing, protecting, and nurturing these shared spaces, rural villages can ensure their way of life and natural heritage thrive for generations to come.

GNDP Policy: Recreation and Open Spaces (RaOS)

5.1 Millenium Spinney. Approach the landowner with the idea of expanding the Millennium Spinney by adding a wildflower meadow.

5.2 Allotments. Engage with the Church to secure the future of Gayton Allotments with a 25-year lease.

5.3 Playing Fields. Look for opportunities to have a new playing field or upgrade the existing one.

5.4 Village Green Explore opportunities to have a village green, as part of any future housing development.

5.5 Footpaths. Continue to support and encourage the volunteers who keep our footpaths and green areas open and attractive.

8.6 Road Safety & Infrastructure

Concerns include narrow or overgrown footpaths, speeding vehicles, parking issues, and the need for better maintenance.

The village road and footpath network was designed for significantly lower traffic volumes and smaller vehicles. Increased car ownership, the prevalence of larger vehicles, and higher traffic speeds have placed pressure on this infrastructure, leading to congestion, parking stress, and road safety concerns.

Street lighting has been partially upgraded to energy efficient LED units; however, a proportion of the existing stock remains outdated, and some areas would benefit from improved coverage. While there is general support for targeted improvements, residents have expressed limited willingness to fund these through increased local taxation.

Several public footpaths require ongoing maintenance due to vegetation overgrowth, surface deterioration, and damage arising from repeated utility works. Limited local authority resources mean that routine maintenance is often supported by volunteers.

Vehicle speeds remain a key concern, particularly on Bugbrooke Road, Back Lane, and Blisworth Road, the latter of which is subject to a 40-mph speed limit. Previous requests to reduce speed limits have not been successful, despite reductions having been implemented in neighbouring settlements.

Parking pressure has increased due to higher levels of car ownership and the larger size of modern vehicles. This has resulted in increased on street parking and damage to grass verges, detracting from the appearance of the village and, in some locations, affecting pedestrian safety.

Although responsibility for highways maintenance rests with the highway authority, the Parish Council will continue to work proactively with relevant bodies to seek improvements. Residents are encouraged to report defects promptly through the appropriate reporting channels.

GNDP Policy: Road Safety & Infrastructure (RSI)

6.1 Traffic Speed and Road Safety. Proposals that contribute to reduced vehicle speeds and improved road safety within the village will be supported. The Parish Council will continue to pursue a village wide 20mph speed limit, with a 30mph limit on Blisworth Road.

6.2 Parking Provision. New residential development must provide a minimum of two off street parking spaces per dwelling. Proposals that reduce on street parking pressure or enable the formalisation of parking in appropriate locations will be supported, provided they do not harm the character of the area.

6.2 Street Lighting. Improvements to street lighting will be supported where they enhance safety and accessibility, are energy-efficient, and respect the rural character of the village. A survey of existing provision will be undertaken to inform future funding bids.

Community Actions

- Encourage the reporting of potholes and highway defects using the Street Doctor app or successor systems.
- Support volunteer initiatives to keep public footpaths clear and safe and report hazardous defects to the highway authority.

8.7 Wildlife Conservation

Ideas include extending the Millennium Spinney, creating wildlife corridors, planting wildflowers, and encouraging sustainable farming practices.

West Northamptonshire's natural environment is under significant pressure, yet it plays a vital role in supporting biodiversity, climate resilience, and community wellbeing. Protecting and enhancing local landscapes and wildlife is therefore a key consideration in planning for sustainable development.

The West Northamptonshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) provides an evidence-based framework to guide nature recovery across the area. Prepared under the Environment Act 2021 and

aligned with national environmental aims, the LNRS names existing priority habitats, areas of opportunity for enhancement, and actions needed to restore and connect ecological networks.

The strategy has been informed by engagement with local communities, landowners, environmental organisations, public bodies, and neighbouring authorities. It focuses on improving biodiversity across five principal habitat types: farmland, woodland, grassland, freshwater and wetland, and urban environments. Attention is given to species of conservation concern and locally significant wildlife.

West Northamptonshire is currently one of the most nature depleted areas in England, with habitats that are highly fragmented. The LNRS looks to address this by promoting the principles of “making space for nature,” including the protection of existing habitats, the creation of new wildlife areas, and improved connectivity between sites.

The NDP supports the aims of the LNRS by looking to ensure that new development contributes positively to nature recovery. This includes safeguarding locally important habitats, enhancing green infrastructure, supporting biodiversity net gain, and encouraging development that strengthens ecological networks while delivering wider benefits such as improved landscape character, climate adaptation, and healthier communities.

The Parish Council should seek a Biodiversity Champion. This individual would handle recruiting a team of volunteers to survey the current state of the wildlife and habitats in the Parish, suggest improvements and monitor progress. The results could then feed into the LNRS.

GNDP Policy: Wildlife Conservation (WC)

7.1 Biodiversity Protection and Enhancement. Development proposals must conserve and enhance biodiversity, protect priority habitats and features (including veteran trees and hedgerows), and support habitat management and enhancement within public open spaces such as the Millennium Spinney and the Allotment.

7.2 Biodiversity Net Gain in New Development. All qualifying development must deliver a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain, in accordance with national legislation and guidance. Proposals should incorporate on site biodiversity enhancements, including integrated nesting and roosting features for birds and bats, and boundary treatments that facilitate wildlife movement.

7.3 Community Led Nature Recovery. The Parish Council will support the appointment of a Biodiversity Champion to promote local nature recovery initiatives, coordinate volunteer engagement, and support evidence gathering and monitoring, including biodiversity surveys.

7.4 Ecological Connectivity. Development and land management proposals should protect, enhance, and where possible create ecological corridors to improve habitat connectivity, including hedgerows and the disused railway line between Britain Cottages and the Pocket Park.

7.5 Species and Habitat Priorities. Conservation and enhancement measures should give particular regard to locally important species, including bats, birds, and pollinators, and to habitats identified within the LNRS as priorities for restoration or enhancement.

8.8 Renewable Energy

Opinions on solar and wind farms are divided, with many preferring solar panels on warehouses rather than using agricultural land.

There is an outstanding application for a solar farm off Milton Road to cover 170 acres. One landlord, two tenants. The original application was dated 2021 WNC.....and was rejected by the planning

committee 100%. It then went to a four-day appeal heard by an Inspector with two KCs in attendance. The Secretary of State also rejected that. Finally at a Judicial Review it was thrown out.

Subsequently the developer has submitted another application with minor adjustments, none of which address the original reasons for the village lodging their refusal. Subsequently the developer has submitted another application (2025/3011/EIA) with minor adjustments, none of which address the original reasons for the village lodging their refusal. This is due to be heard by the Strategic Planning Committee. We are now in August and has still not been heard by committee

The parish are in support of solar generation as an alternative source of electricity but not in this position and scale. We overlook from the village the Swan Valley Industrial Buildings, possibly with the equivalent roof space of 170 acres upon which there is not one solar panel. Our argument is against using good agricultural land when industrial roofs could so easily be used and not interfere with food production.

GNDP Policy: Renewable Energy (RE)

8.1 Large Scale Development. The NDP does not support the large-scale development of solar farms in the Parish without carrying out a full consultation with the villagers.

8.2 Small Scale Development. The NDP will look favourably on smaller, better sited developments including solar on house roofs and other buildings.

8.9 Farming & Local Food Production

Interest in strengthening community ties with local farmers through farm shops, markets, and opportunities to buy locally grown produce.

There are several farming enterprises in and around the parish of Gayton, with diverse interests, arable, cattle, sheep and horses. Land is owned, tenanted and contract farmed. The total area 1,725 acres (698 hectares) made up of eight landowners.

There are eight landlords some of which farm their own land, some contract-farm the land with neighbours, and others rent the land out, and within the parish there four tenant farmers renting the land.

Crops grown include wheat, barley, oats, beans oilseed rape and grass for grazing and preserving (silage, haylage, and hay).

Livestock, cattle for meat production, sheep producing lambs, horse livery and horse riding for leisure.

Existing Diversification: -
Horse riding menage
Letting of Barns for commercial reasons.

GNDP Policy: Farming & Local Food Production (FLFP)

9.1 Diversification. The NDP will support WNC's policy of diversification and alternative uses of farm buildings.

9. Monitoring and Review

Purpose

The purpose of monitoring is to ensure that the policies and actions within this Parish / Neighbourhood Development Plan remain effective, relevant, and aligned with the strategic policies of the West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) Local Plan. Regular review will allow the Parish Council to respond to changing circumstances, updated evidence, and revisions to national or local planning policy.

Responsibility for Monitoring

Monitoring of this Plan will be led by Gayton Parish Council, working in partnership with:

- West Northamptonshire Council
- Local community groups and stakeholders
- Developers and landowners, where appropriate

The Parish Council will use publicly available data, planning application outcomes, and local knowledge to assess progress.

Monitoring Framework

Policy Theme	Relevant Policies	Monitoring Indicator	Evidence Source
Housing Growth & Mix	2.1, 2.2	Number, scale, and type of new dwellings completed	WNC planning records
Affordable Housing	FHG policies	Delivery of affordable housing in line with WNC policy	Planning permissions and completions
Village Amenities & Facilities	1.1, 1.2	Delivery or improvement of community facilities	Parish Council records, S106 / CIL
Environment & Biodiversity	7.1–7.5	Protection of green spaces and biodiversity net gain delivery	Planning decisions, LNRS data
Renewable Energy & Sustainability	8.1, 8.2	Inclusion of renewable energy and energy efficiency measures	Planning applications
Local Business & Rural Economy	3.1–3.3	New or expanded rural enterprises	Planning permissions
Recreation & Open Space	5.1–5.5	Protection and enhancement of open spaces and footpaths	Parish Council records
Roads, Safety & Infrastructure	6.1–6.3	Implementation of traffic, parking, and safety measures	WNC highways data

10. Conclusion

The conclusions will be written in the final draft of this document.

Gayton Green Spaces 2026



- 1 The Pound
- 2 The Village Green
- 3 The Allotments
- 4 The Spinney

Annex B. Street Light Map

Annex C. Planning Priorities

The following priorities involve planning issues that will be immediately addressed in consultation with WNC.

High Priority

- **6.2 Street Lighting:** Support improvements to street lighting for safety, energy efficiency, and rural character.
 - This is already a priority for the PC and funds are available to go ahead once a plan is in place. The first task will be to carry out a full audit of the current network and identify which lamps need upgrading and where there are gaps to fill. Where gaps need to be filled, planning permission will be required.
- **2.1 Future Growth:** Support West Northants local plan for 20% future growth.
 - Realistically, the village will grow by about 20% over the next 5 years. The purpose of the NDP is to give residents a say in where that will happen and what it will look like. With that in mind, it crucial to introduce future proposals from landowners and developers to the village ASAP.
 - We will be delivering a 'Call for Sites' document to every household to support the above statement
- **7.2 Biodiversity Net Gain in New Development:** All qualifying development must deliver at least 10% biodiversity net gain.
 - This will be dictated by national legislation.
- **7.1 Biodiversity Protection and Enhancement:** Require development to conserve and enhance biodiversity and protect priority habitat.
 - It will be for the local community to decide, in conjunction with the Parish Council, what any potential developer needs to consider regarding environmental protection.

Medium Priority

- **6.1 Traffic Speed and Road Safety:** Support proposals to reduce vehicle speeds and improve safety; pursue a 20 mph village-wide speed limit.
 - The PC should approach Highways to apply to have the speed limit reduced from 30 to 20 mph limit in the whole village.

Community Priorities

The following are important priorities for the Parish Council to address locally with the help of the community.

- **7.3 Community Led Nature Recovery:** Support appointing a Biodiversity Champion to coordinate local initiatives.
 - A biodiversity champion should be recruited at the earliest opportunity. They would be responsible to the PC for recruiting a team of volunteers to work closely with WNC

towards the drive to improve environmental diversity in Northamptonshire in general by focusing on the Parish of Gayton. The PC must also work with potential developers to ensure they meet the requirements of environmental legislation.

- **5.5 Footpaths:** Support volunteers maintaining footpaths and green areas.
 - The PC will continue to support the volunteers known as 'The Chain Gang' both financially and by offering moral support.

Annex D. Monitoring Summary

Monitoring Summary for the Gayton Neighbourhood Development Plan

This appendix provides a concise summary of how the policies and community actions in the Gayton Neighbourhood Development Plan will be monitored over the lifetime of the Plan. It supports the Monitoring and Review section and demonstrates that the Plan has clear, proportionate, and deliverable arrangements for assessing effectiveness.

Monitoring Responsibility

Monitoring will be undertaken by Gayton Parish Council, using information from:

- West Northamptonshire Council planning records
- Parish Council decisions and reports
- Developer contributions (Section 106 / CIL where applicable)
- Local evidence and community feedback

Monitoring Summary Table

Plan Objective	Key Policies	What Will Be Monitored	How Often	Lead Body
Manage housing growth in a way that respects village character	2.1, 2.2	Number, scale, and location of new homes	Annually	Parish Council
Support delivery of affordable housing for local needs	FHG policies	Affordable housing permissions and completions	Annually	Parish Council / WNC
Protect landscape, biodiversity, and green spaces	7.1–7.5	Impact of development on green spaces and biodiversity net gain	Annually	Parish Council
Improve village facilities and community infrastructure	1.1, 1.2	Delivery or enhancement of community facilities	Annually	Parish Council
Encourage sustainable development and renewable energy	8.1, 8.2	Inclusion of energy efficiency and renewable measures	Annually	Parish Council
Support local business and rural diversification	3.1–3.3	New or expanded rural enterprises	Annually	Parish Council
Protect and enhance recreation and open spaces	5.1–5.5	Retention and improvement of open spaces and footpaths	Annually	Parish Council
Improve road safety and parking	6.1–6.3	Delivery of traffic, parking, and safety measures	Annually	Parish Council / WNC

Reporting

A short Annual Monitoring Statement will be prepared by the Parish Council summarising:

- Development that has taken place during the monitoring period
- Progress against the Plan's objectives
- Any issues affecting policy effectiveness or delivery

This statement may be reported to a Parish Council meeting and made publicly available.

Use of Monitoring Results

Monitoring results will be used to:

- Inform discussions with West Northamptonshire Council
- Identify whether policies remain effective and relevant
- Determine whether a partial or full review of the Plan is required

Where monitoring identifies significant issues, the Parish Council will consider whether an early review of the Plan is necessary.

Annex E. Site Assessment Methodology

1. Purpose of the methodology

This methodology sets out the process that was used by Gayton Parish Council to identify, consider and assess sites submitted through the **Call for Sites** as part of the preparation of the Gayton Neighbourhood Development Plan. The purpose of the Call for Sites was to gather evidence on land availability and the constraints in order to inform the Plan. The process does not predetermine whether sites will be allocated.

2. Scope of the Call for Sites

The Call for Sites invited submissions of land for potential development within the parish of Gayton. Sites could be submitted for a range of uses, including housing, employment or community uses. Sites both **within** and **outside the defined village confines** were accepted for assessment in order to ensure an open and transparent evidence gathering process.

Submission of a site does not imply that:

- the site will be allocated in the Neighbourhood Development Plan;
- the Parish Council supports development of the site; or
- planning permission would be granted.

3. Assessment principles

All sites were assessed:

- using the same assessment criteria;
- in a consistent and proportionate manner appropriate to the scale of Gayton;
- based on available evidence, including planning constraints and local characteristics; and
- without regard to site ownership or promotion.

The assessment focuses on whether a site could be suitable in planning terms, not on detailed design or viability matters.

4. Relationship to planning policy

The assessment takes account of:

- national planning policy;
- strategic policies of West Northamptonshire Council; and
- the emerging objectives of the Gayton Neighbourhood Development Plan.

The Neighbourhood Development Plan does not seek to meet strategic housing targets but supports small scale, proportionate development that reflects Gayton's rural character.

5. Site assessment criteria

Each submitted site was assessed against the following broad criteria:

a. Location and settlement form

- Relationship to the existing built-up area
- Whether the site lies within or adjacent to the village confines
- Impact on the compact form and character of the village

b. Accessibility and sustainability

- Access to local facilities
- Opportunities for walking and connectivity
- Suitability of vehicular access

c. Landscape and heritage

- Impact on the surrounding landscape
- Relationship to the Conservation Area and listed buildings
- Visual prominence and countryside setting

d. Environmental constraints

- Flood risk
- Biodiversity considerations
- Other environmental designations or constraints

e. Deliverability

- Indicative availability
- Known ownership or control issues
- Obvious physical constraints

These criteria were applied using a simple, proportionate assessment framework suitable for a rural parish.

6. Assessment outcomes

Sites were categorised based on the assessment as:

- potentially suitable for further consideration;
- potentially suitable subject to significant constraints; or
- unsuitable for allocation through the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

The categorisation reflects planning considerations only and does not indicate support for development.

7. Use of assessment results

The results of the site assessments have been used to:

- inform decisions on whether site allocations are necessary or appropriate;
- support the definition and justification of village confines;
- shape policies relating to scale, location and character of development.

Where sites are not taken forward, reasons are clearly recorded to ensure transparency.

8. Review and consultation

The site assessment process and its outcomes are published as supporting evidence to the Neighbourhood Development Plan. The community and statutory consultees have opportunities to comment on the approach and conclusions during formal consultation stages.

Annex F. Site Submission Form

Call for Sites – Site Submission Form

Please complete one form per site.

Submission of a site does not imply allocation, support, or planning permission.

1. Site Details

Site name (if any):

.....

Site address / location:

.....

.....

.....

Ordnance Survey Grid Reference (if known):

.....

Total site area (hectares or square metres):

.....

2. Site Location Plan (required)

Please provide:

- a plan clearly showing the **site boundary edged in red**, and
- sufficient detail to identify the site location.

Location plan attached

Location plan to follow

3. Ownership and Control

Name of landowner(s):

.....

Name of promoter / agent (if different):

.....

Contact email:

.....

Contact telephone (optional):

.....

- ☐ I confirm that the site is available for consideration
- ☐ I confirm that the landowner is aware of this submission

4. Proposed Use

Please indicate the proposed use(s) (tick all that apply):

- ☐ Housing
- ☐ Small-scale employment
- ☐ Community use
- ☐ Mixed use
- ☐ Other (please specify): ☐

Indicative number of dwellings (if housing proposed):

.....

5. Site Availability

When could the site realistically be available for development?

- ☐ Immediately
- ☐ Within 1–5 years
- ☐ 6–10 years
- ☐ Longer term
- ☐ Unknown

6. Access and Highways

How would the site be accessed?

- ☐ Existing access
- ☐ New access required
- ☐ Access arrangements unknown

Brief description (optional):

.....

7. Constraints (to your knowledge)

Please indicate any known constraints affecting the site:

- ☐ Flood risk
- ☐ Conservation Area
- ☐ Listed building(s) or setting
- ☐ Landscape sensitivity
- ☐ Ecological constraints
- ☐ Utilities / infrastructure
- ☐ None known
- ☐ Other (please specify):

8 Additional Information (optional)

Please provide any further information you consider relevant:

.....

.....

.....

.....

9 Declaration

I confirm that the information provided in this form is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Name:

Signature: Date:

Submission details

Please return this completed form, together with the site location plan, to:

Email: NDP.Gayton@hmail.com

Mail or hand delivery:

Roger Clarke, Oak Lodge, 2 Milton Road, Gayton, NN7 3HE

Carl Hamilton, 5 Bugbrooke Rd, Gayton, Northants, NN7 3EU.

Closing date for submissions:
[2359hrs, 1st December 2026]

Confidentiality

Information submitted as part of the Call for Sites process will be used solely for the preparation of the Gayton Neighbourhood Development Plan. Personal information will be handled in accordance with applicable data protection legislation. Site details may be published and discussed as part of the assessment process and supporting evidence base, but personal contact details will not be published without consent.

Dated:

Annex G. Housing Site Self-Assessment Matrix (Template)

1. Site Information

Criterion	Details
Site name / location	
Site area (ha)	
How many dwellings	
Landowner / promoter	

2. Spatial & Policy Context

Criterion	Assessment	Comments
Within, or adjacent to, settlement, boundary		
Compliance with WNLP		
Consistency with NDP objectives		
Risk of village coalescence		

3. Accessibility & Sustainability

Criterion	Assessment	Comments
Safe Pedestrian Access		
Access to public transport		
Access to employment opportunities		
Potential to reduce reliance on private cars		

4. Highways & Access

Criterion	Assessment	Comments
Suitable vehicular access		
Impact on local road network		
Visibility and access		
Opportunity for cycling		

5. Landscape & Heritage

Criterion	Assessment	Comments
Impact on landscape character		
Visibility from public viewpoint		
Impact on Gayton Conservation Area		
Impact on listed buildings or heritage assets		
Ability to mitigate landscape impacts		

6. Environmental Constraints

Criterion	Assessment	Comments
Flood risk (Zones 2/3)		
Surface water flooding risk		

Impact on biodiversity / habitats		
Presence of protected species		
Impact on best and most versatile agricultural land		

7. Infrastructure & Services

Criterion	Assessment	Comments
Capacity of local utilities		
Impact on school capacity		
Impact on healthcare provision		
Opportunity to support village facilities		

8. Deliverability

Criterion	Assessment	Comments
Site availability		
Achievable within NDP plan period		
Ownership constraints		
Abnormal development costs		

9. Community Impact

Criterion	Assessment	Comments
Reflects scale and character of Gayton		
Impact on residential amenity		
Community support / objections (consultation)		
Contribution to local housing needs		

10. Overall Conclusion

Section	Summary
Key strengths	
Key constraints	
Mitigation required	
Overall suitability	
Recommendation	

Scoring Guide (recommended):

- ☒ Positive / Suitable
- ☐ Neutral / Mitigation required
- ☐ Negative / Significant constraint
- N/A Not applicable