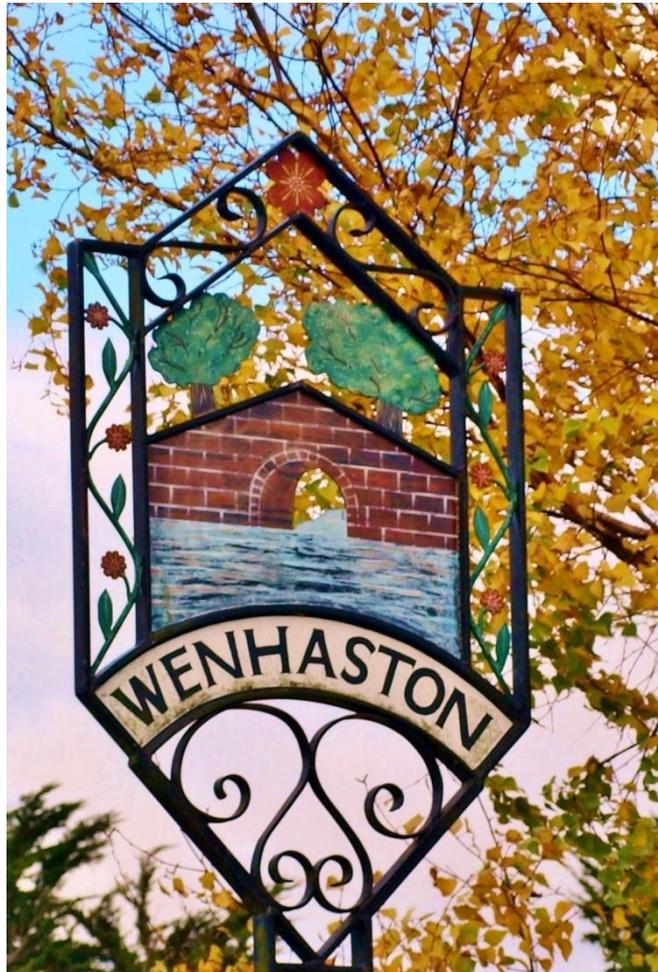


# Wenhaston with Mells Hamlet Parish Council

## Neighbourhood Development Plan



### Whole Parish Character Assessment

### Green Spaces

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### Abstract

Wenhaston with Mells Hamlet Parish council has decided to undertake the process of producing a Neighbourhood Development Plan, as defined in the Localism Act 2011. This plan is to create a vision for the development and use of land within Wenhaston with Mells from 2015 to 2030 related to the views of the residents of the area and consistent with National and Local Planning Policies.

The initial stage of the Neighbourhood Development Plan, (NDP), process is to identify issues and concerns of parishioners but also community assets and aspirations. This information will be used to develop a 'vision' for the future.

One of the aspects of the Plan is to provide future development issues with a 'picture' of the things that make Wenhaston with Mells special to the residents and that need to be considered in future planning. The Character Assessment includes natural green spaces that form an integral part of the village. The results of the green spaces survey are presented and an interpreted definition of the Character of the Parish will be derived in a future document.

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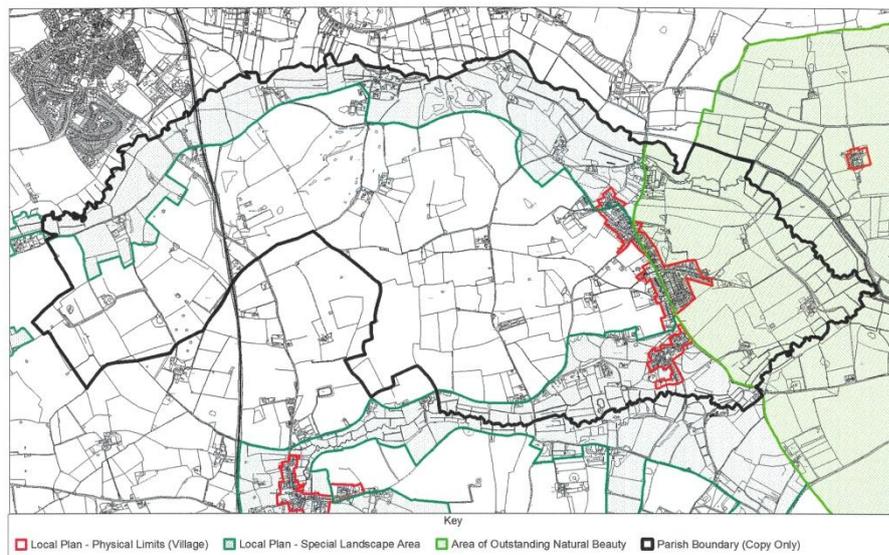
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<b>Document Revision History</b>		
<b>Version</b>	<b>Changes</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Draft</b>		<b>1 August 2016</b>
<b>Review</b>	<b>Comments added and cleared Raised to Issues1.</b>	<b>5 August 2016</b>
<b>Issue 2</b>	<b>Addition of the Playing Field assessment</b>	<b>26 August 2016</b>

## Introduction

Wenhaston with Mells Hamlet is a sprawling parish situated in North Suffolk and at the northern end of the Suffolk Coastal District. It is 8km west of the coast at Southwold and sandwiched between the Blythburgh and Minsmere RAMSAR *Note a* Convention site and the market town of Halesworth. It has large areas in the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area Of Natural Beauty (AONB) Suffolk Special Landscape Area (SSLA) and forms the northern end of the Suffolk Sandlings.

*Note a. RAMSAR Convention, 1971, Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat.*



The parish comprises approximately 430 households in total, largely located in Wenhaston Village and Wenhaston Blackheath settlements with three small clusters at Mells and also isolated dwellings. The road from the South East to the North West is about 6.5 km and footpaths and roads from the north east to the South West 3.5km. In total the parish encloses a land area of about 8000 hectares.

Wenhaston with Mells Hamlet Parish Council has decided to undertake the process of producing a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP), as defined in the Localism Act 2011. This plan is to create a vision for the development and use of land within Wenhaston with Mells from 2015 to 2030 related to the views of the residents of the area.

The initial stage of the NDP is to identify issues and concerns of parishioners but also community assets and aspirations and from this information to develop a ‘vision’ for the future.

One of the aspects of the Plan is to provide future development issues with a ‘picture’ of the things that make Wenhaston with Mells special to the residents and that need to be considered in future planning. The Character Assessment includes the green spaces

of the village. This document records the findings of the assessment and is intended as a reference document to the later Neighbourhood Development Plan.

### The Survey

The survey was designed with sections for observation guidance:

- Topography
- Features
- Structures
- Views
- Summary of Key defining characteristics/other observations.

### The Green Areas

The Village Character Appraisal identified nine areas of green space within or adjoining the Village Development Boundary which are of visual significance. These are:

- Blyford Lane verges
- North Green
- South Green
- Blyth Close
- Churchyard and Old Cemetery
- Track entrance to Black Heath North
- New cemetery and allotments
- Well Green
- The Playing Field

## Assessment Data

## **1. Blyford Lane Verges**

### 1.1 Topography

There are three wide verges on the east side of Blyford Lane between railway Cottages and a track leading to Vale Farm. These have the appearance of highway verges and are grassed. Beyond their boundaries are arable fields. Boundaries comprise mature trees or post and rail fencing.

### 1.2 Structures

The central verge has a seat.

### 1.3 Views

All have views to the east over the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

### 1.4 Summary Character

These are incidental spaces but important in reinforcing the rural character of the street scene on the approach into the built part of the village.

## **2. 'North Green'**

### 2.1 Topography

A triangular space at the junction of The Street and Bramfield Road. It is fronted on the west side by Beech House, on the south by Roslyn House and on the east by Cobblers Cottage and Myrtles. The space rises from The Street on an embankment but is otherwise level

### 2.2 Features

The space is grassed. There is an area of scrub to the west across which there is a pedestrian access.

### 2.3 Structures

There are two electricity poles, water hydrant markers and a sign post. There has been considerable erosion of the grass surface by vehicles parking on the Bramfield Road verge.

### 2.4 Views

The space is viewed down all of the adjoining roads.

### 2.5 Summary Character

An important space fronted by Listed Buildings and others of good visual quality. The space provides a setting for these but is let down by visual clutter and random parking.

### **3. Blyth Close**

#### 3.1 Topography

A wide visibility splay at the junction of The Street and Blyth Close laid to grass.

#### 3.2 Features

The space is crossed by two asphalt footways.

#### 3.3 Structures

A bus stop and seat and road sign are located on the space.

#### 3.4 Views

The Close falls away to the east and Church Common is visible.

#### 3.5 Summary Character

This is an incidental space opening up the eastern frontage of The Street. The verges are well worn as the paths do not correspond to the pedestrian flow on The Street.

### **4. 'South Green'**

#### 4.1 Topography

A small triangular green space at the junction of The Street and Back Road which isolate it. It forms part of the visual widening of The Street at this point with, to the west the wooded frontage of the curtilage of The Old Rectory and to the east the set back frontage of James Roberts Court. The north boundary is weak with close board fence and private car park.

#### 4.2 Features

The space is grassed.

#### 4.3 Structures

There is a K9 telephone box in good condition, an electricity pole and directional traffic sign on the green itself. On the western verge there is a bus shelter, seat, grit bin, dog waste bin and direction sign all randomly placed.

#### 4.4 Views

Views into the space from the approaching roads are significant.

#### 4.5 Summary Character

The space is of visual importance in its context at the junction. It reinforces the rural nature of the village with its undeveloped western boundary.

## **5. The Churchyard and Old Cemetery.**

### **5.1 Topography**

The churchyard is situated some 2.5 metres above The Street and enclosed by a brick wall. To the south of Church Lane and opposite the church yard is the old cemetery dating from around 1900. The war memorial fronts Hall Road on the east side of the cemetery.

### **5.2 Features**

The churchyard is dominated by Yew trees on its east side mainly planted along a path leading from The Street. The north side of the churchyard has been developed as a wild flower meadow whilst the remainder is mown. This boundary is well treed and visually relates to The Old Rectory. The old cemetery has some mature trees on its boundaries and like the churchyard is closed to views from the roads.

### **5.3 Summary Character**

These are special intimate spaces at the historic heart of the village and have a secret quality.

## **6. Track Entrance to Black Heath North**

### **6.1 Topography**

A slender triangle of land running as a wide verge to the east of Hall Road and forming part of Black Heath Common. Unmetalled roads separate it from the frontages of houses and the common.

### **6.2 Features**

The area has had some tree planting in the past though part of it remains as scrub.

### **6.3 Structures**

There is a cluster of two school signs and a dog waste bin on the Hall Road frontage.

### **6.4 Views**

The space is more important for views into it although in winter there are extensive views over the AONB.

### **6.5 Summary Character**

This is an important space visually as it is a gateway from Star Hill into the built up frontages of the village proper and extends the wooded limits of Black Heath into it. It has suffered from a lack of maintenance over time.

## **7. New Cemetery and Allotments**

### **7.1 Topography**

The space is accessed from an unmetalled track at the east end of Narrow Way. The current burial ground is on a level site. Trees border it on the north,

east and south. To the west is an extension area of rough grassland and beyond this across a public footpath are the allotments which lie behind the frontage of Narrow Way. The area is part of the AONB

### 7.2 Access

Access is from Narrow Way. A public footpath bisects the area.

### 7.3 Structures

A small maintenance shed is located at the cemetery entrance.

### 7.4 Views

The area lies on the southern slopes of the Blyth valley and has extensive views to the north.

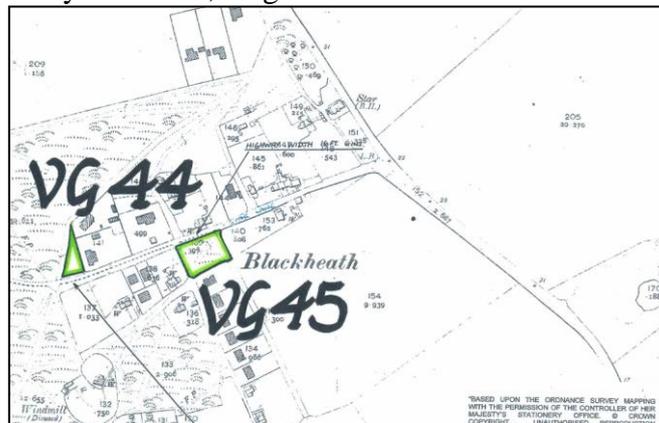
### 7.5 Summary Character

The cemetery and extension are bounded by agricultural land and mature trees. Their close proximity to Blowers Common and the allotments provide a transition from the built up area into the countryside.

## 8. Well Green

### 8.1 Topography

This is a registered Village Green, VG45, in the heart of Blackheath settlement bounded by The Drift, Hog Lane and Blackheath Road. It is level and grassed.



COMMONS REGISTRATION ACT 1965		Register of Village Greens
Part 2		Register No. VG 45
LARD SECTION—Sect No. 1		
1	20 June 1969	The piece of land known as The Green in the parish of Wombourne numbered 130 on the Ordnance Map of that parish, as marked with a green verge line inside the boundary on Sheet 113 of the 1:25,000 map and distinguished by the number of this register with Registered person's application No. 476 made 26th June 1969, by James Roberts of Wombourne, on behalf of Wombourne Parish Council. (Registered person's name)
2	1st July 1971	The piece of land known as The Green in the parish of Wombourne, numbered 130 (part) on the Ordnance Map of that parish, as marked with a green verge line inside the boundary of Sheet 113 of the register map and distinguished by the number of this register with Registered person's application No. 476 made 26th June 1969, by James Roberts of Wombourne, on behalf of Wombourne Parish Council.
3	1 February 1980	The registration at entry No. 2 above, being cancelled, became final on 3 September 1980

## 8.2 Structures

There is a notice board on its north boundary. The Green is fenced.

## 8.3 Views

The Green is enclosed by buildings.

## 8.4 Summary Character

Well Green is an important open space quite different in character to the nearby Common and Merton Wood. It lends itself to community activities and therefore is well maintained.

# 9. The Playing Field

## 9.1 Topography

The Playing Field is an area of land to the east of Hall Road and south of Church Lane which has been developed for formal recreation. The site is flat. Vehicular access is from Hall Road

The site is bounded on its south and west sides by native hedging with arable farmland beyond.

To the north east a hedgerow and metalled path form a boundary and separate the site from an area set aside for a bowling green and pavilion. A lelandii hedge defines the edge of a football pitch close to the southern boundary beyond which is a strip of land formerly partially used as cricket nets.

## 9.2 Uses and Structures

There are three main uses set out on the playing field these being a children's play area fenced off and with play equipment, a football pitch for Wenhaston United Football Club with associated stands and two tennis courts and a small pavilion. There is a central pavilion with toilets at the entrance to the field with car parking. The Bowling Green has a separate access and is not open to the general public. The whole site is owned by the Parish Council.

## 9.3 Views

The site is enclosed by high hedgerows and there are limited views into or out of it.

## 9.4 Summary Character

The playing field is a well maintained space behind the built up frontage of Hall Road providing a range of formal recreation facilities.