



Informal Consultation
July 2021

St Ives Neighbourhood Plan

What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

A Neighbourhood Plan is community led planning document that is used to guide the future planning and development of the area in which people live and work. It aims to plan for the next 15 years or more.

Over the last few months the working group has been collecting information about the town and developing some ideas for how the town could develop in the future. The purpose of this consultation is to present these ideas and to seek feedback and suggestions. These responses will be used to identify which ideas to develop and take forward and turn into local planning policies within the Neighbourhood Plan.

The process is shown on graphic to the right. We are at the 'evidence gathering' stage and there will be further consultation(s) later in the year, called the Pre-Submission stage once the draft policies have been prepared.

Once any necessary changes are made to the Plan and it is then handed over to Huntingdonshire District Council as the Local Planning Authority, who carry out further consultation and then the Plan is assessed by an examiner who may suggest further changes to ensure the document meets all the legal requirements. The final document is then subject to a local referendum. This part of the process may take up to 1 year.

If the referendum is passed, the Neighbourhood Plan becomes part of the development plan for St Ives and its policies will be used to ensure future development meets the requirements of the Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan is therefore an important document in shaping the future of St Ives and your input is a key part of the process.



Fig 1:Neighbourhood Plan Process

Vision:

"To make St Ives more attractive to residents and visitors by:
diversifying the town centre economy
celebrating our history and townscape
encouraging more walking and cycling
doubling nature and addressing the climate emergency"

What a Neighbourhood Plan can't do

We can only influence development, not stop it altogether. Our Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the Huntingdon District Council Local Plan and the government's wider policy of sustainable development.

About this consultation

The purpose of this consultation is to get your feedback on the work done so far. A questionnaire has been produced to allow residents to comment on ideas and options for future development. A number of exhibitions will be held in July 2021:

- Friday July 16 at the Burleigh Hill Community Centre between 13.30 and 17.00
- Saturday 17 July at the St Ives Farmers Market 09.00 to 13.30.

Members of the Neighbourhood Plan working group will be at these events to answer questions.

Copies of the display material and questions are also available on the Town Council website:

https://www.stivestowncouncil.gov.uk/Public_Consultation_29968.aspx

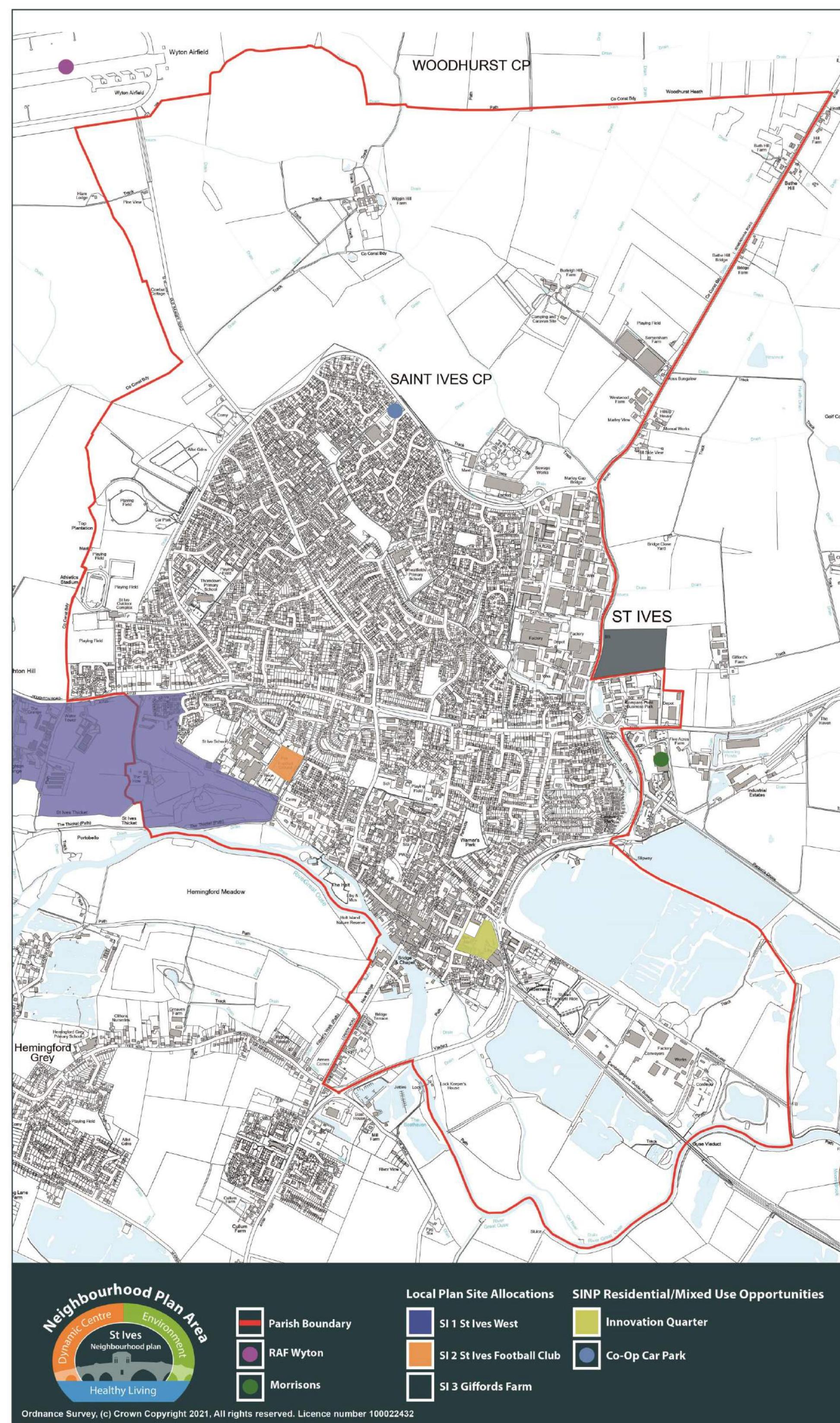
St Ives Vision

Question 1: Does the vision for St Ives capture the issues that are important to the town in the long-term?



Neighbourhood Plan Area and Scope

Fig 2: Neighbourhood Plan Area



Policy themes:

The Neighbourhood Plan Working Group has identified 3 main themes for the Plan; these are: Healthy Living, Environment and a Dynamic Town Centre.

The St Ives Neighbourhood Plan covers the area shown on the map. The red line on the map is our designated area which coincides with the St Ives Town Council boundary. The Neighbourhood Plan will be based around 3 themes: Healthy Living, Environment and a Dynamic Town Centre. These policy themes will be used to guide the actual policies in the Plan and are described in more detail on the display panels.

Having a Neighbourhood Plan in place will also help us ensure that development is suitable for the town and meets the needs of our area. It will also help us to identify the facilities and services that need to be in place to meet the demands that new development will make upon on our community. We must therefore look at the opportunities that can result from the development of new housing and employment to make St Ives an even better place to live and work.

Note that parts of the built up area of St Ives such as the Morrisons supermarket and planned housing at Houghton Grange or proposals that may emerge for RAF Wyton are outside the NP area and therefore the NP can not include policies for these areas. The HDC Local Plan allocates some sites for new development in St Ives, although we understand the Football Club has decided to remain on its current site at the present time. These sites are shown on the map.



A Dynamic Town Centre

A survey of the town centre has identified 200 business premises including a range of shops and services and places to eat and drink. Close proximity to Cambridge with easy access along the busway brings many visitors to the town. This, combined with an attractive riverside setting, provides a good basis to which to build on as the nature of town centres are likely to change in the future.

Last year, the Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority working with HDC produced a "Prospectus for St Ives" document. There is a copy in the NP area on the St Ives Town Council web-site. HDC are currently developing the ideas contained in the report and a public consultation will be held in the future. The Neighbourhood Plan provides an opportunity to support these ideas and help define the requirements and outcomes.

Fig 3: Town Centre Map



Policy theme:

"To make St Ives more attractive to residents and visitors by revitalising and diversifying the town's economy and by celebrating its historic buildings and townscape"

Town Centre policy ideas (based on the Prospectus for St Ives report)

Innovation Quarter – New development in the area around the existing bus station to provide:

- Flexible working spaces for new start up businesses
- Residential accommodation for young professional workers
- New retail / community space
- Improved bus station

Enhanced Public Realm – Improving the appearance of the town centre by:

- Shared space and Pedestrian Priority in the town centre – access for businesses would need to be provided
- Enhancing the appearance of the various Mews
- Providing Parklets to 'green' our town centre
- On street Wi-Fi

Fig 4: A typical Parklet



Credit: MeristemDesign.co.uk

What is a Parklet?

Parklets are intended to provide space for people to sit, relax and enjoy the town around them and enhance the overall streetscape. They combine elements such as seating, trees, flowers, shrubs, umbrellas, bike parking or lighting that reflects the unique character and needs of the location.

Question 2: Do you support the idea of an Innovation Quarter?

Question 3: Do you support the Concept of Enhanced Public Realm?



Housing to meet local needs

The HDC Local Plan allocates about 400 new homes in St Ives located on the old golf course and on the Houghton Grange site located outside the NP area in Houghton. Around half these homes have already been built and an application for around 100 homes on the site between the old golf course and Houghton Grange is expected shortly. The HDC Local Plan also considers the former base at RAF Wyton as a site for new development, although the exact scope has yet to be defined.

In reviewing the housing situation in St Ives, the NP Team concluded that the town had reached a natural limit with no major new sites available within the built-up area and that existing infrastructure such as schools and roads were close to capacity. Although HDC have advised that there are around 300 people on the housing list with some connection to St Ives, new housing options are limited largely to infill sites in and around the Town Centre.

Fig 5: New Housing



The Neighbourhood Plan will not therefore propose new sites for housing outside the existing built-up area. The Neighbourhood Plan could support the use of infill sites around the town centre. The car park at the Co-op store in the north of the town is underused. Planning permission was given for a petrol station on the site which was never built. This site may be suitable for a small number of houses.

Question 4: Do you support the idea that no new sites outside the built-up area should be allocated for housing?

Question 5: If you do not agree with question 4, how many new houses should be provided within the St Ives Neighbourhood Plan area?

Question 6: Do you support the idea of using the underused car park at the Co-op for new housing?

Housing:

"St Ives is at a natural capacity. New housing will be limited to infill only. New homes should be zero carbon ready"

Zero Carbon Housing

Energy used in housing contributes 40% to the overall carbon emissions in the UK. It is therefore essential that any new housing or other development should be as energy efficient as possible. The Neighbourhood Plan is proposing that new development should meet the Passive House Standard which is a standard for energy efficiency in a building, which reduces the building's ecological footprint. It results in ultra-low energy buildings that require little energy for space heating or cooling.

There is also scope for new development to contribute to the environment by including nature friendly features such as bird nest boxes and suitable planting.

Question 7: Do you support the idea of Passive House standards for new development in St Ives?

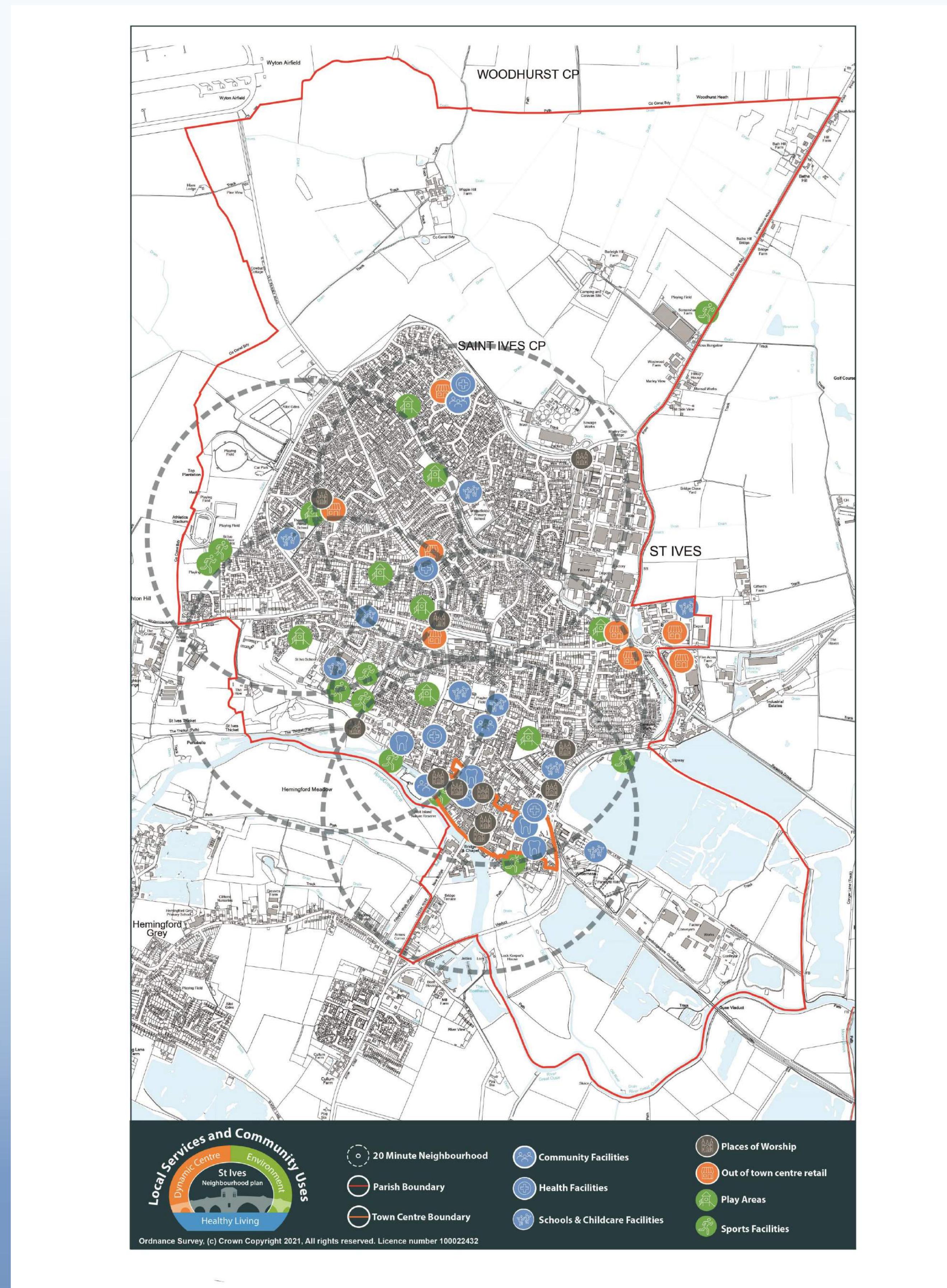


Fig 6: Passive House Requirements from the International Passive House Association



Local Services and Community Facilities

Fig 7: St Ives Facilities Map



Policy theme:

"There has been significant investment in some facilities in recent years such as at St Ivo School and Grove Surgery, but there is likely to be pressures on other facilities in the coming years and the need for upgrades or replacement facilities to cope with additional demand"

20 minute neighbourhood

A 20 minute neighbourhood is where there is good access to a range of services and facilities within a 10 minute walk (800m) of home. Interest in the idea has grown as the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns put a spotlight on the importance of the liveability of neighbourhoods, perhaps working at home if possible, using public green space, cycling and walking instead of using cars and connecting with neighbours. As the plan illustrates, there is generally a good coverage of services and facilities across St Ives.

Leisure Facilities

St Ives currently provides a wide range of leisure facilities for residents of the town and surrounding villages as shown on the map. These include The Corn Exchange, Burleigh Hill Community Centre, play equipment areas for children and a number of sports clubs.

Question 8 – Are there any new facilities that should be provided in St Ives and where should they be located?

Tourism Facilities

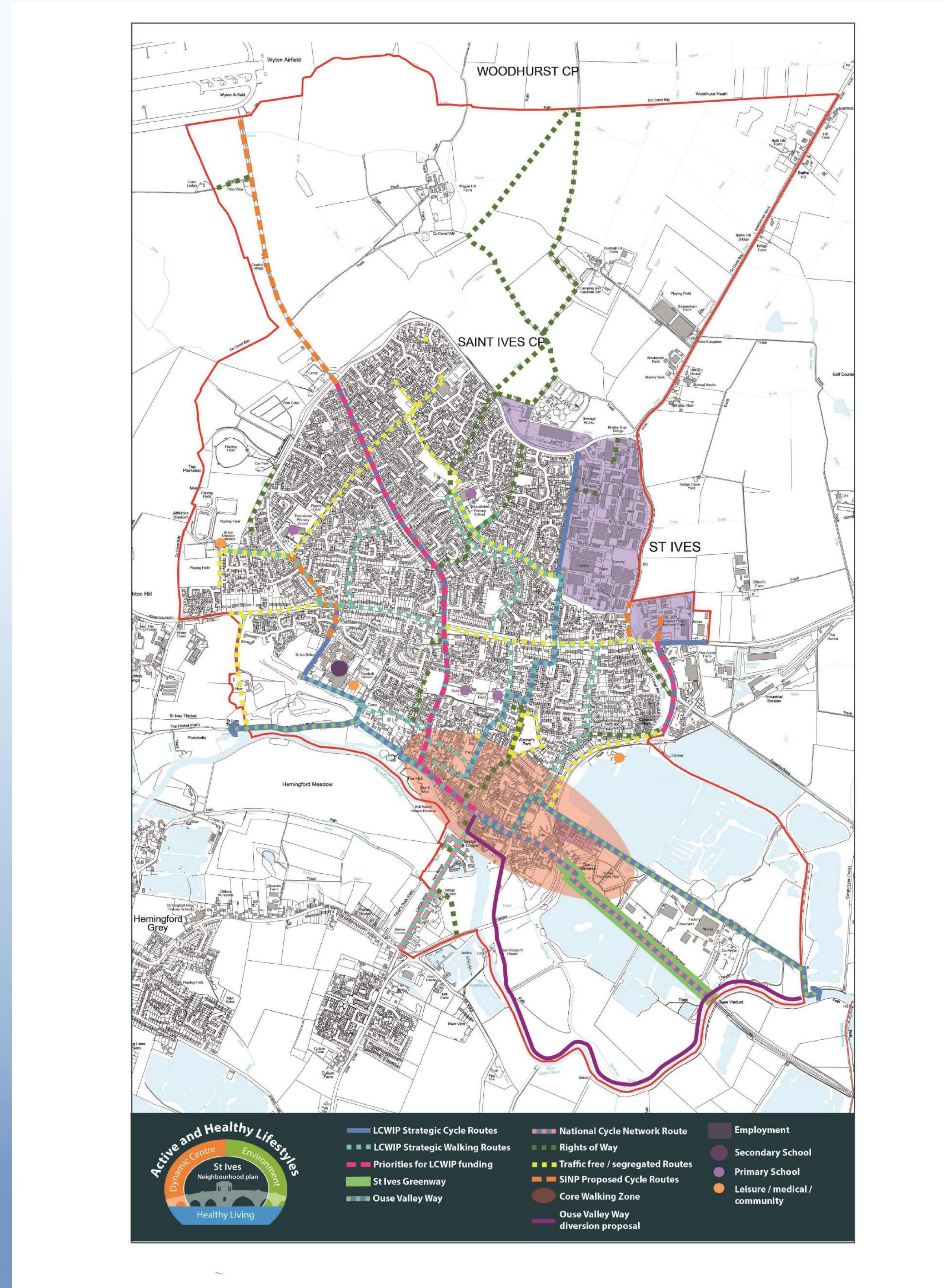
Spending data from St Ives, indicates that St Ives has many more visitors than other towns within Huntingdonshire. The town currently has a number of hotels and guest houses with a capacity of around 150 rooms, but no camping or caravan sites.

Question 9 – Should the St Ives NP support the provision of extra hotel accommodation within the town and where should be located?



Active and Healthy Lifestyles

Fig 8: St Ives Walking and Cycling Routes



Policy theme:

"To put people first by encouraging walking and cycling and reducing the negative impact of traffic and parking in the heart of the town centre to enhance the cultural and shopping experience"

The climate emergency demands a radical approach to active and healthy travel by encouraging more people to move around the town by foot and by bike and to make it safer for young people to walk and cycle to school

While St Ives has a far more comprehensive network of walking and cycling routes than many other towns of its size, and is fortunate in having access to the Greenway towards Cambridge, we know that new development is too often built around car use with residents having little choice but to drive for almost every journey.

We believe that everyone should have access to well connected streets, spaces and places that are pleasant and interesting to be in, sociable, safe and environmentally sustainable.

We have illustrated a number of priority routes for funding through the Cambridge Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and a number of other opportunities to create new cycle routes, but we would like your views on how the walking and cycling network might be improved, particularly to the town centre, to schools and to employment areas including Compass Point and Somersham Road Industrial Estate. There are also ideas to divert the Ouse Valley Way away from Meadow Lane to a new route along the river.

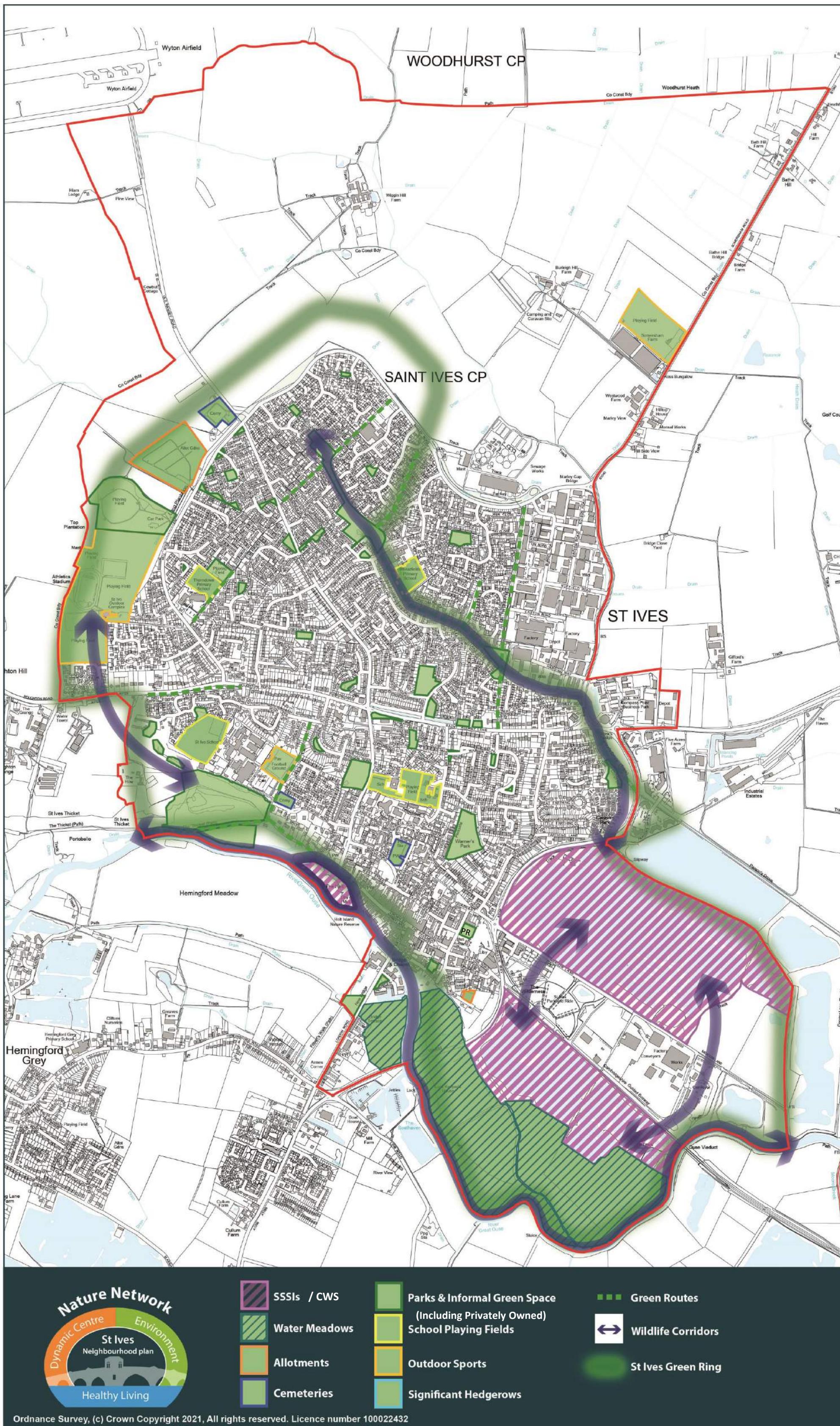
Question 10: Do you support improvements to walking and cycling routes within St Ives and to adjacent villages?

Question 11: Which particular improvements would help you make more journeys by foot or cycle?



Nature Recovery and Climate Change

Fig 9: St Ives Green Space Proposals



Policy theme:

"The benefit of 'greening' our town is far reaching and will help address the Town Council's commitment to the climate and ecological emergency, to 'Double Nature' and contribute to Zero carbon living"

Re-wilding urban green space offers essential habitat and stepping stones to support nature recovery as part of a wider nature network. Parks, allotments, school grounds, and community green spaces can all offer something for nature and, in doing so, can bring people together. This 'Nature Network' Plan contains our initial ideas for a blueprint for the future of our natural environment and local wildlife. It will set out what could be done to make further enhancements to some of the green spaces in the Town, to convert more to 'eco-parks', and to help restore declining species and habitats. In this way we believe it will give nature the best chance to recover. Specifically, our nature recovery plan is intended to:

- Enhance nature by protecting and improving the quality of important green spaces on our doorstep
- Map the most valuable existing habitats for nature and agree priorities for nature recovery
- Help identify where funding is most needed
- Help us sustainably manage and restore nature
- Identify new green opportunities for the Town including a St Ives Green Ring.

The St Ives 'Green Ring' is a long term project to create a series of linked green spaces, to serve the local community and to provide significant nature enhancements. This will, we believe, encourage a community sense of pride, ownership and care and promote daily exercise and active travel by including walking and cycling routes. We envisage this green "corridor" will enable wildlife to move around the area, increasing resilient to the effects of climate change and provide an additional asset to support our visitor economy.

Question 12: Do you support the concept of the St Ives Green Ring?

Question 13: What should be prioritised to improve nature in your neighbourhood to enable you to 'embrace your space'?

Question 14: Are there any other subjects that should be covered in the Neighbourhood Plan? Questionnaire

Please let us have your views by filling in the questionnaire and returning it to the Town Hall. You can also fill in the questionnaire online on the Town Council web-site .

https://www.stivestowncouncil.gov.uk/Public_Consultation_29968.aspx

Please do not hesitate to ask if you have any other questions or wish to share your opinions

