**PARISH DESIGN STATEMENT**

**FOR**

**THE VILLAGE OF SOUTH WOOTTON**

PRODUCED BY SOUTH WOOTTON PARISH COUNCIL

PUBLISHED - AUTUMN 2007

**Contents**

Foreword

**1.** Introduction

**2.** Village locality

**3.** A Short History of the Village

**4.** The Village Community and Structure

**5.** Building Types and Materials

**6.** Landscape and Wildlife

**7.** Roads and Traffic

**8.** Impact of Utilities and Services

**9.** Guidelines for Development

**10.** Consultation Process

**11.** Acknowledgements

**Foreword**

We both congratulate the Parish Council on their initiative to develop and publish

this Design Statement.

South Wootton is a village with a long and proud history. It is a superb place to live

and it is clear that residents want to retain the village character. More business is

moving into our area and for many people South Wootton is an attractive choice to

establish their home. It is vital that, as South Wootton develops, it retains the strong

village identity it has always guarded so well. This Design Statement does much to

set the parameters for sensible and suitable developments in South Wootton. It will

assist developers, planners, designers, residents and those who wish to be

residents.

We are very happy to support the views and aspirations of the residents of the

village, as described.

Nick Daubney and Elizabeth Nockolds

(Borough Councillors – South Wootton Ward)

**1. Introduction**

The South Wootton Parish Design Statement has been prepared by the

Parish Council Planning Committee, with contributions from other Parish

Councillors, using information provided by, and with the support of, village

residents.

When the Parish Plan was published in 2004, more than 70% of residents

responded to a survey asking for their views on living in the village and their

concerns about and aspirations for any future development. These views,

together with more recent additions, form the basis of the present Design

Statement. It is clear that residents consider South Wootton as a pleasant

place to live, value its independent village status and wish to preserve its

distinctive character. The Design Statement defines the standards that, as

residents, we expect of any future development affecting the fabric and

environment of South Wootton. In particular, attention should be paid to the

Guidelines for Development outlined in Section 9 of this document.

The Design Statement will help shape Parish Council policies and provide

guidance to statutory agencies, utility supply companies, developers,

architects, builders, local organisations, householders, landowners and

businesses. To this end, we are pleased that the Borough Council have

agreed to use the document as material consideration.

**2. Village Locality**

South Wootton is a village to the north of the town of King’s Lynn and south of the

neighbouring villages of North Wootton and Castle Rising. Reference to a map (see

overpage) will show that the Parish boundary extends from the River Great Ouse,

along the lines of old sea defence banks on the marshes to join with the Parish

boundary of North Wootton on its northern side. The southern edge of the boundary

crosses the marshes and then runs eastwards, adjacent to part of Edward Benefer

Way, to a point near the junction of Hall Lane and Low Road.

From this point, the boundary skirts Low Road and Grimston Road as far as

Woodlands Home for the Elderly, then to the south of those premises and the

adjoining flat topped houses, the Parish Council allotments and the Rainbow

Superstore. It then crosses Langley Road and runs to the north of Barsham Drive

and through Sandy Lane to the Eastern Bypass. Here, it doubles back across fields

onto Grimston Road just east of the last bunglow on the right and then crosses

Grimston Road into Gooseberry Lane, a Public Right of Way, which borders the

King’s Lynn Golf Course through to Castle Rising Road.

Here, the boundary continues its way through woodland to the north of The Birches

before crossing Priory Lane just south of North Wootton Community School. It runs

in front of the unit shops but behind the Tesco Express shop at Priory Court before

going across the middle of Wootton Park playing fields and out towards the marshes

and thus back to the River Great Ouse.

There are approximately 1660 properties in the village and there are about 5000

residents. Of the latter, just over 3000 are adults and the remainder being children

who attend local Primary and Secondary schools. This is at variance with the UK

national average of 2.4 children per household, which demonstrates that the village

population tends towards those who are retired or are in the second half of their life

spans.

**3. A Short History of the Village**

Every village is unique. Before the advent of commuter dormitories broke the link

between people and the land, village communities developed in tune with whatever

resources nature had to offer. South Wootton is no exception.

Until the addition of a large area of drained salt marsh following the opening of the

‘Estuary Cut’ that re-aligned the River Great Ouse in 1853, the Parish of South

Wootton occupied part of the western portion of the area of upland defined by the

Gaywood and Babingley rivers and the lowland mire of Roydon Common. The

relatively infertile soils are a glacial till including sands, gravels and deposits of

boulder clay. These mineral resources were exploited in various ways. Early

Ordnance Survey maps show that South Wootton was littered with clay and gravel

pits. In mid 17th century, for example, ornate bricks were made on land now

occupied by Ullswater Avenue. One of these bricks is visible, built into the chimney

of No.1 The Green. Other clay pits reflect the more recent practice of ‘marling’, i.e.

spreading clay on poor soils to improve fertility. Gravel was required for road

maintenance.

There has been a settlement in South Wootton, although not continuously, for the

past 5000 years. People were living where the Wootton Gardens Estate now stands

in the late Pre-Roman Iron Age, while by the 2nd century A.D., a Romano-British

peasant farmstead had developed in the same part of the village. Close to the

eastern boundary of the modern parish, in the area called ‘Black Hills’ on the

Ordnance Survey Map, iron was being worked, as it was extensively in North

Wootton, Roydon and Rising. By around 950 A.D., people were again living in the

Wootton Gardens area.

Wootton (Wdetuna – the farmstead in the wood) emerges as a single Royal Manor

in the Doomsday Survey of 1086. It was among the wealthiest and, with 48

households, one of the most populous manors in the Freebridge Hundred (district).

This prosperity depended on the salterns (salt works) on its tidal creeks. There were

14 salterns recorded in Wootton in 1086.The process used to produce salt involved

raking the salt-enriched silt into heaps, filtering tidal water through the silt and finally

boiling the brine. The low mounds produced by this process remain in the former

salt marshes in South Wootton and adjacent parishes. In the 16th or 17th century,

two of the mounds were used as fortifications either against the threat from the

Armada or because of insecurity during the Civil War. Others were utilised as the

basis for Post Medieval sea banks.

William II (Rufus) granted his Wootton manor to William d’Albini, the builder of

Rising castle. Around this time, its character was changing from one of scattered

farmsteads to one or two discrete settlements. South Wootton acquired its Church,

in origin a Saxo-Norman building, probably linked to a manorial site. People began

to live around The Green in order to secure their ‘common rights’. Older Ordnance

Survey maps show clearly a pattern of medieval croft strips running west from

Nursery Lane where it abuts The Green.

In Medieval and Post Medieval times, the boundaries of Rising Chase, i.e. the area

over which the Lords of Rising had the right to hunt included South Wootton.

Indeed, the earliest depiction of South Wootton occurs in a map drawn around 1588

to show the extent of the Chase. The relationship between South Wootton and

Castle Rising was ambiguous. The Lords of Rising retained much influence in

North Wootton but relatively little in South Wootton. In both parishes, in Medieval

and Tudor times, their peculiar jurisdiction was extended, apparently, to the

registration and probate of wills, a right more normally held by the Bishops of

Norwich.

Wootton Manor was divided with the southern portion passing to the Wynde family,

although the crown retained patronage of St Mary’s Church. Various families,

including the Hamonds, who re-built the ’Old Hall’ in 1665, acquired land in South

Wootton. The map of Rising Chase shows that a substantial building already

occupied this site.

By the 14th century, the local salt industry had declined in the face of competition from mined salt. However, the surname ‘Salter’ occurs in Parish Registers as late as the 17th century. In 1552, a Thomas Salter was a churchwarden. The later

medieval village had declined in prosperity to become a peasant community of farmers and fishermen, utilising the still tidal St Catherine’s Creek. There was, however, enough seigniorial (land owning) prosperity for St Mary’s Church to be

largely re-built, in substantially its present form, shortly after 1300. It seems likely that, by this point, the village had reached its medieval peak.

The 14th century was a difficult time. Climatic deterioration with floods and a

succession of bad harvests were followed by the plague. The proximity of South

Wootton to Lynn and its port ensured the Black Death, which struck in 1349, had a

considerable impact. Two rectors were instituted in that year and five more

between 1354 and 1361. The social and economic effects of the plague spanned

more than two centuries with a steep decline in population and the land going out

of cultivation and into grazing. Villages in the ‘Greensand’ belt of West Norfolk,

including South Wootton were particularly badly hit. Nearby Babingley, Bawsey

and Mintlyn, for example, were eventually almost abandoned. In 1672, the Hearth

Tax returns showed just 33 households in North Wootton and only 21 in South

Wootton. Even in the Victorian period, in 1851, the population of North Wootton

was only 188 and South Wootton 164.

Significant changes were, however, taking place. In 1851, the process of

‘Inclosure’ was completed and legally enshrined in the ‘Parish Award’. The Parish

acquired possession of The Green and its three ‘Public Ponds’, the Allotments (set

aside for the use of the ‘labouring poor’) together with one clay and one gravel pit.

Land was also set aside for a school, close to the junction of South Wootton Lane

and Low Road. In 1862, almost a decade before Forster’s Education Act paved the

way for universal education, a mixed ‘National School’ was built at a cost of £170

for 60 children. This school survived until replaced during the 1960’s and 1970’s

by the present First and Junior Schools.

Another factor driving change was the construction of the Lynn-Hunstanton

Railway (North Wootton acquired its station in 1862). Whilst this had little initial

effect on South Wootton, the provision of a Motor Bus Service into the village

certainly did. The service ran to the New Inn with the turn round at the junction of

the Wootton Road, Castle Rising Road and then Low Road. Between 1911 and

1931, the population of South Wootton increased from 159 to 416. The

transformation from an agricultural to a commuting community had begun. After

World War II, the process accelerated with the construction of residential estates.

By 1961, the population had exceeded 1000. It had doubled by 1971 and reached

3177 at the 1981 census. Although the pace of growth has slowed over the past

quarter of a century, the 4000 mark has been passed and it can be argued that

saturation, at least in terms of major development, has been reached.

The Parish Council is the successor to the Medieval Manorial courts in its role in the

management of Parish affairs. By the 16th century, responsibility for government at

Parish level had devolved on to the annual Vestry Meetings. At these meetings, held

at the same time as today’s Parish Assembly, Churchwardens, Overseers of the

Poor, a Parish Constable, Surveyors of the Highway and Common Reeves were

chosen. The offices survived the separation of Church and civil Parish in the Local

Government Act of 1894. The first Parish meeting for South Wootton was held in the

Schoolroom at 7pm on December 4th 1894, when 15 parochial electors were present.

Edward Blomfield took the chair. Five persons (all men!) were nominated and elected to serve as Parish Councillors for the first time. They also collected the rents from 24 allotment holders and let the grazing on The Green. Well into the 20th century, the business of the Council reflected the needs of a still, essentially, peasant community.

Charges were fixed for the grazing of cattle, sheep, horses and geese on The Green.

By the 1920’s, the motorcar was having an impact and attention was given to the

matter of erecting warning signs to guard the school. In 1927, the need was raised for footpaths from the New Inn corner along Castle Rising Road as far as the junction with Priory Lane, because of the increasing traffic. (Residents who live on the east side of Castle Rising Road will be interested to learn that the original proposal was for footpaths on both sides!).

Even in the 1950’s and 1960’s, as serious expansion began, the village was very

different from that of today. Excluding The Green, there were four playing fields.

Rugby was played on a meadow adjacent to what is now Edward Benefer Way. The

site now occupied by the First School was a football pitch on which Lynn apparently

played matches when The Walks was unfit. The present Parish Council Chairman

recalls, while serving briefly as a Housemaster at King Edward VII School, ferrying

boarders to an area to the east of Castle Rising Road, now built over, to play on a

field used by the Old Lennensians F.C. According to a former Parish Councillor,

Norman Rippengill, there was also a cricket ground in the village. The allotments were let to a local resident and smallholder, Jimmy Lee but in the early 1970’s, as a result of public demand, the Parish resumed full responsibility for the land. It was surveyed, divided into plots and re-let. Some residents at least have re-connected with the soil!

The inexorable progress of estate development and the disappearance of open

spaces led to the decision, in 1967, by the Parish Council to partly drain and level The

Green, which was registered, for all time, as a Public Open Space. Before this could

be achieved, the Council had to re-acquire, by the usual buying out process, the

Common Rights that had been linked to several properties in the village, from early

medieval times. Obviously, The Green and the Allotments in themselves could not

provide sufficient recreational space for the residents, particularly the youth of the

village. To this end, and as a matter of urgency as open space was at a premium,

South Wootton entered into an agreement with the Borough and with North Wootton.

The land, now known as Wootton Park, was purchased by the Borough for the two

communities and leased jointly, at a rent of £25 p.a., to the Parish Councils, with the

Wootton Park Association accepting responsibility for its maintenance

Modern estate roads apart, the road and footpath network is rooted deeply in the

past. Grimston Road and Low Road now seem to cut the village in two. On the

1850 inclosure award map, Grimston Road is named as Hillington Turnpike Road.

The medieval predecessor of Grimston Road was known as ‘Walsingham Way’. It

probably dates from whenever the Gaywood River was first bridged, certainly before

the 15th century. Low Road was originally part of one of two ’Drift Ways’ to drive

stock to and from Wootton Marsh. The other still exists as the other extension of

Church Lane, formerly known as Marsh Lane. Both Castle Rising Road and Priory

Lane are at least medieval in origin. By contrast, Sandy Lane was a product of the

Inclosure Award of 1851, its purpose to provide access to brickworks in Reffley

wood.

The footpath from Hall Lane to Nursery Lane where it crosses what was once called

Stones Brook is of particular interest. It cuts across the medieval strip holdings that

ran from The Green as far as Hall Lane and has to be maintained at a sufficient

width to accommodate the early 17th century bier (corpse conveyer) in St Mary’s

Church. As a right of way it may be far older. Another ancient path, Gooseberry

Lane, traverses the lower slopes of Knights Hill and marks part of the eastern

course of the Parish Boundary. The limits of the Parish have undergone relatively

minor changes from time to time, the latest being two areas added at the most

recent boundary review. They remain largely those that can be traced on earlier

Ordnance Survey maps.

**4. The Village Community and Structure.**

Our village is more than a collection of buildings surrounding the central core of

the Green and Duck Pond. It is first and foremost a Community. This Community is

very diverse, with both people who have lived in the village for generations and

newcomers who came with the development of the housing estates in the late

1960s and early 1970s. This has seen a radical shift from a predominantly

agricultural economy, fully supported by local businesses, to a village, which is

mostly a dormitory for people who work in King’s Lynn or who commute further

afield. Also, about a third of our residents are retired.

The village is fortunate to have easy access to amenities such as the Church,

Village Hall, Post Office, Pub and Shops, etc. The shops include Supermarkets and

convenience food shops, Pharmacy, Hairdresser, Beauty Salon, Newsagents, Pizza

Takeaway, Fish & Chip Shops, Chinese Takeaway and a Veterinary Clinic. These

are found at three separate locations in the village, namely, at Nursery Lane, St

Augustine’s Way and Langley Road. A Doctor’s surgery is nearby in North Wootton.

All these, together with local tradesmen, are conveniently located so that it is possible to meet most needs within the village. Although the shops are within easy walking distance or a short car or cycle ride, a bus service also provides access to these amenities as well as further afield to King’s Lynn and Hunstanton.

The village location together with an open countryside and the proximity of the Norfolk coast make it a pleasant place to live. The Sandringham Cycle-track (part of No.1 National Cycle route) also runs through the village and provides a pleasant walk through open country. The Old Hall and St. Mary’s Church are listed buildings with some parts of the Church perhaps dating back to Saxon times. Residents value the separate village identity, its openness and nearness to the countryside, its tranquillity and low crime rate. The latter, in part, is due to active Neighbourhood watch groups. The Parish Council also provides allotments, which are well supported and have a waiting list.

For the younger generation, we have a First and a Junior School and two

pre-school Playgroups all of which are well supported by parents and the local

community. We also share Wootton Park with the neighbouring Parish of North

Wootton. This covers 17 acres with 12 acres of sports field and excellent

changing facilities, which are used by football teams from age about 8 years to

senior standard. All the age groups play in local leagues. There is also a fully

equipped play area for the under 12’s and a Basketball hoop. In the near future, it

is hoped to add Skateboard and Bowling Green facilities to the park.

.

The village has an active “South Wootton in Bloom” Group, which has gained four

consecutive silver awards in the “Anglia in Bloom” Competition and also organise

the ‘best kept garden’ and photographic competitions. They have planted bulbs and

trees at various locations in the village.

The Village Hall was built 25 years ago financed from grants and funds raised by

residents through Village Fetes, etc. It has been used regularly for a variety of

activities, which include Play groups, Art club and workshop, two Flower clubs,

Women’s Institute and Mother’s Union, Scottish dancing and Bridge sessions,

RSPB and National Trust meetings, the Probus Group and Senior Citizens

meetings, which cover a wide range of ages. It has also hosted more formal

functions such as wedding receptions and dance evenings.

The Village Hall shares the central car park with the Parish cemetery and the

Parish Council Office and Meeting room, the Church and the Schools. The cemetery

provides a very tranquil and peaceful area with seating for relatives when they visit

the graves of their loved ones. There is also a quiet corner in the Churchyard, where

the “South Wootton in Bloom” Group have created a sensory garden for residents to

sit in quiet reflection. The Parish Office is open weekday mornings for one and a half

hours for enquiries, etc. The Parish Clerk is also the Cemetery Superintendent.

Although the village is relatively stable and there are few sites available for new

housing developments, residents recognise the need for some more

accommodation, especially for local young people as first-time buyers. **Planners,**

**developers, architects and builders need to take account of the preferred**

**guidelines for any future developments as set out in Section 9 of this Design**

**Statement, which reflect the views of the residents of the village.**

**5. Building Types and Materials**

A major proportion of properties in South Wootton are of modern design, largely

due to post war expansion, particularly in the 1960’s and 1970’s, when a number of

relatively big housing estates were built. Most of the properties are detached houses

or bungalows. Modern designs and construction methods have, obviously,

continued up to the present time. Nevertheless, there are still a wide variety of

building styles to be found in the village, which reflect the differences in designs,

construction methods and materials employed over the years.

Original buildings varied in appearance with the use of red brick and carrstone

mingled in the course of construction. Carrstone has been quarried at Snettisham, a

few miles distant from South Wootton, for at least 1000 years and so was readily

available for building. The Snettisham carrstone is normally used in quite large

pieces, put together to form different patterns. A second type of carrstone, known as

shell-carr, was gathered from the surface in the Woottons and also at Wolferton.

The shell-carr is much darker in colour and smaller in size and is used in a manner

reminiscent of dry stonewalling. Mortar is not visible in this type of construction. In

some cases, the little pieces were simply pushed into the mortar and this was called

“galleting”. It was used not only for decoration but was thought to help keep witches

at bay! Also, small quantities of conglomerates were used in medieval times for

building.

There are a number of fine examples of buildings, which used carrstone in their

construction. Locally, they are known as “Gingerbread Houses”. First among these

is “The Old Hall”, a listed building, which was built in 1665 on the site of a previous

dwelling. “Three Ways Cottage” on Low Road, with the oldest part built in the 16th

century, shows how carrstone has been used over the centuries. This can be seen

on the front and on the end walls with clear indications of the way in which the

property has been enlarged. The cottages, known as “Smith’s

Cottages”, opposite the allotments on Grimston Road also date back to the

1600’s. Shell-carr was the principal material used in their construction and a

further example of its use can be seen on St Mary’s Church tower. Carrstone is still

used today in limited quantities, mainly to provide some variation in style and

decoration of the buildings. In the early 20th century, as prosperity

increased, South Wootton became a desirable area to live. This period saw

the construction of large, detached houses such as those on Castle Rising

Road, Nursery Lane and Grimston Road. They are typical of that time,

double fronted, some with large bay windows, and with very big gardens. Of

particular interest, built in the 1930’s, are two examples of what were

“Art Deco” style houses on Castle Rising Road and Low Road,

respectively. Also built in the 1930’s, are the unusual flat roofed houses on

Grimston Road, which were built for Catleugh employees working in King’s

Lynn.

Post war building restrictions meant that the floor space of houses and bungalows

was kept relatively low. Examples of these constraints can be seen in the original

dwellings on Sandy Lane.

Later, in the 1950’s and 1960’s, when the then Greater London Council chose

King’s Lynn as one of the areas for its overspill, new factories were built and large

scale housing estates (public and private) to accommodate the incoming

employees. In South Wootton, these private estates illustrate the variation in

building construction and styles as can be seen in the developments at Avon Road,

Oak Avenue, The Birches, Priory Park (St Augustine’s Way), Ullswater Avenue and

Wootton Gardens (Blackthorn Road). Many of these houses are substantial in both

size and appearance, though this is not enhanced by the reduction of the plots sizes

on which they stand. Indeed, the recent changes to increase the density of housing

has lead to a more cramped appearance, which may be acceptable in urban

locations but is totally out of character in a village environment. The new Wootton

Meadows development, off Grimston Road, is an unfortunate example of this type of

development.

**It is the Parish Council’s belief that the character of the Village should be**

**retained and enhanced by any future, small scale, development. The gradual**

**imposition of housing on existing green areas would merely serve to create a**

**conurbation-style result. The Village character would be lost and the intrinsic**

**value of living in such an environment destroyed. We would ask developers**

**and their associates, in the future, to take serious note of the guidelines**

**outlined in section 9 of this Design Statement.**

**6. Landscape and Wildlife**

Within the Parish of South Wootton, there are a number of open spaces as well

as designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The most advantageous place

to view the village is at Knight’s Hill, at the top of Grimston Road. Knight’s Hill is set

on a ferruginous (rust coloured due to iron deposits) ridge, which runs southwards

from the cliffs at Hunstanton. On the northern Parish Boundary, there is wooded

area comprising birch, oak and pine trees. The northern boundary continues its way

past Wootton Common, through Wootton Woods and westwards across the

recreation area of Wootton Park. The latter is a large green sports area with a

variety of trees dotting its perimeter. It is shared with the neighbouring Parish of

North Wootton.

The view from the top of Knight’s Hill, looking westwards, encompasses the village,

as the land falls away towards King’s Lynn and the Wash. Moving down Grimston

Road, on the right, there is a protected Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and to

the left is Sandy Lane, which, in part, marks the southern boundary. Nearby, there is

a copse on rising ground, where nightingales have returned to nest. In this generally

wooded area, the trees are home to owls, woodlarks and woodpeckers. Deer,

muntjac, rabbits and squirrels can also be seen. Further down Grimston Road, on

the left, there is an open space, where the Parish allotments are situated on a soil

structure of sand and clay. The focal point of the village is The Green with the Duck Pond and, close by, the Post Office, the Shops and the Swan Pub. The Green is a large open area with trees and spring flowers spread around. It is a popular area for

dog walkers and for children’s leisure activities such as football and cricket. The Duck Pond is home to a variety of ducks, geese, moorhens and occasional herons and swans. A recently erected information board gives details of the types of birds as well as plants found on The Green. The hedge adjacent to Nursery Lane is currently being restored. Some overgrown ash trees have been removed, others pruned and ‘whips’ planted behind a protective timber fence to provide a multi-species hedge. The present outlook across The Green is in sharp contrast to previous times when it was just an area of rough grazing crossed by a bumpy road with a five-bar gate at each end! As you continue west out of the village, the Parish Boundary crosses farmland towards the marshes. Here, the landscape changes to become flat and low-lying, with a patchwork of fields and dykes. The last piece of farmland regained from the marshes by drainage was achieved in 1967. The salt marshes and the sea defence areas, which border The Wash, are not easily accessible but are designated as Natural Nature Reserves. They host a variety of waders and wildfowl, as they migrate. When the tide recedes, the exposed mudflats are vital feeding areas. Wading birds feed on invertebrates (hidden just below the surface of the mud). Barn owls and Marsh harriers hunt untroubled in this quiet, undisturbed environment. The marsh area can be very dangerous and must

be treated with respect. Creeks fill very quickly as the tide rises. The best viewing

place is at “The Point”, which can be reached along the eastern side of the

riverbank. Here, information boards have been erected to help visitors.

**The Parish Council is determined to look after and protect our village**

**landscape. We wish to retain the extensive, tranquil views over the marshes to**

**The Wash as well as the open areas around the village. In doing so, we hope**

**to provide a lasting heritage for the benefit of future generations.**

**7. Roads and Traffic**

South Wootton is a rural village and many people rely on the use of a car or

Public Transport to get to work, school, shops, doctors, dentists, etc. The Parish

Council has long been concerned about the volume and speed of traffic along

Nursery Lane and on the two major roads, Castle Rising Road and Grimston Road,

which run through the village. This, particularly, since the King’s Lynn town centre

weight restrictions were introduced, which means that all heavy goods vehicles to

and from the docks and the town centre now travel through the village. With new

developments currently under way, the volume of traffic is bound to increase.

Both Castle Rising Road and Nursery Lane are used regularly by commuters

from the Hunstanton area and are also popular routes for parents and children

walking to and from the First and Junior Schools. There is also part of the No.1

National Cycle route, which runs from the village into King’s Lynn town centre.

**Speed Limits**

Although the speed limits on the Castle Rising Road and Grimston Road will not

affect the volume of traffic travelling through the village, some reduction would

improve traffic and pedestrian safety, especially at key points where children

regularly cross these roads to attend the local schools and at the busy junctions at

Langley Road, Grimston Road, Castle Rising Road and the Low Road/ Edward

Benefer Way locations. The County Council has carried out a feasibility study on

works to improve crossing facilities near Hall Lane and our local County Councillor

has been asked to comment. Although there is no firm commitment at present, we

would hope to see a positive outcome for the benefit of all, especially the school

children, in the near future. Any traffic management scheme needs to be carefully

considered to minimise its visual impact on the streetscape, with close liaison and

discussion with the Norfolk County Council Highways Department.

**The Parish Council would like to see the speed limits reduced from 40 to**

**30mph on the two major roads through the village.**

**Parking**

Traffic congestion around the village schools is an ongoing problem caused by

inconsiderate, short term parking on footpaths and other inappropriate areas. The

car park at the Village Hall does provide adequate space if used properly. The

cooperation of parents of children attending both the First and Junior Schools is

essential in order to resolve this problem. An array of signs or yellow lines to

manage parking would be a most unwelcome addition. The Schools Travel Plan,

which is supported by the Schools and the Parish Council, encourages safer

walking and cycling to school. The First School has achieved a national award of full

Healthy School Status.

The Parish Council, in conjunction with Norfolk County Council, has been able to get

a new pedestrian crossing point at the junction of Common Lane and Nursery Lane.

This especially helps parents with children to walk to school more safely and has the

knock-on effect of reducing congestion at the schools. **The Parish Council feels**

**that a safe journey to and from school is imperative and will continue its**

**efforts to seek ways to improve the situation.**

**8. Impact of Utilities and Services**

The village of South Wootton enjoys the benefit of 254 footway lighting columns

situated on the housing estates and along the roads, all owned and maintained

under contract by the Parish Council. The brighter and higher street lights on

Grimston Road and Low Road (as part of the Northern Bypass to the town of King’s

Lynn) and those on the two new housing estates at Wootton Gardens (Blackthorn

Road) and Wootton Meadows (Gap Farm) are owned and maintained by the Norfolk

County Council.

A mobile telephone aerial is situated at the Anglian Water pumping station on

Nursery Lane. When it was first erected, it was subject to great concern and many

complaints as to the possible effects of radiation and a number of protests were

held. Since then, however, no further mention has been made of the mast.

There is a second pumping station situated at Grimston Road and four Electricity

sub-stations are located at Grimston Road, Castle Rising Road, Church Lane and St

Augustine’s Way – none of which attract adverse attention or complaint of any kind.

Dog waste bins are situated throughout the village but are mainly concentrated

around the Green and Wootton Park (which we share with North Wootton). In total,

there are 16 such bins and, each Tuesday morning, they are emptied by workmen

from the Borough Council of King’s Lynn and West Norfolk, at a cost to the Parish

Council.

Litter collection is carried out by the Parish Council’s own Litter Warden on a two

weekly rota system, by the Borough Council occasionally, and by a number of

volunteers throughout the village. Waste bins are strategically placed to assist in the

amount of waste discarded and generally the village is kept neat and tidy at all

times.

Re-cycling bins for glass, cans, newspapers and magazines are situated on the

private car park of the Rainbow Superstore at Langley Road. Whilst they provide a

valuable service, from time to time, they do become littered with plastic bags and

boxes, which are discarded by people using them to transport their recyclables to

the bins.

There are garden waste composting schemes operated by the Borough Council and

by Forward & Futures, an organisation helping people with learning difficulties,

which collects in the village and takes the material to the allotments at nearby North

Lynn for composting. The finished product is then sold back to parishioners and

some has recently been used for planting of trees around the cemetery field.

**All these facilities are of benefit to the village and are funded, where**

**appropriate, by residents through the Parish Precept.**

**9. Guidelines for Development**

A very large majority of South Wootton residents feel that the built-up area

boundary of the village should remain as it is. The most recent housing development

at Wootton Meadows leaves few appropriate areas for any possible future

development. Whilst the need for some more accommodation is recognised, it is

hoped that this could be achieved by extensions to existing houses, conversion of

large properties, further infill and smaller scale development.

**Tenets of Good design**

Good design is,

• of its time and is unique.

• inspired by and reinforces the character of the village.

• tailored to the site and its surroundings.

• sustainable

• followed through to construction and operation.

**New Buildings**

Future developments should be small in scale and similar to the existing density.

The sense of space must not be lost. There is no place for a “crowded in” feel if we

are to achieve and retain the atmosphere of the village. Sufficient space should be

allowed between properties. New buildings should reflect both size and scale of

existing buildings and their position within the building plot. House designs should

avoid monotonous repetition. New developments must recognise and be

sympathetic to established variants of design, scale, density, materials and colour.

They should be in harmony with neighbouring properties. It is preferred that no

building over two storeys in height should be allowed. Planning applications should

show how the development will appear in relation to neighbouring surroundings.

The need for increased services such as water and sewerage, etc. should be

identified and catered for. The following points should be noted:

• New buildings should respect the context of their particular location.

• Care should be taken in the design of larger buildings so that they don’t

dominate their neighbours or adversely affect long views. The scale and pitch

of roofs is a significant factor.

• The relative proportion of walls to windows should take account of local

characteristics. Avoid windows that are overlarge in otherwise traditional

buildings.

• Don’t mix details and building forms from different periods.

• When using locally occurring materials, take account not only of traditional

patterns but the availability of craft skills.

• Choose and combine materials with care. Modern bricks and tiles are often too

bright.

• Garages are important, but avoid prominent siting or building in blocks. Keep

hard standings to a minimum.

• Enclose entrances to driveways carefully, taking account of the immediate

context. Avoid garden walls that are too tall and defensive looking or too small

and urban.

• Shingle for driveways can be a very effective finish. It is locally appropriate and

less urban than an expanse of tarmac.

• Consider the impact of cabling, satellite dishes, aerials, burglar alarms and

security lighting.

**Existing Buildings**

The village is fortunate to have a number of very old properties with distinctive

characteristics, some of which are already designated as listed buildings.

Consideration should be given to other properties, which may be worthy of similar

conservation status. One example is the Old Rectory situated at the corner of Hall

Lane and Low Road. The external façade is Victorian in design and, indeed, the

property is shown on the 1850 Inclosure Award map together with some out

buildings. Interestingly, at that time, Hall Lane is listed as Rectory Road. In 1973, a

post-medieval three legged ceramic skillet (cooking pot - now located in the King’s

Lynn Museum) was dug up in the grounds of the property, which suggests that it

may have much earlier connections.

Any extensions to existing properties should always retain the character of the

original building in terms of dimensions, design and building materials. They should

be clearly subordinate to the size of the original building and its land area. Window

design and materials should be the same as the original building and roof height no

greater than that of the original property

In considering the conversion of garages to living accommodation, there should be

adequate off-road parking available without the need to create additional hard

standing. The following points should also be noted.

• When repairing or re-pointing walls choose all materials carefully. Size and

shape of flints, pebbles and bricks together with colour and type of mortar will

all be important.

• Replacement doors and windows should match original ones and new inserts

should be appropriately sized in proportion to facades.

• Sash windows with glazing bars are better than large expanses of glass.

• Wooden windows are easier to produce to size than UPVC framed ones and

easier to repair. Protected with modern paints they can last as long.

• When adding a roof extension or a dormer window it should be carefully

integrated, use the same tiling materials, consider the appearance of the

gable wall and incorporate any brickwork patterns with care. Flat roofs are not

traditional forms and can be unsightly.

• Consider the overall effect of an extension (or, indeed, an extension of an

extension), including the impact of balconies and escape stairs.

• When proposing to render buildings just to tidy them up, be aware that details

of previous work can be very interesting and worth preserving.

• Consider the impact of cabling, satellite dishes, aerials, burglar alarms and

security lighting on traditional buildings.

**Affordable/Low-Cost Housing**

The Government is committed to improving access for all to decent accommodation

at an affordable price. It recognises that the key to making this happen in rural

communities are the rural communities themselves. Landowners must make land

available and local planning authorities must make full use of the powers at their

disposal. Local people must be prepared to support appropriate development. It will

encourage developers, local authorities and housing associations to work together

to provide affordable housing in new developments, either for rent, part rent/part buy

or private purchase. The Parish Council would welcome the opportunity to be

involved with such co-operation at an early stage.

The Parish Council recognises the need for affordable low-cost housing in South

Wootton with a view to enhancing the diversity of the population of the village and

enabling local people to remain in the area. There is a need to balance this against

the high value placed by many residents on the maintenance of open spaces and a

sympathetic environment. Already some affordable homes have been included in

the recent developments at Wootton Gardens and Wootton Meadows. As previously

indicated, the Parish Council will welcome early discussion with developers and the

planning authorities on the location and number of affordable homes within a

development in South Wootton.

**Flood Risk**

In the light of the summer 2007 flooding in several parts of the country, concerns

have been expressed about the potential for flooding within the parish boundary of

South Wootton. Information on the Environment Agency’s website (dated 2006)

shows that the chance of flooding each year in South Wootton is low, i.e 0.5% or

less, but this is largely due to the presence of sea defences situated along the river

Great Ouse at the western edge of the parish boundary, It is important, therefore,

that these defences are regularly inspected and properly maintained in order to

continue to provide adequate protection in the future.

It is also of paramount importance that agencies such as the Anglian Water

Authority, the Environment Agency and the Internal Drainage Board together with

the planning authorities and developers ensure that the infrastructure is sufficient to

cater for new developments and any incidences of heavy rain in the future. Where

development takes place, it will be necessary to quantify the risk and to establish

that proposals are adequate to cover the risk.

**Parking Arrangements**

Parking considerations and the existing pressure of on-road parking should be taken

into account for new and existing building development. The visual impact of parking

areas should be minimised. There is a high level of car ownership and reluctance to

use public transport can create road safety hazards. The needs of the car should

not dominate the design of buildings. Parking and garaging should be provided in

such a way as to ensure that they do not dominate the frontages of properties. The

consequences of garage conversions for accommodation on parking should be

taken into account.

**Lighting**

Public and private external lighting should be environmentally sensitive to power

consumption and light levels to alleviate light pollution.

**Landscaping**

Developments should specify landscaping proposals. The location and character of

the existing footpath network should be protected, as should existing grass verges.

New developments should be encouraged to incorporate these. It is important that

open spaces are maintained to reflect the character and evolution of the village and,

where appropriate, protected as conservation areas. For example, owners of land

that is not capable of being developed for good reason will be encouraged to make

them conversation type areas with tree and other planting.

Existing trees should be protected and planting of native/heritage trees in

appropriate verges and hedgerows should be encouraged to enhance the

landscape. Tree Preservation Orders can be sought where appropriate and a review

and update of these should be carried out.

**Boundary Fencing**

The use of trees and shrubs rather than wire or panel fencing should be encouraged

and safeguarded. They must be maintained so as not to be dangerous or encroach

onto footpaths. Wooden field gates at drive entrances are a more natural feature of

a rural area rather than wrought iron gates with brick piers and high walls or tall,

impenetrable, security gates.

**Public Spaces**

There should be no reduction of existing public open spaces or footpaths and

development should not impinge on them. Any new development should

incorporate new green spaces and recreational areas where appropriate. As

previously mentioned in the Inclosure Award of 1851, The Green was placed in trust

as a place of exercise and recreation for the inhabitants of the Parish and

neighbourhood. Then, in 1976, the Parish Council, as owners, had The Green listed

in the Register of Town or Village Greens (Commons Registration Act 1963). The

Green should be preserved in its present size and character for future generations.

Also, Wootton Park as a recreational area shared with North Wootton, should be

safeguarded and retained.

**Approaches to the Village**

Approaches to the village should remain welcoming and avoid a stereotypical

suburban look. Any developments on the edges of South Wootton should merge

into farmland rather than abrupt lines of housing. Planting of native trees and

hedgerows on the edge of the village to retain a rural landscape character should be

considered.

**Sustainability**

Sustainable development does not mean curtailing development, it merely means

thinking about achieving development objectives in new ways, which do not damage

the environment. It recognises the needs of everyone whilst giving effective

protection of the environment with prudent use of resources. New buildings should

be constructed of materials that use low amounts of energy in their manufacture and

are recyclable. Developers should be required to demonstrate a neutral effect on the

environment in respect of the management of rainwater run-off and the use of grey

water. The use of solar panels should be encouraged and incorporated whenever

appropriate.

**Planners, developers, architects and builders, when considering any future**

**developments, should take note of the above guidelines, which reflect the**

**views and aspirations of South Wootton residents. Otherwise, the Parish**

**Council, on behalf of the residents, will not be able to support their**

**applications.**

**Consultation Process**

The South Wootton Parish Design Statement has been produced by the Parish

Council from information provided by village residents. More than 70% of residents

responded to a survey asking for their views on living in the village and their

concerns about and aspirations for any future development. This information was

incorporated into the Parish Plan, which was published in 2004. The Parish Plan

indicated that a Design Statement would be produced at a later date and

preparation began in January 2007. The information from the earlier survey was

deemed to be still relevant and together with more recent additions from residents

forms the basis of the present Design Statement.

Progress was communicated to residents via the monthly ‘Contact’ Parish church

magazine, the quarterly Parish Newsletter and the annual Parish Assembly meeting

held at the end of April. In addition, an Open Day was held in July at the Parish

Office Meeting room to allow residents to view a draft of the Design Statement and

to record their comments.

The Open Day was well attended and a number of the comments made by

residents have been incorporated into the final document. In addition, copies

of the draft document have been sent to Norfolk County Council and the

Borough Council of King’s Lynn and West Norfolk for their consideration. A

meeting was subsequently held with two officers of the Borough Council

who gave valuable advice and some helpful suggestions, which have also

been included in the final document.

**Acknowledgements**

The South Wootton Parish Council would like to thank all residents of the village for

their help and support in the preparation of the Parish Design Statement and, in

particular, to gratefully acknowledge the contributions and assistance of the

following.

Co-editors: David Price

Tracey Cornwell (Parish Clerk)

Contributors: Ivan Jordan (Deputy Clerk)

John Smallwood (Parish Council Chairman)

Charles Richman

Kay Bolton

Mike Narborough

David Tate

The Parish Council Planning Committee

Photography: Michael Brindle

Kay Bolton

Exhibition Stands: The Borough Council of King’s Lynn and West Norfolk

Funding: Contribution from Norfolk Rural Community Council

Finally many thanks to the distributors of the Parish Newsletters

and the Open Day leaflets.