

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<p><b>1. Heritage</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- An important example of a medieval village. Over 300 listed buildings.</li> <li>- Local specialised knowledge of historic built environment e.g. Suffolk Preservation Society</li> </ul> <p><b>2. Landscape</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Unique landscape that contributes significantly to the setting of the historic settlement</li> </ul> <p><b>3. Built Environment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A strong built environment character</li> <li>- Historic and attractive buildings line the main routes in and out of the village core. Modern housing tends to be located behind this frontage.</li> <li>- Strong rural backdrop to settlement</li> </ul> <p><b>4. Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pre-school plus primary education</li> <li>- Lavenham Forest School</li> </ul> <p><b>5. Housing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New homes are and have been built in the village in line with district requirements (subject to success of Local Plan at examination this could mean less pressure for more locally)</li> <li>- Peek close – an example of successful community-led housing</li> <li>- Sheltered housing stock</li> </ul> <p><b>6. A core village providing, shops, services and community infrastructure for parish and hinterland villages beyond.</b></p> <p><b>7. Local economy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strong tourism market</li> </ul> <p><b>8. Neighbourhood Plan and the Lavenham Character Assessment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Neighbourhood Plan 1 which has the broad support of the community</li> </ul> <p><b>9. A vibrant and dynamic Community</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A strong volunteer sector (although lower representation from families and younger generation)</li> <li>- A diversity of clubs and interest groups</li> <li>- Churches (providing a spiritual function plus social and community function (concerts, play groups, volunteers))</li> <li>- The salvation army</li> </ul>	<p><b>1. Demographics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Imbalanced parish demographics with an increasingly older population</li> </ul> <p><b>2. Housing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cost of housing out of reach of many</li> <li>- Lack of smaller homes suitable for downsizing and younger families (to be confirmed through up to date evidence)</li> </ul> <p><b>3. Traffic</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Problematic traffic volumes</li> <li>- Conflict between different users (parked cars, HGV vehicles, coaches)</li> <li>- Difficult for vehicles to pass each other safely in village centre</li> <li>- Lack of off-street parking available for business owners and residents. Many on street spaces occupied all day by business owners.</li> <li>- Lack of off-street parking to serve both residents and visitors on busy days</li> </ul> <p><b>4. Built Environment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Some completed housing developments are considered to adversely impact rural backdrop to historic village, landscape character, views and actually created new hard edges directly onto open farmland (not in line with Policy ENV1, D1 and D2)</li> </ul> <p><b>5. Development standards</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of a strong design code to apply specifically to Lavenham parish</li> <li>- Too many recently completed schemes are considered generic in their appearance (could be built anywhere) and lack distinctiveness.</li> <li>- Recently completed schemes have failed to respond adequately to the climate change challenge</li> </ul> <p><b>6. Infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Primary school on constrained site</li> <li>- Not a fully functioning GP surgery?</li> </ul> <p><b>7. Poor public transport provision</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Infrequent bus service</li> </ul> <p><b>8. Flooding</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Flooding of roads and footpaths near and adjacent to River Brett</li> </ul> <p><b>9. Neighbourhood Plan</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not 100% successful at stopping insensitive development. Need to explore the reasons why.</li> </ul>

## **THREATS**

### **1. Climate Change**

- Local flooding
- Dry summers
- Wet winters
- Cost of energy and fuel poverty
- New development coming through that does not adequately address climate change through appropriate design, adaptation and mitigation measures

#### **1.1 Environment & Biodiversity**

- Run off causing pollution into River Brett
- Poor water quality in River Brett
- Increase in wood-burning stoves and local air pollution
- Farming practices in the parish potentially exacerbating problems created through local flooding

### **2. Heritage**

- Heritage assets could be harmed as a result of insensitive development including damage to the rural interface to historic village edges.
- Heritage assets could be harmed as a result of traffic movements.

### **3. Landscape**

- Removal of Special Landscape Area policy from Local Plan as emerging plan comes to fruition.
- Insensitive development that adversely impacts important views and landscape character

### **4. Built environment**

- Poor or inappropriate design diluting and undermining Lavenham's unique character
- Village gateways into the village being spoiled
- Village "sprawl" spoiling setting of historic settlement in the landscape
- Erosion of the rural backdrop to the village
- Fragmentation of village morale and community spirit

### **5. Local economy**

- Damage to Lavenham's uniqueness could damage the tourism market

### **6. Community infrastructure**

- Demographics (imbalanced parish demographics with an increasingly older population) could lead to unviable schools, in turn leading to school closures.
- Cutbacks and centralisation (by facilities/services providers) leading to withdrawal of schools, GP surgery, post office, pharmacy, dentist, bus service, hairdressers, laundry.
- Slowness in payment of CIL charges (by developer to Babergh) following commencement of development proposals.
- Slowness in release of CIL monies from Babergh to Lavenham

### **7. Growth in electric charging points**

- Whilst good in principle, there is a need to manage delivery especially in light of businesses and residents without off street parking facilities.

### **8. Uncertain policy context at national and local level**

- Current delays in Local Plan examination
- 2020 Planning White Paper proposes radical reform to the planning system in England.

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

### **1. Lavenham to become a LEAD PLAYER in addressing climate change at the LOCAL LEVEL**

- Increase the use of environmental features in new build and infrastructure (e.g. solar panels, SuDs that meet four sustainability pillars i) reducing water consumption ii) protecting/improving water quality in waterways iii) deliver biodiversity benefits iv) providing amenity
- New build to exceed building regs, future proofed against climate change
- Work with local stakeholders (EA, Suffolk County Council), landowners to develop a flood management plan specific to the parish.
- Potentially a Lavenham specific policy on Green Infrastructure

### **2. Heritage**

- Lead the way in addressing climate change challenges specific to the historic environment
- Compile a list of non-designated heritage assets (plus stronger policy approach on design and landscape see below)
- Increase access to knowledge and resources on local heritage

### **3. Environment**

- Local action to conserve existing countryside hedgerows and small areas of woodland
- Engage with EA to encourage regular maintenance of River Brett
- Work more closely with local farmers
- Improve recycling infrastructure in main car park
- All new development schemes to deliver net gains in biodiversity

### **4. Landscape:**

- Review NP1 policies, explore how policies are referenced in planning applications and strengthen approach accordingly

### **5. Built environment**

- Provide clearer and stronger design guidance (including how to build more sustainably and achieve ambitious sustainable design and construction standards) to help applicants and local authority planners
- Lavenham specific design and landscape policies tied strongly to guidance

### **6. Infrastructure**

- New infrastructure alongside new development e.g. allotments
- Amenities alongside new development e.g. street furniture, improved street scene signage

### **7. Strengthen the role of the core village, providing shops, services and community infrastructure for parish and hinterland villages beyond.**

- Increase access through provision of reserved disabled parking e.g. in the Market Square
- Support continued maintenance and improvements of public toilets, street cleaning and other services

### **8. Traffic**

- Increase electric car charging infrastructure (private and public provision)
- Introduce 20mph speed limit
- Limit access to heavy goods vehicles in Lavenham (outside scope of planning policies)
- Introduce residents parking permits
- Liaise constructively with local businesses to seek mutually beneficial car parking solutions
- Continue NP1 Projects 2, 3, 4 and 5

### **9. Improve outdoor recreation facilities**

- Manage and improve quality of footpath provision (Project 10)