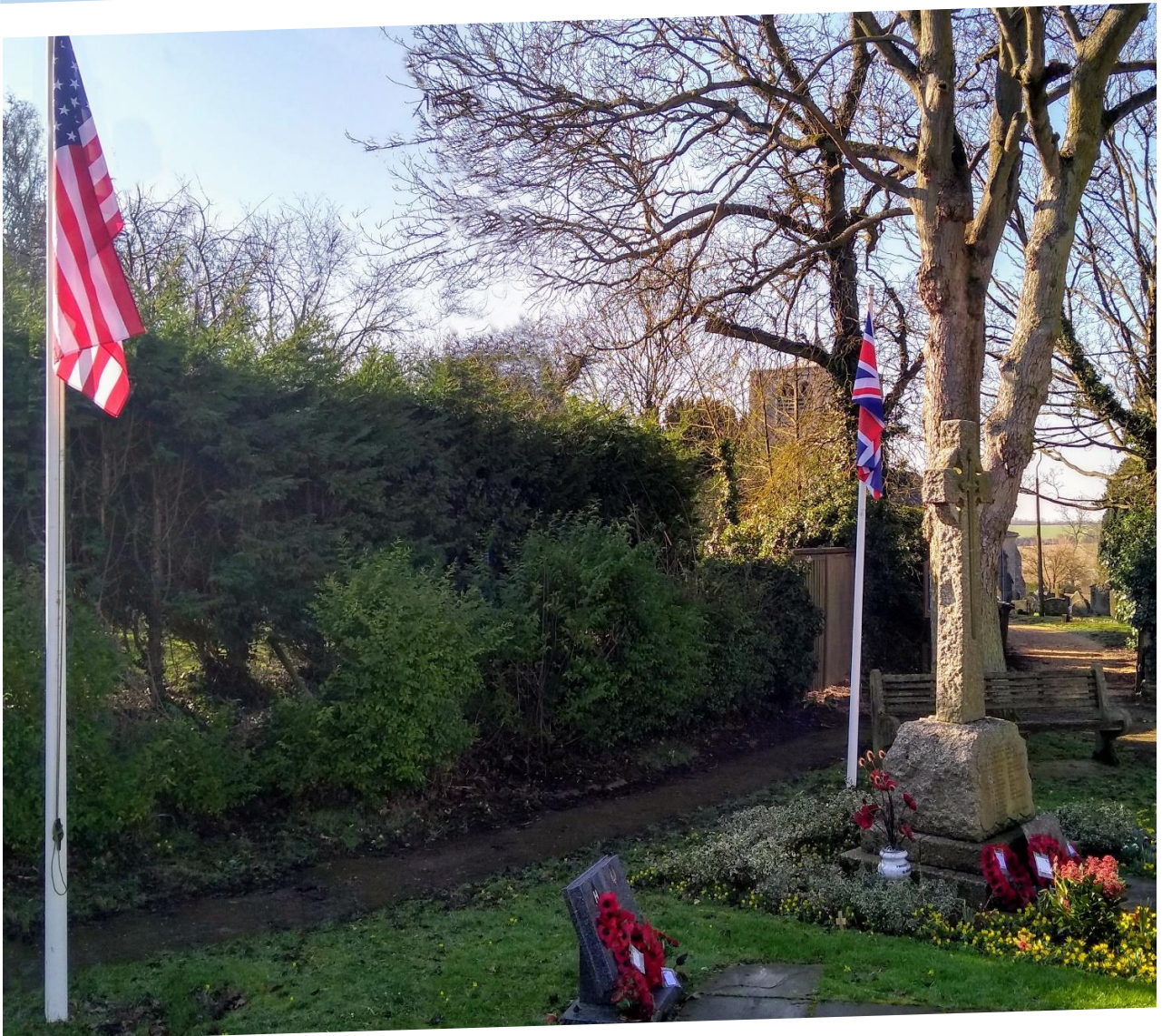


# Thurleigh

## Neighbourhood Development Plan

Submission Version



March 2020

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# 1

## VILLAGE HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Thurleigh is an ancient parish, about 6 miles north of Bedford and covers an area of about 3400 acres. The land is undulating boulder clay, ranging in height from 200 ft. to 275 ft. above sea level. The countryside around is in the main used for arable farming. There are only minor roads in the parish, though the A6 is just a few miles away to the west.
- 1.2 The name 'Thurleigh' is believed to have originated from the Saxon words La Lega meaning 'the clearing'.
- 1.3 The village has a population of approximately 750 people with about 300 dwellings spread over 5 'ends'- Church End, Cross End, Scald End, Backnoe End and Park End. The village has a strong rural character and is surrounded by working farms and open countryside with about 30 miles of footpaths and bridleways.
- 1.4 The Parish Church of St Peter is a grade II\* listed building, dating from approximately 1130, probably built on the site of a Saxon church and with 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century additions and restored in the 1880s. Thurleigh Castle, a designated Scheduled Monument, was a medieval timber, motte and bailey, castle but only earthworks survive today. Other listed buildings include a windmill tower, built c 1890, and dwellings dating mainly from the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The Baptist Church was built in 1888- although this has subsequently been decommissioned as a chapel and is to be developed.



- 1.5 To the north of the village lies a former airfield and defence establishment (RAE Thurleigh), which now accommodates Thurleigh Business Park and Bedford Aerodrome, a motor sport venue and hospitality centre. The business park is progressively being developed for mixed industrial usage. Development of the airfield site in general is subject to policies directly under the control of Bedford Borough Council and as such is not covered in this Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- 1.6 The airfield was constructed in 1941 and, after a short tenure by the RAF, the base became home to USAAF 8<sup>th</sup> Airforce 306<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group from 1942 to December 1945. A memorial to the 306<sup>th</sup> that originally stood in the village has since moved to the 306<sup>th</sup> Museum in 2011 with an additional small memorial installed next to the village War memorial on the High Street. Both memorials are situated near the church in the village conservation area.
- 1.7 The Old 'Officers' Club on Keysoe Road is a further reminder of the former airfield. This brownfield site is now owned by St Modwens PLC.
- 1.8 There is a real commitment to ensure that local facilities and services are available to ensure a high quality of life for both current and future residents. Thurleigh Primary School and Pre-School offer excellent provision for the village's children. Older children are served by Sharnbrook Academy.

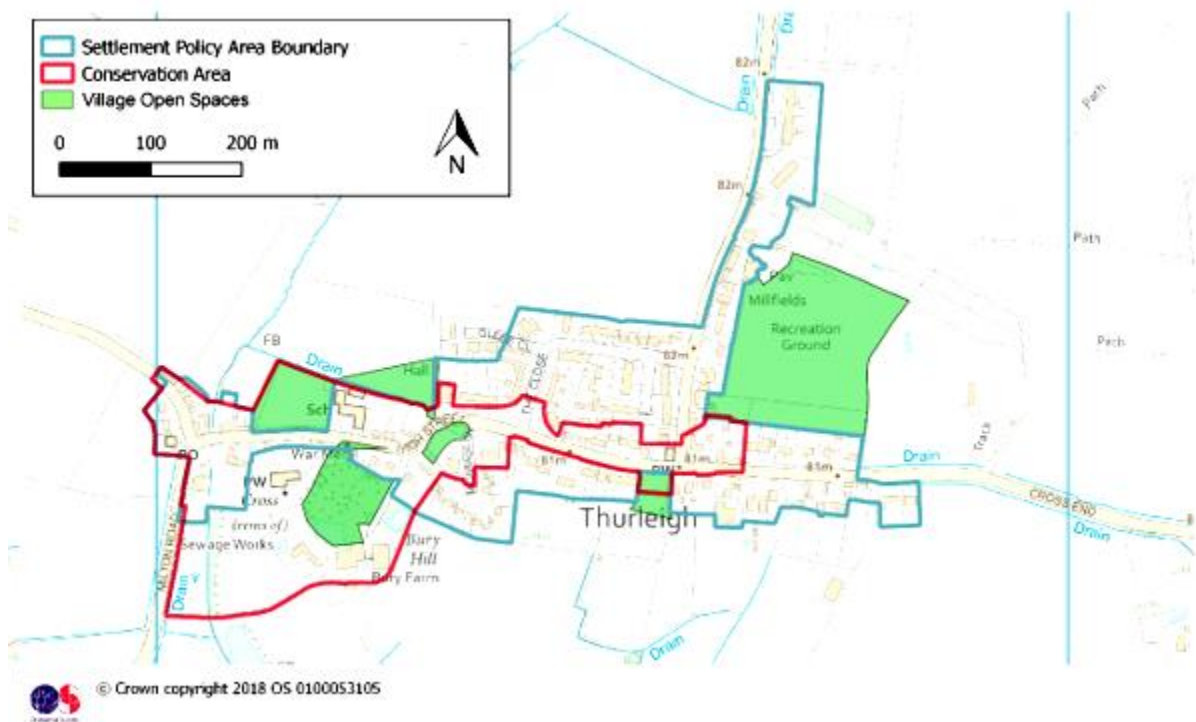
# 2

## VISION AND SETTLEMENT MAPS

- 2.1 It is essential that any further development in the village maintains the special characteristics of the village and the following Vision Statement has been agreed for the Neighbourhood Development Plan:

***“We passionately believe that Thurleigh is a special, quiet village with a real sense of community. Any future development should, therefore, be sustainable and sensitive, respecting the character of our Village and protecting its beauty, vitality and the natural environment. Thurleigh must retain its distinctive characteristics and continue to grow as a strong, thriving and vibrant place in which to live, work and visit”.***

- 2.2 The existing settlement is defined by the designated Settlement Policy Area (SPA). SPA boundaries were first defined in the Bedford Borough Local Plan (2002) for villages with a built up character to identify the main built up part of the settlement; undeveloped areas or more loosely knit development were excluded from the SPA but the fact that they are outside the SPA is not to imply that they are not part of the village, merely that they are not within the main built-up area.



**MAP 1 - THURLEIGH SETTLEMENT POLICY AREA**

# 3

## NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLANS

### What is a Neighbourhood Development Plan?

- 3.1 Communities now have new powers to shape development through neighbourhood planning, a new right introduced through the Localism Act 2011.
- 3.2 A Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) can set out a vision for an area with planning policies for the use and development of land. A NDP will form part of the statutory planning framework for the area, and the policies and proposals contained within it will be used in the determination of planning applications.
- 3.3 In January 2013, Thurleigh Parish Council applied for the designation of the whole of the Thurleigh Parish as a Neighbourhood area and this was approved 1<sup>st</sup> July 2013. A Neighbourhood Plan Working Group was set up comprising Parish Councillors and interested local residents to take forward the development of the Plan and the Working Group has been committed to effective community engagement at all stages of the process.

### The Plan Period

- 3.4 The NDP will cover the period up to 2030 to align with the plan period for the Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030.



# 4

## NATIONAL AND LOCAL PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

### The Basic Conditions

- 4.1 The Localism Act 2011 stipulates that a Neighbourhood Development Plan must meet certain basic conditions before it can come into force. After being submitted to the relevant local planning authority an independent examiner will be appointed to assess whether the plan has met these basic conditions. If the examiner concludes the basic conditions have not been met, the plan will not go forward to referendum.
- 4.2 The basic conditions state that the plan:
- must have regard to national policies and advice, such as the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF);
  - must be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan for the area, which includes any adopted local plans;
  - should contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
  - should be compatible with European obligations and human rights requirements, and
  - must ensure that prescribed conditions are met in relation to the plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the Neighbourhood Plan<sup>1</sup>

### National Planning Policies

- 4.3 The Thurleigh Neighbourhood Plan has been developed with regard to national policy, especially the National Planning Policy Framework. The Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and came into effect in March 2012. It contains core planning principles which must underpin all plan-making. It provides the basis for local planning authorities to prepare their Local Plans and for communities producing Neighbourhood Plans.
- 4.4 The Framework states that Neighbourhood Plans should support the strategic development needs of the wider area set out in the Local Plan. They should not promote less development or undermine Local Plan strategic policies. It adds that Neighbourhood Plans should plan positively to shape and direct development that is outside the strategic elements of the Local Plan.

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<sup>1</sup>The prescribed condition is that the 'making' of the neighbourhood plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2012) or a European offshore marine site (as defined in the Offshore Marine Conservation (natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 2009) (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects)

- 4.5 The Thurleigh Neighbourhood Plan must also be mindful of Planning Practice Guidance, which was published by the Government in 2014. The Guidance explains how national policy should be applied.

#### The Development Plan

- 4.6 The Thurleigh Neighbourhood Plan must also be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area.
- 4.7 The main Bedford Borough Development Plan documents at the time of writing the Neighbourhood Plan comprise of:
- i. Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013
  - ii. Saved policies in the Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2005
  - iii. Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Strategic Sites and Policies 2014
  - iv. Policies Map
  - v. Bedford Borough Council Local Plan 2030
- 4.8 Other documents that support the plan include:
- vi. Statement of Community Involvement 2013
  - vii. Planning for Traveller Sites
  - viii. Climate Change and Pollution 2009
  - ix. Community Infrastructure Levy
  - x. Open Space SPD
  - xi. Planning Obligations SPD
  - xii. Community Safety SPD
  - xiii. Mobility Housing SPD
  - xiv. Parking Standards for Sustainable Communities SPD
  - xv. Wind Turbines Guidance Note
  - xvi. Policy Statement Housing Standards Update
  - xvii. Shop-fronts and Advertisements in Conservation Areas

#### Policies

- 4.9 The following Bedford Borough Development Plan policies are of particular relevance to the designated Thurleigh Neighbourhood Plan area:

##### Allocations and Designations Plan (2013)

AD40 Village Open Spaces and Views

##### Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030

2S Healthy communities  
3S Spatial Strategy  
5S Development in villages with a Settlement Policy Area



6	Development in Small Settlements
7S	Development in the Countryside
28S	Place Making
29	Design quality and principles
30-33	The Impact of Development
37	Landscape Character
38	Landscaping in New Development
39	Retention of Trees
40	Hedgerows
41S-	Historic environment and Heritage Assets
42S	Protecting biodiversity and geodiversity
43	Enhancing biodiversity
45	Local Green Spaces
46S	Use of previously developed land and use of undeveloped land
53	Development layout and accessibility
57	Renewable energy – general impact
58S	Affordable Housing
59S	Housing Mix
65	Reuse of rural buildings in the countryside
67	Affordable housing to meet local needs in the rural area
75	New employment development in the countryside
91	Access to the countryside
94	Broadband

- 4.10 The Policies Map defines the settlement policy area for the village within which the principle of new housing development is accepted. Part of the historic core of the village is designated a conservation area. The other key designations and constraints include six Village Open Spaces and land which falls within a designated flood zone. Outside of the village envelope new development will be strictly controlled.
- 4.11 The Thurleigh Neighbourhood Plan has been drafted concurrently with the preparation of the Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030, which was adopted in January 2020.
- 4.12 The Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030 does not require land allocation from villages such as Thurleigh to meet the development strategy but permits local areas to bring forward development through the neighbourhood planning process. The parish of Thurleigh have indicated the preparedness to allocate land for up to 30 new homes in the local plan period to 2030 to help sustain local services.

### Sustainable Development

- 4.13 The National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (paragraph 8) states that:

*“Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has 3 overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):*

- ***an economic objective*** – *to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure*

- **a social objective** – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and
- **an environmental objective** – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy”

#### EU Obligations

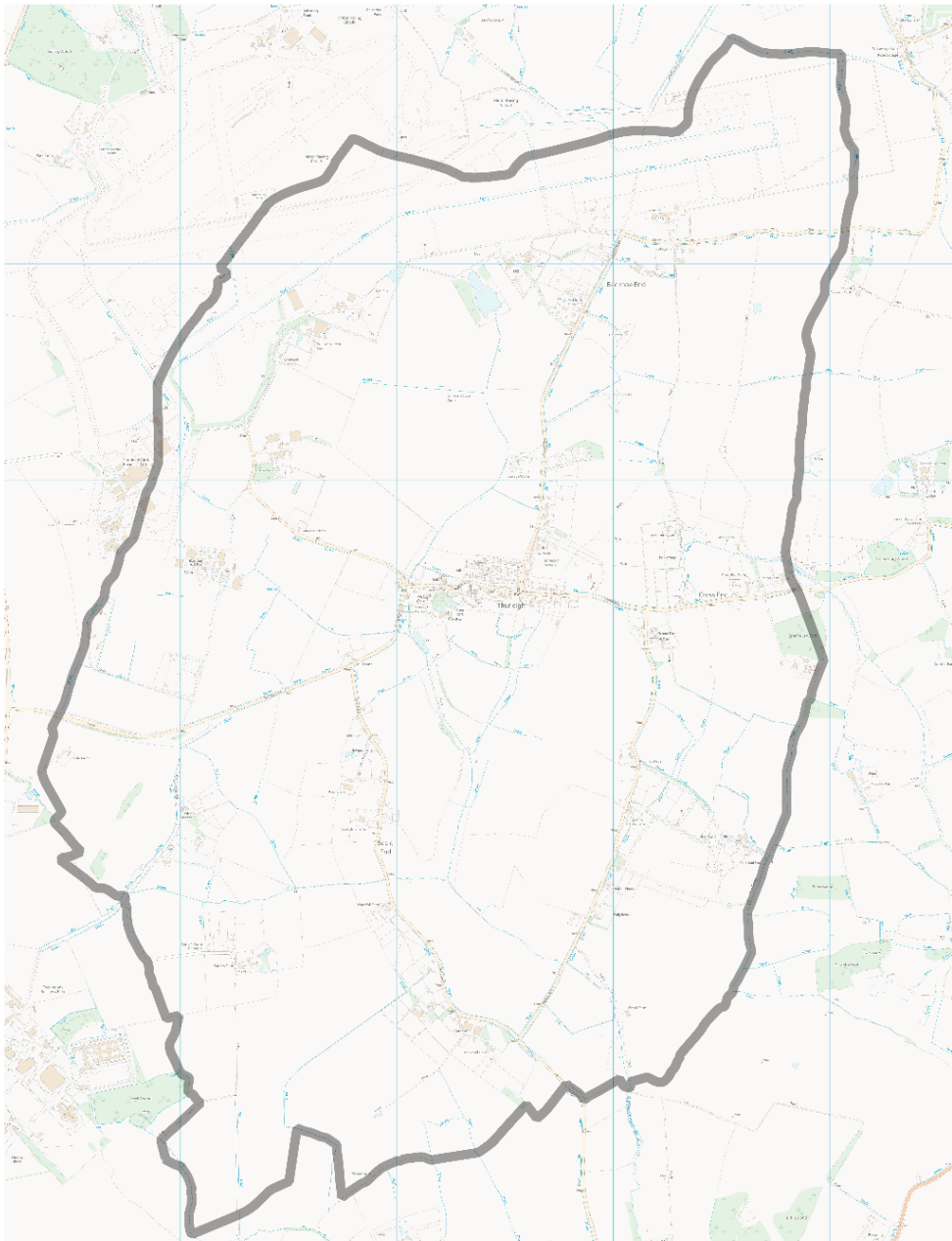
- 4.14 A number of EU obligations are relevant to the Thurleigh Neighbourhood Plan. In particular the Borough Council will ‘screen’ the plan and ascertain whether the policies and proposals give rise to significant environmental effects and trigger the need to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment. It is not anticipated, however, that this will be required. However a Habitat Risk Assessment is required and this can be found on the website [www.thurleighndp.com](http://www.thurleighndp.com)
- 4.15 The Thurleigh Neighbourhood Development Plan is drafted to embrace these principles of sustainable development and the core planning principles set out in the NPPF, in so far as they can be applied to the Parish. In summary, these core principles applied to plan making a decision taking are defined as -
- Being a genuinely plan-led system.
  - Being a creative exercise, not just one of scrutiny.
  - Being proactive in driving and supporting sustainable development
  - Seeking and securing high quality.
  - Taking account of the diverse character of different areas
  - Supporting the transition to a climate-resilient, low –carbon economy.
  - Contributing to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution.
  - Encouraging the use of brownfield land.
  - Encouraging mixed use development.
  - Conserving heritage.
  - Maximising the use of public transport, walking and cycling.
  - Supporting health, social and cultural wellbeing.

# 5

## THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AREA

- 5.1 The Boundary of the Thurleigh Neighbourhood Plan Area corresponds to the Parish Boundary as identified in the map below:

### Application for the designation of Thurleigh as a neighbourhood area.



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# 6

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

6.1 Consultation has been undertaken in a variety of formats to inform the development of the Neighbourhood Plan and the policies it provides. The Working Group agreed a Community Consultation Strategy in November 2014, a copy of which can be found at [www.thurleighndp.com](http://www.thurleighndp.com)

6.2 Consultation was undertaken using a variety of methods including:

- A "Launch Event" to promote local awareness about the Neighbourhood Plan was held on 1 December 2014 at Thurleigh Village Hall.
- During July and June 2015 a community questionnaire was distributed to all housing (including a draft Vision and Objectives).
- In May 2016 a Community Consultation Event to promote the findings of the questionnaire.
- In November and December 2016 a community consultation was held to obtain feedback on options and initial ideas for inclusion in the draft plan.
- Consultation October 2018 via Facebook to regenerate interest in the plan.

6.3 Issues that were raised at the various consultations were used to inform the vision and objectives for the NDP. Details of the feedback from the various consultations can be found at [www.thurleighndp.com](http://www.thurleighndp.com)

6.4 Publicity for events was undertaken in the Parish newsletter, social media and websites with leaflets and questionnaires also delivered to all residents and businesses.

6.5 At the launch event, a number of main themes emerged. These were considered and grouped to create Objectives for further consultation exercises:-

### 6.5.1 Housing

- (i) There is a need for more affordable housing in the village which means for both young people and the elderly. This was very much aimed at existing residents rather than attracting incomers.
- (ii) Suggestions as to location included: demolishing the flats in The Close and building bungalows, developing the Officers' Mess site, Hayle Field and Church field. As well as providing (affordable) accommodation for existing residents, there was also an acknowledgement that increasing the housing stock would help retain existing facilities, including re-instating the pub, and perhaps attract further facilities.
- (iii) Many respondents were keen on a small shop being available in the centre of the

village.

- (iv) Coupled with the development of housing is the need to ensure sufficient/additional parking; this is a real issue in The Close and Keysoe Road.

#### 6.5.2 Traffic

- (i) Many concerns were raised about the village being used as a thoroughfare for much traffic, both East-West and as an alternative to the A6. General feeling that there is a need for speed reduction schemes that might include average speed cameras, traffic calming (especially around school/Village Hall High Street area) and further speed limits.

#### 6.5.3 Broadband

- (i) A very high number of respondents wanted the introduction of high speed broadband to the village. Since the consultation, through the Borough Council superfast broadband initiative, in conjunction with BT, this is now installed in the main areas of the village, although the outlying 'Ends' still have poor service.

#### 6.5.4 Young People

- (i) There was a general feeling that there is a need for more opportunities/facilities for young people within the village.

#### 6.5.5 Sense of Community

- (i) Many respondents highlighted the need for a greater sense of community, which could include developing more community facilities, better use of Village Hall for activities, develop Community Garden/allotments.
- (ii) Retaining the school is a key part of developing the community and perhaps utilising its facilities.
- (iii) Look at the skills that residents can offer.

#### 6.5.6 Access

- (i) Maintain safe footpaths and provide additional access e.g. footpath from village to Cross End. Coupled with this, the need for additional public transport.

#### 6.5.7 Heritage

- (i) Make better use of the Church, perhaps illuminate it as a feature.
- (ii) Open up access to Bury Hill.
- (iii) Protect trees.

#### 6.5.8 Environment

- (i) Plant more trees.
- (ii) Have more pride in the village.
- (iii) Promote footpaths and bridleways and consider wildlife area.

- (iv) Maintain the rural nature of the village.
- 6.6 The Thurleigh NDP aims to identify the challenges and changes that face all parts of the Parish, for whilst the community embraces new initiatives and welcomes innovation, it is fiercely protective of its unique culture and heritage and the community spirit that it generates.
- 6.7 The initial consultation processes provided vital information to identify to understand the key issues of residents and what the community thinks about the local area. The feedback provided, coupled with other evidence gathered through the process, has enabled options to be identified and proposals formulated to respond to the key issues, including ideas on locations for growth.
- 6.8 A further consultation was held on issues and options arising from the initial consultation, and these further helped form the NDP. Details can be found at [www.thurleighndp.com](http://www.thurleighndp.com)
- 6.9 The Neighbourhood Plan must conform to Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030. It is accepted that development and change is necessary if the village is to remain a vital and attractive place in which to live and work. The Neighbourhood Plan also provides an opportunity to address some of the future needs of the Parish and includes a range of Non Land Policy Actions that have been identified through the neighbourhood planning process. .

# 7

## CORE OBJECTIVES

7.1 The core objectives of the NDP are based on the key issues raised by local people

7.2 Core Objectives were established as follows:

1. Housing:
  - delivering housing which both sustains the current and meets the future needs of the community;
2. Infrastructure needs:
  - managing both existing and future infrastructure requirements
  - encouraging safe and sustainable movement;
3. Green spaces:
  - protecting and enhancing our existing and future open spaces;
4. Village facilities:
  - ensuring that the village benefits from sufficient facilities and services;
5. Business & employment:
  - identifying development opportunities to provide further employment within the village whilst safeguarding existing employment provision for the community;
6. Young people:
  - ensuring that the village benefits from sufficient facilities and services for young people;
7. Local distinctiveness:
  - encouraging and supporting our distinctive landscape which contributes to a sense of place and community, including natural features such as small woodlands, in-field trees, hedgerows, ponds and streams which distinguish the parish;
8. Heritage:
  - Preserving the special interest of our listed buildings and their settings; preserve or enhance the special interest of the conservation area and protecting the scheduled (ancient) Monument of Bury Hill Camp as well as other archaeological sites within the Parish.
9. Wider Environment:
  - The plan will ensure that there are no negative likely significant effects relating to the Water Framework Directive nor to European sites designated under European Directive (92/43/EEC)

# 8

## POLICIES

### **HOUSING POLICIES**

#### Delivering Housing Growth

- 8.1 Thurleigh has a range of housing types and sizes. One of the NDP core objectives is the delivery of housing which both sustains the current and meets the future needs of the community.
- 8.2 A number of options were consulted on during November and December 2016 to respond to the following key issues that had been highlighted during the original consultation in June/July 2015:
- The need for a better mix of housing (tenure and price);
  - No major growth due to the impact on the infrastructure;
  - Small and medium scale housing developments to meet identified need, growth targets and help sustain local services and facilities;
  - Some provision of affordable homes for existing and future residents;
  - The need to ensure that the village retains its character, rural atmosphere and, in particular, respect environmental and heritage features;
  - Any new housing should help to broaden the range of stock available in the Parish;
  - The type, tenure and cost of new housing should meet the housing needs of the local area.
- 8.3 In general terms the village aims to deliver a housing growth strategy tailored to the needs and context of Thurleigh, ensuring that a mix of housing types is delivered across all tenures.
- 8.4 The provision of a range of property types, sizes and tenure in new build development would provide all households in need, and in particular younger and older people, the opportunity to move to more appropriate properties. This would create secondary gains through making best use of the existing housing stock by addressing under-occupation and promoting improvements in the rate of turnover of existing family units. This would be further enhanced if specialist accommodation to meet the changing requirements of the increasing older population was provided.
- 8.5 The provision of a mix of housing size and type to meet local need is further supported by the Borough Council Local Plan 2030 (policy 4S).
- 8.6 In addition, Policy 58S confirms that on sites of 10 or more residential units or 0.5 hectares or more will provide 30% affordable housing with 78% of the dwellings as social or affordable rented properties and the remainder (22%) as other forms of affordable housing. The preamble text to this policy confirms that there is a significant need for affordable housing in the borough and the fact that the Plan makes no allocations for villages below the level of group 2 villages in the settlement hierarchy (such as Thurleigh) it is important that where small scale development is proposed in the these smaller settlements that some affordable housing is provided. This is



supported by the Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030 viability work which confirmed that *'in general terms there is no barrier in viability terms to the provision of affordable housing*

8.7 The NDP Plan recognises, that all new housing should help to broaden the range of stock available in the Parish. There was support for 3 or more bedroom detached housing, 2/3 bedroom semi-detached or terraced housing and the provision of bungalows to meet the identified current and future needs of existing owner occupiers wishing to stay in the village. The provision of flats/apartments and three storey housing as part of new developments was not supported.

8.8 Policy HS1 – New Housing Mix

Policy HS1 - New Housing Mix
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) New housing should complement and add to the existing stock, broaden choice and extend the opportunity to own a house or live in the village to a wide range of people;</li><li>b) There will be a presumption in favour of a mix of 3 or more bedroom detached housing, 2/3 bedroom semi-detached or terraced housing and the provision of bungalows;</li><li>c) Buildings are to be no more than two storeys high;</li><li>d) Developments will be low density, (less than 20 dwellings per hectare);</li><li>e) At least 30% of dwellings should be 2/3 bedroom.</li></ul>

Compliance NP Objective 1: Delivering Housing which both sustains the current and meets the future needs of the community  
BBLP2030: 4S, 5S, 7S, 67S, 37, 41S, 42S, 46S, 51S, 58S, 87, 97/ A&DP AD1/ NPPF 14, 60, 61, 63, 67, 68, 69, 77 and 78

Location and Scale of Development

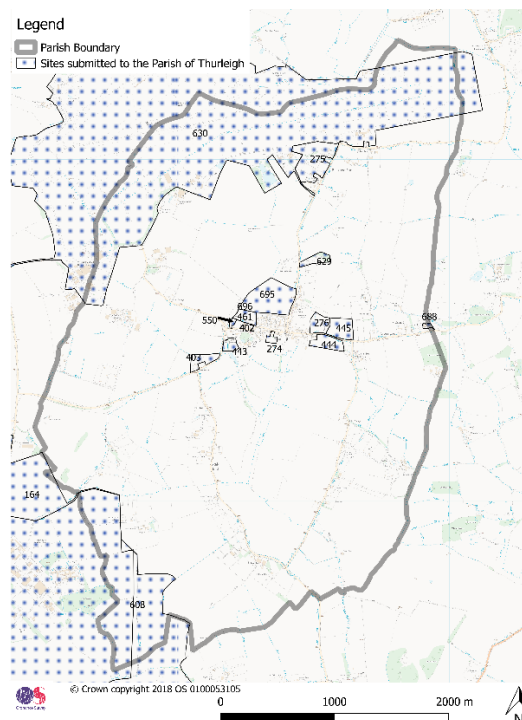
8.9 The NPPF makes it clear that Local Planning Authorities should plan to meet housing needs based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community.

8.10 Bedford Borough Council Settlement Hierarchy, has identified Thurleigh as a Group 3 village and, whilst the Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030 does not specifically require land allocations to meet Borough wide needs, it does enable local areas to bring forward development through the neighbourhood planning process. The parish of Thurleigh has indicated based upon community feedback, to allocate land for up to 30 new homes in the local plan period to 2030 to help sustain local services. This includes a local need identified by a Housing Needs Survey, commissioned by the Parish Council and undertaken by Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity in 2016, for 7 units of affordable housing and 4 units of market housing.

8.11 Thurleigh is located on the edge of open countryside and has several areas of open space. The majority of the village is designated as a conservation area and any development within it should preserve and enhance the conservation area, as should any development forming part of its setting. A key consideration is the need to ensure that the village retains its character and rural nature and the emerging preference is for a small number of low density, small or medium size, developments. Also, it should be noted that although there are no European sites designated under European

Directive (92/43/EEC) within the Parish or within Bedford Borough there are European sites downstream on the River Great Ouse (Portholme SAC, The Ouse Washes SAC/SPA/Ramsar) that are vulnerable and these sites should not be compromised.

- 8.12 It is accepted that some forms of new housing development are acceptable in a rural location outside of the defined Settlement Policy Area, where there is explicit compliance with the relevant NPPF and as set out in policy 7S of the Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030 – i.e. reuse of rural buildings, replacement of dwellings, affordable housing for local need and accommodation for rural workers. This type of development would need to be supported with robust evidence as part of the planning application.
- 8.13 In acknowledgement of the need for a limited amount of growth in Thurleigh, and following consultation with Thurleigh residents, the Neighbourhood Plan proposes the allocation of new small scale housing developments on two parcels of land, each having their own specific policy that reflects the individual circumstances of these preferred sites.
- 8.14 In determining which land to allocate for residential development, all sites put forward as part of the "Call for Sites" organised by Bedford Borough Council have been independently assessed in a manner that accords with the guidance on assessing sites for allocation, as set out by the NPPF and the Planning Practice Guidance. Given the number of sites put forward as part of the Call for Sites process, no further call for sites took place as part of the neighbourhood planning process. The Site Assessment Report provides an overview of the likely planning constraints in order to ensure any sites allocated within the Neighbourhood Plan comply with the NPPF and broadly comply with the adopted policies within BBC Local Plan and are deliverable. The full report can be found at [www.Thurleighndp.com](http://www.Thurleighndp.com).
- 8.15 The Borough Council's call for sites identified 13 possible sites for new housing within Thurleigh. Sites promoted for development are shown on Map 2 below:



**MAP 2 - SITES SUBMITTED TO BEDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL IN RESPONSE TO CALL FOR SITES PROCESS**

- 8.16 Map 2 above identifies the submissions to Bedford Borough Council of the original "call for sites" process back in 2014, together with the additional call for sites submissions received subsequently. Sites with numbers 1-400 were submitted in 2014, 400-500+ in 2015 and sites with 700+ in 2017.
- 8.17 In considering potential land allocations for residential development, regard has been given to the assessment of sites in terms of suitability, availability and achievability and also to the feedback from the community in terms of sites offered for development and the commitment to locate a planned level of growth focussed at the centre of the village, close to local amenities.
- 8.18 A key purpose of the consultations undertaken during the neighbourhood planning process was to obtain views on the acceptability of the sites put forward for development. The evidence collected has indicated that development to meet identified need in the village should take place on a number of small sites with access to local amenities, and that it should be delivered in a way that ensures that the right type of housing is built in the right locations, and that protects the village from uncontrolled, large scale, or poorly placed development. In terms of locations for growth (and in the context an acceptable level of growth), in both the original consultation June/July 2015 and the Issues and Options consultation undertaken in November/December 2016 the following sites were considered as acceptable for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan to meet housing needs:
- (1) Land known as The Beeches, High Street, Thurleigh (Call for Site reference 274) for a small to medium size development of up to 10 dwellings.
  - (2) Land known as Hayle Field, High Street, Thurleigh (Call for Site reference 276) for a medium to large development of up to 20 dwellings.
- 8.19 The site assessment process identified, in terms of suitability, availability and achievability, two sites as having residential development potential.
- 8.20 The full Site Assessment Report is available at [www.Thurleighndp.com](http://www.Thurleighndp.com) and a summary of the assessments relevant to the preferred sites is set out below:

Site ref	Site name	No. of dwellings requested	RAG score	Recommendation	Comments
274	The Beeches	18	52	GREEN	No constraints that cannot be mitigated. A new footpath fronting the site and a road crossing point to link with the existing foot- path on the north side of High Street should be delivered if this site is supported.
276	Hayle Field High Street	Up to 90	52	GREEN	The site as proposed would have medium to high visual and landscape impacts as the land is flat and open with views from the open countryside. A smaller area of land that better relates to the frontage style of development that predominates in the High Street would more likely create low visual and landscape impacts. A new footpath as illustrated on the concept plan should be delivered if this site is supported to link with the existing footpath fronting 67 High Street.

### Policy HS2 -The Beeches, High Street, Thurleigh

- 8.21 The land at The Beeches, High Street, Thurleigh (Site reference 274) is located partly outside of the defined Settlement Policy Area but adjoining its boundary and existing development. It is centrally located in the village, close to local amenities, and accessed from the High Street. There are no known major constraints which could affect development of this site. It scored well in the Site Assessment process and the feedback from the consultations in both June/July 2015 and November/December 2016 consultation which identified the site as a preferred location for development. A small to medium scale development of up to 10 dwellings is considered to be most appropriate for this location.

#### Policy HS2 - Land at The Beeches, High Street, Thurleigh

A residential development of 10 dwellings on the land at The Beeches, High Street, as identified on the Policies Map (**Appendix A**), will be supported subject to the following criteria:

- a) The design and layout respects and enhances the built, historic, local and wider natural environment;
- b) It can be demonstrated the mix and tenure proposed meets the local identified need;
- c) No building will be more than two storeys high;
- d) Onsite parking provision is provided in accordance with Policy HS4, Village Design Statement, unless it can be demonstrated that a reduction would not result in a significant increase in on street parking. In addition to those required by HS4 one additional visitor on street parking space is to be provided for every two dwellings;
- e) Private amenity space is provided in accordance with Policy HS4, Village Design Statement, unless it can be demonstrated that a reduction would not result in substandard amenity standards for future occupiers;
- f) It can be demonstrated that an appropriate standard of access can be achieved for both vehicles and pedestrians;
- g) A landscaping plan needs to be provided that will retain as many trees and environmental features as possible;
- h) Provision to be made of three 1 and 2 bedroomed bungalows as affordable housing (rent and shared ownership).
- i) Pre-determination archaeological evaluation is undertaken and the results submitted alongside any planning application.

Compliance: NP Objective 1; Delivering housing which both sustains the current and meets the future needs of the community. NP objective 7- encouraging and supporting our distinctive landscape which contributes to a sense of place and community, including natural features such as small woodlands, in-field trees, hedgerows, ponds and streams which distinguish the Parish.

BBLP2030: 4S, 30, 31, 55, 58S, 67S / NPPF 124, 126, 127, 128, 130

### Policy HS3 - Land at Hayle Field

- 8.22 The land at Hayle Field, High Street, Thurleigh (Site reference 276) is located just outside of the defined Settlement Policy Area but adjoining its boundary and existing development. It is centrally located in the village, close to local amenities, and accessed from the High Street. There are no known major constraints which could affect development of this site. A medium scale development of up to 20 dwellings was considered to be most appropriate for this location:

### Policy HS3 - Land at Hayle Field, High Street, Thurleigh

A residential development of 20 dwellings on the land at Hayle Field, High Street, as identified on the Policies Map (**Appendix A**), will be supported subject to the following criteria:

- a) The design and layout respects and enhances the built, historic, local and wider natural environment;
- b) It can be demonstrated the mix and tenure proposed meets the local identified need;
- c) No buildings to be more than two storeys high;
- d) Onsite parking provision is provided in accordance with Policy HS4, Village Design Statement, unless it can be demonstrated that a reduction would not result in a significant increase in on street parking. In addition to those required by HS4 one additional visitor on street parking space is to be provided for every two dwellings;
- e) Private amenity space is provided in accordance with Policy HS4, Village Design Statement, unless it can be demonstrated that a reduction would not result in substandard amenity standards for future occupiers;
- f) It can be demonstrated that an appropriate standard of access can be achieved for both vehicles and pedestrians;
- g) Frontage development in this location should be sensitive and sympathetic to ensure that associated accesses and other structures do not radically and adversely affect this pleasant village approach;
- h) The entrance to the development must be of an appropriate design to blend in with the village;
- i) A landscaping plan needs to be provided that will retain as many trees and environmental features as possible;
- j) Provision to be made of six houses, with 1, 2 and 3 bedrooms as affordable housing (rent and shared ownership).
- k) Pre-determination archaeological evaluation is undertaken and the results submitted alongside any planning application.

Compliance: NP Objective 1; Delivering housing which both sustains the current and meets the future needs of the community. NP objective 7- encouraging and supporting our distinctive landscape which contributes to a sense of place and community, including natural features such as small woodlands, in-field trees, hedgerows, ponds and streams which distinguish the Parish  
BBLP2030: 4S, 30, 31, 55, 58S, 67S / NPPF 124, 126, 127, 128, 130

#### Achieving Quality Design and Local Distinctiveness

8.23 Thurleigh has experienced some limited post war growth, but some properties do little to reflect local design and materials and the character of the settlement.

8.24 Following consultation, residents stated a preference for new housing to complement the village style and character. There is a strong desire to ensure that all new development is sensitively designed so as to respect the local landscape, and take into account the need to provide sufficient parking, appropriate levels of amenity space and also facilitate the retention and/or addition of tree, hedge and other planting. Where appropriate, development should seek to integrate with the surrounding landscape and countryside and, therefore, avoid being designed with hard edges, particularly when exposed to the countryside beyond. When preparing proposals for new development consideration should, therefore, be given not only to individual house design, but also the provision of landscaping and street layout including accessibility and appearance.

8.25 The following policy has been developed to ensure that all development is provided to a high standard, contributing to the creation of a sustainable, mixed community. Other requirements are set out in Bedford Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents as follows:

- Achieving Quality in Residential Layouts (1997);
- Parking Standards for Sustainable Communities: Design and Good Practice (2014);
- Residential extensions, New Dwellings and Small Infill Developments (2000).

#### 8.26 Policy HS4- Thurleigh Village Design Statement

##### **Policy HS4 - Thurleigh Village Design Statement**

Proposals for new development will provide a written statement demonstrating that the principles of the Village Design Statement have been met.

All proposals for new development, including extensions to existing dwellings will be expected to meet the following criteria:

- a) The design and layout is appropriate to its location and in keeping with the scale and character of the immediate surroundings particularly in terms of:
  - Ridge and eaves height and massing;
  - Architectural features and decoration which should be consistent with neighbouring properties;
  - Detached or semi-detached houses and bungalows are preferred along with dwellings suitable for affordable housing for the existing local population and aging/mobility impaired residents;
  - New houses should be brick face or rendered block walls, with plain tile, slate or pantile roofs, and brick and tile colour should be consistent with adjacent housing
  - To avoid an urban appearance individual houses should use a mix of materials to provide visual variation in aspect and grouped buildings should provide variation on style and building materials between units;
  - Paving, hardstanding and hard landscaping- care is to be taken on colour and style of paving to ensure it remains the character of the area. Extensive black top surfaces are to be avoided, and bricks or setts should be used as demarcation where needed;
  - Property frontages should retain the current characteristic of open fencing, low hedges and open gardens. Close boarded fencing, iron railings and brick walls hiding building frontage should be avoided.
- b) Consider the significance of heritage assets as well as the contribution made by setting to their significance. Development within the village conservation area or forming part of its setting should either preserve or enhance its character and appearance;
- c) Buildings should be no more than two storeys high, however new housing fronting the High Street and the principal roads through the village should be no more than one and a half storeys high;
- d) New development on the edge of the village and which adjoins open countryside should seek to avoid an abrupt transition. Layout and design is to mitigate the visual transition and present a sympathetic vista on approach to the village;
- e) It can be demonstrated that the proposal would provide sufficient on plot parking in accordance with Bedford Borough Council adopted parking standards as a minimum,

- and must ensure there is no unacceptable increase in on street parking. Provision of parking which exceeds these standards is favoured in principle;
- f) New residential development must provide additional visitor parking of 1 space per two dwellings;
  - g) Extensions or conversion of existing buildings which increase the potential occupancy should seek to provide additional on plot parking to accommodate the increase;
  - h) Design of amenity space should take into account the need to provide adequate spacing between new and existing developments and conform, as a minimum, to Bedford Borough Council standards for garden size. Exceptions can be made to these standards where it can be demonstrated that the garden size is inappropriate for the size and occupants of the dwelling;
  - i) Provide hard and soft landscaping appropriate to the scale, location and design of the development;
  - j) There is no unacceptable loss of amenity to neighbouring developments through loss of privacy, loss of light, noise and pollution and visual bulk and/or the development would be overbearing;
  - k) Existing planting that contributes to the street scene or supports the rural character should be retained, or replaced like for like if removal is necessary.

Compliance: NP Objective 1; Delivering housing which both sustains the current and meets the future needs of the community. NP objective 7- encouraging and supporting our distinctive landscape which contributes to a sense of place and community, including natural features such as small woodlands, in-field trees, hedgerows, ponds and streams which distinguish the Parish  
 BBLP2030: 4S, 30, 31, 55, 58S, 67S / NPPF 124, 126, 127, 128, 130

#### 8.27 Policy HS5- Affordable Housing

8.28 Affordable housing (shared ownership or below market rent) is expected to be delivered as part of the Parish's preferred development sites, based upon the Borough Council Policy 58s of the Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030.

#### **Policy HS5 - Affordable Housing Allocation**

In the case of any, as yet, undelivered exception sites affordable housing will be subject, at all times (first and subsequent occupation) to conditions or a planning obligation to ensure that when social rented homes or shared ownership homes are allocated to qualifying candidates first priority is given to people with a familial or work connection to Thurleigh Parish and second priority is given to those with connections to surrounding Parishes and third priority to all other qualifying candidates. For all other development sites the Bedford Borough Council Housing Allocations Policy will apply.

Compliance NP Objective 1: Delivering Housing which both sustains the current and meets the future needs of the community  
 BBLP 2030: 58s, 67s/ NPPF 63

### **INFRASTRUCTURE POLICIES**

8.29 The planned new developments for Thurleigh village over the plan period will place additional demands on community facilities and infrastructure. The Parish's core objective in relation to infrastructure is to manage both existing and future infrastructure requirements and encourage safe and sustainable movement.

8.30 A number of key infrastructure issues were identified during the neighbourhood planning process:

- (i) Parking issues in the village, particularly on The Close and Glebe Close.
- (ii) Traffic issues, in particular, speeding through the village.
- (iii) Growth will impact on infrastructure and, as such, capacity issues must be addressed with careful integrated planning.
- (iv) The impact of new development on traffic movement.

8.31 A number of sub-objectives were identified and first of these sought to ensure that any proposal for development ensures adequate and enhanced physical and communications infrastructure.

8.32 Policy IF1- The Provision of Services

**Policy IF1 - The Provision of Services**

Development proposals should provide services to meet expectations for modern living to include sewerage, water supply, electricity, telephone land line and broadband service.

Compliance: NP Objective 2 Managing both existing and future infrastructure and encouraging safe and sustainable movement  
BBLP2030 86S, 94 / NPPF 112

8.33 It is acknowledged that there are problems of traffic congestion on village roads and the lack of parking in some areas. New development should seek to improve the management of traffic in the village where appropriate.

8.34 Policy IF2- Traffic Management

**Policy IF2 - Traffic Management**

- a) Applications for development in Thurleigh should identify and demonstrate the additional level of traffic that they are likely to generate.
- b) They should assess the potential impact of this traffic on pedestrians, cyclists, road safety, parking and congestion within the Parish and, where necessary, include within their proposals measures to mitigate the impact
- c) Proposals which are likely to increase the impact of traffic on road users will need to demonstrate how that traffic will be managed.
- d) There will be a presumption against development which would impact detrimentally on road safety.

Compliance: NP Objective 2; managing both existing and future infrastructure and encouraging safe and sustainable movement.  
BBLP2030 31 / NPPF 102, 104, 109, 110

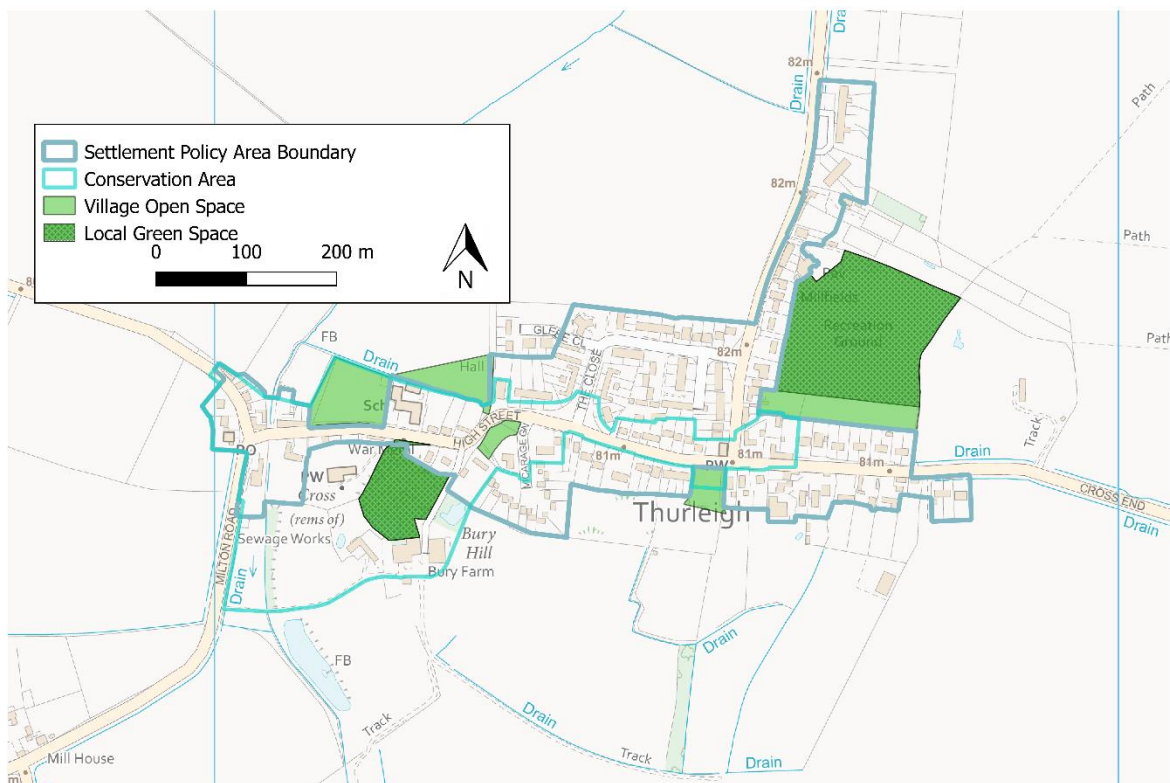
**GREEN SPACE POLICIES**

8.35 Green space is vital in creating and maintaining a balanced community providing an important 'quality of life' resource.



- 8.36 The core objective in relation to green space is the protection and enhancement of the existing and future open spaces.
- 8.37 A number of options were consulted on during November and December 2016 to respond to the following key issues that had been highlighted during the neighbourhood planning process:
- (i) The need to protect green space in the village.
  - (ii) The need to protect natural resources.
  - (iii) The scope to deliver local environmental improvements and the need to develop an action plan to respond to local issues raised via the consultation process.
  - (iv) The need to consider the allocation of land for allotments given that there is some demand for such provision in the parish
- 8.38 A number of sub-objectives were identified by the Parish –
- (i) To protect, improve and enhance community open spaces.
  - (ii) To maintain the distinct character of the village by preserving, protecting and enhancing the green and rural identify of our surroundings
  - (iii) To sustain the vitality, health and safety of the community by ensuring that all residents have easy access to community facilities and community green, open spaces for leisure, recreation and enjoyment
  - (iv) To ensure that any new development includes new appropriate and proportionate green spaces for leisure, recreation and enjoyment
- 8.39 Policy AD40 in the Bedford Borough Allocation and Designations Plan 2013 currently affords protection to specific Village Open Spaces within Thurleigh. These protected spaces are identified in green on the map below. The policy states –
- “Open spaces which have particular importance in maintaining the function, character and identity of villages are identified on the Policies Map as Village Open Spaces. Open spaces have been identified as Village Open Spaces / Views where they meet one or more of the following criteria:*
- A. They are publicly accessible and valuable to the local community for sport, recreation or as amenity space.*
  - B. They give identity to a settlement or village by helping to retain its form and reflect past history (examples include village greens).*
  - C. They provide a gap or break in the frontage which contributes to the character of a settlement for example by providing a view into a village which forms part of the village setting, or a view into open countryside establishing the relationship between the form of the village and the countryside beyond.*
  - D. The gap provides visual relief in an otherwise built up area punctuating the street scene.*
  - E. The open space assists the transition between village and countryside providing a soft edge to the village which is pleasing visually.*
- Development will not be permitted on land designated as a village open space or view unless it can be demonstrated that the reasons for designation are not compromised or that other material considerations outweigh the need to retain the Village Open Space or View undeveloped.”*
- 8.40 In addition to these specific already protected village open spaces, policy 45 of the Borough Council’s Local Plan 2030 provides protection to Local Green Spaces. These are new designations as allowed following the publication of the new NPPF (2019).

Protection afforded to these spaces is high. Two spaces now designated by Bedford Borough Council's Local Plan 2030 in Thurleigh village are - Area C and the majority of Area F (recreation ground area only).



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**MAP 3 - AREAS OF DESIGNATED OPEN SPACE AND LOCAL GREEN SPACE**

8.41 Policy GS1- Protection of Green Space

**Policy GS1 - Protection of Green Space**

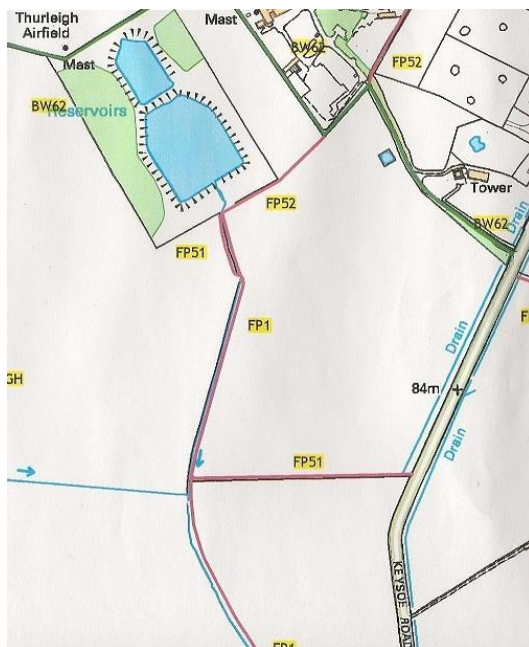
The designated Village Open Spaces and Local Green Spaces identified in Map 3 above will be protected from inappropriate new development by the use of Policy AD40 in the Allocation and Designations Local Plan 2013 for Village Open Spaces and the policy 45 in the Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030.

Compliance: NP Objective 3: Protecting and enhancing our existing and future open spaces  
 A&DP AD40 / NPPF 99, 100

8.42 Thurleigh has approximately thirty miles of public rights of way across the surrounding countryside. There is a local volunteer group who, in conjunction with the Borough Council, help maintain these paths and way markers and also prepare local circular walks. Just a few minutes, walking to the north of the village, lie two Reservoirs.

8.43 The twin reservoir area has been identified by the community for special protection. It is currently on land owned by St. Modwen and is not currently designated as Village

Open Space. It is unlikely to meet the NPPF criteria for Local Green Space but it is nevertheless proposed that the Parish Council continue to liaise with the site owner to ensure that this area is protected and enhanced. The area is identified in blue on Map 4



**MAP 4 – TWIN RESERVOIR AREA**

8.44 Policy GS2- Renewable Energy

**Policy GS2 - Renewable Energy**

Renewable energy development will be acceptable where it does not compromise matters relating to heritage assets, residential amenity, landscape character, visual amenity, highway safety, wildlife and habitats, environmental assets and any other relevant material considerations.

Compliance: NP Objective 3- protecting and enhancing our existing and future open spaces. Objective 5 – protecting and enhancing our listed buildings and the ancient monument (bury hill camp) & Objective 7 – encouraging and supporting our distinctive landscape which contributes to a sense of place and community, including natural features such as small woodlands, in-field trees, hedgerows, ponds and streams which distinguish the parish;  
BBLP2030 57/ NPPF 151, 153, 154

**RECREATION, YOUNG PEOPLE, SPORT AND VILLAGE FACILITIES**

8.45 Sport and recreation helps communities in many ways and can provide innumerable benefits including:

- ✓ Bringing people together, providing opportunities for social interaction
- ✓ Empowers, inspires and motivates individuals.
- ✓ Creates opportunity for work/life balance.

- ✓ Helps protect open space and natural areas.
- ✓ Provides an opportunity for social inclusion
- ✓ Promotes the use of healthy modes of transport like walking and cycling.
- ✓ Creates positive opportunities for all of the community particularly the young.
- ✓ Eases pressure on the health system.
- ✓ Improves mental health.
- ✓ Binds families and communities through shared experiences.
- ✓ Great opportunities for networking.
- ✓ Contributes to lifelong learning.
- ✓ Fosters community pride.
- ✓ Promotes a healthy, active lifestyle.

8.46 If a community is to be truly sustainable, vibrant and equitable, it needs to offer, as far as is practically possible, opportunities for all - the opportunity to learn, play, socialise and enjoy rural life. These should be one of the focus points for communities when devising policies for the future of rural communities such as Thurleigh.

8.47 A number of options were consulted on during November and December 2016 to respond to the following key issues that had been highlighted during the original consultation in June/July 2015:

- (i) The need to protect existing community facilities.
- (ii) Scope to extend community and social facilities over time.
- (iii) Encourage clubs or societies to use the Village Hall.
- (iv) Support and promote existing clubs and facilities in the area.
- (v) The need for improved broadband provision (superfast broadband was delivered in 2017).
- (vi) Thurleigh Primary School and Pre-School offers excellent provision for the village's children.
- (vii) Thurleigh has a limited range of facilities for young people which must be protected.
- (viii) There is scope to extend community and social facilities over time for the benefit of the youth in the village.
- (ix) There is a commitment to ensure that excellent local facilities and services are available for young people in the village.

8.48 The feedback from the consultation confirms that there was positive support for the protection and improvement of local facilities and services, including the promotion of the Village Hall, and for the allocation of developer contributions through the Community Infrastructure Levy to enable such improvements to be realised. The support for the provision of recreational facilities is, however, dependent on the design and scale being in keeping with the local character and not adversely impacting on the amenity of surrounding residential properties.

8.49 There is strong support for the protection and enhancement of local amenities and a presumption against development which would detrimentally affect community assets such as the Village Hall, Sports and Social Club, Playing Fields, the Church, the War Memorial, Memorial Garden, Bus stops, post box and benches. There was a high level of support for the provision of a village shop, medical provision and dental care facility.

8.50 One of the core objectives is to ensure that the village benefits from sufficient facilities and services for all. The first sub objective identified in this topic area during community consultation, was to protect and enhance local amenities which provide a community focus.

#### 8.51 Policy RYS1- Local facilities and Services

##### **Policy RYS1 - Local facilities and Services**

- a) Local facilities and services will be protected and supported by the Parish Council in accordance with other policies in the Development Plan that seek to ensure the continued viability of the rural economy and support the sustainability of local services.
- b) There will be a presumption against development which would detrimentally affect the following village assets:
  - (i) The Jackal Public House
  - (ii) The Village Hall
  - (iii) Sports and Social Club
  - (iv) Playing Fields,
  - (v) The Church,
  - (vi) The War Memorial
  - (vii) Memorial Garden,
  - (viii) Village Garden

Compliance: NP Objective: 3 – protecting and enhancing our existing and future open spaces & Objective 4 – ensuring that the village benefits from sufficient facilities and service  
BBLP2030 99 / NPPF 83, 84, 91, 91, 96, 97

#### 8.52 Policy RYS2- New Local Services

##### **Policy RYS2- New Local Services**

The Parish Council will support proposals for new local services including a village shop, medical and dental care facility where they are appropriately located and do not cause harm or where the harm caused is outweighed by other benefits.

Compliance: NP Objective 4 – ensuring that the village benefits from sufficient facilities and service  
BBLP2030: 81, 98 / NPPF 83, 84, 96, 97

- 8.53 The community identified other sub-objectives in this topic area as the
- (i) need to encourage opportunities for all generations to participate in a range of educational, sporting and leisure activities;
  - (ii) to sustain the vitality, health and safety of the community by ensuring that all residents have easy access to community facilities, community green, open spaces for leisure, recreation and enjoyment and
  - (iii) to ensure that any new development includes new appropriate and proportionate green spaces for leisure and enjoyment.

## 8.54 Policy RY33- New and Improvements to Recreation Facilities

### **Policy RYS3 - New and Improvements to Recreation Facilities**

The Parish Council will support the provision of new or improved recreational facilities provided that their design and scale are in keeping with the local character and that there is no adverse impact on the amenity of surrounding residential properties.

Compliance: NP Objective 4 – ensuring that the village benefits from sufficient facilities and services & Objective 6 – ensuring that the village benefits from sufficient facilities and services for young people : BBLP2030 97, 98 / NPPF 83, 84

## **EMPLOYMENT POLICIES**

- 8.55 The provision of local employment opportunities help support a thriving and sustainable community. Whilst commuting from rural to urban areas to work is still common for many people, technology is creating opportunities for more flexible working arrangements. Redundant farm buildings are also providing new opportunities for land owners to introduce new employment uses which can support help and sustain rural areas.
- 8.56 Thurleigh’s main employment consists of a number of farms, equestrian centres, and local haulage firms, as well as home based workers such as builders, accountants etc. To the north west of the village, just outside the parish is the Thurleigh Business Park.
- 8.57 Whilst the NDP working party wished to allocate the site of the former "Officers Mess" site, on Keysoe Road, for additional employment growth in the village,(with employment uses restricted to those classes that do not rely on the regular use of commercial traffic movements) they have been made aware by the landowner that this site is not available for this purpose.

## **LOCAL DISTICTIVENESS, LANDSCAPE AND PUBLIC ACCESS**

- 8.58 The landscapes within and around Thurleigh village have a rich and varied built, cultural and natural environment.
- 8.59 A number of options were consulted on during November and December 2016 to respond to the following key issues that had been highlighted during the neighbourhood planning process:
- (i) Potential scope exists to improve accessibility for all throughout Thurleigh to support healthy communities.
  - (ii) The need to protect trees, hedgerows, and other distinctive features in the village.
  - (iii) The potential for a tree planting scheme.
  - (iv) The scope to deliver local improvements and the need to develop an action plan to respond to the issues raised via the consultation process.
- 8.60 There is positive support for environmental improvements and that new developments in excess of five dwellings should produce a green infrastructure plan to show how the development can improve green spaces and corridors for people and nature and how

wildlife can be protected and enhanced. There is support for the protection and enhancement of the biodiversity of the area, local wildlife and its habitat and trees and for the preservation of ecological corridors and sites of special interest, along with the maintaining of the distinct character of the village by preserving, protecting and enhancing the green and rural identify of the surroundings.

8.61 The following were identified as Sub-Objectives in this topic area:

- (i) To protect and enhance the high quality and distinctive rural landscape for present and future generations;
- (ii) To minimise the impact of new development on the local area and, in doing so, to protect the distinctive views and visual connectivity with the surrounding countryside, landscape and heritage assets;
- (iii) To protect and enhance the biodiversity of our area, our local wildlife and its habitat and trees and preserve ecological corridors and sites of special interest, and
- (iv) To maintain the distinct character of the village by preserving, protecting and enhancing the green and rural identify of our surroundings

8.62 Policy LPA1- Public Rights of Way and Accessibility

#### Policy LPA1 - Public Rights of Way and Accessibility

Where development is proposed there will be a presumption in favour of the preservation and enhancement of the existing network of Public Rights of Way. These will be protected, promoted and enhanced through signage and environmental improvements including seating and dropped kerbs to improve accessibility for all.

Compliance: NP Objective 2 – managing both existing and future infrastructure requirements and encouraging safe and sustainable movement & Objective 7 – encouraging and supporting our distinctive landscape which contributes to a sense of place and community, including natural features such as small woodlands, in-field trees, hedgerows, ponds and streams which distinguish the parish  
BBLP2030 91 / NPPF 91, 98, 104, 108, 110

8.63 Policy LPA2- Public Rights of Way Improvements

#### Policy LPA2 - Public Rights of Way Improvements

The Parish Council will, where appropriate, work to develop improved access and linkages for Public Rights of Way connecting to neighbouring parishes in order to support and enhance health and wellbeing beyond Thurleigh Parish.

Compliance: NP Objective 2 – managing both existing and future infrastructure requirements and encouraging safe and sustainable movement & Objective 7 – encouraging and supporting our distinctive landscape which contributes to a sense of place and community, including natural features such as small woodlands, in-field trees, hedgerows, ponds and streams which distinguish the parish  
: BBLP2030 91 / NPPF 91, 98, 104, 108, 110

#### 8.64 Policy LPA3- New Development and Connectivity

##### Policy LPA3 - New Development and Connectivity

New developments will be expected to demonstrate connectivity to existing Public Rights of Way network and provide new footpaths and cycle paths (where appropriate), allowing improved access to the local amenities and services, to green spaces and to the open countryside.

Compliance: NP Objective 2 – managing both existing and future infrastructure requirements and encouraging safe and sustainable movement & Objective 7 – encouraging and supporting our distinctive landscape which contributes to a sense of place and community, including natural features such as small woodlands, in-field trees, hedgerows, ponds and streams which distinguish the parish  
: BBLP2030 91 / NPPF 91, 98, 104, 108, 110

#### 8.65 Policy LPA4- Protection and Replacement of Existing Landscape

##### Policy LPA4 - Protection and Replacement of Existing Landscape

Development proposals must be designed to retain wherever possible established healthy trees and hedgerows, trees of good arboricultural and amenity value and hedgerows. Proposals which either result in the loss of or affect existing trees or hedgerows should be accompanied by the relevant supporting surveys.

Compliance: NP Objective 7 – encouraging and supporting our distinctive landscape which contributes to a sense of place and community, including natural features such as small woodlands, in-field trees, hedgerows, ponds and streams which distinguish the parish  
: BBLP2030 37, 38, 39, 40 / NPPF 170, 171, 175

### **HERITAGE ASSETS**

8.66 The National Planning Policy Framework defines a heritage asset as follows:

*‘A building, monument, site, place or landscape identified as having a degree of significance, meriting consideration in planning decisions because of its heritage interests’.*

8.67 Heritage assets include designated heritage assets and those identified by the LPA, including local listing. Significance of a heritage asset derives not only from the asset’s physical presence but also from its setting. Section 1 of the Plan gives a brief overview of Thurleigh and its history. The village boasts a number of historic characterful buildings and monuments, ancient green amenity spaces and farmland which all add significantly to the historic character of the village.

8.68 Thurleigh experienced great change following the end of the Second World War. The previous agricultural character was altered by the creation of the Royal Aircraft Establishment (RAE) to the north west of the village which was created on the airfield site; this brought new job opportunities to the area. The facility closed in 1994 and is now a business park



- 8.69 The core objective is to preserve the special architectural or historic significance of listed buildings, to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area and preserve the significance of the Scheduled Monuments and other archaeological sites.
- 8.70 A number of options were consulted on during November and December 2016 to respond to the following key issues that had been highlighted during the neighbourhood planning process:
- (i) The need to ensure that any new development in Thurleigh positively respects and does not negatively impact on the shared heritage.
  - (ii) The need to ensure that both the fabric and the setting of listed buildings and heritage assets continue to be protected.
- 8.71 The respondents recognised that there are several buildings and features of historical interest within Thurleigh as well as locally important heritage assets, which should be protected.
- 8.72 The Neighbourhood Plan expects special care to be given to all historic buildings and any proposed works that affect these buildings and their setting should be carefully considered so that new development does not result in any undue harm to their heritage and community value.
- 8.73 Through its consultation process the Parish Council identified a number of sub-objectives.
- To support sensitive development which is sympathetic to the area, protects and enriches the look and feel of the village and that minimises the impact of such development on the natural and built environment (including protected assets).
  - To conserve the historic environment and our heritage assets.

# 9

## NON LAND USE ACTIONS

- 9.1 Some issues have been raised whilst preparing the NDP that are not directly related to land use matters (although they might indirectly relate to the use of land in some form). As such they are not matters that can be addressed directly by the provision of a planning policy within the NDP, but they are important to residents of the Parish. These matters are detailed below.
- 9.2 Parts of the village are currently poorly connected to the main part of the village due to the absence of footpaths and cycle-paths. Road safety could be improved for the benefit of both residents and visitors.
- 9.3 Non Land Use Action 1- Traffic, Transportation and Accessibility

### Non-Land Use Action NLUA1 - Traffic, Transportation and Accessibility

The Parish Council will work with Bedford Borough Council to improve awareness of local traffic issues and, by supporting the provision of regulation compliant locally designed signs, road improvements and the use of technology, to improve road safety for all and to create a safer environment for all particularly pedestrians and cyclists.

- 9.4 The twin reservoir area has been identified by the community for special protection. It is currently on land owned by St. Modwen and is not currently designated as important open space. It is unlikely to meet the NPPF criteria for Local Green Space but it is nevertheless proposed that the Parish Council continue to liaise with the site owner to ensure that this area is protected and enhanced.
- 9.5 Non Land Use Action 2- Twin Reservoirs

### Non Land Use Action 2 –Twin Reservoirs

Protection of the open countryside of the area comprising the two reservoirs and the immediately adjacent area. The Parish Council will work with the landowner to develop a management plan for the area.

- 9.6 There is some support for the provision of allotments and, as such, the potential scope to allocate land in the village to encourage the use of allotments could be considered.

9.7 Non Land Use Action 3- Allotment Provision

**Non Land Use Action 3 - Allotment Provision**

The Parish Council will work with the local community to confirm whether interest exists for the provision of allotments and, if so, look to identify land within Thurleigh Parish for the provision of such amenity.

9.8 There is positive support for environmental improvements including a tree planting scheme and the provision of maps and information boards to promote areas of interest

9.9 Non Land Use Action 4- Thurleigh Tree Planting Plan

**Non Land Use Action 4- Thurleigh Tree Planting Plan**

The Parish Council will look to work with land owners to devise a Tree Planting Scheme using Government incentives

9.10 Non Land Use Action 5

**Non Land Use Action 5 - Local Information Signage**

The Parish Council will seek to identify opportunities for the provision of maps, direction signage and information boards to promote areas of interest in the Village.

9.11 The respondents recognised that there are several buildings and features of historical interest within Thurleigh as well as locally important heritage assets, which should be protected.

9.12 Non land use Action 6- Protection for Buildings of Local Interest

**Non-Land Use Action 6 - Protection for Buildings of Local Interest**

The Parish Council and its community will work with Bedford Borough Council and Historic England to explore the development of a Local List for the Thurleigh Neighbourhood Plan area to include buildings noted as historically important in the Neighbourhood Plan engagement process.

9.13 There was support for the Parish Council to promote dialogue with English Heritage with a view to opening up access to Bury Hill Ancient Monument for visitors and, as part of this, to ensure that a Monument Management Plan is prepared to ensure that the heritage asset is protected and maintained. This should include information boards and heritage trail leaflets

9.14 Non Land Use Action 7- Public Access to Bury Hill Ancient Monument

**Non-Land Use Action 7 - Public Access to Bury Hill Ancient Monument**

The Parish Council will promote dialogue with the landowner, Historic England and other appropriate interested parties to explore whether public access to Bury Hill Ancient Monument can be provided. As part of this, the Parish Council will seek to promote the preparation of a Monument Management Plan to ensure that the heritage asset is protected and maintained.

9.15 Non Land Use Action 8- Developer Contributions and Community Infrastructure Levy

**Non-Land Use Action 8 Developer Contributions and Community Infrastructure Levy**

The following projects have been identified as priorities for investment in local community infrastructure ( in no particular order), and monies from the local element of the Community Infrastructure Levy will be applied to these various priority projects:

- a) Enhancement to Community facilities
- b) Improvements to facilities at the Sports Field
- c) Contribution to traffic surveys and implementation of improved traffic management in the village
- d) Enhancement of footways within the Parish with improved surfaces and lighting
- e) Improvements to parking facilities
- f) Improvements to communication infrastructure
- g) The promotion and improvement of the Public Rights of Way across the Parish
- h) Improvements to existing open views, Local Green Spaces and ecological sites

# 10

## MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THE PLAN

- 10.1 The Thurleigh Neighbourhood Development Plan will be reviewed periodically to ensure that it addresses any changes in both national and local planning policies.
- 10.2 Each Annual Parish Council meeting, after implementation of the Neighbourhood Development Plan, will include a detailed update report. This will monitor the progress of the plan for the previous year and identify the likely implications and impact for the forthcoming year.
- 10.3 In 2025 there will be a thorough five year review of progress, and will consider if a review of, or amendment to the Pan needs to be proposed.
- 10.4 In 2028 the Parish Council will recruit a new working party to undertake a review and decide on the need for a subsequent Neighbourhood Plan. If a new plan is required the Working Group will develop it so it becomes effective in 2030.

# 11

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thurleigh Parish Council would like to thank all those who have been involved in delivering the Neighbourhood Development Plan:

- Residents, businesses, local groups and organisations that completed and returned survey forms and attended the various consultations
- The Thurleigh Neighbourhood Plan Working Group
- Planning consultants- Regeneration Position and Peter Bull for their continued support
- Officers of Bedford Borough Council for their co-operation and advice through the neighbourhood plan process

# 12

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Affordable Housing.** Social rented, affordable rented and shared ownership housing provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the current market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provision to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.

**Archaeological interest.** There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.

**Conservation Area.** An area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

**Consultation Statement.** Consultation statements explain and demonstrate how engagement took place with the community and others to shape the development of the neighbourhood plan. The consultation statement will include and summarise all the statutory (i.e. the pre-submission consultation) and non-statutory consultation that has taken place with the community, organisations and other relevant bodies to develop the plan.

**Core Strategy.** A Development Plan Document (DPD) setting out the spatial vision and strategic objectives of the planning framework for the area.

**Designated heritage asset.** A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.

**Development Plans.** This includes adopted Local Plans, neighbourhood plans and is defined in Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

**Green Infrastructure.** A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.

**Heritage Asset.** A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

**Highway Authority.** Highways authorities are responsible for producing the local transport plan and for managing existing or proposed new local roads in the area. Bedford Borough Council is the local highway authority.

**Historic environment.** All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.

**Infrastructure.** Basic services necessary for development to take place: for example roads, electricity, sewerage, water, education and health facilities.

**Listed Building.** A building of special architectural or historic interest. Listed buildings are graded I,II\* or II with Grade I being the highest. Listing includes the interior as well the exterior of the building and any buildings or permanent structures within the curtilage of that listed building.

**Local Green Spaces:** Local Green space designation allows local communities to protect green spaces of local importance for reasons including setting and nature conservation. Local communities can identify green spaces through their neighbourhood plans which will then receive protection equivalent to green belt land.

**Local Planning Authority.** The public authority whose duty it is to carry out specific planning functions for an area. The Local Planning Authority is Bedford Borough Council.

**Local Plan.** A plan for the future development of a local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community. In law this is described as the development plan documents adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. A local plan can consist of either strategic or non-strategic policies, or a combination of the two.

**Localism Act.** The Localism Act has devolved greater powers to councils and neighbourhoods and given local communities more control over housing and planning decisions.

**Material Consideration.** A matter that should be taken into account in deciding a planning application or an appeal against a planning decision.

**National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).** The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system only to the extent that it is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so. It provides a framework within which local people can produce their own Neighbourhood Development Plans.

**Neighbourhood Plan.** A plan prepared by a Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum for a particular Neighbourhood (made under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

**Open Space.** All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.

**Parish Council.** Parish Councils are the first tier of Local governance, and the closest to the community. Parish Councils are elected bodies and have the power to raise taxes via the precept. Their responsibilities vary.

**Planning Condition.** A condition imposed on a grant of planning permission (in accordance with the Town and Country Act 1990) or a condition included in a Local Development Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.

**Planning Obligation.** A legal agreement entered into under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to mitigate the impacts of a development proposal.

**Planning Permission.** Formal approval sought from a local planning authority allowing a proposed development to proceed. Permission may be sought for in principle through outline planning applications, or sought in detail through full planning applications.

**Rural Exception Site.** Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seeks to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. A proportion of market homes may be allowed on the site at the local planning authority's discretion, for example where residential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding.

**Saved Policies/Saved Plan.** Policies within unitary development plans, local plans and structure plans that are saved for a time period during replacement production of Local Development Documents.

**Section 106 Agreement.** A legal agreement under section 106 of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act. Section 106 agreements are legal agreements between a planning authority and a developer, or undertaking offered unilaterally by a developer, that ensure that certain extra works related to a development are undertaken.

**Setting of a heritage asset.** The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

**Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD).** Documents which add further detail to the policies in the Local Plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design. Supplementary planning documents are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the Development plan.

**Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG).** Supplementary Planning Guidance may cover a range of issues, both thematic and site specific and provide further detail of policies and proposals in a development plan.

**Sustainability Appraisal.** An appraisal of the economic, environmental and social effects of a plan, from the outset of the preparation process to allow decisions to be made that accord with sustainable development.

**Village Open Spaces:** spaces which are particularly important in maintaining the function, character and identity of villages and meet criteria laid down the Bedford Boroughs Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013 policy AD40.

**Windfall Site.** Sites which have been specifically identifies as available in the Local Plan process. They normally comprise previously developed sites that have unexpectedly become available.



# APPENDIX A

## POLICIES MAP

