

**BEDFORD BOROUGH
PLANNING MONITORING REPORT
2021-2022**

FEBRUARY 2023

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1 Introduction

Purpose of this report

- 1.1 Local planning authorities are required to produce and publish monitoring reports by The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011)¹. The Bedford Borough Planning Monitoring Report has been prepared in accordance with legislation and National Planning Practice Guidance².
- 1.2 Monitoring is an essential part of the ongoing planning process, providing a mechanism to review the progress of development activity and to establish whether adopted policies are being effectively implemented and delivered. It also allows communities and interested parties to be aware of the progress local planning authorities are making towards delivering their vision and objectives, as set out in the development plan. Where it is found that policies are not achieving their intended outcomes, monitoring provides an opportunity to identify the reasons for this and the steps to be taken to improve their performance, including whether a full or partial review of the plan is necessary.
- 1.3 This Planning Monitoring Report covers the monitoring period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, with updates to the end of January 2023 where these are considered to be relevant.

Background

- 1.4 The Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030 was adopted in January 2020 and sets out the overarching spatial strategy for the borough up to 2030. It identifies the scale of new development that is required and a strategy for accommodating this growth. The local plan allocates specific sites for particular types of development and includes detailed policies across several thematic areas to manage new development.
- 1.5 The Local Plan 2030 (chapter 13) states that the Council will monitor the policies of the local plan, along with other saved policies, to assess their effectiveness in achieving the plan's vision and objectives. It states that the principal method for doing this will be through its established programme of monitoring reports which are published regularly on the Council's

¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/767/regulation/34/made>

² PPG Paragraph 073; Reference ID: 61-073-20190315

website. The plan also states that targets and indicators to measure the effects of policies will be completed at regular intervals.

- 1.6 The Council has reviewed its approach to monitoring and concluded that it is more effective if all monitoring is contained within one document and therefore this Planning Monitoring Report has been prepared.
- 1.7 Minerals and waste matters are excluded as they are monitored separately by the Joint Minerals and Waste Team.

Structure of the Planning Monitoring Report

- 1.8 This report sets out:
 - The current documents forming the statutory development plan for Bedford Borough and other relevant planning guidance (section 2).
 - Progress in preparing the Borough Council's Local Plan 2040 and other planning policy documents against the milestones set out in the Local Development Scheme (section 3).
 - Progress made on neighbourhood planning (section 4).
 - Key actions taken under the duty to co-operate (section 5).
 - Progress on the implementation of all allocations in plans, including neighbourhood plans (section 6).
 - Detailed monitoring results structured under the themes of natural environment, accessibility, delivering growth and placemaking. (section 7).

2 The Development Plan for Bedford Borough

2.1 When determining planning applications, the decision shall be in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The statutory development plan for Bedford Borough is currently made up of the following documents:

- Local Plan 2030 (adopted January 2020).
- Saved Local Plan 2002 policies (adopted October 2002).
- Saved Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2005 policies (adopted January 2005).
- Continuing policies in the Allocations and Designations Local Plan (adopted July 2013).
- The Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Strategic Sites and Policies (adopted January 2014).

2.2 The following Neighbourhood Development Plans were 'made' up to the end of the monitoring period, and therefore also form part of the statutory development plan for their designated area:

- Bletsoe (made June 2021).
- Bromham (made June 2021).
- Carlton and Chellington (made March 2020).
- Great Barford (made January 2022).
- Harrold (made January 2022).
- Milton Ernest (made November 2021).
- Oakley (made March 2020).
- Sharnbrook (made November 2021).
- Stevington (made June 2021).
- Thurleigh (made June 2021).
- Turvey (made September 2021).
- Willington (made March 2022).
- Wootton (made March 2022).

2.3 Since April 2022, the following additional Neighbourhood Development Plans have also been made:

- Clapham (made July 2022).
- Felmersham and Radwell (made July 2022).
- Odell (made September 2022).
- Wilshamstead (made January 2023).

3 Implementation of the Local Development Scheme

- 3.1 The Local Development Scheme (LDS) is a rolling business plan for the preparation of key planning policy documents relevant to future planning decisions. The LDS that this document reports on was published in January 2022 and is available online at www.bedford.gov.uk/lds.

Progress on the Bedford Borough Local Plan 2040

- 3.2 The Council adopted Local Plan 2030 in January 2020, which sets out the strategy and planning policies for the borough to 2030. As part of the adoption of the plan, a policy was inserted committing the Council to an immediate review. Policy 1 states: “The Council will undertake a review of the Local Plan 2030, which will be submitted for examination no later than three years after the date of adoption of the plan...”
- 3.3 On 12 January 2023 (outside of the monitoring year), the Review of the Bedford Local Plan (Local Plan 2040) was submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination.
- 3.4 In line with the Local Development Scheme, the Local Plan 2040 was subject to a regulation 19 consultation in June/July 2022 (outside of the monitoring year). Previous Issues and Options consultations were held between 14 July and 4 September 2020, and 29 June and 3 September 2021. The first of these consultations considered the scope of the local plan, a draft vision and key themes along with possible locations for development beyond 2030. A call for sites exercise was also undertaken. The second consultation narrowed the suitable development strategy options for the borough as well as included a number of draft policies for the town centre and retail, and development management issues.
- 3.5 Information on the progress of the Local Plan 2040, including the examination of the plan can be found at www.bedford.gov.uk/localplan2040.

Progress on Supplementary Planning Documents

- 3.6 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) provide more detailed advice and guidance on the implementation and interpretation of planning policies set out in the local plan. Unlike local plans, SPDs are not required to be submitted for

independent examination but are subject to public consultation and are a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

3.7 The LDS (appendix 3) lists the SPDs that have been adopted by the Council and these are published at www.bedford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/other-planning-policy-documents.

3.8 The SPDs the Council intends to prepare within the current LDS time period are listed in appendix 4 of the LDS³. The progress has been made during 2021/22 is outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Supplementary Planning Document preparation		
Supplementary Planning Document	Purpose	Status
Health Impact Assessments	To guide the scope and content of HIAs	Being prepared as guidance rather than SPD
Ford End Road planning brief and design code	To set out distribution of uses and guide development in support of Local Plan 2030 Policy 12.	This is behind timetable. Work on the brief has been paused pending the delayed preferred route announcement for East West Rail.
Land south of the river planning brief and design code	To set out distribution of uses, phase and guide development in support of Local Plan 2030 Policy 14.	This is behind timetable. Work on the brief has been paused pending the delayed preferred route announcement for East West Rail.
Developing in the Forest of Marston Vale Design Guidance	To provide guidance on how to achieve the requirements of Local Plan 2030 Policy 36S. The document was prepared in conjunction with Central Bedfordshire Council and the Forest of Marston	Consultation on a draft document was undertaken in June and July 2022 and the SPD was adopted on 25 January 2023 (outside of the monitoring year).

³ Health Impact Assessments SPD is identified in the LDS, however the document is now to be adopted as guidance rather than an SPD.

	Vale. Further information is available online ⁴ .	
Trees	To provide guidance on the types of trees for inclusion as part of landscaping, installation and future maintenance that is suitable for particular types of development. The guidance supports Local Plan 2030 Policies 38, 39 and 40. Further information is available online ⁵ .	This is behind timetable due to LP2040 taking priority. Consultation on the scope of the draft document was undertaken in November and December 2022 (outside of the monitoring year).
Bedford Borough Design Guide	To provide guidance on design matters for future development and support design policies in the development plan. Further information on progress is available online ⁶ .	Initial engagement with internal stakeholders in developing a scope for the SPD was followed by public engagement on the scope of the SPD in August and September 2021. Public consultation on a draft design guide was undertaken in September and October 2022, and a report recommending approval is due to be considered by the Council's Executive in March 2023 (outside of the monitoring year).
Design guidance to guide the development of small residential sites, infill development and extensions	To update and replace the Council's existing guidance "Residential Extensions, New Dwellings and Small Infill Developments" (RENSID) in support of Local Plan 2030 Policy 29.	No progress has been made since the publication of the LDS. To be prepared as resources allow.

⁴ <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/forest-marston-vale-development-design-guidance>

⁵ <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/trees-supplementary-planning-document>

⁶ <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/bedford-borough-design-guide>

Guidance for the design of shopfronts	To update and replace the Council's existing guidance "Shopfronts and Advertisements in Conservation Areas" in support of Local Plan 2030 Policy 29.	No progress has been made since the publication of the LDS. To be prepared as resources allow.
Guidance on advertisements	To provide design guidance on advertisements in support of Local Plan 2030 Policy 34.	No progress has been made since the publication of the LDS. To be prepared as resources allow.

4 Duty to Co-operate

- 4.1 The Duty to Co-operate was introduced by the Localism Act 2011 and is set out in section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004⁷. It places a legal duty on local planning authorities and county councils in England, and prescribed public bodies to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis to maximise the effectiveness of local plan preparation in the context of strategic cross boundary matters.
- 4.2 During the monitoring year 2021/22 Bedford Borough Council has continued to work with neighbouring local authorities and other key partners to plan for strategic and cross boundary matters during the preparation of the Local Plan 2040. Information on the discussion and joint working to the end of March 2022 can be found in the Duty to Co-operate Position Statements⁸.
- 4.3 A more up to date Duty to Co-operate Compliance Statement has been prepared in January 2023 (outside of the monitoring year).

⁷ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/5/section/33A>

⁸ <https://edrms.bedford.gov.uk/OpenDocument.aspx?id=DGE0aFzC0cS7wSj1bR3YJw%3d%3d&name=DtC%20All%20position%20statements%20Redacted.pdf>

5 Progress on Neighbourhood Planning

- 5.1 Neighbourhood planning was introduced through the Localism Act 2011. New powers were introduced that allowed qualifying bodies to produce neighbourhood plans and neighbourhood development orders. Neighbourhood plans allow communities to set planning policies for their area. Once 'made' (adopted), neighbourhood plans become part of the development plan for their designated area.
- 5.2 The LDS does not include timescales for the preparation of new neighbourhood plans as these are led by Town and Parish Councils on behalf of their local communities; the timescales for their production or review are therefore set by the relevant Town or Parish Council.
- 5.3 During the monitoring year, the Council has not designated any additional Neighbourhood Areas. However, 18 Neighbourhood Areas remain designated, covering the parishes listed in Table 2. These are parishes where no neighbourhood plan has yet been made (in some instances plans are in production).

Table 2: Designated neighbourhood plan areas	
Neighbourhood Plan area	Designation date
Brickhill	8 September 2016
Cardington	8 June 2016
Colmworth	20 February 2015
Cople	30 July 2015
Cotton End	21 August 2019
Dean and Shelton	30 July 2015
Great Denham	7 January 2014
Pavenham	20 June 2014
Pertenhall and Swineshead	11 April 2017
Ravensden	23 October 2019
Renhold	7 September 2020
Riseley	14 March 2018
Roxton	5 November 2014

Stagsden	11 September 2015
Staploe	7 September 2020
Stewartby	26 November 2013
Wilden	14 November 2013
Wyboston, Chawston and Colesden	12 November 2014

5.4 During the monitoring year 2021/22, 11 Neighbourhood Plans were subject to referendum and subsequently made. These were:

- Bletsoe (made June 2021).
- Bromham (made June 2021).
- Great Barford (made January 2022).
- Harrold (made January 2022).
- Milton Ernest (made November 2021).
- Sharnbrook (made November 2021).
- Stevington (made June 2021).
- Thurleigh (made June 2021).
- Turvey (made September 2021).
- Willington (made March 2022).
- Wootton (made March 2022).

5.5 Since the end of the monitoring year, four Neighbourhood Plans have been subject to referendum and subsequently made. These were: Clapham (made July 2022), Felmersham and Radwell (made July 2022), Odell (made September 2022), and Wilshamstead (made January 2023).

5.6 More information on neighbourhood planning in the borough can be found at www.bedford.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning.

6 Allocated Sites

- 6.1 This section of the monitoring report provides information on the implementation of all allocations in plans, including neighbourhood plans. Table 3 sets out the status of all allocated sites in the Local Plan 2030, saved Local Plan 2002 policy allocations and saved Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013 allocations at the end of the 2021/22 monitoring year.
- 6.2 During the monitoring year, progress continued on delivering allocated sites in the development plan.

Local Plan 2030 Policy		Status at 31 March 2022
8	Key development sites in St Paul's Square	<u>Bank building site, St Paul's Square</u> No planning permission. <u>Shire Hall, St Paul's Square</u> No planning permission.
9	Land at Duckmill Lane / Bedesman Lane, Bedford	No planning permission.
10	The station area, Ashburnham Rd, Bedford	No planning permission. Reliant on the East West Rail scheme. Route decision awaited.
11	Greyfriars, Bedford	No planning permission. Discussions have commenced in association with redevelopment of land subject to Local Plan 2040 Policy HOU1 Greyfriars North.
12	Land at Ford End Road, Bedford	No planning permission. Work on the brief has been paused pending the preferred route announcement for East West Rail.

13	Land at Borough Hall, Bedford	No planning permission. Work on the design code has been paused pending the preferred route announcement for East West Rail.
14	Land south of the river, Bedford	No planning permission. Work on the brief has been paused pending the preferred route announcement for East West Rail.
18	Land at Gold Lane, Biddenham	Outline planning permission (18/00140/MAO) is secured for up to 249 dwellings. Reserved matters for the first phase of development, comprising 119 dwellings was approved on 24 February 2022.
19	Land at 329 Bedford Road, Kempston	No planning permission.
20	Land at Mowbray Road, Bedford	No planning permission.
21	Land north of Beverley Crescent, Bedford	No planning permission.
22	Land at Lodge Hill, Bedford	No planning permission. Initial discussions with the land owner are underway.
23	Land to the rear of Bromham Road, Biddenham	Outline planning permission (19/01394/MAO) for residential development was approved on 15 October 2020.
24	Land at Grazehill, Bedford	Outline planning permission (19/00593/MAO) for 165 dwellings was been approved on 6 Nov 2020.
25	Former Stewartby Brickworks	Outline planning permission (18/03022/EIA) for up to 1,000 dwellings was approved on 29 October 2021.
27	Land north of School Lane, Roxton	No planning permission. Scheme being progressed.
62	Kempston Hardwick Gypsy and Traveller site	Planning permission for two new day units with access, parking and associated works was granted In December 2018 (18/02566/DC3).

Local Plan 2002 Policy		Status at 31 March 2022
H2	Britannia Iron Works	Development completed.
H6	Biddenham Loop	Land adjacent to Mercia Road, Great Denham (21/01582/MAF) remains to be developed. This is land originally set aside for school use.
H7	Land west of Kempston	Development completed.
H8	Land north of Bromham Road, Biddenham	Outline planning permission was granted under 01/02199/OUT and multiple reserved matters have been approved. 645 dwellings have been completed and 655 dwellings have extant planning permission but are not built.
H9	Land at Shortstown	The development is being implemented in three phases under separate reserved matters applications pursuant to outline consent 02/01920/OUT. 820 dwellings have been completed and 180 dwellings have extant planning permission but are not built.
H11	Land south of Fields Road, Wootton	Full planning permission (15/02060/MAF) for 600 dwellings was approved in 2016 and 56 dwellings have been completed.
H12	Land north of Fields Road, Wootton	Development completed.
H13	Land off Rousebury Road, Stewartby	Outline planning permission was granted under 07/01163/OUT and reserved matters have been secured for the first phase of 325 dwellings (14/03135/MAR) and the second phase comprising 285 dwellings (17/02295/MAR). 459 dwellings have been completed and 151 dwellings have extant planning permission but are not built.

H14 and E10	Elstow Storage Depot and Elstow Brickworks	<p>The new settlement of Wixams lies partly within Bedford Borough and partly within Central Bedfordshire. It consists of four “villages”. Development of Wixams Village 1 comprising 988 dwellings is completed. A new primary school opened in September 2009 and a village hall opened in April 2013. A local centre within Village 1 has been completed. Development of Village 2 is under construction and 499 dwellings are complete. Village 3 has extant outline planning permission and development has not yet started. Development of Village 4 is under construction and 72 dwellings are complete.</p> <p>A purpose-built retirement village for the over 55s opened on a site adjacent to Village 1 in 2019 and a care home opened in 2021.</p> <p>The construction of a regional distribution centre has been completed on a site north of Fisherswood Road. A site to the south west benefits from an extant reserved matters approval (17/02657/MAR) for a regional distribution centre. The applicant subsequently submitted a new reserved matters application (22/00532/MAR) incorporating a series of amendments to the previously approved scheme. The new reserved matters application is pending consideration. Three commercial units have been completed on a site north of Watson Road. A business park comprising of six units have recently been completed (outside of the monitoring year) on a site north of Fisherswood Road, adjacent to the care home.</p>
H23	Housing in second order villages	<p><u>Land south of Cople Road, Cardington</u></p> <p>Development completed.</p> <p><u>Land at West End Lane, Elstow</u></p>

		<p>Development completed.</p> <p><u>Land off Pavenham Road, Oakley</u></p> <p>Development completed.</p> <p><u>Land off Sandye Lane, Swineshead</u></p> <p>No planning permission.</p> <p><u>Land off Keysoe Road, Riseley</u></p> <p>Development completed.</p> <p><u>Land to the north of School Lane, Roxton</u></p> <p>Development completed</p> <p><u>'Village Green', Spring Lane, Stagsden</u></p> <p>No planning permission.</p> <p><u>Newton Road, Turvey</u></p> <p>Development completed.</p> <p><u>Land adjoining the Old Pond House, Upper Dean</u></p> <p>Development completed.</p> <p><u>Canons Close, Wootton</u></p>
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		<p>Development completed.</p> <p><u>Church Lane, Wymington</u></p> <p>Development completed.</p> <p><u>Land between High Road, Hall Way and Meeting Close, Cotton End</u></p> <p>Development completed.</p> <p><u>Land south of Bedford Road, Willington</u></p> <p>Development completed.</p>
E2	Land south of Cambridge Road	Development completed.
LR4	Rowing course	Planning permission for the watersports lake was granted in 2006 under BC/CM/2003/33 and a legal start has been made. The intention is that Local Plan 2040 Policy HOU11 will deliver the watersports facility alongside development.
Allocations and Designations Plan 2013 Policy		Status at 31 March 2022
AD3	Land at Hall End Road, Wootton	Development of 58 dwellings under planning permission 14/02939/MAF on the eastern part of the site is completed. The land reserved for education use, on the western part of the site has no planning permission.
AD4	Land at Old Ford End Road, Queens Park, Bedford	Development completed.
AD7	Land East of Eastcotts Road, Bedford	Development completed.

AD10	Lansdowne Road, Warwick Avenue and Dynevor Road, Bedford	Full planning permission (13/02417/MAF) for demolition of existing buildings and development of 152 dwellings was secured in 2015. 141 dwellings have been completed and 11 dwellings have extant planning permission but are not built.
AD11	Land at Medbury Farm, Elstow	No planning permission. It is proposed to replace Policy AD11 with emerging Local Plan 2040 Policy EMP5.
AD12	Land at Bell Farm, Kempston	The development of five storage and distribution buildings with ancillary office space was completed in 2020/21.
AD13	Marston Vale Innovation Park, Phase 2, Wootton	<p>The planning history of the site is extensive. A hybrid scheme (17/00666/MAO) permitted in May 2018 allowed for a mix of employment uses including leisure based employment and associated infrastructure. This permission was subsequently amended by four non material amendment applications. Three reserved matters applications have been approved of which 21/00322/M73 for the layout, scale, appearance and landscaping of plots 4 and 5, providing approximately 24,000 sqm employment floorspace has been implemented. The construction of plot 6 (19/01176/NMA), providing a 37,626 sqm distribution warehouse has also been completed.</p> <p>A children's nursery school building on plot 1D (18/00644/DC3) was approved in June 2018 and the development is completed.</p> <p>The time limit for the submission of reserved matters under 17/00666/MAO expired in May 2021 and a new outline planning application (21/02077/MAO) to establish the principle of development of plots 1A to C (for Class E(b), C1 and sui generis</p>

		uses) and plots 2 and 3 (for Class E(g) and ancillary B8 uses) was approved on 7 April 2022 (outside of the monitoring year).
AD15	Manton Lane Reservoir Site, Bedford	Planning permission for the erection of a commercial building was approved on 24 February 2020 (19/01860/MAF). Development was completed in the 2021/22 monitoring year.
AD16	Land West of Manton Lane, Bedford	Was allocated as employment land but planning permission is now approved for a school (20/00488/MAR).
AD17	Land West of the B530, Kempston	No planning permission. A scheme is being prepared.
AD18	Land North of the A6-A428 Link Road, Bedford	Planning permission was granted under 18/02231/MDC4 for the erection of microbrewery with access road (Class B2) (detailed element) and outline proposals with all matters reserved except access and site clearance for mixed use development, to include employment B1, B2, B8, D2 leisure use, A3, A4 and hotel uses. Only the outline proposals are within the allocated site. A reserved matters application (19/00921/MAR) for the construction of a leisure activities centre is pending consideration.
AD19	Land at Manton Lane, Bedford	No planning permission. A scheme is being prepared and a planning application is anticipated in the first half of 2023.
AD20	Land at Bedford Road, Great Barford	Full planning permission (16/00873/MAF) for the development of 54 dwellings and 1 acre area of land to provide a site for a Primary Care Facility has been approved and the dwellings are completed. Development of the Primary Care Facility has not started.
AD21	Land at Chawston Lake, Roxton Road, Wyboston	Full planning permission (17/00880/MAF) was granted in 2017 for use as a holiday village including 8 holiday chalets (including manager's chalet), 20 caravan plots, camping area, facilities

		buildings and associated landscaping and ancillary works. The development was not implemented and the permission has expired.
AD22	Land North of Ravensden Road, Salph End, Renhold	No planning permission.
AD23	Bedford River Valley Enabling Development	<p>Enabling development at Bedford River Valley Park has been allocated in the development plan for a number of years in order to finance the delivery of a watersports lake and other leisure opportunities. Whilst planning permission for the watersports lake has been granted and development legally commenced, the project has progressed no further. The enabling development hasn't happened, but the Council's aspiration to deliver the lake and leisure uses in support of wider growth in the borough remains a priority.</p> <p>A new scheme has been drawn up to take the project forward. Whilst the original enabling development envisaged employment, leisure and education uses on the site with the possibility of a continuing care retirement community, the refreshed scheme will deliver a mixed use development including residential units, an education facility, a care home, and watersports lake set in a well landscaped, multi-functional greenspace.</p> <p>It is proposed to replace Policy AD23 with emerging Local Plan 2040 Policy HOU11.</p>

6.3 Table 4 shows the estimated number of dwellings allocated in 'made' and emerging neighbourhood plans and the status of allocated sites at the end of the 2021/22 monitoring year.

Table 4: Status of Neighbourhood Plan policy allocations at 31 March 2022		
Parish	Dwellings allocated	Status at 31 March 2022
Bromham	500	<p><u>BP - Beauchamp Park</u> Resolution to approve outline planning permission (19/01904/MAO) for 390 dwellings subject to legal agreement.</p> <p><u>SR - The Stagsden Rise Development</u> Outline planning permission (17/02242/MAO) is secured for 80 dwellings.</p> <p><u>OS - Old Stable Yard Development</u> No planning permission.</p>
Clapham	500	<p><u>Policy HG2: Land at Milton Hill</u> No planning permission.</p>
Great Barford	500	<p><u>Policy H1: Land at Great Barford West</u> No planning permission.</p>
Sharnbrook	500	<p><u>Policy S3 – Land at Hill Farm, Mill Road</u> Planning application (22/02193/MAF) for 500 dwellings is pending consideration.</p>
Carlton and Chellington	32	<p><u>Policy CC5 - Land at the Causeway</u> Resolution to approve full planning permission (21/02406/FUL) for 9 dwellings subject to legal agreement.</p> <p><u>Policy CC6 - The Causeway</u> Development of 18 dwellings was completed in 2020/21.</p> <p><u>Policy CC7 - Land north of the Moor</u> No planning permission.</p>

Harrold	25	<p><u>Policy HARROLD NDP2: Land at Odell Road</u> No planning permission.</p> <p><u>Policy HARROLD NDP3: Land east of Orchard Lane</u> No planning permission.</p>
Milton Ernest	25	<p><u>Policy ME H1: Rushden Road</u> No planning permission</p>
Oakley	40	<p><u>ONP HG1: Land at Station Road</u> Outline planning permission for up to 40 dwellings was refused in October 2022 and an appeal has been lodged (outside of the monitoring year).</p> <p><u>ONP:HG1: Land to the rear of the High Street</u> No planning permission.</p>
Turvey	50	<p><u>Policy T1: Carlton Road</u> No planning permission.</p> <p><u>Policy T1: Mill Rise</u> No planning permission.</p>
Willington	50	<p><u>Policy W4 – Land off Sandy Road</u> Outline planning permission (20/02151/MAO) for 50 dwellings was approved in July 2022 (outside of the monitoring year).</p>
Bletsoe	11	<p><u>BNP Policy 2 Land behind Captains Close</u> No planning permission.</p> <p><u>BNP Policy 3 Land north of the Old Rectory</u> No planning permission.</p>

Felmersham and Radwell	13	<p><u>Policy FR3: Land at the Old Road, Felmersham</u> No planning permission.</p> <p><u>Policy FR4: Perch Heights, Carlton Road, Felmersham</u> No planning permission.</p>
Odell	None	
Stevington	None	
Thurleigh	30	<p><u>Policy HS2 – Land at The Beeches, High Street</u> Outline planning permission is secured. Reserved matters (22/01889/MAR) for 11 dwellings is pending consideration.</p> <p><u>Policy HS3 – Land at Hayle Field, High Street</u> No planning permission.</p>
Wilshamstead	None	
Wootton	105	<p><u>Policy W3 – Land between Potters Cross and Wootton Road</u> No planning permission.</p> <p><u>Policy W4 – Land south of Keeley Lane</u> Outline planning permission (22/01035/MAO) for 20 dwellings was approved on 18 November 2022 (outside of the monitoring year).</p> <p><u>Policy W5 – Land at Tinkers Corner, Keeley Lane</u> No planning permission.</p> <p><u>Policy W6 – Land on south side of Keeley Lane</u> No planning permission.</p>

7 Monitoring Results

- 7.1 This section reports on the implementation of local plan policies under the four themes of natural environment, accessibility, delivering growth and placemaking. Key objectives from the Local Plan 2030 are grouped at the start of each theme. For context, the relevant themes from the emerging Local Plan 2040 are also identified.
- 7.2 Data relating to the 2021/22 monitoring year is presented but as the plan period started in 2015, where possible, data for the monitoring indicators has been 'baselined' at 2015 to establish trends and to enable more effective analysis.

Theme 1: Natural environment

LP2030 Objective 1. Deliver high quality growth that will facilitate the development of more sustainable and inclusive places for local communities, which are equipped to respond to the impacts of climate and economic change and offer the opportunity to live more healthy lifestyles. Where it is viable and sustainable to do so, encourage the re-use of land that has been previously developed.

LP2030 Objective 8. Develop a strong and multifunctional urban and rural green infrastructure network through protecting, enhancing, extending and linking landscapes, woodland, biodiversity sites, heritage sites, green spaces and paths.

LP2030 Objective 9. Support and create a high quality, inclusive and safe built environment which values local landscape and settlement character and which conserves and enhances the historic environment and is enjoyed by all.

LP2030 Objective 10. Protect and enhance our natural resources including air, soil minerals and water to minimise the impacts of flooding, climate change and pollution.

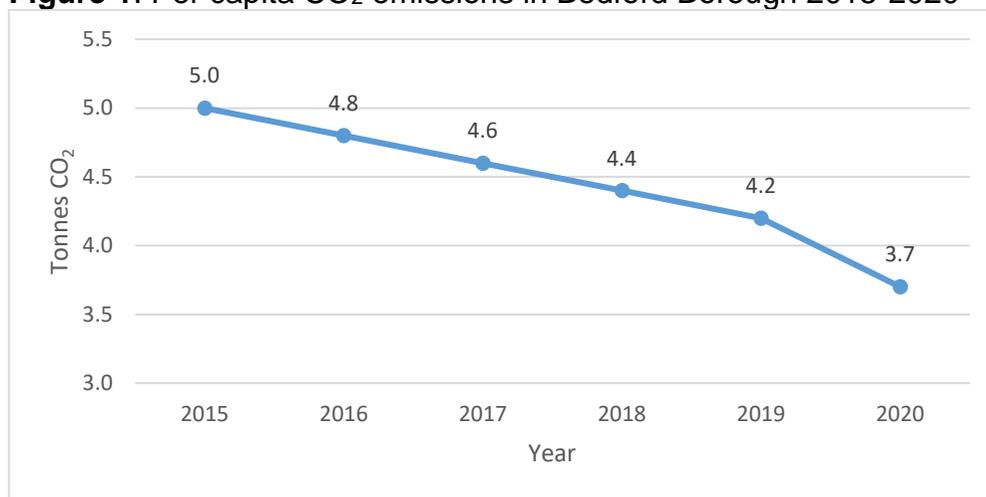
This section broadly aligns with emerging Local Plan 2040 Theme 1: Greener

Monitoring indicator 1 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
1a Reduction in carbon emissions	51S, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 89	Carbon emissions in the borough per capita	2015 = 5.0 tonnes CO ₂ per capita 2016 = 4.8 tonnes CO ₂ per capita 2017 = 4.6 tonnes CO ₂ per capita 2018 = 4.4 tonnes CO ₂ per capita 2019 = 4.2 tonnes CO ₂ per capita 2020 = 3.7 tonnes CO ₂ per capita	DBEIS
1b Delivery of district heating networks	51S, 55	Information about the installation of district heating networks	£16.9 million in funding is secured for a new district heat network supplying heat from Rookery South Energy Recovery Facility to serve new developments in the Marston Vale area.	BBC
1c Delivery of renewable and low carbon energy generation schemes	51S, 53, 55, 56, 57	Number of renewable energy installations completed annually	Solar photovoltaics = 117	DBEIS
			Onshore wind = 0	
			Landfill gas = 0	
			Sewage gas = 0	
			Plant biomass = 0	
			Animal biomass = 0	
			Anaerobic digestion = 0	
Hydro = 0				
1d Planning permissions for renewable and low carbon energy generation schemes	51S, 53, 55, 56, 57	Number of permissions granted for renewable and low carbon energy generation	2 permissions	DBEIS

7.3 It is established that the leading cause of climate change is the release of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases into the atmosphere through human activity. Climate change is already evident in the form of increased extreme weather events, rising sea levels, longer droughts and heatwaves, and retreating polar ice and glaciers.

- 7.4 The Climate Change Act 2008 introduced a statutory target of reducing carbon dioxide emissions to at least 80% below 1990 levels by 2050 and in 2019 the government adopted a legally binding target for the UK to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.
- 7.5 Local Plan 2030 Policy 51S requires development and the use of land and buildings to address climate change, adapting to anticipated future changes and mitigating against further change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- 7.6 Data from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (DBEIS)⁹ presented in Figure 1 shows gradually decreasing trends for carbon dioxide emissions (tonnes) per capita between 2015 and 2020.

Figure 1: Per capita CO₂ emissions in Bedford Borough 2015-2020



- 7.7 Heat networks provide an opportunity in dense urban areas to use low-carbon heat sources to heat communities with a much greater overall efficiency than individual gas boiler systems. The Bedford Heat Mapping and Masterplanning Study 2019 mapped the heat demand of the urban area as well as the major anchor loads of the area. £16.9 million in funding from

⁹ DBEIS (2022) UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions national statistics, 2005 to 2020. Table 1.2: Local authority territorial carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions estimates. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-national-statistics>

the government's Heat Network Investment Project is secured for a new district heat network supplying heat from Rookery South Energy Recovery Facility to serve new developments in the Marston Vale area in Bedfordshire¹⁰.

- 7.8 Existing renewable energy installations at local authority level are published annually by DBEIS. Most of the data relating to renewable energy technologies is based on records of installations that have been registered under an accreditation scheme. Technologies that are not supported by such schemes or that are not registered for some other reason are therefore likely to be underrepresented. The Regional Renewable Statistics reports the number of installations, capacity and annual electricity generation from a range of renewable energy technologies. The latest data¹¹ shows that at the end of 2021 there were around 2,592 renewable energy installations in the borough, the vast majority being solar photovoltaics (around 2,569 installations). 15 onshore wind, two landfill gas, two plant biomass, one animal biomass, one sewage gas, one anaerobic digestion and one hydro installation were also recorded. The same dataset estimates that renewable electricity generation in the borough is 131 GWh per year. For comparison, annual electricity consumption in the borough was 699 GWh in 2020¹². Increasing renewable energy supply is therefore crucial to the Council achieving carbon neutrality in its operations by 2030 and for the UK to meet its commitments to climate change mitigation.
- 7.9 The Renewable Energy Planning Database (REPD) records the status of all renewable energy and combined heat and power projects for which a planning application has been submitted including the dates of permission being granted or refused, and when the project became operational. Small-scale technologies that do not require planning permission are not included in the dataset.
- 7.10 The REPD¹³ shows that planning permission was granted for two projects during 2021/22: a containerised battery storage facility at Land north of The Brickmakers Arms, Woburn Road, Kempston (21/00300/FUL) and a roof mounted 200kWp solar PV system at Systems House, 235 Ampthill Road, Bedford (21/02478/SPNJ). The REPD also shows that the construction of a 5.5MW solar PV array at Elstow Landfill Site, Wilstead Road, Elstow (20/01987/FULWM) began in the monitoring year. No projects became operational in the monitoring year.

¹⁰ Further information available at <https://www.vitalenergi.co.uk/media/press-releases/vital-energi-to-deliver-new-heat-network-in-bedfordshire/>

¹¹ DBEIS (2022) Renewable energy by local authority 2014-2021. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/regional-renewable-statistics>

¹² DBEIS (2022) Subnational total final energy consumption. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/total-final-energy-consumption-at-sub-national-level>

¹³ DBEIS (2022) Renewable Energy Planning Database. Available at <https://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/a5b0ed13-c960-49ce-b1f6-3a6bbe0db1b7/renewable-energy-planning-database-repd>

7.11 The latest data on renewable energy installations and renewable electricity generation will be reported in the next monitoring report. Analysis of this data will help to assess the extent to which the Council’s planning policies relating to renewable energy generation are achieving their intended outcomes and helping to achieve the local plan vision and objectives in addition to the Council’s carbon neutrality pledge and UK-wide targets relating to climate change mitigation.

Monitoring indicator 2 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
2a Development proposed and delivered in the riverside area of Bedford town centre	17	Number of planning permissions received and determined in the riverside area Whether proposals satisfied the policy tests	0 permissions	BBC

7.12 Planning applications for development proposals on land bordering the River Great Ouse in Bedford town centre are assessed against criteria set out in Local Plan 2030 Policy 17. There were no planning permissions for development in the riverside area of Bedford town centre during the 2021/22 monitoring year.

Monitoring indicator 3 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
3a Green infrastructure created and lost	35S, 36S, AD24, AD26, AD27	Amount of new green infrastructure created and existing green infrastructure lost	The method of data collection to monitor delivery of local plan policy objectives to achieve a net gain in green infrastructure is being reviewed. Progress will be reported in the next monitoring report.	BBC

- 7.13 The Local Plan 2030 emphasises the importance of green infrastructure in the borough, citing its environmental and health benefits as well as its capacity to enhance and conserve the historic environment by improving the setting of infrastructure assets, improve access to it and help contribute to the sense of place and a tangible link with local history. Local Plan 2030 Policy 35S relates to the provision, protection and enhancement of green infrastructure in the borough.
- 7.14 The Bedford Borough Green Infrastructure Plan 2009 identifies a strategic green infrastructure network which is divided into six separate Opportunity Zones. Saved Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013 Policy AD24 provides further detail about the zones and the priorities for the protection and enhancement of green infrastructure within them.
- 7.15 The method of data collection to monitor delivery of local plan policy objectives to achieve a net gain in green infrastructure is being reviewed. Progress will be reported in the next monitoring report.

Monitoring indicator 4 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
4a Woodland creation in the Forest of Marston Vale	36S	Amount of new woodland planted (ha)	31.8ha of new woodland area was created in the Forest of Marston Vale during 2021/22.	The Forest of Marston Vale Trust
4b Planning contributions secured towards the delivery of the Forest of Marston Vale	36S	Financial contributions secured as a result of planning permissions granted (through S106)	£28,770.36 in total	BBC
4c Progress in the delivery of Bedford River Valley Park and Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway Park	AD26, AD27	Information relating to the delivery of these two strategic green infrastructure projects.	The Oxford to Cambridge Arc Central Area Growth Board partnership has submitted a bid for £30 million capacity funding from government to support delivery of the Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway Park.	BBC

- 7.16 Strategic green infrastructure projects within the borough are the Forest of Marston Vale, Bedford River Valley Park and the Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway Park.
- 7.17 The Forest of Marston Vale is one of England's nationally designated community forests covering 61 square miles of land between Bedford and Milton Keynes. Further information is available at www.marstonvale.org. Over 800ha of green and blue infrastructure in the east of Bedford will be delivered by the Borough Council and partners to form Bedford River Valley Park. Further information is available at www.bedfordrivervalley.org.uk. The Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway Park scheme consists of a 26km canal connecting Milton Keynes to the head of navigation of the River Great Ouse at Kempston. The project is led by the Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterway Trust. Further information is available at www.bmkwaterway.org.
- 7.18 In order to meet the target for 30% tree cover in the Forest of Marston Vale as a whole, Local Plan 2030 Policy 36S sets out a requirement to provide tree cover at 30% within new developments or provide an off-site financial contribution, secured through a s106 agreement.
- 7.19 In the monitoring year 2021/22, a further 31.8ha of new woodland area was created in the Forest of Marston Vale. Within the Bedford Borough half of the Forest, this was centred around 11.1ha new woodland on land north of Octagon Farm, near Willington, planted as part of further habitat creation within Bedford River Valley Park. A further 5ha of new woodland was planted on land at Jackmans Farm, adjacent to Clapham Park Wood. A total of around 24,000 native trees and shrubs were planted across both sites, with over 500 local people involved in helping to plant some of these via tree planting events. A further 15.7ha of planting was delivered across eleven other sites within the Forest area, bringing the total to 31.8ha for the year. All of these projects were supported under the 'Trees for Climate' programme, a new Defra-sponsored programme to accelerate woodland creation activity within the Forest of Marston Vale and other Community Forests up until April 2025.
- 7.20 Planting activity generally alternates between Bedford Borough Council and Central Bedfordshire Council administrative areas, with the 61 square mile designated Forest of Marston Vale area spanning the boundary. During this monitoring year, most activity took place within Bedford Borough.
- 7.21 Bedford Borough Council's Infrastructure Funding Statement 2021-2022 indicates that a total of £28,770.36 in developer contributions was secured towards the Forest during the monitoring year. This is an increase from 2020/21 when no developer contributions were secured towards the Forest.

Monitoring indicator 5 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
5a Progress in preparing the Developing in the Forest of Marston Vale SPD	36S	Details of preparation in accordance with milestones in the Local Development Scheme	The SPD was adopted on 25 January 2023. (outside of the monitoring year)	BBC

- 7.22 The supporting text to Policy 36S states that a supplementary planning document will be produced jointly with Central Bedfordshire Council to inform development within the Forest area. Consultation on a draft document was undertaken in June and July 2022 and the SDP was adopted on 25 January 2023 (outside of the monitoring year).

Monitoring indicator 6 What is being measured	Related policies	Target	Result	Data source
6a Progress in preparing the Trees SPD	37, 38, 39, 40	Details of preparation in accordance with milestones in the Local Development Scheme	Consultation on the scope of the draft document was undertaken in November and December 2022 (outside of the monitoring year).	BBC

- 7.23 The supporting text to Local Plan 2030 Policy 38 states that a supplementary planning document will be produced to provide guidance on the types of trees for inclusion as part of landscaping installation and future maintenance that is suitable for particular types of development. Consultation on the scope of the draft document was undertaken in November and December 2022 (outside of the monitoring year).

Monitoring indicator 7 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
7a Extent of areas of biodiversity and geodiversity importance	42S, 43	Details of any net loss / net gain in areas of biodiversity and geodiversity importance	Eight Sites of Special Scientific Interest covering 166.7ha. No change from previous year	Natural England
			Eight Local Nature Reserves covering 114.55ha. No change from previous year	

- 7.24 Local Plan 2030 Policies 42S and 43 set out objectives for the biodiversity and geodiversity of the borough to be protected and enhanced where appropriate.
- 7.25 Sites of special scientific interest (SSSI) are nationally important sites designated by Natural England and contain the best examples of the UK's flora, fauna, geological or geophysical features. There are eight sites of special scientific interest in the borough (see Table 5) covering 166.7 hectares of land¹⁴. The largest SSSI in the borough is Odell Great Wood (85.94ha). There has been no change to the area of SSSI land in the borough during 2021/22.

SSSI site	Main habitat	Area (hectares)
Biddenham Pit	Earth heritage	0.42
Felmersham Gravel Pits	Standing open water and canals	21.52
Hanger Wood	Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland – lowland	23.95
Odell Great Wood	Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland – lowland	85.94
Stevington Marsh	Neutral grassland – lowland / Calcareous grassland – lowland	7.62
Swineshead Wood	Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland – lowland	21.87

¹⁴ Natural England Designated Sites System Available at <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteSearch.aspx>

Tilwick Meadow	Natural grassland - lowland	2.54
Yelden Meadows	Natural grassland - lowland	2.84
Total	-	166.7

7.26 Local nature reserves (LNR) are sites that are in the control of and have been suggested by a local authority, but they are designated by Natural England. They are of local importance and have wildlife or geological interest. The sites are publicly accessible and have a management plan in place to ensure their biodiversity or geodiversity is maintained and the wildlife is not damaged as a result of public access. In December 2022 there were eight local nature reserves in Bedford Borough (see Table 6) covering 114.55 hectares of land¹⁵. There has been no change to the area of LNR land in the borough during 2021/22.

Table 6: Local Nature Reserves in Bedford Borough, 2022

LNR site	Type	Area (hectares)
Bromham Lake	Biological	10.89
Browns Wood	Biological	6.03
Fenlake Meadows	Biological	19.15
Harrold Odell Country Park	Biological	59.31
Hill Rise	Biological	0.85
Mowsbury Hill	Biological	2.77
Park Wood	Biological	5.2
Putnoe Wood	Biological	10.35
Total	-	114.55

7.27 The condition of SSSI land in England is assessed by Natural England using categories agreed through the Joint Nature Conservation Committee. There are five reportable condition categories: favourable, unfavourable recovering, unfavourable no change, unfavourable declining, destroyed / part destroyed. Natural England's objective is to achieve 'favourable condition' status for all SSSIs. Favourable condition means that the SSSI's habitats and features are in a healthy state and are being conserved by appropriate management. Assessments of SSSIs are conducted on a six year cycle.

¹⁵ Natural England Designated Sites System Available at <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteSearch.aspx>

Monitoring indicator 8 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Direction of change	Data source	
8a Condition of SSSIs in the borough with a view to 100% being in favourable or unfavourable recovering condition	42S, 43	% of SSSI units in favourable, unfavourable recovering, unfavourable no change, unfavourable declining, destroyed / part destroyed	Favourable	51.33ha (30.8%)	Down	Natural England
			Unfavourable recovering	115.08ha (69.03%)	No change	
			Unfavourable no change	0ha (0%)	No change	
			Unfavourable declining	0.3ha (0.18%)	Up	
			Destroyed / part destroyed	0ha (0%)	No change	

7.28 According to data published on Natural England's designated sites system¹⁶, the proportion of SSSI site area assessed to be in favourable or unfavourable recovering condition is 99.8%, this is primarily due to the resurvey of Biddenham Pit in the monitoring year and its condition declining. Overall, the majority of SSSI land is deemed to be in unfavourable recovering condition (69.03%) with the next highest proportion in favourable condition (30.8%). Just 0.3ha of SSSI land in the borough is assessed to be in unfavourable declining condition.

Monitoring indicator 9 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Direction of change	Data source
9a Condition of locally important sites (county wildlife sites, roadside nature reserves and local geological sites)	42S, 43	Percentage of locally important sites in positive conservation management	2015/16 = 50.4% 2016/17 = 52.8% 2017/18 = 54.0% 2018/19 = 54.0% 2019/20 = 52.8% 2020/22 = 57.6%	Up	Defra The Wildlife Trust

¹⁶ Available at <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteSearch.aspx>

- 7.29 Locally important sites are non-statutory and are known in Bedford Borough as county wildlife sites, roadside nature reserves and local geological sites.
- 7.30 The Single Data List 160-00 (SDL160) aims to measure the performance of local authorities at protecting their local biodiversity and geodiversity, by assessing the implementation of positive conservation management on local sites. The implementation of positive conservation management, defined as management which contributes to maintaining or enhancing the features of interest for which a site has been selected, is widely used for assessing improvements in biodiversity and geodiversity. The status of every site that counts towards the biodiversity indicator is reviewed every five years to assess whether they are still considered to be in positive conservation management.
- 7.31 For a variety of reasons, information for the year 2020/21 was not collected and the most recent data available for the borough therefore incorporates the years 2020/21 and 2021/22. Data from The Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire for 2020/22 shows that 72 local sites are in positive conservation management in Bedford Borough, this represents 57.6% of the total number of sites. Aside from a decline recorded in 2019/20, historical data¹⁷ shows a gradual increase in the proportion of local sites in positive conservation management in the borough.

Monitoring indicator 10 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
10a Impact of development on the River Great Ouse and its environs	44	Number of and details of planning permissions for development on or connected to the River Great Ouse	1 permission	BBC
10b Impact of development on the River Great Ouse and its environs	44	Completed new development on or connected to the River Great Ouse	Continued retention of fishing lodge measuring approximately 35 sqm (present for over 55 years) on land at Willow Vale, Pavenham Road, Oakley	BBC

¹⁷ Defra (2020) Nature conservation: Local sites in positive conservation management in England. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/env10-local-sites-in-positive-conservation-management>

7.32 The River Great Ouse within Bedford Borough is a focal point for formal and informal recreation and sport, and supports a range of diversity. Local Plan 2030 Policy 44 requires development proposals along and adjoining the River Great Ouse to improve access to the river including canoe portage areas and related facilities; deliver improvements to facilities having regard to the Bedford Waterspace Study 2011; ensure that new river moorings have pedestrian and vehicle access to an adopted road; ensure that new marinas have access to an adopted road and provide adequate car parking; and ensure that any new development or activities do not lead to adverse impacts on Natura 2000 sites downstream of Bedford, including as a result of increased flooding or because of pollution. During 2021/22, planning permission (22/00349/S73) was granted for a fishing lodge, including variation of condition 1 attached to 17/00702/S73 (originally permitted under B/TP/82/1971/A) to allow for the continued retention of the fishing lodge at Willow Vale, Pavenham Road, Oakley. No planning permissions for development along or adjoining the River Great Ouse were granted in the previous monitoring year.

Monitoring indicator 11 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
11a Status of the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)	32, 47S, 88	Nitrogen dioxide levels in the Bedford town centre AQMA	One exceedance of the annual mean NO ₂ objective of 40µg/m ³ within the Bedford town centre AQMA	BBC

7.33 There is one Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in Bedford town centre where the annual mean level of nitrogen dioxide exceeds national air quality standards, mainly due to the large number of road vehicles. The Air Quality Annual Status Report 2022¹⁸ identifies that the annual mean objective for nitrogen dioxide was exceeded at one location across the borough during 2021 with this location being within the AQMA (DT20 Prebend Street). This is the same location as 2020 and a reduction since 2019 from four exceedances to one exceedance. The Air Quality Annual Status Report 2022 goes on to say that monitoring data will continue to be reviewed over the next two years to consider the possibility of reducing the current size of the AQMA.

¹⁸ The Air Quality Annual Status Report 2022 and reports from previous years are available at <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/environmental-issues/noise-nuisances-and-pollution/air-quality/air-quality-overview>

Monitoring indicator 12 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Direction of change	Data source
12a Water quality	32, 47S, 50S	Proportion of watercourses classified as good or very good biological or chemical quality	Ecological class Very good = 0 watercourses Good = 2 watercourses Moderate = 16 watercourses Bad = 1 watercourse	No change	Environment Agency
			Chemical class All waterbodies fail	Historical data is not comparable	
12b Compliance with Environment Agency advice on water quality	32, 47S, 50S	Number of planning permissions granted contrary to Environment Agency advice on water quality grounds	0 permissions	No change	Environment Agency
12c Compliance with Environment Agency advice on flooding	92, 93	Number of planning permissions granted contrary to Environment Agency advice on flooding grounds	0 permissions	No change	Environment Agency

- 7.34 The Water Framework Directive is the primary piece of legislation regulating water quality in the borough. Its objectives are to prevent deterioration of waterbodies and to improve them such that they meet the required status for that given waterbody (rivers, lakes, estuaries, coastal and groundwaters).
- 7.35 Bedford falls within the Ouse Upper and Bedford management catchment, although this itself is split into five separate operational catchments and Bedford borough falls largely within the Great Ouse Bedford catchment and the Great Ouse Lower catchment. A small portion of land to the south of the borough falls within the Ivel catchment. The Great Ouse Bedford operational catchment contains 13 water bodies and the Great Ouse Lower operational catchment contains 20 water bodies. The latest water quality readings (2019 cycle 3) are published on the Environment Agency’s online Catchment Data Explorer¹⁹. The status for watercourses in Bedford Borough, and watercourses with part of their catchment in the borough are shown in Table 7. The survey in 2019 found that two waterbodies achieved good ecological status whilst 16 achieved moderate ecological status and one achieved bad ecological status. In 2016 (cycle 2), two waterbodies achieved good ecological status whilst 16 achieved moderate ecological status and one achieved bad ecological status. The ecological status of Begwary Brook has worsened since 2016 whilst the ecological status of Colmworth Brook has improved from poor to moderate status.

Table 7: Water quality in water bodies in Bedford Borough in 2019

Operational catchment	Water body name	Type	Hydro-morphological designation	Ecological class	Chemical class
Great Ouse Bedford	Brogborough Lake	Lake	Artificial	Good	Fail
Great Ouse Bedford	Bromham Brook	River	Heavily modified	Moderate	Fail
Great Ouse Bedford	Cople Brook	River	Heavily modified	Good	Fail
Great Ouse Bedford	Elstow Brook (DS Shortstown)	River	Heavily modified	Moderate	Fail
Great Ouse Bedford	Elstow Brook (US Shortstown)	River	Heavily modified	Moderate	Fail
Great Ouse Bedford	Felmersham Gravel Pits	Lake	Artificial	Moderate	Fail
Great Ouse Bedford	Harrowden Brook	River	Heavily modified	Bad	Fail
Great Ouse Bedford	Ouse (Newport Pagnell to Roxton)	River	Heavily modified	Moderate	Fail
Great Ouse Bedford	Renhold Brook	River	Heavily modified	Moderate	Fail

¹⁹ Available at: <https://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/RiverBasinDistrict/5>

Great Ouse Bedford	Sharn Brook	River	Heavily modified	Moderate	Fail
Great Ouse Bedford	Stewartby Lake	Lake	Artificial	Moderate	Fail
Great Ouse Lower	Begwary Brook	River	Heavily modified	Moderate	Fail
Great Ouse Lower	Colmworth Brook	River	Heavily modified	Moderate	Fail
Great Ouse Lower	Duloe Brook	River	Not designated artificial or heavily modified	Moderate	Fail
Great Ouse Lower	Kym	River	Heavily modified	Moderate	Fail
Great Ouse Lower	Kym (and Til)	River	Heavily modified	Moderate	Fail
Great Ouse Lower	Ouse (Roxton to Earith)	River	Heavily modified	Moderate	Fail
Great Ouse Lower	Pertenhall Brook	River	Heavily modified	Moderate	Fail
Great Ouse Lower	Stone Brook	River	Heavily modified	Moderate	Fail

- 7.36 Guidance published by the Environment Agency²⁰ on how to use the online Catchment Data Explorer should be considered when interpreting the chemical classification data: For the 2019 assessment of chemical status, the Environment Agency changed some methods and increased their evidence base. Due to these changes all water bodies in England now fail chemical status and this assessment is not comparable to previous year's assessments.
- 7.37 The Environment Agency publishes a list of applications it has lodged objections to on flood risk and water quality grounds to assist local authorities and meet their reporting obligations to government²¹. The information indicates that during 2021/22, the Environment Agency lodged objections on flood risk grounds to three planning applications that were submitted for development proposals in Bedford borough. Of these, one application was withdrawn by the applicant and two are not yet determined (as of December 2022). No permissions were granted with unresolved objections from the Environment Agency during the monitoring year.
- 7.38 Information published by the Environment Agency indicates it made no objections to planning applications in the borough on grounds of water quality in 2021/22. This is the same as 2020/21.

²⁰ <https://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/help/usage#chemical-status>

²¹ Environment Agency objections to planning on the basis of flood risk and water quality 2016/2017 to 2021/2022. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environment-agency-objections-to-planning-on-the-basis-of-flood-risk>

Monitoring indicator 13 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Direction of change	Data source
13a Water stress	50S, 52	Water stress classification of the Anglian Water company area	Serious water stress for the region within which Bedford Borough sits	No change	Environment Agency
13b Water consumption	50S, 52	Average household water consumption	138.7 litres per head per day (metered and unmetered)	Up	Anglian Water

7.39 The Environment Agency has developed a methodology for identifying and classifying relative levels of water stress in England. The East of England, which includes the Anglian Water supply region in which Bedford lies was considered an area of serious water stress in 2013 when the classification was revised. The latest determination in 2021²² confirms that the Anglian Water supply region remains an area of serious water stress.

7.40 The average household water consumption (metered and unmetered) in the Anglian Water area in 2020/21 was 138.7 litres per head per day. This is a slight increase compared to 2020/21²³. This increase may be attributed to changes in working practices and the trend towards hybrid working which has seen an increased proportion of people working from home.

Monitoring indicator 14 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Direction of change	Data source
14a Waste reuse / recycling / composting	47S, 48, 49	Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting	2015/16 = 37.5% 2016/17 = 40.7% 2017/18 = 44.5% 2018/19 = 42.9% 2019/10 = 42.7% 2020/21 = 40.0%	Down	Defra

²² Environment Agency (2021) Water stressed areas – final classification 2021. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/water-stressed-areas-2021-classification>

²³ Anglian Water Services Limited (2022) Annual Integrated Report 2022. Available at https://fr.zone-secure.net/5521/.Anglian_Water_Services_Limited-AIR_2022/#page=44

- 7.41 The Joint Minerals and Waste Team are responsible for the determination of minerals and waste planning applications for Central Bedfordshire Council and Bedford Borough Council. The shared service also monitors minerals and waste sites in Central Bedfordshire, Bedford Borough and Luton Borough and publishes results annually in the Minerals and Waste Monitoring Report²⁴.
- 7.42 Data on household waste recycling rates is not included in the Minerals and Waste Monitoring Report. Data published by Defra²⁵ shows that the percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting in 2020/21 was 40.0%, this is a reduction of 2.7% from the amount recorded in 2019/20. The decline in recycling rate may be attributed to the fact that over the period of Covid-19 restrictions, there were some disruptions to waste collection operations and the widespread closure of household waste recycling centres. Furthermore, the national lockdowns and rules for the operation of some businesses had a significant impact of generation of waste during this period.

Monitoring indicator 15 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
15a Development on designated Village Open Spaces	AD40	Number of planning permissions for development resulting in the loss of all or part of a Village Open Space Reasons why permission was granted	1 permission	BBC
15b Development on designated Urban Open Spaces	AD43	Number of planning permissions for development resulting in the loss of all or part of a Urban Open Space Reasons why permission was granted	4 permissions	BBC

²⁴ The most recent monitoring report covers the period 1 January 2021 – 31 December 2021. Available at https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/48/minerals_and_waste/450/development_framework/4

²⁵ Defra (2021) Local authority collected waste management – annual results. Available at https://lginform.local.gov.uk/reports/lgastandard?mod-metric=46&mod-area=E06000055&mod-group=AllUnitaryLainCountry_England&mod-type=namedComparisonGroup

15c Development on designated Local Green Spaces	45	Number of planning permissions for development resulting in the loss of all or part of a Local Green Space Reasons why permission was granted	0 permissions	BBC
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- 7.43 The Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013 affords protection to Village Open Spaces and Urban Open Spaces through policies AD40 and AD43 respectively. Local Green Spaces were introduced in the NPPF and provide a higher tier of protection for open spaces. Local Green Spaces are designated on the Policies Map and have been determined as demonstrably special to the communities they serve. Local Plan 2030 Policy 45 acknowledges that development proposals which result in the loss of part or all of a Local Green Space or would have a negative impact on the features that make it locally significant will not be permitted unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated.
- 7.44 During 2021/22, five planning permissions were granted for development resulting in the loss of all or part of a Village Open Space or Urban Open Space, this is down from nine last year. The reasons for granting planning permission is summarised in Table 8. No planning permissions were granted for development resulting in the loss of all or part of a Local Green Space during the monitoring year.

Table 8: Planning permissions granted for development resulting in the loss or partial loss of a Village Open Space or Urban Open Space during 2021/22 and the reasons for granting permission			
Application reference	Site	Description of development	Reasons for granting planning permission
20/02361/S73	Paddock to the rear of Oakley Methodist Church, High Street, Oakley	Pre-fabricated building for Oakley Pre-School	Material considerations outweigh the need to retain the Village Open Space undeveloped. The proposal will help secure the long-term provision and future of the existing Oakley Pre-School. A condition has been imposed to ensure that the permission can only be implemented by Oakley Pre-School charity. This will ensure that should the pre-school ever cease to operate then the pre-fabricated building, boundary treatments and car parking area, can be required to be removed from the site and the Village Open Space reinstated to its former state.

18/01144/S73A	Kings House 245 Amphill Road, Bedford	Retention of crushed tarmacadam gravelled areas to facilitate access to overflow car parking areas	The retrospective development is in conflict with Policy AD43 as it has an adverse impact on the visual amenity of the area. However the officer assessment considered that due to the passage of time a refusal would be unreasonable and unjustified when considered against Section 171b of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
20/01906/FUL	Bury Court, Church Lane, Bedford	Refurbishment of existing block of flats and erection of new block of 9 flats and associated works	Overall, the minimal loss of trees / hedgerow within the area of the site captured by the wider Goldington Green Park Urban Open Space designation when weighed against the overall public benefits of the scheme and the additional landscaping proposed would not come into conflict with Policy AD43.
21/02804/MAF	Richardson Milling (UK) Ltd, Mile Road and land at Windsor Road, Bedford	Demolition of existing BT office and shed, car sales building, warehouse, offices, part of existing energy centre and silos. Erection of new B2/B8 building and all ancillary works	The proposed development would result in the substantial loss of land designated as Urban Open Space, however the retained and improved vegetation along Mile Road and Windsor Road would still comprise a green break within the street scene so the reason for designation is not considered to be compromised.
20/03068/MAF	Land south of Cardington Road and north of St Martins Way, Bedford	Three storey Class E(g) building, vehicular access, parking, infiltration swale and associated plant and services	The development would involve building on a designated urban open space but it is considered that the reasons for the Urban Open Space being designated would not be compromised. A strong case can also be made for the economic benefits of supporting a local business and enabling it to expand its operations adjoining its existing site.

Monitoring Indicator 16 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
16a Development in designated local gaps	AD42	Number of planning permissions for development in local gaps Reasons why permission was granted	2 permissions	BBC

- 7.45 Saved Allocations and Designations Local 2013 Policy AD42 seeks to prevent the coalescence of settlements between nearby rural settlements, particularly with the urban area. Policy AD42 restricts development which would diminish a local gap unless suitable justification can be given. The areas where the local gaps policy applies are shown on the Policies Map.
- 7.46 Two planning applications for development within a local gap were granted during 2021/22, this is up from no permissions last year. The application details and the reasons for granting planning permission during 2021/22 are summarised in Table 9.

Table 9: Planning permissions granted for development within a local gap during 2021/22 and the reasons for granting permission			
Application reference	Site	Description of development	Reasons for granting planning permission
20/00488/MAR	Land off Clapham Road and Manton Lane, Bedford	All reserved matters for the erection of school buildings and the provision of associated indoor and outdoor sports facilities / pitches	Whilst the school grounds on the western side of the site will be located within the local gap, the area will be kept clear of buildings and so it is not considered that this will diminish the gap physically or visually change its character adversely or compromise its integrity.
21/00116/M73	Land north of Great Spur, Biddenham	Formation of two fishing lakes, retention of car park, removal of spoil and refurbishment of existing outbuilding	The fishing lakes are not considered to diminish the local gap physically or visually. The land will retain a rural character to the benefit of the local area and the existing buildings will be utilised on site to reduce the visual impact.

Theme 2: Accessibility

LP2030 Objective 7. Improve the borough's transport infrastructure in order to support growth in the local economy and to make the borough more attractive as a place to live and do business. Reduce congestion in the borough, particularly into and around the town centre and by making journeys by public transport, walking and cycling more attractive to encourage an increase in more sustainable and healthy modes of transport.

LP2030 Objective 6. Deliver existing and future infrastructure needs to support growth in both urban and rural areas of the borough through the implementation of the Community Infrastructure Levy and other means.

This section broadly aligns with emerging Local Plan 2040 Theme 2: More accessible.

Monitoring indicator 17 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Direction of change	Data source
17a Walking activity	AD36	Percentage of adults who walk for any purpose	At least once per month = 81.7%	Up	Department for Transport
			At least once per week = 76.1%	Up	
			At least 3 times per week = 45.6%	Up	
			At least 5 times per week = 33.3%	Up	
17b Cycling activity	AD39	Percentage of adults who cycle for any purpose	At least once per month = 14.8%	Down	Department for Transport
			At least once per week = 8.9%	Down	
			At least 3 times per week = 5.3%	Down	
			At least 5 times per week = 2.9%	Down	

17c Delivery of new cycle and footways	91, AD36, AD39	Amount of newly adopted footway and cycleway delivered annually	1,169 metres carriageway footway and 258 metres offstreet footway was adopted during 2021/22.	Up	BBC
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- 7.47 The most recent data available at the borough level regarding travel mode share is from the 2011 Census which is now outdated. Information on method of travel to work from the 2021 Census has not yet been published. When more recent data becomes available, it will be reported in the next monitoring report.
- 7.48 Sustainable transport modes as defined in the NPPF includes “any efficient, safe and accessible means of transport with overall low impact on the environment, including walking and cycling, ultra low and zero emission vehicles, car sharing and public transport”.
- 7.49 Participation in walking and cycling at local authority level is compiled from the National Travel Survey and Active Lives Survey²⁶. The data in Figure 2 generally shows a gradual increase in walking in Bedford Borough between 2016 and 2021. Whilst there was a slight decline as a result of the changes in lifestyle necessitated by the implementation of a national lockdown at the beginning of 2020 to curb the spread of Covid-19, increases in all frequencies of walking were observed between 2020 and 2021. In comparison, the cycling data in Figure 3 shows a gradual decline in cycling activity in the borough over the same timeframe. A notable increase of adults cycling at least 5 times per week is evident during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 for which it was permissible to leave the house once a day for exercise during the national lockdowns.

²⁶ DfT (2022) Proportion of adults who do any walking or cycling, for any purpose, by frequency and local authority: England. Table CWO301. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/walking-and-cycling-statistics-cw>

Figure 2: Percentage of adults who walk for any purpose by frequency 2016-2021

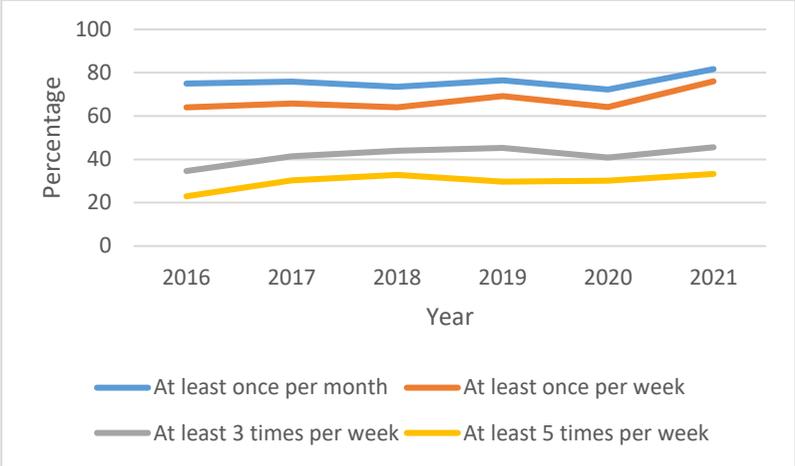
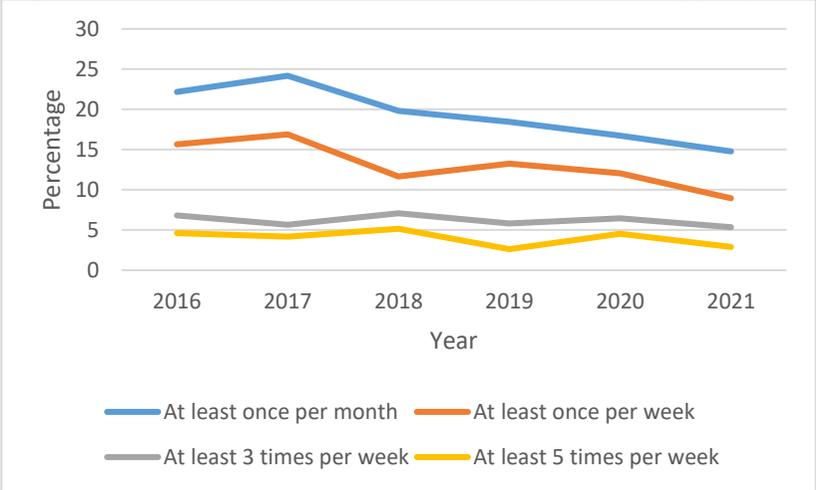


Figure 3: Percentage of adults who cycle for any purpose by frequency 2016-2021



7.50 During 2021/22, 1,169 metres carriageway footway and 258 metres offstreet footway was adopted by the Council.

7.51 Future planned walking and cycling provision in the borough will be set out in the Council’s forthcoming Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan.

Monitoring indicator 18 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
18a Availability of publicly accessible electric vehicle charging points	51S, 89	Total number of publicly accessible electric vehicle charging points available	110 publicly accessible electric vehicle charging points available in Bedford Borough	Department for Transport

7.52 The Council aims to maximise the use of sustainable transport in developments, and support low carbon public and personal transport such as electric cars, bikes and buses. Data published by the Department for Transport²⁷ shows that in April 2022 there were 110 publicly accessible electric vehicle charging points in Bedford Borough which is an increase from 63 in April 2021.

7.53 As part of the Government’s commitment to meeting its target of net zero emissions by 2050, it is making changes to the Building Regulations relating to the provision of electric vehicle charging infrastructure. Approved Document S, which came into force on 15 June 2022, applies to new residential and non-residential buildings as well as to those undergoing major renovation, requiring them to install electric vehicle chargers as part of the works being undertaken. The introduction of these requirements through the building regulations will help to boost the installation of new electric vehicle charging points nationally.

7.54 In 2021, the Council published a bus strategy for the borough: the Bus Service Improvement Plan. The strategy sets out the gaps in the present network and in response includes a number of projects and ambitions relating to future provision. The majority of this future provision does not relate to physical infrastructure changes, rather initiatives including encouraging the digitalisation of ticketing and improving timetabling information.

²⁷ DfT (2022) Publicly available electric vehicle charging devices at all speeds by local authority, from October 2019. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/electric-vehicle-charging-device-statistics-october-2022>

Monitoring indicator 19 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
19a Delivery of transport infrastructure and network improvements	90S	Details relating to progress made in delivering the transport infrastructure and network improvements identified in Policy 90S	<p>During the monitoring year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East West Rail company undertook a consultation on its options for the route its railway will take through Bedford Borough including proposals for the redevelopment of Bedford station in 2021. • An outline business case was issued to the DfT for Wixams railway station and early design and ecological works were underway. The project formally entered stage 3 of the Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline. • Four schemes identified in the Bedford Town Centre Strategy (Transporting Bedford 2020) were completed. • The first stage of the M1 J13-J16 smart motorways programme works were completed and opened to traffic. • The A45/A6 Chowns Mill roundabout improvement works in Northamptonshire was completed. • The A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet upgrade scheme entered the examination stage of its Development Consent Order 	BBC National Highways East West Rail

7.55 A number of strategic infrastructure projects, which have implications for transport and the highways network within the borough, are identified in Local Plan 2030 Policy 90S. The policy states that the Council will work with its partners, agencies

and developers to deliver reduced congestion around the town centre and key strategic routes while promoting sustainable transport modes. The safeguarded routes are shown on the Policies Map.

7.56 Progress on each project at the end of the monitoring year is presented in Table 10 and where possible, a more up to date position is provided.

Scheme		Description	Status at 31/03/2022
i	Redevelopment of Bedford Rail Station and additional car parking provision	The Bedford Town Investment Plan emphasises the need to develop an attractive road corridor along Midland Road, between the station and the town centre. Separately from the Towns Fund bid, but supported by it, it is also anticipated that Bedford Midland Station will be redeveloped as part of East West Rail.	<p>East West Rail company undertook a consultation on its options for the route its railway will take through Bedford Borough including proposals for the redevelopment of Bedford station in spring 2021.</p> <p>The Bedford Area Strategic Advice document (August 2022) produced by Network Rail recommends a new London-bound fast line platform (also known as up-fast) be built at Bedford station. The preferred option is to realign the down-fast line and extend the current platform 4 out over the alignment of the current down-fast to create an island platform. The document recommends that improvements are made to station facilities and gate line capacity as part of the planned East West Rail redevelopment of the station.</p>

ii	Development opportunities around Ford End Road and Prebend Street		A bid for Housing Infrastructure Fund resources to construct the Prebend Street Relief Road has been submitted, and the Council is working with Homes England to develop this further.
iii	Wixams railway station	A new station at Wixams on the Midland Main line south of Bedford will deliver connectivity to residents of the strategic housing site of Wixams and the station is considered to have potential to act as an enabler for wider growth across the sub-region.	A decision has been taken in favour of the “Orange” Option for the station’s layout. An outline business case has been issued to the DfT and the project has formally entered stage 3 of the Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline. The construction cost of the station has been reviewed and has advised the DfT that it remains committed to funding it. The design has been developed ready for submission to Network Rail for approval in principle. The planning application for the station (22/01933/MAR) was approved at Planning Committee on 20 February 2023.
iv	East-West rail scheme	The exact route and stations along East West Rail connection stage 2 (Bletchley to Bedford) have yet to be confirmed. The redevelopment of Bedford Midland and Bedford St. Johns stations are expected as part of, or coinciding with, East West Rail. Connection stage 3 (Bedford to Cambridge) is projected to open in 2030.	East West Rail Oxford to Bicester is complete and works are underway to complete the connection between Bicester and Bletchley.
v		Britannia Road improvements	Works were completed in mid-2021

	Schemes identified in the Bedford Town Centre Strategy (Transporting Bedford 2020)	Bromham Road / Shakespeare Road / Ashburnham Road junction	Works were completed in 2020
		Bedford High Street	Works were completed in early 2022
		Clapham Road / A6 / superstore (northbound) and Clapham Road / Manton Lane / Shakespeare Road	Works were completed in early 2022
		Amphill Road corridor	Works were completed in early 2022
		Caldwell Street / Britannia Road junction	Works completed
vi	Marsh Leys Junction Improvements	Improvements to junctions	Works completed
vii	A6 / A421 junction improvements	Resurfacing and junction improvements	Works completed
viii	Dualling of the Bedford Western Bypass	The A6-A421 link	Preparation of the Strategic Outline Business Case is underway and the scheme has been included in the forward programme for improvements to the Major Road Network.
ix	Improvements on Highway England's ²⁸ strategic road network	A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet – upgrade to a new 10 mile dual carriageway with a number of junction improvements	Consultations were carried out in 2019 and summer 2020, and as a result of the feedback changes were made to the proposal. The Development Consent Order was granted on 18 August 2022. An application for Judicial Review has been refused, but this decision is being appealed.
		A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon – outside of Bedford Borough but could influence the borough	The scheme opened in May 2020

²⁸ Highways England is now National Highways

		A45/A6 Chowns Mill roundabout improvement – outside of Bedford Borough but it provides an important strategic connection in the region	The scheme opened in early 2022
		M1 J13-J16 smart motorways programme – outside of Bedford Borough but it could influence the borough	The first stage of works to convert the existing section of the M1 from junction 13 to junction 14 and a section 4.2 miles north of the Newport Pagnell services have been completed. A further 4.5 mile section to junction 15 is expected to fully open in early 2023. The third and final section of the upgrade between junctions 15 and 16, began its phased opening in late 2022 and is expected to fully open by March 2023.

Monitoring indicator 20 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
20a Financial contributions towards the delivery of infrastructure	58S, 86S, 87, 90	Details of planning contributions secured towards new and expansion of existing infrastructure and the most up to date Infrastructure Delivery Plan	During the monitoring year: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £4,021,119 in Community Infrastructure Levy contributions have been collected. 13 S106 agreements were signed and the funding secured through these agreements equates to £10,625,217 at present. The Council received £1,885,056 in s106 contributions. The Council spent £1,237,635 across projects in environment, public transport, highways, public transport, affordable housing and education. 	BBC

- 7.57 The Council has prepared, in consultation with service providers, an Infrastructure Delivery Plan setting out strategic and local infrastructure requirements to support planned new development in Bedford Borough over the local plan period.
- 7.58 Bedford Borough Council's Infrastructure Funding Statement 2021-2022 highlights that over the reported year, £4,021,119 in Community Infrastructure Levy contributions were collected. 13 S106 agreements were signed during 2021/22 and the funding secured through these agreements equates to £10,625,217 at present. This is more than the amount of Community Infrastructure Levy contributions that were collected in the previous year (£2,660,004). Whilst more S106 agreements were signed during the previous year (17), the amount of funding secured through these agreements (£1,766,261) was significantly less than in 2021/22.
- 7.59 During 2021/22, the Council received £1,885,056 in s106 contributions and spent £1,237,635 across projects in environment, public transport, highways, public transport, affordable housing and education. This is more than the amount of s106 contributions received (£172,000) and spent (£255,000) in the previous year.

Monitoring indicator 21 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
21a Number of planning permissions granted for telecommunications infrastructure	95, 96	Total number of publicly accessible electric vehicle charging points available	3 applications for domestic equipment permitted 4 applications for communications infrastructure permitted	BBC

- 7.60 Policy 94 of the Local Plan 2030 sets out the requirements expected from new development to provide on-site infrastructure to support the installation of, and allow the future upgrade and maintenance of, fibre optic broadband. The policy states that appropriate open access fibre optic infrastructure to enable high speed and reliable broadband connection should be in accordance with national and local objectives to increase coverage.

- 7.61 The national government objective for the provision of superfast broadband to 95% of UK premises by 2020 has been achieved. Coverage stands at 98.3% (≥ 30 Mbps) across the borough with superfast speeds^[1].
- 7.62 The government target now is to provide up to 85% of UK premises with gigabit capabilities by 2025. Data published by Think Broadband shows that 78.5% of properties in Bedford have access to gigabit speeds.
- 7.63 The Openreach Full Fibre investment programme has the objective of providing 20 million premises throughout the UK with ultrafast full fibre broadband by December 2026^[2] and the deployment map shows that Openreach has started its Full Fibre upgrade in Bedford Borough. This investment by Openreach includes the Fibre First programme which means new development will be planned with a full fibre solution. Similar to Openreach, Virgin Media announced in December 2020 that they have completed Project Lightning which has upgraded their network to offer gigabit broadband^[3].
- 7.64 The development of telecommunications infrastructure is mostly covered under permitted development. Where planning permission is required, Local Plan 2030 Policy 95 is used to assess proposals for domestic equipment and Policy 96 relates to the consideration of telecommunication equipment. During 2021/22, three planning applications for domestic equipment were permitted and four applications for communications infrastructure were permitted. 16 applications for communications infrastructure were refused due to the proposals being visually prominent in the street scene.

[1] <https://labs.thinkbroadband.com/local/E06000055>

[2] <https://www.openreach.com/fibre-broadband/where-when-building-ultrafast-full-fibre-broadband>

[3] <https://news.virginmediao2.co.uk/virgin-media-o2-completes-gigabit-upgrade-in-boost-for-britains-broadband-target/>

Theme 3: Delivering growth

LP2030 Objective 1. Deliver high quality growth that will facilitate the development of more sustainable and inclusive places for local communities, which are equipped to respond to the impacts of climate and economic change and offer the opportunity to live more healthy lifestyles. Where it is viable and sustainable to do so, encourage the re-use of land that has been previously developed.

LP2030 Objective 3. Support a stronger local economy delivering economic growth, broadening employment opportunities, and attracting and enabling high value businesses to prosper for the benefit of the borough’s existing and future residents.

LP2030 Objective 4. Create a distinctive, attractive and multi-functional town centre for the future with a particularly strong focus on leisure and visitor economy activities.

This section broadly aligns with emerging Local Plan 2040 Theme 3: More prosperous.

Monitoring indicator 22 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
22a Progress in meeting the number of net additional jobs required to 2030	69S	Information about the number of net additional jobs created.	6,000 jobs created between 2015 and 2021	BRES

7.65 The Bedford Economy and Employment Land Study 2015 and the Employment Land Needs Addendum 2018 estimates a requirement for 6,900 additional jobs in the borough between 2015 and 2030. This requirement is outlined in Local Plan

2030 Policy 69S. The policy states that the main focus for jobs growth will be the urban area and on the employment sites that are already allocated in the development plan.

- 7.66 According to BRES data²⁹, in 2015 there were approximately 73,000 jobs in Bedford Borough and the latest data shows that in 2021 there were approximately 79,000 jobs in the borough. In the period 2015 to 2021 an additional 6,000 jobs were recorded representing nearly 87% of the total number of additional jobs required by Policy 69S to 2030.
- 7.67 BRES data shows that in the period 2015 to 2021, the “property” broad industrial group experienced the largest proportional increase, followed by the “construction”, and “business administration and support services” broad industrial groups. With regard to actual increases in employment, the “health and social work” broad industrial group exhibited an increase of approximately 3,000 jobs between 2015 and 2021.

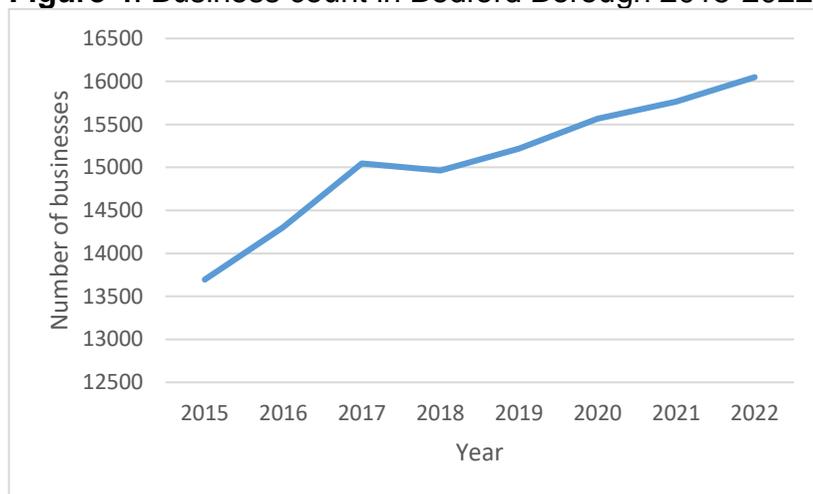
Monitoring indicator 23 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
23a Business creation	69S, 70, 71, 72S, 74, 75	Number of new businesses created (net)	A gain of 2,355 businesses between 2015 and 2022	IDBR

- 7.68 Data from the Inter-Departmental Business Register³⁰ presented in Figure 4 shows a gain of 285 businesses for Bedford Borough between 2021 and 2022 and there has been a notable increase of 17% in the number of businesses in the borough since 2015.

²⁹ ONS (via NOMIS), Labour market profile (2021) Available at [nomisweb.co.uk](https://www.nomisweb.co.uk)

³⁰ ONS (2022) UK business counts from the Inter Departmental Business Register. Available at: https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157199/subreports/idbr_time_series/report.aspx?

Figure 4: Business count in Bedford Borough 2015-2022



Monitoring indicator 24 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
24a Preparation of Employment and Skills Plans in accordance with Policy 74	74	Number of applications requiring an Employment and Skills Plan to be prepared / number of Employment and Skills Plans prepared	0 permissions	BBC

- 7.69 It is important for the workforce to have relevant skills for the borough’s future economy. A highly skilled and employable workforce, with access to training and work opportunities, is essential to support the borough’s growth agenda by helping to attract inward investment and enabling local businesses to expand. The local plan aims to assist delivery of the job opportunities needed to achieve this ambition including education and training opportunities. To facilitate this, Local Plan 2030 Policy 74 requires that an employment and skills plan is provided for development over 200 dwellings or 5 hectares of ‘B’ class uses.
- 7.70 No employment and skills plans were produced during the monitoring year, which is down from the previous year when one eligible application was supported by an employment and skills plan. However, planning permission (20/03068/MAF) was

granted for a UK Headquarters building at land south of Cardington Road and north of St Martins Way, Bedford. The development is occupied by Fujifilm, a global employer that has been located in Bedford since 1983 and has an established skilled workforce within the town. The development will retain existing jobs in Bedford and will create new skilled jobs.

7.71 'Employment generating uses' are traditionally known as 'B' Class uses (offices, industrial, warehousing and distribution). The Use Classes Order was updated on 1 September 2020. Class B1 Business was revoked and replaced by Class E(g). Class E – Commercial Business and Service is broken down into 11 parts. Class E(g) uses which can be carried out in a residential area without detriment to its amenity are as follows:

- E(g)(i) Offices to carry out any operational or administrative functions.
- E(g)(ii) Research and development of products and processes.
- E(g)(iii) Industrial processes.

Use Class B2 General Industry and B8 Storage and Distribution are retained.

7.72 Bedford Borough Council carries out employment monitoring on sites where more than 100 sqm of employment floorspace is proposed.

7.73 Table 11 summarises the total amount of employment floorspace (Use Classes B1, B2, B8 and E(g)) completed in the borough for each year from 1 April 2015.

Year	Gross internal floorspace loss (sqm)	Gross internal floorspace gain (sqm)	Net internal floorspace total (sqm)
2015/16	40,897	24,225	-16,672
2016/17	12,917	25,355	12,438
2017/18	29,314	14,049	-15,265
2018/19	3,463	66,818	63,355
2019/20	13,033	129,357	116,324
2020/21	207	93,399	93,192
2021/22	2,264	204,104	201,840

- 7.74 Local Plan 2030 does not plan for an increase in the existing employment land supply figure as supporting evidence suggested that existing supply, allocated in previous plans, was sufficient to meet future needs.
- 7.75 The local plan categorises existing employment sites into four groups to reflect recommended future action: protect and maintain, protect and enhance, protect and develop, and monitor and manage. Sites classified as monitor and manage are those that may not continue to meet the needs of businesses in the future as they are likely to reach the end of their functional life within the plan period. Redevelopment of such sites to non-class B employment uses will normally be supported by the Council (Policy 71). Sites within the remaining categories, collectively known as key employment sites, will be expected to remain primarily in class B employment use (Policy 70).
- 7.76 Progress with delivery of employment policy allocations carried forward from the Local Plan 2002 and Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013 is reported in the Allocated Sites section of this monitoring report.

Monitoring indicator 25 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
25a Net additional employment floorspace delivered	69S, 70, 71, 72S, 74, 75	Annual net gain / loss of B2/B8 and E(g) employment floorspace	E(g)(i) = 10,928 sqm E(g)(ii) = 0 sqm E(g)(iii) = 633 sqm E(g) unspecified = 0 sqm B2 = 11,629 sqm B8 = 178,650 sqm E(g) / B2 / B8 mixed = 0 sqm Total = 201,840 sqm	BBC

- 7.77 For the 2021/22 monitoring year, 201,840 sqm net additional employment floorspace has been completed in the borough. This is significantly higher when compared to previous monitoring years and can largely be attributed to the development of a regional distribution centre on the north eastern parcel of the Wixams northern expansion area (99,285 sqm) and the development of three storage and distribution units with ancillary office space on land to the north of Watson Road, forming

the employment quarter of Wixams (50,964 sqm). At Wootton, four storage and distribution units with ancillary office floorspace were completed at Marston Vale Innovation Park, Phase 2 (23,188 sqm).

Monitoring indicator 26 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
26a Loss of employment floorspace	71	Annual development completions resulting in a loss of employment floorspace to non-employment use Reasons why permission was granted	E(g)(i) loss = 2,264 sqm E(g)(ii) loss = 0 sqm E(g)(iii) loss = 0 sqm E(g) unspecified loss = 0 sqm B2 loss = 0 sqm B8 loss = 0 sqm E(g) / B2 / B8 mixed loss = 0 sqm Total loss = 2,264 sqm	BBC

7.78 No employment floorspace was lost through redevelopment for employment uses during 2021/22 however 2,264 sqm employment floorspace was lost through change of use to non-employment uses. Such losses were mainly focused within the Bedford urban area and at one site in Sharnbrook in the rural area. The reasons for granting planning permission is summarised in Table 12.

Table 12: Development completions resulting in a loss of employment floorspace to non-employment use during 2021/22 and the reasons for granting permission			
Application reference	Site	Description of development	Reasons for granting planning permission
17/02634/COU	Cowper Building, Riverside Square, Bedford	Change of use of first floor from council offices to hotel rooms ancillary to the main restaurant use on the ground floor	The use of the area (restaurants, a hotel, a cinema and residential flats) has changed from employment to leisure. The use offers a new form of accommodation (boutique style hotel) which is currently lacking within the town centre. The new hotel use is deemed more appropriate in this highly sustainable area and the

			retention of office space is not considered necessary in this case.
17/03561/FUL	3 St Peters Street, Bedford	Change of use from office to drinking establishment	The site is within the defined town centre boundary for Bedford, within the primary shopping area. This is the preferred location for leisure and entertainment uses and the development offers an alternative business, thereby helping to improve the vitality and viability of the town centre. The small amount of floorspace is considered not to have a severe impact on existing leisure uses to the detriment of the town centre.
19/01040/COU	26 Harpur Street, Bedford	Temporary change of use from offices to rough sleeper assessment hub and emergency bed provision for a period of three years	The site has been vacant since 2015 despite marketing efforts. The development is for a specialist form of accommodation to meet the needs of homeless people within Bedford and will contribute to the town centre housing mix. The change of use is for a temporary three year period at which point the use will revert back to the existing office use.
19/01567/COU	Suite B2 Emerald Court, Pilgrim Centre, Bedford	Change of use from office to non-residential institution	The use of the premises for an education use is in keeping with other uses at the centre and will not give rise to unacceptable disturbance, parking or traffic problems. A condition was imposed to restrict the use to an education and training centre.
19/01890/COU	The Engine Shed, Station Yard, Templars Way, Sharnbrook	Change of use from office to a fitness studio	Although there will be a loss of a Class B unit, the unit is of a small scale and does not provide a modern office space. The use will create community benefits for the local rural area by providing a leisure use.

7.79 During 2021/22, 886 sqm office floorspace was lost through permitted development rights for the change of use of offices to dwellings at St Johns Terrace, Bedford (18/01272/CPNO and 20/02078/CPNO).

Monitoring indicator 27 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
27a Employment land supply	69S, 70, 71, 72S, 74, 75	Outstanding supply of B2 / B8 and E(g) net employment floorspace with planning permission	E(g)(i) = 7,259 sqm E(g)(ii) = 0 sqm E(g)(iii) = 848 sqm E(g) unspecified = 21,963 sqm B2 = 655 sqm B8 = 90,899 sqm E(g) / B2 / B8 mixed = 27,292 sqm Total = 148,916 sqm	BBC

- 7.80 At 31 March 2022 there was outstanding employment floorspace (net) to be implemented equating to 148,916 sqm. This includes sites which have been granted planning permission in the past and remain extant. The majority of outstanding floorspace is within B8 storage and distribution use. Mixed E(g) / B2 / B8 employment uses and unspecified E(g) offices / research and development / light industrial uses also represent a high proportion of outstanding permissions. Most outstanding employment floorspace is located at saved Local Plan 2002 policy allocations and saved Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013 allocations including H14/E10 (former Elstow Storage Depot / Elstow Brickworks) and AD13 (Marston Vale Innovation Park, Phase 2, Wootton).
- 7.81 The amount of outstanding employment floorspace (net) to be implemented at 31/03/2022 is significantly lower than at the end of the previous monitoring year (254,791 sqm). This can be attributed to the considerable amount of employment floorspace that was completed in the borough during 2021/22.

Monitoring indicator 28 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
28a Amount of new build employment floorspace permitted in the countryside	75	Net increase in floorspace in accordance with the policy criteria	E(g)(i) = 327 sqm E(g)(ii) = 0 sqm E(g)(iii) = 368 sqm E(g) unspecified = 0 sqm	BBC

			B2 = 0 sqm B8 = 0 sqm E(g) / B2 / B8 mixed = 2,150 sqm Total = 2,845 sqm	
28b Amount of new build employment floorspace completed in the countryside	75	Net increase in floorspace in accordance with the policy criteria	E(g)(i) = 0 sqm E(g)(ii) = 0 sqm E(g)(iii) = 633 sqm E(g) unspecified = 0 sqm B2 = 0 sqm B8 = 0 sqm E(g) / B2 / B8 mixed = 0 sqm Total = 633 sqm	BBC

7.82 Local Plan 2030 Policy 75 encourages new employment development that needs to be in the countryside in order to support the rural economy, providing certain criteria can be satisfied. During 2021/22, several agricultural storage barns to support farming and other rural activities such as commercial equestrian-related developments were granted. A total of 2,845 sqm new build employment floorspace was granted in the countryside, comprising two light industrial units measuring 368 sqm in Colmworth (21/01930/S73A), a 327 sqm office extension in Great Barford (21/02128/FUL) and an outline scheme for up to 2,150 research and development/light industrial/storage and distribution uses in Colesden (20/01537/MAO). An additional 500 sqm light industrial floorspace was secured through change of use of a grain store in High Street, Pavenham (21/01062/FUL) and 731 sqm Class E(g) use employment floorspace was granted under permitted development rights through the Class R (agricultural buildings to a flexible commercial use) prior notification process during the monitoring year. The total amount of new build employment floorspace granted in the countryside during 2021/22 is more than last year (1,173 sqm office and storage and distribution uses).

7.83 During 2021/22, 633 sqm new build employment floorspace was completed in the countryside. This new floorspace is for light industrial uses (Class E(g)(iii)) in Chawston and Colmworth. The amount of new employment floorspace completed in the countryside is less than last year when 3,290 sqm Class B2 use was completed.

- 7.84 Government guidance in the NPPF requires a ‘town centres first’ approach to the location of new retail, office and leisure uses defined as ‘main town centre uses’ (known as the sequential test). It requires planning policies to promote the long term vitality and viability of town centres, meeting anticipated needs for town centre uses in or on the edge of centres where sites are available or otherwise in other accessible locations that are well connected to the town centre. The main town centre uses as defined in the NPPF are summarised below:
- Retail (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres).
 - Leisure, entertainment and more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, nightclubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres and bingo halls).
 - Offices.
 - Arts, culture and tourism (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).
- 7.85 The Bedford Retail Study 2015 and update in 2018 looked at the need for additional retail floorspace over the plan period. The study showed that, if existing commitments are taken up, there will be additional capacity for 11,790 sqm net floorspace for comparison goods and 2,980 sqm net floorspace for convenience goods. By the end of the plan period at 2030 this is forecast to increase to 34,210 sqm net floorspace for comparison goods and 4,330 sqm net floorspace for convenience goods.
- 7.86 The Commercial Leisure Needs Study 2018 concludes that for most commercial leisure categories there is adequate provision. However over the plan period there may be a requirement for additional restaurants and cafes, and qualitative changes may result in a need emerging for more health and fitness centres.
- 7.87 The hierarchy of town centres in Bedford Borough is set out in Local Plan 2030 Policy 77S. This policy defines a four tier hierarchy of 1) Strategic Centre (Bedford), 2) District Centre (Kempston), 3) Local Centres (including 5 ‘urban centres’ and 8 ‘key service centres’), and 4) Neighbourhood Centres.
- 7.88 Bedford Borough Council carries out town centre use monitoring on sites where more than 100 sqm of employment floorspace is proposed.

Monitoring indicator 29 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
29a Potential creation / loss of floorspace for town centre uses within defined centres	15, 77S, 78, 79, 80, 81	Planning permissions for town centre uses within defined centres. Details of floorspace created / lost	Retail = -128 sqm Leisure and entertainment = -46 sqm Offices = -1,634 sqm Arts, culture and tourism = 690 sqm Total = -1,118 sqm	BBC
29b Potential creation / loss of floorspace for town centre uses outside defined centres	15, 77S, 78, 79, 80, 81	Planning permissions for town centre uses outside defined centres. Details of floorspace created / lost	Retail = 240 sqm Leisure and entertainment = 0 sqm Offices = -379 sqm Arts, culture and tourism = 0 sqm Total = -139 sqm	BBC

7.89 During 2021/22, planning permissions resulting in a loss of 1,118 sqm town centre use floorspace within defined centres in the borough were granted. Table 13 shows the net amount of floorspace that was permitted for town centre uses within the borough's defined centres during 2021/22.

Table 13: Net amount of floorspace for town centre uses within defined centres granted planning permission during 2021/22				
Centre	Retail (sqm)	Leisure and entertainment (sqm)	Offices (sqm)	Arts, culture and tourism (sqm)
Town centre	-128	140	-1,634	690
District centre	0	0	0	0
Local centres	0	-186	0	0
Neighbourhood centres	0	0	0	0

- 7.90 The loss of 1,634 sqm office floorspace from within Bedford town centre results from a grant of prior approval for change of use from office to residential. In addition, prior approval was granted to change the use of 379 sqm office floorspace to residential outside Bedford town centre.
- 7.91 Planning permission (21/02684/COU) was granted during the monitoring year for the change of use of a barn measuring 240 sqm in area into a farm shop (Class E(a)) at Homefield, Balls Lane, Willington. Whilst the site is located outside the Willington settlement policy area boundary, the officer assessment considered the proposal to be acceptable as it is an expansion of an existing rural enterprise.

Monitoring indicator 30 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
30a Delivery of floorspace for town centre uses within defined centres	77S, 78, 79, 81	Amount of development completed for town centre uses within defined centres	Data not available for 2021/22	BBC
30b Delivery of floorspace for town centre uses outside defined centres	77S, 78, 79, 81	Amount of development completed for town centre uses outside defined centres	Data not available for 2021/22	BBC

- 7.92 The Council did not monitor development completions for town centre uses in 2021/22. Sites with extant planning permission for town centre uses will be visited in March / April 2023 and development completions during 2022/23 will be reported in the next monitoring report.

Monitoring indicator 31 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
31a Preparation of impact assessments in accordance with Policy 78	77S, 78, 79, 81	Number of applications requiring an impact assessment to be prepared / number of	1 impact assessment	BBC

		impact assessments prepared for retail and leisure development proposals outside of defined centres.		
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- 7.93 Local Plan 2030 Policy 78 sets local thresholds for retail and leisure proposals to be subject to an impact assessment if they are to be located outside of Bedford town centre, Kempston district centre and the local centres. For leisure development the threshold is 2,500 sqm gross floorspace. For retail development: i. if the nearest centre to the proposed development is Bedford town centre or Kempston district centre, the threshold is 500 sqm net floorspace; ii. if the nearest centre to be proposed development is a local centre, the threshold is 200 sqm net floorspace.
- 7.94 During 2021/22, one planning permission for development exceeding the local threshold for retail use was granted. This is lower than the previous monitoring year when four eligible planning applications were supported by an impact assessment. In 2021/22, planning application 21/00775/M73 for variation of condition 19 attached to planning permission 94/00401/FUL to allow the range of goods which can be sold in Unit C to be widened to include ‘food and drink’ from 627 sqm of the floorspace at Unit C Interchange Retail Park, Meadows Way, Kempston exceeded the local threshold for retail development. The application was supported by a retail impact assessment. The Council considered that the impact assessment demonstrated that the application would not have an unacceptable impact on Bedford town centre or Kempston district centre.
- 7.95 A test of policy for main town centre uses is its impact on the vitality and viability of a retail centre. National Planning Practice Guidance³¹ offers a set of indicators that may be monitored to assess the health of a centre and its performance over time: diversity of land uses, vacancy levels, pedestrian flows (footfall), retailer representation, customer perceptions, commercial rents and yields, crime, accessibility and environmental quality. Information on town centre vacancies and pedestrian flows (footfall) is monitored annually by the Council. Furthermore, data on the diversity of uses in Bedford town centre was collated during the health check completed by Nexus in June 2020 to inform the Bedford Town Centre Study³². Perceptions of safety, consideration of accessibility, environmental quality and retailer representation for each retail centre was informed by the

³¹ PPG Paragraph 006; Reference ID: 2b-006-20190722

³² <https://edrms.bedford.gov.uk/OpenDocument.aspx?id=FOOBK%2ftB0k3RX9VNvvelAw%3d%3d&name=Bedford%20Town%20Centres%20Study.pdf>

Nexus site visits and the findings are published in the Town Centre Study. Regular updating of the variety of indicators over time will help to assess the overall success of local plan policies in this regard.

Monitoring indicator 32 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
32a Pedestrian footfall in Bedford town centre	77S, 78, 79, 81	Activity from counters in Bedford town centre locations	2015/16 = 14,073,911 2016/17 = 14,637,699 2017/18 = 14,629,509 2018/19 = 13,862,826 2019/20 = 12,468,422 2020/21 = 6,966,412 2021/22 = 8,501,206	BBC
32b Occupancy rates	77S, 78, 79, 81	Vacancies (by unit count) in Bedford town centre	2015 = 13.0% 2016 = 12.6% 2017 = 11.7% 2018 = 10.9% 2019 = 13.0% 2020 = 14.0% 2021 = 13.0% 2022 = 13.0%	BBC

- 7.96 Pedestrian footfall in Bedford town centre increased between 2015/16 and 2016/17 but fell between 2016/17 and 2020/21. The most recent data for 2021/22 shows an increase in footfall above that recorded in the previous year however the footfall in 2020/21 and 2021/22 is significantly lower than previous years as a result of the Covid-19 government enforced lockdowns and restrictions, and the reluctance of people to visit crowded areas.
- 7.97 A high concentration of vacant properties within a retail centre can detract from its vitality and viability by reducing the centre’s attractiveness for shoppers. This is because when many of the shop units are not in active use, there is less reason for visiting the centre, as there will often be a smaller number of retail and leisure attractions. However, it is important to acknowledge that a degree of vacancy is inevitable and indeed desirable. Some ‘churn’ is expected in the market as units

alter and change, as new businesses come in, and others leave. In this context, vacant units can be found in even the strongest of town centres.

- 7.98 Bedford town centre experienced reducing vacancy rates (by unit count) between 2015 and 2018, before a peak of 14% in 2020. Vacancy rates for 2021 and 2022 reduced from 2020 levels to 13%. In terms of unit numbers, the peak of 14% in 2020 accounted for 78 units being vacant which is only slightly higher than the number of units vacant in 2021 (77) and 2022 (75). The 2022 vacancy rate for Bedford town centre at 13% is slightly lower than the national average of 15%.
- 7.99 Projects and developments to improve the town centre environment and drive economic growth are ongoing and are being progressed through initiatives including the Towns Fund, High Street Heritage Action Zone, and One Public Estate programme. Further information is available at <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/business/invest-bedford/projects-and-infrastructure>.
- 7.100 One of the key themes of the Transporting Bedford 2020 strategy is focused on improving the town centre public realm in order to help boost the local economy, improve air quality, reduce traffic volumes and noise. Bedford High Street improvement works to improve the street scene of the High Street and Silver Street Square began in early 2021 and have been completed. Bedford Borough Council's Infrastructure Funding Statement 2021-2022 shows that over the monitoring year, the Council has spent £550,953 on improvements to Allhallows public realm and £142,000 strategic CIL funding is committed for future expenditure on the project. The total cost of the Allhallows project is approximately £3,000,000.

Monitoring indicator 33 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
33a Development activity on Bedford High Street	16, 34	Number of planning permissions or advertisement consents in Bedford High Street	2 permissions	BBC
33b Development activity on Bedford High Street	16	Amount of completed new development in Bedford High Street	Data not available for 2021/22	BBC

- 7.101 Local Plan 2030 Policy 16 acknowledges that in considering planning applications in Bedford High Street, weight will be given to a closed list of criteria. Given the central location of the High Street in Bedford town centre, its visual prominence and historical significance, Local Plan 2030 Policy 16 prevents any further changes of use at ground floor level to restaurants and cafes, drinking establishments, hot food takeaways or nightclubs.
- 7.102 During 2021/22, two planning permissions for development proposals in Bedford High Street were granted and one application was refused. This is up from one permission and one refusal last year.
- 7.103 Planning permission (21/03026/COU) for the change of use of basement to drinking establishment at 75 High Street and permission (21/02518/FUL) for a replacement shopfront and alterations to form 2 residential flats on the upper floors of 43 High Street were both granted during the monitoring year. Application 21/00520/COU for the change of use of 103 High Street from a vacant former estate agents office to a taxi booking office was refused as the proposal would lead to additional demand for on-street parking, which is contrary to the Council's requirements to reduce traffic congestion in accordance with Policy 16 and the objectives of the Bedford Town Centre Plan 2020-23; the Transporting Bedford programme and the Bedford High Street Heritage Action Zone programme.

Monitoring indicator 34 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
34a Activity in the visitor economy	76	Number of planning permissions for improvement and provision of new visitor accommodation	4 permissions	BBC

- 7.104 The Council's Visitor Accommodation Review 2015 advises that the visitor market in Bedford is growing steadily. Although evidence shows that there is presently no unmet need for visitor accommodation in the borough, there may be opportunities to improve the visitor accommodation offer in some locations. Local Plan 2030 Policy 76 lists criteria for considering proposals which relate to the improvement and provision of new visitor accommodation.
- 7.105 During 2021/22, planning permission was granted for four schemes involving improvement or provision of new visitor accommodation, this is down from seven last year. Two self-catering guesthouse accommodation units at The New Inn, 1 Rushden Road, Wymington (20/02112/S73A) and one holiday let at the Sun Inn, Grange Road, Felmersham (21/00755/FUL) were granted. Planning permission was also granted for the use of the existing caravan site for the siting of

8 touring caravans and 6 tents at Land adjacent to Orchard Cottage, Church Hill, Ravensden (20/02850/FUL). In addition, a three storey extension to create a function room and associated facilities was granted at Bedford Swan, High Street, Bedford (21/01663/FUL).

7.106 Three planning applications for improvement and provision of new visitor accommodation were refused during the monitoring year due to the nature of the proposed development and its adverse environmental impacts not being in accordance with the principles set out in Local Plan 2030 Policy 76. In the Council's view the proposals would establish new visitor accommodation in the countryside which would not integrate well with the existing pattern of development.

Theme 4: Placemaking

LP2030 Objective 2. Provide appropriate amounts and types of housing to meet the needs of the borough’s urban and rural communities over the lifetime of the Plan.

LP2030 Objective 5. Achieve a borough where everybody has appropriate access to high quality health and social care as well as everyday essential services and community facilities. Where social and cultural wellbeing is supported, enabling all residents to lead healthy and independent lives.

LP2030 Objective 9. Support and create a high quality, inclusive and safe built environment which values local landscape and settlement character and which conserves and enhances the historic environment and is enjoyed by all.

This section broadly aligns with emerging Local Plan 2040 Theme 4: Better places.

Monitoring indicator 35 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
35a Delivery of the housing requirement over the plan period	4S	Annual and cumulative dwelling completions	2015/16 = 964 completions 2016/17 = 1,255 completions 2017/18 = 1,350 completions 2018/19 = 1,359 completions 2019/20 = 1,026 completions 2020/21 = 1,199 completions 2021/22 = 1,019 completions	BBC

			Total = 8,172 net completions	
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- 7.107 Local Plan 2030 Policy 3S provides the overarching strategic framework, in response to the plan’s vision and objectives, for ensuring that the local plan delivers sufficient new development in sustainable locations to meet identified needs. It supports the overall provision of new homes and jobs to meet the assessed needs of the borough up to 2030 along with supporting infrastructure and services.
- 7.108 Existing planning permissions for residential development, together with previously allocated commitments and an allowance for windfall mean that the local plan allocates a minimum 3,169 new dwellings in order to ensure that the objectively assessed need for housing of 14,550 homes over the plan period will be met. This equates to an average of 970 dwellings per annum and is based on evidence in the Bedford Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) Updates of 2016 and 2018. Policy 4S sets out how a minimum 3,169 new dwellings will be allocated and distributed.
- 7.109 The number of net additional dwellings completed in 2021/22 was 1,019. Whilst slightly lower than the number completed in the previous year, this continues the trend of delivery rates exceeding the annualised minimum housing figure of 970 net additional dwellings per annum in six of the first seven years of the plan period. A total of 8,172 net dwelling completions have been delivered between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022. This rate of delivery is not expected to be maintained. The Local Plan 2030 housing trajectory showed completions lower than the annual average in later years.
- 7.110 Of the 1,019 net additional dwellings completed in 2021/22, new build homes accounted for 945 of the total, or 92.7%. The 98 homes that came from change of use from non-residential to residential accounted for 9.6% of the total. Two new dwellings were created through conversion of existing residential properties. These additional dwellings were offset by 26 dwellings that were lost through demolitions, conversion or change of use.
- 7.111 The majority of housing completions in 2021/22 were delivered at saved Local Plan 2002 policy allocations including Land north of Bromham Road, Biddenham (137 completions); Land at Shortstown (102 completions); Wixams (former Elstow Storage Depot) (218 completions); and Land south of Fields Road, Wootton (124 completions). There were also 258 net additional dwellings delivered in the Bedford and Kempston urban area during 2021/22.
- 7.112 The progress of the delivery of housing policy allocations is reported in the Allocated sites section of this monitoring report (Section 6).

7.113 Local Plan 2030 Policy 4S sets out the amount and distribution of housing development, seeking to direct new housing development to locations that are sustainable or can be made sustainable. The Local Plan primarily allocates housing land in the Bedford and Kempston urban area, the urban edge, former Stewartby brickworks and Roxton. Neighbourhood Plans will identify sites for residential development in the Key Service Centres of Bromham, Clapham, Great Barford, Sharnbrook and a range of smaller Rural Service Centres.

Monitoring indicator 36 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
36a Supply of dwellings with planning permission	4S	The number of dwellings within extant planning permission	2015/16 = 8,574 dwellings 2016/17 = 8,341 dwellings 2017/18 = 7,259 dwellings 2018/19 = 6,347 dwellings 2019/20 = 5,979 dwellings 2020/21 = 4,864 dwellings 2021/22 = 6,040 dwellings	BBC

7.114 The number of dwellings with outstanding planning permission has been retained at a high level during the first seven years of Local Plan 2030 period. Whilst the total number of outstanding permissions declined between 2017/18 and 2020/21, the number of dwellings with outstanding planning permission at the end of the 2021/22 monitoring year is higher than the previous two years.

Monitoring indicator 37 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
37a Progress in delivering housing opportunity sites	26	Details of applications and permissions relating to identified opportunity sites	Full planning permission for the development of 341 dwellings (19/02247/MAF) was approved at the site at Dallas Road, Kempston in August 2021	BBC

- 7.115 Local Plan 2030 Policy 26 identifies three housing opportunity sites at Dallas Road, Kempston; Bedford Blues Rugby Club, Bedford; and Amphill Road (former Camford Works), Bedford. The sites are included in the Plan as they are considered suitable for development, but are also known to have particular constraints which may prevent them from coming forward in the plan period. As a result, they are not subject to allocations.
- 7.116 Full planning permission for the development of 341 dwellings (19/02247/MAF) was approved at the site at Dallas Road, Kempston in August 2021.
- 7.117 A planning application (22/01899/EIA) for 508 dwellings, 96 bedroom care homes, two storey advance technology building, drive-thru coffee shop and associated works at the site of the former Camford Works, Bedford is currently pending consideration. Emerging Local Plan 2040 Policy HOU3 allocates the site for a mix of residential and business uses.
- 7.118 No planning applications for development of the site at Bedford Blues Rugby Club, Bedford were received or determined during the monitoring year.
- 7.119 Policy 26 is proposed to be replaced by emerging Local Plan 2040 Policy DS6.

Monitoring indicator 38 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
38a Development outside settlement boundaries	5S, 6, 7S, AD41	Details of planning permissions granted for dwellings on sites that fall outside the urban area boundary or settlement policy area boundaries	587 new dwellings were permitted outside the urban and settlement policy area boundaries in 2021/22	BBC

- 7.120 In order to protect the character of Bedford and Kempston and to protect the countryside from inappropriate development, the extent of the urban area is defined in saved Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013 Policy AD41. Local Plan 2030 Policies 5S, 6 and 7S together distinguish between the open countryside and settlements within it by identifying village Settlement Policy Areas and the type and location of development which will be acceptable. The boundaries are shown on the Policies Map.

7.121 During 2021/22, 587 new dwellings were permitted outside the urban and settlement policy area boundaries. Major developments make up a large proportion of the total and include planning permissions for 473 dwellings close to the former RAF Cardington, Shortstown (part of 20/00901/EIA which was granted planning permission for a total of 592 dwellings), and 51 dwellings at Land at Yelow Lane, Sharnbrook (20/02914/MAR). Of those 587 dwellings, seven were granted under permitted development rights through the Class Q (agricultural buildings to dwelling houses) prior notification process. The permission close to the former RAF Cardington was granted as enabling development following viability appraisal to support the restoration of the Grade II* listed Airship Shed 1. Development at Yelow Lane Sharnbrook was permitted during a short period prior to the adoption of the LP2030 when the Council was unable to demonstrate a five year land supply.

Monitoring indicator 39 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
39a Compliance with policies for replacement dwellings in the countryside	7S, 66	Details of planning permissions for replacement dwellings in the countryside	Permission granted for five replacement dwellings	BBC
39b Scale of replacement dwelling activity	7S, 66	Number of completed replacement dwellings in the countryside	2 replacement dwellings were completed	BBC

7.122 Local Plan 2030 Policy 66 sets out the Council's approach to the replacement and extension of dwellings in the countryside. During 2021/22 planning permission was granted in accordance with policy for five replacement dwellings in the countryside, this is up from two last year. Two replacement dwellings in the countryside were completed during 2021/22; which is down from 11 last year.

Monitoring indicator 40 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
40a Progress made in planning affordable	7S, 67	Number of affordable dwellings permitted through rural exception schemes	No affordable dwellings were permitted through rural exception schemes	BBC

housing schemes for local people				
40b Delivery of affordable housing schemes for local people	7S, 67	Number of affordable dwellings completed through rural exception schemes	No affordable dwellings were completed through rural exception schemes	BBC

7.123 In order to facilitate the provision of affordable housing specifically for local needs the Council will support rural exception sites. Such sites can be located in areas where housing development would not normally be encouraged on the basis that development proposals meet identified need for 'qualifying persons'. Local Plan 2030 Policy 67 allows for planning permission to be granted as an exception to policy where there are identified local needs in the rural area and a number of other requirements are met. During 2021/22 no planning permissions were granted for dwellings to meet local needs in the rural area and no dwellings were completed under the rural exception scheme. This is the same as in 2020/21.

Monitoring indicator 41 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
41a Supporting new homes for rural workers in accordance with Policy 68	7S, 68	Details of planning permissions granted for rural worker dwellings	One rural worker dwelling was permitted	BBC
41b Number of completed rural worker dwellings	7S, 68	Number of rural worker dwellings completed	No rural worker dwellings were completed	BBC

7.124 There may be instances where it is necessary for a new dwelling to be built in the countryside to meet the need for a worker to be accommodated on site, such as for an agricultural, forestry, horse breeding and training, livery or equivalent use. Planning permission for new rural worker accommodation in the countryside will be granted if it is in accordance with Local Plan 2030 Policy 68. During 2021/22, planning permission was granted for one rural worker dwelling (21/00401/COU) at 146 Cotton End Road, Wilstead. Five planning applications for rural workers' dwellings were refused on the basis that they would be contrary to the aims of Policies 7S and 68. No rural worker dwellings were completed during the monitoring year.

Monitoring indicator 42 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
42a Five year housing land supply	4S	Details of sites likely to be delivered in the next five years. Assessment carried out in accordance with government policy and guidance	6.82 year housing land supply for the five year period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2027	BBC

7.125 Paragraph 74 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires all local planning authorities to identify and update annually a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites against their housing requirement. The Council's five-year supply of deliverable housing sites is updated annually and the latest position is published on the Council's website www.bedford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/monitoring. It demonstrates that the Council presently has a 6.82 year housing land supply for the five year period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2027.

Monitoring indicator 43 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Housing Delivery Test consequence	Data source
43a Performance against the national Housing Delivery Test (HDT)	4S	Annual published HDT results	2018 = 129%	None	DLUHC
			2019 = 125%	None	
			2020 = 133%	None	
			2021 = 144%	None	

7.126 The Housing Delivery Test (HDT) is a government annual measurement of housing delivery in the area of the relevant planning authorities. The HDT is a percentage measurement of the number of net homes delivered against the number of homes required, as set out in the relevant strategic policies for the area, over a rolling three year period. The HDT results are published annually by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and the NPPF outlines a range of planning policy consequences for authorities who do not achieve set percentage results each year.

7.127 Bedford Borough has consistently achieved a HDT score over 100% and as a result, faces no consequences.

Monitoring indicator 44 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
44a Delivery of affordable housing in accordance with Policy 58S	58S	Number of affordable dwellings permitted on qualifying sites	1,892 new dwellings were permitted on sites subject to affordable housing provision. Of these, 447 dwellings were affordable, equating to 23.6%. Three further planning permissions were granted on sites for 100% affordable housing equating to a total of 31 dwellings	BBC
44b Delivery of affordable housing in accordance with Policy 58S	58S	Affordable dwelling completions	2015/16 = 178 (17.7%) 2016/17 = 234 (18.0%) 2017/18 = 252 (18.4%) 2018/19 = 284 (20.7%) 2019/20 = 342 (32.9%) 2020/21 = 192 (16.0%) 2021/22 = 220 (21.2%) Total = 1,702 (20.8%)	BBC

7.128 The Council's Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update and addendum (August 2018) establishes an objectively assessed need for affordable housing of 4,188 dwellings for the period 2015-2030. Whilst an annualised requirement of affordable housing to be delivered is not set, this is equivalent to an average of 279 dwellings for each year of the plan period. Local Plan 2030 Policy 58S sets out the Council's requirements in relation to affordable housing.

7.129 In 2021/22, 1,892 new dwellings were permitted on sites subject to affordable housing provision. Of these, 447 dwellings were affordable, equating to 23.6%. Three further planning permissions were granted on sites for 100% affordable housing equating to a total of 31 dwellings. This is higher than last year when 707 new dwellings were permitted on sites subject to affordable housing provision, 150 (21.2%) of these were affordable.

7.130 There were 220 affordable housing completions in 2021/22 and this accounts for 21.2% of the total housing completions within the borough for the year. Annual delivery rates of affordable housing have varied over the first seven years of the plan period and the number of affordable dwellings delivered in only one year (2019/20) during the plan period has achieved the amount that would be expected if the requirement were annualised. It should however be noted that this indicator only measures affordable housing achieved through the planning system; other affordable dwellings may be provided by Registered Providers acquiring properties in the housing market.

7.131 The Council's Housing Strategy 2021-2026³³ sets out the Council's commitments to support the delivery of affordable housing to meet identified needs.

Monitoring indicator 45 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
45a Housing mix	59S	Net dwelling completions by number of bedrooms	1 bed = 158 (15.1%)	BBC
			2 bed = 283 (27.1%)	
			3 bed = 334 (32.0%)	
			4 and 4+ bed = 259 (24.8%)	
			Unknown = 11 (1.1%)	

7.132 Local Plan 2030 Policy 59S seeks to provide a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community. The SHMA (Figure 102) presents the breakdown of need for different size homes in the period 2015-2035. Whilst this timeframe exceeds the adopted Local Plan period, the figures give an indication of the size homes of greatest need in the borough. The SHMA identifies that most of the market need is for three bedroom houses whilst most of the need for affordable housing is also for three bedroom houses with a need for two bedroom houses and one bedroom flats also identified.

7.133 More three bedroom dwellings were completed than any other size in 2021/22. Two and four or more bedroom dwellings also represented a high proportion of completions in the monitoring year.

³³ Available at <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/media/943/download?inline>

- 7.134 There are however several factors that should be appreciated when comparing the housing mix data currently being delivered against the mix of housing as recommended by the SHMA, which forms the most recent needs assessment for the borough. The SHMA provides only a snapshot in time and as such the needs outlined in it may not be the same as are required now. Secondly, it should be noted that the majority of housing currently being delivered was granted permission prior to the adoption of the Local Plan 2030 and, as such, their applications were assessed and approved against different policies. In light of this, analysis of completions alone at this stage does not provide a full picture of how Policy 59S is performing in this regard. Furthermore, even if the mix of housing permitted during the monitoring year were to be reviewed, the results may be skewed due to a number of these being reserved matters approvals for which the housing mix was approved under the outline permission, which was assessed against policies pre-dating the Local Plan 2030.
- 7.135 Therefore, to truly assess the performance of Policy 59S in helping to achieve the Local Plan 2030 objective to deliver appropriate types of housing to meet the needs of the borough, monitoring over a longer period of time will be required as will continuous updates on the evidence for housing need and market demand.

Monitoring indicator 46 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
46a Housing mix	59S	Proportion of dwellings permitted that are accessible and adaptable	The method of data collection to monitor delivery of these requirements is being reviewed. Progress will be reported in the next monitoring report	BBC
46b Housing mix	59S	Proportion of dwellings permitted that are wheelchair accessible	The method of data collection to monitor delivery of these requirements is being reviewed. Progress will be reported in the next monitoring report	BBC

- 7.136 In response to the projected increase in the elderly population of the borough during the plan period, and evidence in the SHMA, Local Plan 2030 Policy 59S sets requirements relating to adaptations and wheelchair accessible homes. The policy stipulates that on sites of 3 or more dwellings 49% of all new residential development meets the accessible and adaptable requirements of the building regulations and on sites of 20 or more dwellings a minimum of 5% of all market housing and 7% of affordable housing meets the wheelchair accessible homes requirements of the building regulations. The supporting text

clarifies that wheelchair accessible homes will only be required where the Council is responsible for nominating a person to live in the dwelling.

7.137 The method of data collection to monitor delivery of these requirements is being reviewed. Progress will be reported in the next monitoring report.

Monitoring indicator 47 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
47a Housing mix	60	Number of new self-contained specialist housing schemes (class C3) by type, permitted and completed	Permission for 25 Class C3 use self-contained specialist housing bed spaces	BBC
			Completions data not available for 2021/22	
47b Housing mix	60	Number of new care home bed spaces (class C2) by type, permitted and completed	Permission for 83 Class C2 use care home bed spaces	BBC
			Completions data not available for 2021/22	

7.138 Local Plan 2030 Policy 60 relates to the provision of specialist housing, which includes care homes and extra care schemes, in line with the need to provide sufficient housing for all sectors of the community. The supporting text sets out the differences between class C2 care schemes and class C3 self-contained extra care schemes.

7.139 During 2021/22, planning permission was granted for 25 Class C3 use self-contained specialist housing bed spaces, this is up from last year when no specialist accommodation was granted. During 2021/22, planning permission was granted for 83 Class C2 use care home bed spaces, this is down from last year when 105 Class C3 use care home bed spaces were granted. Some specialist housing provision is also to be provided as part of the mixed use redevelopment of the former Stewartby Brickworks.

7.140 The Council did not monitor completions of Class C2 use care home bed spaces in 2021/22 however monitoring of Class C2 use development will be included in the Council's future monitoring programme and development completions during 2022/23 will be reported in the next monitoring report.

Monitoring indicator 48 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
48a Housing mix	59S, 60	Number of specialist homes for older people permitted that are wheelchair accessible	63 eligible units (all wheelchair accessible)	BBC

7.141 Local Plan Policy 59S stipulates that all specialist housing for older people meet the wheelchair accessible homes requirements of the building regulations. During the monitoring year, only planning permission 20/00021/MAF was eligible to achieve this standard. The design and access statement submitted in support of the application states that all apartments and communal spaces for use by residents are designed to be wheelchair accessible. This is down from 2020/21 when 103 Class C2 units were eligible to achieve the standard. This requirement was secured via condition.

Monitoring indicator 49 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
49a Operation of an up to date Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Register	59S	The number of entries on the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Register	2015/16 = 50 individuals, 0 groups 2016/17 = 137 individuals, 1 group 2017/18 = 172 individuals, 1 group 2018/19 = 110 individuals, 0 groups 2019/20 = 169 individuals, 0 groups 2020/21 = 90 individuals, 0 groups	DLUHC
49b Compliance with the self build duty	59S	The number of plots permitted suitable for self	2015/16 = N/A 2016/17 = 64 2017/18 = 66	DLUHC

		and custom housebuilding	2018/19 = 24 2019/20 = 35 2020/21 = 32 The number of single plots granted planning permission to the end of the sixth base period is sufficient to meet the demand for self and custom build housebuilding in the borough, as evidenced by the number of entries on part 1 of the Council's register	
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- 7.142 Support for self build and custom build housing developments, in line with national guidance, is set out in Local Plan 2030 Policy 59S v) and in the supporting text. The Council has included a self-build and custom housebuilding policy in its emerging Local Plan 2040.
- 7.143 The Housing and Planning Act 2016 requires authorities to give suitable development permission in respect of enough serviced plots of land to meet the demand for self and custom housebuilding in the authority's area arising in each base period, as shown in the Council's Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Register.
- 7.144 The Council's register became operational in April 2016. On 5 January 2021, the Council divided the register into two parts with only those with a defined local connection included on Part 1 and other individuals or groups that have an interest in self-build plots in the borough but who do not have the required local connection to the area included on Part 2. The requirement to provide enough serviced plots to meet the demand shown on the register only applies to Part 1, but both Part 1 and 2 are used to assess the general level of demand.
- 7.145 Data compiled from the annual self-build returns submitted to government³⁴ shows that at October 2021 (which falls within the 2021/22 monitoring year) there were 90 entries on the register, which were all individuals. Table 14 shows how many people have entered the register each year since its creation and the number of entries on the register in total at the end of each base period.

³⁴ DLUHC and MHCLG (2022) Right to build registers monitoring: data for 2016 to 2020-21. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/self-build-and-custom-housebuilding-data-2016-2016-17-2017-18-and-2018-19>

Table 14: Number of new entries on the self-build register in each base period and the number of entries on the register in total at the end of each base period 2015/16-2020/21

Year (October to October)	Number of new individual entrants	Number of individuals removed from the register	Individuals on the register in total (net)	Number of new group entrants	Groups on the register in total
2015/16	50		50	0	0
2016/17	87		137	1	1
2017/18	35		172	0	1
2018/19	40	-102	110	0	1
2019/20	60	-1	169	-1	0
2020/21	28	-107	90	0	0

7.146 The first base period covered seven months, running from 1 April 2016 to 30 October 2016. Each subsequent base period covers 12 months and runs from 31 October to 30 October the following year. The Council has three years from the end of each base period within which to grant the required number of development permissions. Data cleansing exercises took place in August 2019 and August 2021 which resulted in reductions in the numbers of individuals on the register. Registrants were asked to confirm that they wished to stay on the register.

7.147 Table 15 shows the supply of serviced plots by way of the number of new plots granted planning permissions in each base period, based on statistics published by DLUHC (previously MHCLG)³⁵.

³⁵ DLUHC and MHCLG (2022) Right to build registers monitoring: data for 2016 to 2020-21. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/self-build-and-custom-housebuilding-data-2016-2016-17-2017-18-and-2018-19>

Table 15: Planning permissions for plots suitable for self and custom build granted in each base period 2016/17-2020/21

Year (October to October)	Number of suitable single planning permissions granted	Cumulative number of suitable planning permissions granted since October 2016
2015/16	N/A	N/A
2016/17	64	64
2017/18	66	130
2018/19	24	154
2019/20	35	189
2020/21	32	221

- 7.148 Between 2016 and October 2021, a total of 221 planning permissions for developments of a single dwelling in the borough were granted, which although not explicitly submitted as self and custom build applications, provide potential opportunities for self and custom build. The supply is currently measured only by planning permissions for a single dwelling and in practice it is likely that at least some dwellings on sites with more than one dwelling will also fall within the self and custom build definition of suitable permission.
- 7.149 The number of single plots granted planning permission to the end of the sixth base period is sufficient to meet the demand for self and custom build housebuilding in the borough, as evidenced by the number of entries on part 1 of the Council's register.

Monitoring indicator 50 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
50a Progress delivering Gypsy and Traveller Pitches	61, 62, 63, 64	Details of permissions granted for new Gypsy and Traveller Pitches	0 permissions granted	BBC
50b Progress delivering Travelling Showpeople plots	61, 63, AD19	Details of permissions granted for Travelling Showpeople plots	0 permissions granted	BBC

7.150 Local Plan 2030 Policy 61 states that there is a need for two additional permanent gypsy and traveller pitches to 2030 and five additional travelling showpeople plots to 2030, reflecting the findings of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment 2017. Policy 62 requires that the two additional gypsy and traveller pitches are provided on the existing site at Kempston Hardwick. Planning permission for this was granted in December 2018 (18/02566/DC3). A site at Manton Lane, Bedford is already allocated under Policy AD19 in the Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013 to make provision for the travelling showpeople plots. This additional accommodation has not been delivered to date, though plans are currently being prepared (outside the monitoring period).

7.151 A more recent Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment³⁶ was completed in November 2021 to support the Local Plan 2040.

Monitoring indicator 51 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
51a Meeting the needs for Gypsy and Traveller pitches and Travelling Showpeople plots in accordance with Policy 63	63, 64	Number of planning permissions for new Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites on unallocated land in the countryside	0 permissions granted	BBC

7.152 Local Plan 2030 Policy 63 is a criteria based policy relating to the provision of traveller sites on unallocated land in the countryside. During the monitoring year, no planning permissions for new traveller sites on unallocated land in the countryside were granted.

Monitoring indicator 52 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
52a Health Impact Assessments carried	2S	Number of Health Impact	No Health Impact Assessments	BBC

³⁶ <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/media/4069/download?inline>

out in accordance with Policy 2S for policy documents		Assessments prepared to support planning policy documents		
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- 7.153 A key objective of the planning system is to help support people in living healthy lives and this is reflected in section 8 of the NPPF 'Promoting healthy and safe communities'. Health and wellbeing is an underlying theme for the local plan and health features directly and indirectly in the Local Plan 2030 vision and objectives and across the local plan policies.
- 7.154 A Health Impact Assessment is a method of considering the positive and negative impacts of development on the health of different groups in the population, in order to enhance the benefits and minimise any risks to health.
- 7.155 Local Plan 2030 Policy 2S seeks to reduce health inequalities and promote healthy lifestyles by requiring development to promote health, safety and active living for all age groups and encouraging physically active lifestyles through the provision of sustainable modes of transport. The policy seeks to ensure that development enhances health and wellbeing and does not have a negative impact on it by setting a threshold for providing Health Impact Assessments.
- 7.156 Policy 2S i) requires the Council to carry out Health Impact Assessments, which may be incorporated into sustainability appraisals, on all planning policy documents. During 2021/22, resources were focused on preparing the Local Plan 2040 which is to be subject to a Health Impact Assessment outside of the monitoring year.

Monitoring indicator 53 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
53a Progress in preparing the Health Impact Assessments guidance	2S	Progress in accordance with milestones in the Local Development Scheme	The document was due to be completed Winter 2022. Work on the document is being led by colleagues in Public Health. A draft has been prepared and will be the subject of consultation shortly.	BBC

7.157 The supporting text to Policy 2S states that “a guidance note will be provided which will include further advice in relation to where a Health Impact Assessment is required, what it should contain and the health outcomes the development should seek to achieve.” Work on the document is progressing and an update will be provided in the next monitoring report.

Monitoring indicator 54 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
54a Health Impact Assessments carried out in accordance with Policy 2S for planning applications	2S	Details of planning permissions where Health Impact Assessment have been prepared in accordance with policy.	2 planning applications	BBC

7.158 Policy 2S ii) sets out that planning applications for all residential and mixed-use sites of 50 homes or more, employment sites of 5ha (gross) or more, retail developments over 500 sqm (gross internal area), or any other sites as requested by the local planning authority are required to submit a Health Impact Assessment. In 2021/22, a Health Impact Assessment was prepared for two applications that exceeded the policy thresholds which is one more than last year.

Monitoring indicator 55 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
55a Progress in preparing a Bedford Borough Design Guide	28S, 29, 30	Details of progress in accordance with milestones in the Local Development Scheme	This was due for completion in Summer 2022. Owing to the Local Plan 2040 taking priority, the document will now be adopted in March 2023 (outside of the monitoring year). Initial engagement with internal stakeholders in developing a scope for the SPD was followed by public engagement on the scope of the SPD in August and September 2021.	BBC

55b Progress in preparing updated design guidance on advertisements	28S, 29, 30, 34	Details of progress in accordance with milestones in the Local Development Scheme	No progress has been made on updating the guidance on advertisements. The LDS makes no commitment for the production of this document.	BBC
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7.159 Government policy identifies good design as a key aspect of sustainable development and explains that it is indivisible from good planning. Paragraph 127 of the NPPF requires that local plans contain comprehensive and robust policies that set out the expectations regarding the quality of development. Local Plan 2030 contains a suite of policies in this regard.

7.160 The Council will, where appropriate, work with developers to prepare development briefs, codes and design guidance for major development sites allocated in the local plan. Preparation of new and updated design guidance will appear in the Local Development Scheme. During 2021/22, the Bedford Borough Design Guide has been under preparation. Initial engagement with internal stakeholders in developing a scope for the SPD was followed by public engagement on the scope of the SPD in August and September 2021. Public consultation on a draft design guide was undertaken in September and October 2022, and a report recommending approval is due to be considered by the Council's Executive in March 2023 (outside of the monitoring year).

7.161 The supporting text to Local Plan 2030 Policy 34 states that the Council will publish updated design guidance on advertisements. No progress has been made on updating the guidance.

Monitoring indicator 56 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
56a Production of design codes in accordance with Policy 29 when required by the policy	28S, 29, 30	Details of permissions where design codes are required / have been produced	To be reported in the next monitoring report	BBC

7.162 Local Plan 2030 Policy 29 sets thresholds for planning applications to be guided by a design code to be agreed with the Council as part of the application process. The number of design codes prepared during 2021/22 will be reported in the next monitoring report.

Monitoring indicator 57 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
57a Permissions granted in the Land Settlement Association Area	AD44	Details of planning permissions granted in accordance with specific policy requirements	4 permissions	BBC

7.163 The former Land Settlement Association area of smallholdings within Wyboston, Chawston and Colesden parish was created during the 1930s and supported decades of agricultural and horticultural activity. Saved Policy AD44 of the Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013 is applicable to development proposals within the former Land Settlement Association area and sets out that permission will only be granted where applications:

- i. Maintain the distinctive spatial pattern, layout and scale of plots.
- ii. Respect the style, scale, appearance and orientation of the original dwellings and separation between them.
- iii. Protect residential amenity from inappropriate disturbance.
- iv. Do not result in unacceptable levels of traffic generation.

Monitoring indicator 58 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
58a Permissions granted at Wyboston Lakes	73	Details of planning permissions granted in accordance with specific policy requirements	0 permissions	BBC

7.164 Wyboston Lakes lies close to the A428 and A1 to the east of the Bedford Borough. It is close to the urban area of St Neots which is in Huntingdonshire district. The site is partially developed for recreation, leisure and hotel, conference and training

uses providing a wide range of employment uses in a low density landscaped setting. Planning permission has also be granted for former B1 business uses. Policy 73 supports development at Wyboston Lakes subject to specific criteria which reflect the location and character of the site.

Monitoring indicator 59 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Direction of change	Data source
59a Number of heritage assets 'at risk'	41S	Details of entries on the National Heritage At Risk Register	9 entries (3 listed buildings, 5 scheduled monuments and 1 conservation area)	Up	BBC

7.165 Bedford Borough has a rich and distinctive historic environment and the borough contains a variety of designated and non-designated heritage assets. Within Bedford Borough currently (December 2022) there are 1,329 listed buildings and 28 conservation areas. There are also 69 scheduled monuments and 9 historic parks and gardens³⁷. Of the 28 conservation areas in the borough, six have a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan. These are Bedford, Biddenham, Bletsoe, Elstow, Hinwick, and Stewartby. Conservation Area Appraisals highlight a number of buildings which, while not listed on the National Heritage List, are considered important local buildings of positive townscape merit. There are over ten thousand archaeological sites, historic buildings, landscapes, find-spots, place names and parks and gardens recorded on the Bedford Borough Historic Environment Record, many of which could be considered to be non-designated heritage assets.

7.166 The Council is considering the designation of a new conservation area in Little Barford and has produced a draft Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan as part of the process. A four week consultation period took place from 21 November to 19 December 2022 (outside of the monitoring year) in order to gather feedback on the document. Feedback is being reviewed and where applicable the document will be amended, and a report and recommendation made to the Council's Executive.

³⁷ Historic England (2022) Listing. Available at <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>

- 7.167 Local Plan 2030 Policy 41S requires development to preserve, and where possible, enhance the significance of heritage assets and minimise impacts on the historic environment. This is in line with the requirement in the NPPF to conserve heritage assets so they can be enjoyed by future generations.
- 7.168 Three listed buildings, five scheduled monuments and one conservation area are identified as being ‘at risk’ by Historic England as a result of neglect, decay, or inappropriate development and appear on the National Heritage at Risk Register. These assets are listed in Table 15.
- 7.169 The Council’s Heritage and Built Environment Monitoring Report 2019-2020 identified two listed buildings and six scheduled monuments that were listed on Historic England’s National Heritage at Risk Register in 2019. Since that time, one listed building (Parish Church of St Denys, Church Road, Church End, Colmworth) and Bedford conservation area have been added to the National Heritage At Risk Register. One scheduled monument (site discovered by aerial photography south of village, Cardington) has been removed from the National Heritage At Risk Register.

Table 16: Heritage assets listed on the National Heritage at Risk Register, December 2022

Asset name and location	Designation
Church St Mary the Virgin, Church Road, Keysoe, Bolnhurst and Keysoe	Listed Building grade I
Parish Church of St Denys, Church Road, Church End, Colmworth	Listed Building grade I
Church of St Martin, Clapham Road, Bedford	Listed Building grade II
Settlement site north of Chapel End Farm, Cardington	Scheduled Monument
Bury Hill Camp, a motte and bailey castle with three fishponds, Thurleigh	Scheduled Monument
Yarl’s Wood hermitage and moated site, Milton Ernest	Scheduled Monument
Palaceyard Wood medieval moated enclosure and associated enclosures, woodland bank and cultivation earthworks, Wyboston, Chawston and Colesden / Great Barford	Scheduled Monument
Manor Farm Iron Age univallate hillfort and medieval moated enclosure, Bolnhurst and Keysoe	Scheduled Monument
Bedford	Conservation Area

- 7.170 In partnership with BedfordBID and SEMLEP, the Council has been awarded funding from Historic England as part of their High Street Heritage Action Zone project. The High Streets Heritage Action Zone is a nationwide initiative designed to secure improvements to buildings and the public realm. The grant will be used to facilitate a four year programme, investing in Bedford High Street, local communities and visitors. The restoration of 19-21 High Street, a grade II listed building was completed in July 2022 and includes a newly painted front, comprehensive works to reinstate the classical style architectural

design and detailing, and restoration of the original lion-head stringcourse which runs along the façade of the building. Further improvements are being delivered on 58 and 107 High Street.

Monitoring indicator 60 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
60a Residential development on previously developed land	46S	Percentage of new dwelling completions (including conversions) on previously developed land	2015/16 = 39.4% 2016/17 = 45.0% 2017/18 = 41.5% 2018/19 = 26.5% 2019/20 = 27.0% 2020/21 = 48.0% 2021/22 = 32.2%	BBC
60b Non-residential development on previously developed land	46S, 65	Percentage of non-residential floorspace completions on previously developed land	2021/22 = 81.9%	BBC

- 7.171 Local Plan 2030 Policy 46S seeks to maximise the delivery of development through the reuse of suitably located previously developed land provided that it is not of high environmental or biodiversity value. The policy requires that poorer quality land should be used in preference to the best and most versatile agricultural land (grades 1-3a). It is therefore appropriate that the plan seeks to maximise the delivery of development on brownfield sites whilst recognising that greenfield development may be necessary.
- 7.172 No target is set for the proportion of new development on previously developed land however in line with national policy the Local Plan 2030 spatial strategy seeks to maximise opportunities for the reuse of specific brownfield sites within the urban area and at the former brickworks at Stewartby which is identified as a large scale brownfield site for future development. In addition, the Council is required to maintain a brownfield register which provides up-to-date and consistent information on sites considered to be appropriate for residential development.

7.173 Government land use change statistics in England 2021-22³⁸ identify that 54% of new residential addresses in England were created on previously developed land. Whilst the percentage of new and converted dwellings on developed land in 2021/22 in the borough is lower than the national average, the proportion has varied during the first seven years of the plan period.

7.174 In 2021/22, planning permission 18/01087/MAF for a residential development of 49 new dwellings at Land off Champion Way, Bedford contributed significantly to the number of brownfield land completions, providing 49 dwellings in total during the monitoring year. In addition, 56 dwelling completions at Wixams new settlement provided a large contribution.

7.175 The percentage of new non-residential floorspace completions on previously developed land in 2021/22 was 81.9%. This was largely as a result of large employment developments completed at the former Elstow Storage Depot (Wixams) and the former site of the Elstow Brickworks (saved Local Plan 2002 site allocations H14 and E10). The amount of new non-residential floorspace completions on previously developed land was not reported in previous years monitoring reports.

Monitoring indicator 61 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
61a Delivery of new community space	98, 99	Number of planning permissions for new community facilities or extensions to existing facilities	5 permissions	BBC
61b Delivery of sports pitches in accordance with Policy AD28	97, 99, AD28	Number of planning permissions for sports and recreation facilities To address deficiencies in existing provision identified in the Bedford Borough Council Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy	2 permissions	BBC

³⁸ DLUHC (2022) Land use change statistics 2021 to 2022. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/land-use-change-statistics-2021-to-2022>

61c Delivery of open space in accordance with Policy AD28	AD28	Amount of open space provided in association with new development	The method of data collection to monitor delivery of the provision of open space in association with new development in accordance with local standards is being reviewed. Progress will be reported in the next monitoring report	BBC
61d Payments in lieu of on-site provision of open space and community facilities.	97, 98, AD28	Financial contributions secured in lieu of on-site provision	A total of £19,920 secured towards off-site equipped / natural play space and £25,927 towards off-site outdoor sports space	BBC

7.176 Community facilities are an important feature in settlements as they help to meet local needs and can provide opportunities for social and cultural interaction. Community facilities can include parish halls, places of worship, cemeteries, community centres, schools and colleges, health facilities, libraries, and leisure, arts and cultural facilities.

7.177 During 2021/22, five planning permissions were granted for new community facilities or extensions to existing facilities, this is up from three last year. Planning permission was granted for the change of use of 5 Peel Street, Bedford to a place of worship (21/02231/COU), a single storey extension to Bedfordshire Golf Club, Stagsden (21/02452/FUL), a prefabricated building for Oakley Pre-School (20/02361/S73) and erection of school buildings and associated indoor and outdoor sports facilities at Land off Clapham Road and Manton Lane, Bedford (20/00488/MAR). Outline planning permission for a housing led mixed use redevelopment of the former Stewartby Brickworks, to include community facilities, (18/03022/EIA) was also granted during the monitoring year.

7.178 Sports pitches, sports facilities, parks and open space contribute to the quality of life in and around settlements and it is important to ensure that the stock and range of facilities is adequate to serve the needs of both the existing and the future population of the area.

- 7.179 The Council commissioned a Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy³⁹ to assess the existing provision of, and future demand for, outdoor sports facilities. The study found that demand is broadly being met for all sports except for football and rugby league. Demand for all remaining sports can generally be met or be resolved in the future through quality improvements and the restoration of sites which are currently underutilised. There are shortfalls identified for 3G pitches which cannot be alleviated unless new provision is created. An increase in 3G pitch provision could also help reduce grass pitch shortfalls through the transfer of play, thus reducing overplay, which in turn can aid pitch quality improvements. As there are identified shortfalls on grass pitches, there is a need to protect both playing pitch provision currently in use and pitches that are no longer in use due to the potential that they may offer for meeting current and future needs.
- 7.180 During 2021/22, outline planning permission (18/03022/EIA) was granted for comprehensive redevelopment for a mix of residential, employment and community uses, to include sports pitches and facilities, at the former Stewartby brickworks (Local Plan 2030 Policy 25). In addition, planning permission (20/00488/MAR) was granted for the erection of school buildings and associated indoor and outdoor sports facilities / pitches at Land off Clapham Road and Manton Lane, Bedford. The sports provision includes a sports village incorporating an indoor swimming pool, sports hall, weights room, gym, dance studio and changing facilities. The outdoor facilities will comprise a grass playing field to accommodate football, rugby, athletics and cricket, two outdoor netball courts and two 3G multi-sport pitches. Once constructed, the sports facilities will be made available to the wider community when not in use by the school.
- 7.181 The NPPF defines open space as being 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.
- 7.182 The Bedfordshire Natural Capital Assessment published in May 2021 includes an assessment of open space in the borough against Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards (ANGSt). It shows that 68.1% of Bedford Borough residents did not have access to natural greenspace within 300m of their home. However, the borough performed more strongly in the provision of larger natural greenspaces, with 81.8% and 84.0% of residents living within 2km of a 20ha site and within 5km of a 100ha site respectively.

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<https://edrms.bedford.gov.uk/OpenDocument.aspx?id=gh5UFxeJZtGZ%2fB3uANN4SA%3d%3d&name=Bedford%20Playing%20Pitch%20%20Outdoor%20Sport%20Strategy.pdf>

- 7.183 Saved Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013 Policy AD28 requires provision of open space and built facilities in association with new development in accordance with local standards. The policy goes on to state that where possible, provision should be made on-site. Where this is not possible, practical or preferred, a financial contribution in lieu of on-site provision will be required.
- 7.184 The method of data collection to monitor delivery of the provision of open space in association with new development in accordance with local standards (Policy AD28) is being reviewed. Progress will be reported in the next monitoring report.
- 7.185 Bedford Borough Council's Infrastructure Funding Statement 2021-2022 shows that financial contributions towards off-site play space or outdoor sports space were secured by way of two S106 legal agreements signed during the monitoring year. £11,401 towards off-site equipped play space and £14,839 towards off-site outdoor sports space within the locality was secured through the refurbishment of the existing flats and the erection of a new build block of flats at Bury Court, Church Lane, Bedford (20/01906/FUL). £8,519 towards off-site play space and £11,088 towards off-site outdoor sports space within the locality was secured through the redevelopment of land to the rear of The Bull, 259 London Road, Bedford to provide 7 dwellings (21/00834/FUL). In addition, the S106 Agreement signed during the monitoring year for the development of 592 dwellings close to the former RAF Cardington, Shortstown (20/00901/EIA) secured £485,706 (index-linked) as a contribution towards the costs of the provision, improvement or maintenance of sporting, leisure or other community facilities capable of serving the development.

Monitoring indicator 62 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
62a Loss of sports and community facilities	97, 98, 99, AD28	Number of planning permissions allowing the loss of an existing sports or community facility through demolition, conversion or redevelopment	0 permissions	BBC

- 7.186 Safeguarding existing leisure, sports and community facilities is important to ensure that facilities are not lost to other types of development and that appropriate provision is made for the community to access these facilities. Local Plan 2030 Policy

99 sets out that the loss of existing sports and community facilities will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the facility is surplus to existing and future needs or the facility is to be relocated and is of a similar scale to the current facility, is of an equivalent standard and able to serve the same community.

7.187 Aside from small losses of school playing fields to accommodate new built facilities, no planning permission was granted for the substantial loss of leisure, sports or community facilities during 2021/22.