



# Sharnbrook Neighbourhood Plan To 2030

**Referendum – 21 October 2021**  
**Plan made – 24 November 2021**



**Contents**

## Foreword

1	Introduction	4
2	About Sharnbrook	10
3	Vision, Key Themes and Core Objectives	14
4	The Policies of the Sharnbrook Neighbourhood Development Plan	20
5	Non-Land Use Actions	31
6	Monitoring and Review of the Plan	33

## List of Appendices

1	List of Statutory Listed Buildings	34
2	Local Green Spaces and Assessment	36
3	Policies Map	38
4	Glossary of Terms	39

## **FOREWORD**

Neighbourhood planning was introduced under the Localism Act 2011 to give members of the community a more hands on role in the planning of their neighbourhoods. It introduced new rights and powers to allow communities to shape new development in their local area by coming together to prepare neighbourhood development plans.

The Sharnbrook Neighbourhood Development Plan (SNDP) has been prepared to establish a vision for the Parish and to help deliver the local community's aspirations and needs for the plan period up to 2030.

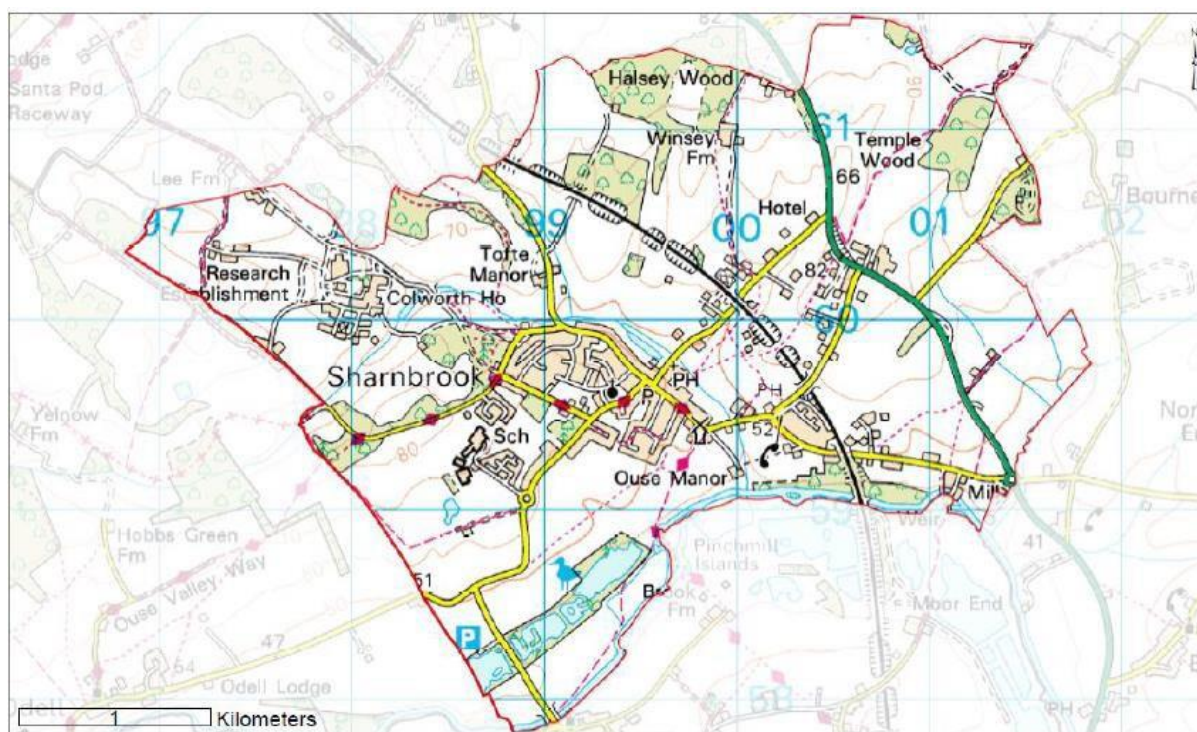
This Plan has been produced by the Sharnbrook Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group (SNPSG) who have consulted those who live, work or have a business interest in the Parish. Every effort has been made to ensure that the views and policies contained in this document reflect those of the majority of residents in the Parish.

The Parish Council would like to thank the members of the Steering Group and pay tribute to their work since 2017. The Parish Council is also grateful for the help and engagement of many others in the village, without whom it would not have been possible to produce this Plan.

Jonathan Miller – Chair of Sharnbrook Parish Council

# 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This document has been prepared by the Sharnbrook Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group (SNPSG), led by Sharnbrook Parish Council.
- 1.2 The Sharnbrook Neighbourhood Development Plan (SNDP) is designed to define and achieve the vision for Sharnbrook through to 2030. Neighbourhood planning enables communities to play a much stronger role in shaping the areas in which they live and work and in supporting new development proposals.
- 1.3 On 18 September 2017, Sharnbrook Parish Council applied to Bedford Borough Council for designation of the whole of the Parish as a Neighbourhood Plan Area. On 27 September 2017, Bedford Borough Council approved the Neighbourhood Plan Area as shown on the map below (Fig.1). The village of Sharnbrook has been classified as a Key Service Centre by Bedford Borough Council in their Local Plan 2030.



**FIGURE 1 – SHARNBROOK NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AREA**

- 1.4 The SNPSG, comprising Parish Councillors and volunteers, was established in August 2017, to drive forward the preparation of the Plan and to lead on the public engagement and consultation process.
- 1.5 The SNDP provides a vision for the future of Sharnbrook and sets out clear policies to help realise this ambition. These policies have regard to national planning policy as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and are in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted development plan which presently comprises the 'saved' policies of the Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013, the 'saved' policies of the Bedford Local Plan 2002 and the adopted Local Plan 2030.
- 1.6 This Plan has been developed through extensive consultation with the residents, land owners and other stakeholders who have an interest in the community. It provides local people with the opportunity to have

input over where development should take place within the Parish, and to influence it for the benefit of the community.

- 1.7 It is intended that the Plan will assist not only in guiding future development, but also ensure that the Conservation Area, heritage assets, wildlife assets and existing designated Village Open Spaces and Views, all of which give the Parish its special character, are protected.
- 1.8 A Neighbourhood Development Plan describes the area it serves and details the developments, improvements and changes that local residents, community and voluntary groups, and service providers, would like to see. This is done by:
- Forming a Steering Group.
  - Use of consultations to reach those whose voice is not normally heard.
  - Use of consultations to identify the most important local issues.
  - Evidence gathering to inform the Plan and its policies.
  - Creating opportunities for residents to work out practical steps to improve issues identified.
- 1.9 The final SNDP will be 'made' formally by Bedford Borough Council. Local parishioners will be given the opportunity to endorse the SNDP publicly by means of a referendum which ensures that the Plan has the backing of local residents.
- 1.10 The Steering Group identified key themes which it felt were particularly pertinent to Sharnbrook, and which have guided both the process of consultations and the reporting of the findings described in this document. The key themes identified are:
- Housing.
  - Transport and Access.
  - Environment and Heritage.
  - Technology, Employment and Business.
  - Village Facilities
- 1.11 The SNDP has been produced on behalf of the residents of Sharnbrook. It has been developed from the views of local people and organisations using a variety of consultation methods including:
- Exhibitions and Events.
  - Feedback from Launch and Open Days.
  - Residents and Businesses Questionnaire.
  - Production of newsletters.
  - Feedback via dedicated email address.
  - Regular meetings of the Sharnbrook Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group.
  - Parish Council meetings.
  - Social Media Platforms (including Facebook).
  - Parish Council website.
- 1.12 A detailed summary of the public consultation carried out will be provided within the Consultation Statement which will accompany the Submission Version of the SNDP.
- 1.13 Prior to consultation of the SNDP, the Parish Council commissioned a number of documents which have formed the Evidence Base and support the Plan. These are listed below:

- Site Options and Assessment Report (including Traffic Survey).
- Housing Needs Assessment.
- Landscape Character and Built Environment Assessment.
- Habitats Regulation Assessment.

### ***What is a Neighbourhood Development Plan?***

1.14 The Neighbourhood Development Plan is a plan for the community as a whole. It looks at a wide range of issues including:

- The development of housing (location, type, tenure etc).
- Transport, access and connectivity (roads, cycling, walking etc).
- The protection and creation of open spaces (allotments, play areas etc).
- The protection of important buildings and heritage assets.

1.15 Although the Localism Act 2011 aims, via the Neighbourhood Development Plan, to give local people the power to decide what happens in their community, it also sets out a number of 'basic conditions' that must be met. These are:

- **To have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;**
- **To contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;**
- **To be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area<sup>1</sup>, or any part of the area;**
- **To be compatible with EU obligations; and that prescribed conditions are met in relation to the plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the neighbourhood plan<sup>2</sup>.**

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<sup>1</sup> Development plan is defined in Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and includes adopted local plans, neighbourhood plans that have been made and published spatial development strategies, together with any regional strategy policies that remain in force. Neighbourhood plans that have been approved at referendum are also part of the development plan, unless the local planning authority decides that the neighbourhood plan should not be made.

<sup>2</sup> The prescribed condition is that the 'making' of the neighbourhood plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2012) or a European offshore marine site (as defined in the Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 2007) (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects).

- To have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
- To contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
- To be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan<sup>1</sup> for the area, or any part of the area;
- To be compatible with EU obligations; and that prescribed conditions are met in relation to the plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the neighbourhood plan<sup>2</sup>.

- 1.16 The production of a Neighbourhood Development Plan gives the local community the opportunity to input into where new housing, infrastructure and any community facilities should go and how the village should develop.
- 1.17 The SNDP will be subject to an independent examination. An independent examiner will be appointed by Bedford Borough Council in consultation with the Parish Council. The appointed examiner will assess whether the Plan meets the 'basic conditions' and if found to meet these, the Plan can proceed to the local referendum. The referendum will give all eligible voters in the Parish the opportunity to vote and decide if the SNDP should form part of the development plan and be used in the determination of planning applications.
- 1.18 The SNDP has been prepared to conform generally to the strategic policies of the development plan. Neighbourhood Plans do not cover minerals and waste matters. Minerals and waste policies are contained in Local Plan 2030 and the Bedfordshire and Luton Minerals and Waste Local Plan.
- 1.19 The SNDP has been prepared for the period 2020-2030 in accordance with Bedford Borough Council's Local Plan 2030.
- 1.20 Once 'made', the SNDP will form part of the development plan. Planning applications are determined in accordance with the development plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

### ***Sharnbrook Neighbourhood Plan and the Development Plan Context***

- 1.21 The Basic Conditions Statement will map the various policies in the submitted SNDP against the policies in the current development plan. In summary, the following policies have been particularly important in underpinning the SNDP policies:

#### ***Allocations and Designations Local Plan***

AD1	Sustainable Development Policy
AD24	Green Infrastructure Opportunity Zones
AD28	Provision of Open Space and Built Facilities in Association with New Development
	Pedestrian Routes
AD40	Village Open Spaces and Views

- 1.22 In regard to the policies of the Local Plan 2030, the following policies have been taken into account in resolving the SNDP policies:

### ***Local Plan 2030***

3S	Spatial Strategy
4S	Amount and distribution of housing development
5S	Development in villages with a Settlement Policy Area
7S	Development in the countryside
28S	Place making
29	Design quality and principles
30-33	The Impact of development
35S	Green Infrastructure
37	Landscape character
38	Landscaping in new development
39	Retention of trees
40	Hedgerows
41S	Historic environment and heritage assets
42S	Protecting biodiversity and geodiversity
43	Enhancing biodiversity
44	River Great Ouse
45	Local Green Space
46S	Use of previously developed land & use of undeveloped land
50S	Water resources
51S	Climate change strategic approach
52	Water demand
54	Energy efficiency
58S	Affordable housing
59S	Housing mix
65	Reuse of rural buildings in the countryside
75	New employment development in the countryside
82	Local centres (including rural key service centres) – changes of use
83	Neighbourhood Centres and individual shops – changes of use
86S	Delivering infrastructure
87	Public transport
88	Impact of transport on people, places and environment
90S	Transport infrastructure and network improvements
92	Flood risk
93	Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS)
97	New sports and leisure facilities
98	New community facilities
99	Loss of existing sports and community facilities

- 1.23 It is clear that the SNDP has been prepared within the context of the existing development plan and the Local Plan 2030. This is good practice and reflects key elements within the Planning Practice Guidance on this matter.

### ***Community Engagement and Consultation***

- 1.24 The SNDP has been produced on behalf of the residents of the Parish of Sharnbrook. It has been developed from the views of local people using a variety of consultation methods.
- 1.25 Extensive consultation has been undertaken in order to inform the development of the SNDP and the policies that it provides. A draft Plan was shared informally with Officers of Bedford Borough Council in



January 2020. Following receipt of comments from Bedford Borough Council, amendments were made to the Plan.

- 1.26 The Pre-Submission Version of the Plan was discussed at an Extra Ordinary meeting of the Parish Council on 13 August 2020 and the Parish Council resolved that the Plan be subject to the statutory 6 week “Pre-Submission consultation” in accordance with Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended). In light of the Covid-19 restrictions in place, the consultation period was agreed to be extended to take place between 19 August 2020 and 23 October 2020. The consultation took place with bodies whose interests were considered may be affected by the draft Plan.
- 1.27 Posters and literature on the Pre-Submission consultation were distributed in relevant areas of the village and literature was delivered to all households. Information was posted on the Parish Council Facebook page and the Parish Council website. Paper copies of the plan, with included response forms, were delivered to all households and businesses. Completing the Response forms online was encouraged. Extra paper response forms were made available on request.
- 1.28 A Consultation Statement detailing the consultation process accompanies this document.

## 2 About Sharnbrook

- 2.1 Sharnbrook is a settlement mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086. The Parish covers an area of 998 hectares and is located 8 miles north west of Bedford. It is in gently rolling countryside near where the River Great Ouse is joined by the brook that gives the village its name. The oldest part of the village is designated as a Conservation Area and has many distinctive buildings and features.

### ***History and Context***

- 2.2 St Peter's Church (Grade I listed) is the oldest surviving building in the village. It is a 13<sup>th</sup> century spired church remodelled from an earlier Norman building. The village developed mainly through agriculture. During the 17<sup>th</sup> century, there was a great period of building, including Tofte Manor in 1613, and a number of distinctive houses at the lower end of the High Street. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the village developed as a commercial centre. The railway came to Sharnbrook in 1857 and served the community until the station was closed in 1960. A Police Station, with cells and Court House, was opened in the High Street in 1872. The buildings remain, but they have been converted to other uses.



- 2.3 At one time, Sharnbrook had eight Manors. Only three remain today, namely Tofte Manor to the north, Ouse Manor to the south east of the village and Colworth House to the west. The other Manors are now represented in road names around the village including Templars Way, Loring Road and Grange Gardens. In 1950 Colworth House and its surrounding farmland became the home to Unilever's Scientific Research and Development centre. In the 1980's, it not only provided a variety of employment to Sharnbrook residents, but many employees were bussed in from the surrounding area and there were more employees on the site than residents in the village. In 2004 the site became Colworth Science Park. Unilever's Scientific Research and Development centre still has 750 employees and several small companies employ an additional 200 personnel.
- 2.4 Four mills have existed in the Parish: a windmill to the south of the High Street, with a water mill nearby (both are now part of private residences), Pinch Mill bordering Felmersham, and Stoke Mills, a former water mill on the south-east approach to the village. Milling ceased on that site in 1969. The original mill was converted to the present award winning Sharnbrook Mill Theatre, which opened in 1979. The Mill House became the Millhouse Hotel and Riverside Restaurant and subsequently, the adjacent ancillary buildings became a Business Park with small and medium units.



**High Street (South) Circa 1900**

- 2.5 The village school was founded in 1836. Formerly John Gibbard Lower School, it is now Sharnbrook Primary School (an Academy). In 1975, Sharnbrook Upper School opened on the west boundary of the village. It has always maintained a good reputation and the numerous buses and cars serving the school give the village its own rush hour traffic. From 1984 a Community College was incorporated into the school. The SAF Sharnbrook Community Sports Centre opened in 2006 on the site of Sharnbrook Academy, for the joint use of the school and the community. After a change in government policy led to the collapse of adult education at the Community College, some residents formed Sharnbrook Learning for Pleasure (LfP) in 2006. In 2017, Sharnbrook Upper School became Sharnbrook Academy.
- 2.6 Major housing development took place in the Parish between 1960 and 1985 including the Manor Farm estate, the Loring Road area and Brittons Close. In 2002 the village grew by 20% due to the planning permission given for School Approach and Yelow Lane developments, 86 and 47 houses respectively (please refer to Table 2.2 of the Site Options and Assessment report prepared by consultants, AECOM). There have been small amounts of infilling in other areas.

### ***Demographics***











- 2.7 The information provided below is a synopsis of the population and household characteristics.







Source 2011 Census

#### **Age Breakdown of Residents within Sharnbrook Parish**

<b>Age</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
0-4	94	4.1
5-15	399	17.4
16-17	65	2.8
18-29	192	8.4
30-39	203	8.9
40-49	393	17.1
50-64	491	21.4
65-74	239	10.4
75-84	151	6.6
85+	66	2.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,293</b>	<b>100</b>

## Housing and Households within Sharnbrook Parish

Accommodation Type	Parish		Borough	Parish (%)
	No.	%	%	
 Detached	457	48.3	27.4	 48.3
 Semi-Detached	289	30.5	32.2	 30.5
 Terrace	169	17.8	21.9	 17.8
 Flat	30	3.2	17.6	 3.2
 Caravan/Mobile	2	0.2	0.9	 0.2

Household Tenure	Parish		Borough	Parish (%)
	No.	%	%	
 Owned	709	78.8	66.8	 78.8
 Social Rented	82	9.1	16.1	 9.1
 Private Rented	109	12.1	17.2	 12.1

## Economic Activity

Economic Activity (16-74)	Parish		Borough	Economic Activity (16-74)	Parish		Borough
	No.	%	%		No.	%	%
<b>Active</b>	<b>1,129</b>	<b>71.3</b>	<b>71.9</b>	<b>Inactive</b>	<b>454</b>	<b>28.7</b>	<b>28.1</b>
FT Employee	595	37.6	40.4	Retired	284	17.9	12.8
PT Employee	237	15.0	13.9	Student	59	3.7	5.5
Self-Employed	203	12.8	9.5	Looking After Home	55	3.5	4.3
Unemployed	46	2.9	4.4	Sick/Disabled	39	2.5	3.3
Full-Time Student	48	3.0	3.6	Other	17	1.1	2.3

## Village Facilities

- 2.8 On the High Street there are two general convenience stores: the Co-op and Nisa, which includes a Post Office. The village has two public houses (The Fordham Arms and The Swan with Two Nicks) as well as two tea-rooms (Bake 'n' Butty and Ashpoles). There is a medical practice at Sharnbrook Surgery (with dispensary) on Templars Way as well as a pharmacy on the High Street (Wellbeing Pharmacy). In addition, there is a florist, a veterinary clinic, a curtain and blinds shop and a hair salon. Within the Parish there are two farm shops selling locally grown produce (Crossways Farm and Hill Farm).
- 2.9 The Parish has three restaurants: Riverside Restaurant, Vesuvio's and The Spice Tree, as well as two hotels (The Sharnbrook Hotel and Millhouse Hotel). Places of entertainment include a theatre (Sharnbrook Mill Theatre) and a board games centre with café (Ready Steady Roll).
- 2.10 Residential care for the older population is provided at Sharnbrook House located on the High Street. The Leys, Park Lane provides residential care for adults with learning disabilities. There is also a day care centre on the same site.
- 2.11 Within the village there are three places of worship:
- St Peter's Church (Church Lane).
  - Sharnbrook Evangelical Church (meeting in Sharnbrook Academy).
  - Sharnbrook Methodist Church (Park Lane).

2.12 Meeting places located within the Parish include:

- Village Hall (Lodge Road).
- Methodist Church (Park Lane).
- St Peter's Room (Church Lane).
- Scout Hut (Church Lane). Sharnbrook Mill Theatre (Mill Road).
- Sharnbrook Bowls Pavilion (Lodge Road).
- Sharnbrook Playing Field Social Club (Lodge Road).

2.13 School provision within the village:

- Sharnbrook Primary School, providing education for 4 to 11 year olds, from its catchment area of Sharnbrook, Knotting and Souldrop.
- Sharnbrook Academy, providing education for 11 to 19 year olds. It has 1900 students and 300 staff and draws children from Northamptonshire as well as the whole of North Bedfordshire.
- Pre-school education is currently provided at 'Tiny Tots', which is held in the Village Hall, Acorn Early Years Foundation at Colworth Park and also at Sharnbrook Primary for 2.5- to 5-year-olds.

2.14 With regard to sport, leisure and play facilities, the playing field is located off Lodge Road and provides cricket, football and tennis facilities. In addition, there is the Sharnbrook Bowls Club (Lodge Road), and Sharnbrook Golf Club (within Colworth Park). The SAF Sharnbrook Community Sports Centre (School Approach) provides a gym, a sports hall and an all-weather pitch. A large children's play area is located at the playing field and other smaller sites are located within the School Approach and Yelnow Lane developments. Castle Close is a wooded wildlife and heritage site, with public access, off Lodge Road. It is the site of a medieval moated circular earthwork (a Scheduled Ancient Monument).

2.15 Sharnbrook Learning for Pleasure (LfP) is an independent, not-for-profit organisation with the objective of sharing skills and interests in the community and surrounding villages. LfP provides activities covering education and leisure, physical activities, crafts, social pursuits and trips. There are also the WI, Sharnbrook Ladies Group and the Man Cave as well as regular sessions of Pilates, Line Dancing and Zumba. For children there is Dance, Boxing and Karate as well as Army Cadets and Scouts.

2.16 The Allotments and Community Orchard are located off Odell Road. There is an Allotment Association and the Gardening Club, which organises the Annual Show. Other clubs and organisations include two choirs, Lunch Club, Good Companions, Carers Together, Good Neighbours, and the Villager Community Bus.

2.17 There are 52 listed buildings (a full list is provided at Appendix 1). These include St Peter's Church (Grade 1 listed), Sharnbrook House (Grade II listed), Ouse Manor (Grade II listed), Strict Baptist Chapel designed by John Usher (Grade II listed), Colworth House (Grade II\* listed) and Tofte Manor (Grade II listed).

### 3 Vision, Key Themes and Core Objectives 2020-2030

#### ***Vision for Sharnbrook***

- 3.1 It is essential that the special characteristics of the Parish are protected and enhanced. In recognition of this, the following Vision Statement has been adopted for the SNDP:
- 3.2 The SNDP will:

***In 2030, Sharnbrook will be a thriving and sustainable Parish, which has adapted to the changing needs of the community through the provision of new housing and appropriate infrastructure. Development will respect the local historic built form and will ensure that Sharnbrook village retains and enhances key attributes such as open spaces & views, heritage, health & well-being and a sense of community.***

- Facilitate a lively, diverse and distinct village identity and ensure that day to day services are provided so that social and recreational needs of the population are satisfied whilst protecting and enhancing the village's built environment, open spaces, adjacent countryside and green infrastructure.
- Ensure that new development contributes to the provision of the necessary infrastructure improvements, enhances the present built and historic environment, prevents physical coalescence with surrounding settlements and secures open spaces (including Local Green Space), woodlands and the networks of footpaths and cycleways.
- Ensure that any new housing proposals are proportionate in scale and density in keeping with the character of this rural village.
- Encourage measures to reduce traffic congestion within the village.
- Conserve and further promote the heritage assets of the Parish and wildlife of the local area and wider countryside.
- Ensure that Sharnbrook remains an attractive place to live and work.

- 3.3 The Vision will be achieved by focusing on:

- Developing and deploying a strategic level of thinking that enables a coordinated approach to any future development within the Parish.
- Retaining the open countryside, developing footpaths and bridleways, and protecting Local Green Spaces.
- Providing community infrastructure to ensure that residents' needs are met.

#### ***Key Theme Issues***

- 3.4 The responses to the Questionnaire and various consultation events have provided a significant level of data which has been invaluable in establishing priorities, identifying problems and generating ideas. The following issues, by theme, have been highlighted:

#### **Housing**

- Any new housing should help to broaden the range of stock available in the Parish with a priority for provision for older and young people, eco-friendly housing and 2-3 bedroom sized accommodation.

- The type, tenure and cost of new housing should meet the housing needs of the local area.
- The need for some good quality affordable housing provision.
- Growth will impact on infrastructure and, as such, capacity issues must be addressed with careful integrated planning.
- Ensuring that new housing developments provide acceptable provision of off-street parking facilities.
- To ensure new housing development respects the existing character of the village.

### **Transport and Access**

- Parking and congestion issues in the village and the support for more dedicated parking facilities.
- Traffic issues, in particular speeding of vehicles through the village and HGV traffic.
- Some support for traffic calming measures, such as road humps or average speed cameras.
- The impact of new development on traffic movement.
- The issue of traffic movement associated with the schools in the Parish, in particular safer routes to them.
- The issue of parking associated with Sharnbrook Surgery.
- There is some support for better public transport.
- Support for improved provision in the village for cyclists, pedestrians and mobility impaired residents.
- Maintenance and further improvement of the connectivity provided by footpaths.
- Scope to deliver local improvements to access and safety also the need to develop an action plan to respond to local issues raised via the consultation process.
- Previous construction sites have caused community disturbance and disruption.

### **Environment and Heritage**

- The need to protect green space and open spaces in the village.
- Support for creating new open spaces.
- Increase accessible public open space.
- To maintain existing views and vistas.
- To protect the landscape quality of the river valley.
- The need to protect the River Great Ouse and so protect Natura 2000 sites downstream of Sharnbrook.
- To protect the Felmersham Gravel Pits Nature Reserve (Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)).
- Open spaces of amenity, ecological or recreational value within the built-up area should be retained.
- The need to protect trees, hedgerows, and other distinctive features in the village.
- The potential need for a tree planting scheme.
- Maintaining rights of way.
- The need to preserve and enhance the Conservation Area together with the enhancement of the heritage value of the High Street.
- The potential for improvements to the Village Green environment i.e., rationalisation of street furniture and signage.
- The need to protect heritage assets, both statutory listed and locally important.
- Protect the character of the historic village and its street pattern.
- Support for an improved network of footpaths and bridleways.
- Importance of the playing field and the incidental areas of open space.
- A commitment to improve accessibility for all throughout Sharnbrook to support healthy communities.

- The scope to deliver local environmental improvements and the need to develop an action plan to respond to local issues raised via the consultation process.
- The need to ensure quality design and building standards for all new development.
- The need to ensure that the village retains its character, rural atmosphere and, in particular, respect environmental and heritage features.
- Local design, materials and features should be reflected in new development.

### **Technology, Employment and Business**

- Improvement of high-speed broadband.
- Encouraging local enterprise and promoting opportunities for working from home as long as residential amenities are not adversely affected.
- Any new development must be of a scale that will have limited adverse impact on existing services and infrastructure.
- Growth will impact on already constrained infrastructure and, as such, capacity issues must be addressed with careful integrated planning. Concerns about the type of business, noise pollution and adequacy of parking must also be addressed.
- Economic importance of Colworth Science Park.
- Employment activity will continue to focus on the existing Colworth Science Park and at The Stoke Mill Business Centre.

### **Village Facilities**

- There is scope to improve local services for all age groups.
- There is a good level of support for protecting the Post Office, Sharnbrook Surgery, the Village Hall, the Public Houses, existing local shops and other community facilities.
- The need to consider the allocation of land for future cemetery provision.
- The need to support and promote existing clubs in the area.
- The scope to deliver improvements to local facilities and the need to develop an action plan to respond to local issues raised via the consultation process.

### ***The Objectives of the Sharnbrook Neighbourhood Development Plan***

- 3.5 The views expressed by local residents at the various consultation events reflected and reinforced much of the evidence gathered through the Evidence Base. The core objectives are based on the key issues raised by local people and have been summarised to form the basis of the SNDP.

### **Housing**

*1) To provide housing which meets the needs of the diverse and growing community and to influence the location, density, scale, design and type of new housing to ensure that it fits with the distinctive character of Sharnbrook's built heritage and meets identified local housing needs.*

- 3.6 The following sub-objectives have been identified:

- 1a) To deliver a housing growth strategy tailored to the needs and context of Sharnbrook Parish, ensuring that a mix of housing types is delivered across all tenures and seeking to provide existing and future residents with the opportunity to live in a decent home.
- 1b) To meet the objectives of the Borough's housing land supply to the period 2030, the Plan will allocate development for up to 500 dwellings.



- 1c) To ensure that any housing development provides adequate and enhanced physical and communications infrastructure.
- 1d) To provide new housing which is high quality in design, layout and materials, appropriate in size and suitable for the whole life needs of residents.
- 1e) To support sensitive development which is sympathetic to the area, protects and enriched the look and feel of the village and that minimises the impact of such development on the natural, historic and built environment.
- 1f) To encourage energy efficiency in new housing developments.

### **Transport and Access**

*2) To promote the infrastructure and access improvements (such as improve traffic management, car parking, pedestrian and cycle routes) needed to support new development and to encourage safe and accessible movement for pedestrians, cyclists, motorists and public transport.*

3.7 The following sub-objectives have been identified:

- 2a) To ensure that any proposal for development provides adequate and enhanced physical infrastructure.
- 2b) To ensure that Sharnbrook is well connected for walking and cycling in the village and to surrounding destinations and that roads and paths provide safer and more accessible routes, thus better balancing the needs of pedestrians, mobility impaired pedestrians, cyclists and drivers.
- 2c) To seek ways of addressing and reducing the problems of traffic congestion on roads and the lack of parking, and to ensure that new developments contribute to this in every respect, both during the construction phase and after build completion.
- 2d) To promote sustainable transport by encouraging viable alternative methods to move around the village.

### **Environment and Heritage**

*3) To protect the place defining characteristics of Sharnbrook's historic environment and enriched countryside, including the existing Village Open Spaces, and to ensure that new development creates new space and contributes to the open space needs of the local community, including the preservation of the natural features in the distinctive landscape.*

3.8 The following sub-objectives have been identified:

- 3a) To conserve and strengthen Sharnbrook's existing character and heritage, thus seeking to protect and enhance features which contribute to this environment.
- 3b) To protect, enhance and improve access to existing open spaces.
- 3c) To ensure that any new development includes new appropriate and proportionate green spaces for leisure, recreation and enjoyment.
- 3d) To minimise the impact of new development on the local area and, in doing so, to protect the

- distinctive views and visual connectivity with the surrounding countryside, landscape and heritage assets.
- 3e) To protect and enhance the biodiversity of the area, the local wildlife with its habitat and trees, and preserve ecological corridors and sites of special interest, including Felmersham Gravel Pits and other Natura 2000 sites in the wider countryside.
- 3f) To maintain the distinct character of the village by preserving, protecting and enhancing the high quality and distinctive rural landscape for present and future generations.
- 3g) To encourage energy efficiency within new developments.

### **Technology, Employment and Business**

*4) To protect and strengthen the economic benefits of Sharnbrook as a Key Service Centre and to encourage and support local business and local measures to improve employment prospects in the village.*

3.9 The following sub-objectives have been identified:

- 4a) To enhance the prospects for local employment by creating and maintaining an environment that makes it attractive for micro and small businesses to locate and flourish in the area.
- 4b) To continue to support the local economy and sustain existing businesses.

### **Village Facilities**

*5) To maintain and improve local facilities, amenities and services which provide a community focus and help to sustain the vitality, health and quality of life for all residents.*

3.10 The following sub-objectives have been identified:

- 5a) To protect and enhance local amenities which provide a community focus.
- 5b) To encourage opportunities to expand local facilities with a presumption in favour of specifically identified uses e.g., doctors' surgery.
- 5c) To encourage opportunities for all generations to participate in a range of educational, sporting and leisure activities.
- 5d) To sustain the vitality, health and safety of the community by ensuring that all residents have easy access to community facilities and community open spaces for leisure, recreation and enjoyment.
- 5e) To ensure that any new development includes new appropriate and proportionate green spaces for leisure, recreation and enjoyment.

3.11 The delivery of non-land use actions (as listed in Section 5 of the Plan) will be achieved in partnership with public sector bodies, private bodies and stakeholders such as landowners, developers and the community.

3.12 The SNDP fully meets the requirements for public consultation as set out in the Localism Act 2011. Details of the consultation will be recorded in the Consultation Statement which will accompany this document. For a locally distinctive Plan it is right that a range of locally specific objectives should be developed. These will underpin the policies whose use and implementation will support and deliver the objectives and contribute to sustainable development within the Parish. The objectives intend that the Plan should:

- Provide a framework within which decisions on planning applications can be made for the benefit of continuing sustainability across the Parish;
- Encourage provision of housing, including affordable housing and homes for the elderly and young people to meet identified housing needs where doing so would not significantly affect the quality of the local environment;
- Support and encourage the continued provision of social, community, recreational and other leisure infrastructure to meet community needs; and
- Conserve and enhance the landscape, biodiversity, natural habitats and cultural heritage of the Parish.

## 4 The Policies of the Sharnbrook Neighbourhood Development Plan

- 4.1 This section of the Plan sets out the planning policies of the SNDP. The policies have been developed from the evidence, vision and objectives as detailed in this document. These policies will be used to determine planning applications in the Plan area and also to assist in shaping the future of Sharnbrook as a place to live and work in, and to visit.

### General

- 4.2 **Policy S1 – Design Principles (Sub-Objectives 1d, 1e, 2c, 3a, 3d and 3f)**

***New development within Sharnbrook will be supported where it preserves and enhances the local character and appearance of the village. Proposals should:***

- a. Be designed to take account of site characteristics, respecting the locally distinctive built, historic and natural environment.***
- b. Be designed to reflect the prevailing pattern and scale of development in the immediate location.***
- c. Protect residential amenity from direct overlooking, loss of daylight/sunlight, visual bulk and noise pollution.***
- d. Provide adequate off-street car parking to meet the assessed need.***
- e. Be able to be adapted to accommodate changing lifestyles and technologies.***
- f. Seek to incorporate high quality landscaping within and around new developments together with protecting and enhancing wildlife habitats.***

- 4.3 **Local Evidence:** Responses from the public consultation support the need to ensure high quality development, to protect and enhance the characteristics of the local environment and to ensure that new development contributes positively to the area.
- 4.4 **Technical Evidence:** National planning policy acknowledges that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. The National Planning Policy Framework confirms that neighbourhood plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development.
- 4.5 This policy is also supported within the requirements of Policies 28S, 29, 30, 37 and 41S of the Local Plan 2030

#### 4.6 Policy S2 – Construction Activity (Sub-Objective 2c)

*All new development proposals should be designed in a way that minimises their impacts on amenity, public health and the environment through dust and emissions, light pollution, noise and vibration during construction. Appropriate mitigation for such impacts will be sought through the use of planning conditions or use of Construction Management Plans.*

- 4.7 **Local Evidence:** Construction activity has been an issue for the residents of Sharnbrook. The Parish is very sensitive to this activity and this is a matter which has been raised during the preparation of the SNDP.
- 4.8 **Technical Evidence:** This policy is also supported within the requirements of Policies 29, 32 and 47S of the Local Plan 2030.

#### *Housing*

#### 4.9 Policy S3 – Housing Delivery (Sub-Objectives 1a and 1b)

*Provision will be made over the Plan period for a maximum of 500 homes at Hill Farm, Mill Road as proposed within site specific Policy S4.*

*Development in excess of this figure will only be permitted where the proposal relates to a site within the Settlement Policy Area (SPA). Exceptionally, permission will be granted on sites immediately adjacent to the SPA for schemes providing 100% affordable housing to meet identified needs in accordance with Local Plan 2030 Policy 67.*

- 4.10 **Local Evidence:** Sharnbrook provides a good range of services for the local community and the immediate surrounding area. The overriding consideration was the need to ensure that further development should not damage the environmental and heritage features attributed to the Parish.
- 4.11 **Technical Evidence:** Sharnbrook is defined within the Local Plan 2030 as a Key Service Centre. Policy 4S states for Sharnbrook that it will be necessary to identify sites to meet the provision of 500 new homes in the Plan period. In addition, this policy meets the requirements of Policy 67 of the Local Plan 2030 in regard to providing affordable housing to meet local needs in the rural area.
- 4.12 When considering locations for development, an assessment of potential housing sites was undertaken by appointed consultants, AECOM. This site assessment is provided in the Evidence Base. The SNDP makes one site allocation for new housing at Hill Farm, Mill Road.

#### 4.13 Policy S4 – Land at Hill Farm, Mill Road

The SNDP allocates 38.8 ha of land at Hill Farm, Mill Road as identified on the Policies Map for a comprehensive development, subject to the following criteria being met:

- a. A maximum of 500 dwellings with an affordable housing contribution in line with policies within the development plan and a range of house types, in particular 2-3 bedroom properties as identified in the Housing Needs Assessment;
- b. The scale, form, layout and density should be appropriate for this location;
- c. Approximately 13.99 ha of land for sport and leisure facilities including sports pitches, changing facilities and parking provision;
- d. Approximately 2.2 ha will be provided for a community hub to include a potential site for a community building and/or a new doctor's surgery and provision of small scale retail units to address the day to day needs of local residents. Within the community hub 2 ha will be provided as a serviced site for a replacement primary school.
- e. Informal open space, sustainable drainage systems, landscape buffering and sensitive boundary treatment will be incorporated as part of the proposed development;
- f. Pedestrian and cycle access will be provided to the village centre;
- g. Vehicular access will be provided from Mill Road and a new roundabout off the A6 together with a secondary vehicular access off Templars Way; and
- h. A scheme of parking will be provided that will minimise on-street parking and ensure safe and free movement of all vehicles throughout the development; and
- i. In addition, the development shall respect the surrounding natural, built and historic environment. The development shall include the incorporation of at least 3 ha of existing and new woodland and provide for the protection of the setting of the Grade II listed former farmhouse at Hill Farm.

4.14 **Local Evidence:** The Parish Council considers that the allocation at Hill Farm will assist in meeting the broad objectives of the SNDP and will not conflict with the broader strategic objectives of the development plan.

4.15 In determining which land to allocate for residential development, a total of 22 sites were assessed by independent consultants, AECOM, derived from Bedford Borough Council's 'Call for Sites' for the Local Plan 2030. The Site Options and Assessment Report accords with the guidance on assessing sites for allocation, as defined within both the National Planning Policy Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance.

4.16 **Technical Evidence:** Sharnbrook is defined within the Local Plan 2030 as a Key Service Centre. Policy 4S states for Sharnbrook that it will be necessary to identify 500 homes in the Plan period.

4.17 **Policy S5 – Local Housing Needs (Sub-Objective 1a)**

***To meet defined local housing needs, all housing development will provide a mix and range of house types and tenures, ensuring provision of affordable housing and housing designed to meet the needs of the elderly, the disabled and the vulnerable.***

4.18 **Local Evidence:** Consultation carried out during the neighbourhood planning process demonstrates a strong support for homes for young people and the elderly, and new market housing to broaden the range of stock in the Parish, with a particular need for 2-3 bedroom homes. The Housing Needs Assessment carried out by consultants, AECOM, concluded that there is no further requirement during the Plan period for dwellings of 4 bedrooms or more and that on the basis of forward population projections and allowing for existing stock, the following split should apply:

- 24% 1 bedroom homes;
- 30% 2 bedroom homes; and
- 46% 3 bedroom homes.

The Housing Needs Assessment forms part of the Evidence Base to the SNDP.

4.19 Over the Plan period, the housing need for the Parish may change. Therefore, alternative house sizes could be supported where it can be demonstrated that there is an identified need for this.

4.20 **Technical Evidence:** This policy is further supported within the requirements of Policy 59S of the Local Plan 2030.

4.21 **Policy S6 – Housing Density (Sub-Objectives 1d, 3a and 3f)**

***The density of any new development should be in character with the local surrounding area, respect the rural nature of the Parish and be designed to give an impression of spaciousness, with uniform houses and plots being avoided.***

4.22 **Local Evidence:** This policy seeks to ensure that new development addresses density in the design and layout. The maintenance of local character has a higher significance than achieving a minimum housing density figure. The Plan will place emphasis on good design and layout which fits the vernacular of the Parish and the development's setting within the settlement and in relation to adjacent buildings.

4.23 **Technical Evidence:** Paragraph 122 of the National Planning Policy Framework provides a statement relating to housing density, in particular that planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account the following relevant extracts 'a) the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it, and b) the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or promoting regeneration and change.'

4.24 This policy is further supported within the requirements of Policies 29 and 30 of the Local Plan 2030.

## ***Transport and Access***

### **4.25 Policy S7 – Residential Parking in New Developments (Sub-Objectives 2b and 2c)**

**The need for parking provision within new residential developments will be assessed against the Borough Council's Adopted Parking Standards for Sustainable Communities. Proposals should:**

- a. Provide adequate parking to meet the assessed need:**
- b. Ensure that any additional on-street parking does not result in significant congestion for other road users or a serious threat to road safety;**
- c. Avoid the creation of car-dominated environments through the appropriate location, layout and detailed design of the parking spaces; and**
- d. Ensure that run-off from residential parking will be adequately controlled (through sustainable drainage systems (SuDS)) so that pollution to watercourses is prevented.**

**4.26 Local Evidence:** Comments within the Questionnaire and consultation revealed that residents were concerned about parking and the resulting congestion caused by on street parking in Sharnbrook, especially the older part of the village. Whilst on-street parking can bring activity to the street and help to reduce traffic speeds, inadequate off-street parking can result in an environment dominated by cars, restricted traffic movements and unsafe conditions for both pedestrians and cyclists. Providing an appropriate balance between the amount, type and form of car parking is therefore a key factor in designing an acceptable development.

**4.27 Technical Evidence:** Paragraph 105 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that parking standards are influenced by the accessibility of the development, the availability of public transport, the size and type of property and local levels of car ownership. Bedford Borough Council's Parking Standards for Sustainable Communities sets out the overarching vision for parking within the Borough.

**4.28** Policy S7 conforms to the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework and Local Plan 2030 Policies 31 and 88.

### **4.29 Policy S8 – Pedestrian Footpaths and Cycleways (Sub-Objectives 2b)**

***All new housing developments must, when appropriate and practical, provide safe pedestrian access to link up with existing or proposed footpaths and cycleways, ensuring that residents can safely access bus stops, schools and other facilities.***

**4.30 Local Evidence:** Additional residential development within the Parish will be expected to contribute towards a network of footpaths and cycleways in order to encourage more walking and cycling as well as enhance connectivity to local facilities. Within the Questionnaire, 63% of respondents stated that pedestrian safety was a transport issue in the local area.

**4.31 Technical Evidence:** Paragraph 104 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that planning policies should provide for high quality walking and cycling networks. This policy is further supported within the requirements of Policy AD36 of the Allocations and Designations Local Plan and Policy 31 of the Local Plan 2030.



## ***Environment and Heritage***

### **4.32 Policy S9 – Local Green Spaces (Sub-Objective 3b)**

***As shown on the Policies Map and in the more detailed maps at Appendix 2, the following parcels of land are designated as Local Green Spaces:***

- a. Allotment Gardens, Odell Road (LGS 1)***
- b. Land at St Peter's Close (LG2)***
- c. Land at The Swell (LG3)***

***Policies for managing development within Local Green Space should be compatible with their designation, being consistent with those for Green Belt.***

**4.33 Local Evidence:** The results of the Questionnaire demonstrated that open space protection was of great importance and in addition the Playing Field, Felmersham Nature Reserve and Castle Close were considered to be high value green spaces. Many existing open spaces and views within the Parish are designated as Village Open Space and Views (as protected under Policy AD40 of the Allocations and Designations Local Plan) which will remain as part of the development plan.

**4.34 Technical Evidence:** Paragraph 99 of the National Planning Policy Framework advises that 'the designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them'. Designating land as Local Green Space should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services.

**4.35** Paragraph 100 of the NPPF goes on to add that 'the Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:

- in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

**4.36** This policy is further supported within the requirements of Policy 45 of the Local Plan 2030.

### **4.37 Policy S10 - Protection of Views (Sub-Objective 3d)**

***Development on prominent sites on the edge of Sharnbrook should be avoided to protect the profile and skyline of the village and to ensure that key views into and out of the settlement as identified on the Policies Map are not adversely affected.***

**4.38 Local Evidence:** Consultation carried out identified that countryside views and vistas must be maintained to retain the 'village feel' and to avoid coalescence with adjoining settlements. As part of the evidence base to the SNDP, a Landscape Character and Built Environment Assessment was undertaken by the SNPSG with support from consultant, Clive Keeble Consulting Ltd. The existing

designated Village Open Spaces and higher ground in the surrounding countryside sustain key views within, from and into the village across the surrounding countryside, including the Great Ouse Valley. As part of the assessment work carried out, a total of nine key views were identified and are listed below:

**Key View 1** – View North West of Sharn Brook stream valley from the bridge on Park Lane.

**Key View 2** – View South West across the village (from footpath south of Cock and Pullet).

**Key View 3** – View South from Kennel Hill/Mill Road across parkland to Great Ouse Valley and ridge beyond.

**Key View 4** – View South East towards Ouse Manor from junction of Kennel Hill and High Street.

**Key View 5** – View West/North West from the Great Ouse Valley (Pinchmill Island footpath) upslope towards Odell Road.

**Key View 6** – View East across Great Ouse Valley (including Sharnbrook Church) from Odell Road.

**Key View 7** – View South/South West of 4 Great Ouse Valley Churches (Felmersham, Chellington, Harrold and Odell) from the public footpath along the concrete track off Odell Road roundabout.

**Key View 8** – View North/North East across part of the Colworth Estate from footpath to Souldrop.

**Key View 9** – View South West across the village and Great Ouse Valley from footpath by Winsey Farm.

- 4.39 **Technical Evidence:** The National Planning Policy Framework confirms that neighbourhood plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development. This policy is supported within the requirements of Policy AD40 of the Allocations and Designations Local Plan and Policies 28S, 29S and 41S (part v. e) of the Local Plan 2030.

- 4.40 **Policy S11 – Protection of Heritage Assets (Sub-Objectives 3a and 3f)**

***Planning permission will normally be granted for developments within the Sharnbrook Conservation Area that lies within the SPA, provided that proposals preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.***

- 4.41 **Local Evidence:** Local residents agreed that the Parish should retain its existing environmental and heritage features that give the Parish its special character. The continued protection of important built heritage assets was supported because of their contribution to the historic and natural environment. In addition, 57% of respondents to the Questionnaire confirmed that non-statutory but locally important heritage assets should be identified as being protected. A detailed list of the Parish's Heritage Assets is provided in Appendix 1.
- 4.42 **Technical Evidence:** Paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). Paragraph 197 of the National Planning Policy Framework also advises that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application.

- 4.43 Both designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings contribute much towards the character of the village and will be conserved and enhanced in recognition of their individual and cumulative significance. This is further supported within the requirements of Policy 41S of the Local Plan 2030.

***Technology, Employment and Business***

- 4.44 **Policy S12 – Supporting the Development of Small Businesses (Sub-Objectives 4a and 4b)**

***Proposals for the development of small businesses within and beyond the Settlement Policy Area will be supported where they involve:***

***a. New builds or the conversion of existing buildings; and***

***b. The diversification of existing rural enterprises.***

***All such proposals will be assessed against the following:***

***i. Impact on residential amenity.***

***ii. Access, traffic and car parking arrangements.***

***iii. Impact on the landscape and character of the area.***

***iv. Impact on the heritage interest of an existing building where proposed for conversion.***

***v. Design.***

- 4.45 **Local Evidence:** Most residents who are in employment work outside the village. However, residents support the development of small businesses in the village and many already operate from home. It is important to support the opportunities that exist e.g., rural diversification and small-scale businesses, in order to ensure that the village does not become a purely residential community.

- 4.46 **Technical Evidence:** The National Planning Policy Framework seeks to encourage economic growth and identifies how planning policy can support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development (paragraphs 83 & 84). It is also compatible with the National Planning Policy Framework objective of promoting a strong rural economy through neighbourhood planning. Policy S12 conforms to the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework and Local Plan 2030 Policy 65.

- 4.47 **Policy S13 – Working from Home (Sub-Objectives 4a and 4b)**

***Small-scale, home based businesses will be supported provided it can be demonstrated that:***

***a. Residential amenity and the character of the surrounding area will not be unacceptably harmed by virtue of noise and disturbance, nuisance and pollution, traffic generation, scale, design or appearance; and***

***b. The operation of the business activity can be confined within the existing curtilage of the premises.***

- 4.48 **Local Evidence:** A majority of the respondents (72%) to the Questionnaire confirmed that the SNDP should include policies that promote working from home. Small businesses can find it difficult to start up or continue trading because of a lack of flexible premises within their means and Policy S13 seeks to address this within the Parish.
- 4.49 **Technical Evidence:** As outlined within the evidence to Policy S12, the National Planning Policy Framework seeks to encourage economic growth and identifies how planning policy can support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development.

### ***Village Facilities***

#### 4.50 **Policy S14 – Village Facilities (Sub-Objective 5a)**

***1. The identified community facilities are:***

- a. Sharnbrook Surgery and Dispensary***
- b. Sharnbrook Primary School***
- c. Sharnbrook Academy***
- d. SAF Sharnbrook Community Sports Centre***
- e. St Peter's Church and Room***
- f. Methodist Church***
- g. Sharnbrook Sports and Social Club***
- h. Sharnbrook Mill Theatre***
- i. The Village Hall***
- j. Sharnbrook Scout Hut***
- k. Sharnbrook Bowls Club Pavilion***
- l. Sharnbrook Lawn Tennis Club***
- m. Sharnbrook Golf Club***

***2. Development that would result in the loss of these community facilities will not be supported unless the following can be demonstrated:***

- a. The proposals include alternative provision, where possible on a site within the SPA, of equivalent or enhanced facilities. Such sites should be accessible by public transport, walking and cycling and have adequate car parking; or***
- b. Satisfactory evidence (including independently marketed for at least 18 months) to demonstrate that there is no longer an economic justification to protect the asset; or***
- c. It can be demonstrated that the proposal would be of benefit to the local community and would outweigh the loss of the existing facility.***

- 4.51 **Local Evidence:** Local residents value the community assets and facilities that the Parish offers and confirmed the need to protect community facilities. A majority of the respondents to the Questionnaire regard the village shops, schools, surgery, Village Hall and village pubs as important or very important. This policy seeks to protect community assets within the village and reflects the views expressed in the Questionnaire.
- 4.52 **Technical Evidence:** The ‘golden thread’ running through national planning policy is the promotion of sustainable development. This has economic, environmental and social dimensions. The maintenance and enhancement of the village’s range of social and community assets will allow the village to function and allow for some growth provided it is modest in scale and proportionate to the whole village. Specifically, in rural areas, national planning policy promotes the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship. Paragraphs 28, 83 and 92 of the National Planning Policy Framework are of particular relevance to the protection of local services. This policy seeks to protect community assets within the village and reflects the views expressed by residents during the public consultation events carried out as part of the neighbourhood planning process.
- 4.53 Policy S14 is therefore consistent with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework and Policies 82 and 99 of the Local Plan 2030.
- 4.54 **Policy S15 – Provision of New Community Facilities (Sub-Objectives 5a and 5d)**

***Proposals that diversify or enhance the range of community facilities will be supported provided that the development:***

- a. Will not result in unacceptable traffic movements, noise, fumes, smell or other disturbance to residential properties; and***
- b. Will not cause harm to the significance of Sharnbrook’s heritage assets unless in the case of designated heritage assets, the public benefits of the development can be demonstrated to outweigh the harm and in the case of non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset; and***
- c. Will not generate a need for parking that cannot be adequately catered for; and***
- d. Is of a scale appropriate to the needs, of the locality and conveniently accessible for residents of the village wishing to walk or cycle.***

- 4.55 **Local Evidence:** Public consultation carried out to date supports the need for improved medical facilities, recreational and sporting facilities and Village Hall facilities as well as improvements to children’s play areas, which were afforded the highest priority from respondents.
- 4.56 **Technical Evidence:** National planning policy promotes the provision of the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services that the community needs and identifies the need for planning policies and decisions to plan positively for the provision and use of community facilities; such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship and other local services, to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments. This is

of particular importance to the commitment to support a prosperous rural economy. Paragraphs 83 and 92 of the National Planning Policy Framework are of particular relevance. Policy S15 seeks to address the potential for new community facilities within the village and reflects the views expressed by residents during the consultation processes. In addition, Policy 86S (and 98) of the Local Plan 2030 states that development proposals should ensure that they do not have a harmful impact (including cumulative impact with other development) on the adequacy of existing infrastructure, including community facilities.

4.57 **Policy S16 – Developer Contributions and Community Infrastructure (Sub-Objective 5e)**

*The following projects are identified as priorities for investment in local community infrastructure:*

- a. Improvements to cycleways, footpaths and bridleways within the Parish with improved surfaces and lighting.*
- b. Supporting the promotion and improvement of Parish Walks.*
- c. Contribution to traffic surveys and implementation of improved traffic management in the village centre.*
- d. Enhancement to community facilities.*
- e. Supporting future cemetery provision within the Parish, including possibility of a green burial ground.*
- f. Improvements to communications infrastructure.*
- g. Upgrading medical facilities.*
- h. Upgrading of A6 road network within the Parish to enable improved access to the village, including improved junctions.*

*Monies from the local element of the Community Infrastructure Levy will be applied to these various priority projects.*

4.58 **Local Evidence:** The listed projects have been derived from the outcome of the consultation carried out to date. In addition, concerns and matters raised included improvement of footpaths, cycle routes and improvement of traffic management within the village. Also, the need to support future cemetery provision within the Parish arose from discussions during the neighbourhood plan process.

4.59 **Technical Evidence:** Policy 86S of the Local Plan 2030 states that new development will be required to provide, or contribute towards the provision of, measures to directly mitigate its impact on existing infrastructure which will be normally secured through the use of site specific planning obligations and/or Community Infrastructure Levy payments as permitted by the regulations. In addition, s106 agreements may also be required if infrastructure is required to make a proposed development acceptable in the first instance.

## 5 Non-Land Use Actions

- 5.1 A few issues have been raised whilst preparing the SNDP that are not directly related to land-use (although they might indirectly relate to the use of land in some form). As such, these issues cannot be addressed directly by the provision of planning policy in the SNDP. However, they are important to the residents of the Parish. Together with actions for dealing with them, these issues are detailed below, which if implemented will help to achieve the vision and objectives of the SNDP.

### **Transport and Access**

*To seek ways of addressing and reducing the problems of traffic congestion and inappropriate parking and to ensure that new developments contribute to this in every respect.*

- The Questionnaire highlighted that residents regarded local congestion, HGV traffic and parking on verges within the village as important issues which need to be addressed. The Parish Council will work together with the Highway Authority and residents to implement measures that will manage traffic in and around the village e.g., average speed cameras, reduced speed limits and on-street parking.

*To promote sustainable transport by encouraging viable alternative methods to move around the village.*

- The Parish Council will work with local schools to create and enhance 'Safer Routes to Schools' schemes.
- The Parish Council will work with relevant stakeholders to assist in alleviating school traffic congestion.
- The Parish Council will ensure that development proposals seek to make a contribution towards improvements to existing and/or new public and community transport services in the SNDP area and will be supported subject to there being no conflict with any other policies within the SNDP.

*To ensure that Sharnbrook has well connected routes for pedestrians and cyclists, both within the village and into the surrounding area, and that roads and paths are safe and accessible for everyone, thus enhancing the experience of pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.*

- The Parish Council will work together with the Highway Authority and other relevant agencies to develop a long-term sustainable strategy for improvements to the existing highway network in the Parish in order to alleviate local traffic congestion, provide safer routes and create a safer environment for all, in particular mobility impaired people, pedestrians, cyclists and those who use electric bikes, scooters and mobility chairs.

### **Environment and Heritage**

*To protect, improve and enhance community open spaces.*

- The Parish Council will work to create more formal and informal green spaces in the village and to ensure the better landscaping of public areas.

*To protect and enhance the biodiversity of local wildlife and its habitat, and preserve ecological corridors and sites of special interest.*

- The Parish Council will work with landowners to identify areas of land for tree planting in the Parish.
- The Parish Council will seek to encourage the protection of locally designated and non-

designated wildlife sites/areas and habitats and will support the development of wildlife corridors and also, the extension of green space and new nature conservation sites; planting native species wherever possible.

*To maintain the unique character of the village by preserving, protecting and enhancing the high quality and distinctive rural landscape for present and future generations.*

- The Parish Council will expect new developments to demonstrate connectivity to the existing Public Rights of Way network and to provide new footpaths and cycleways (where appropriate), allowing improved access to the local amenities and services, to green spaces and to the open countryside.
- The Parish Council will work with Bedford Borough Council to improve Public Rights of Way links to neighbouring parishes in order to support and enhance health and well-being within the Parish.
- The Parish Council will work with Bedford Borough Council to promote and enhance the existing network of Parish Walks through new signage and environmental improvements that will increase accessibility.

### **Village Facilities**

*To protect and enhance local amenities which provide a community focus.*

- Local facilities and services will be protected and supported by the Parish Council in accordance with other policies in the Plan.
- The Parish Council will work with the Church Authorities and local landowners to identify suitable land for additional cemetery provision to meet the future needs of the community.

*To ensure that any development includes new appropriate and proportionate green spaces for leisure, recreation and enjoyment.*

- The provision of new or enhanced recreational facilities will be supported, provided that the design and scale are in keeping with the local character and there is no adverse impact on surrounding residential properties.
- The Parish Council will work with the Sharnbrook Playing Field Association to ensure that the future development of the village fully encompasses the sporting and social requirements of the community.

*To encourage opportunities for all generations to participate in a range of educational, sporting and leisure activities.*

- The Parish Council will continue to promote the use of the Village Hall and will support appropriate plans to improve community provision. The Parish Council will also support and promote other existing clubs and facilities in the area and will assist to identify sources of funding available.
- The Parish Council will appraise options to enable the provision of a new medical facility, a viable new Village Hall together with children's play area, including feasibility and identification of potential sources of funding.



## **6 Monitoring and Review of the Plan**

- 6.1 The SNPSG will ensure that the Plan is actively managed over the Plan period. The Plan will be reviewed periodically to ensure that it addresses and takes into account any changes in both national and local planning policies.
- 6.2 Responsibility for providing the leadership for the SNDP will rest with Sharnbrook Parish Council. Each Annual Parish Council meeting, after the Plan implementation, will include an agenda item and a detailed report in order to provide an update on the SNDP. This will monitor the progress of the Plan in the previous year and the likely implications and impact of the Plan for the forthcoming year.
- 6.3 The Parish Council website [www.sharnbrook-pc.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plan/](http://www.sharnbrook-pc.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plan/) will carry an up to date report on progress with the Plan during its lifetime.
- 6.4 There will be a mid-period review of the progress of the SNDP in 2024/2025 by a Steering Group which has a wider community base. The purpose of the review will be to guide the Parish Council in its stewardship of the Plan and to consider whether a review of or amendment to the Plan needs to be proposed to Bedford Borough Council.
- 6.5 In 2028, or a date consistent with the timetable set out in the Local Development Scheme for the production of local development documents by Bedford Borough Council, the Parish Council will recruit a new Steering Group to undertake a review and decide on the need for a subsequent SNDP. If it is decided that a new Plan is required the Steering Group will develop it so that it is effective from 2031, or a date consistent with new local development plan documents produced by Bedford Borough Council.

## APPENDIX 1 – STATUTORY LISTED BUILDINGS AND MONUMENTS

Grade	Location
II	SHARNBROOK HOUSE HIGH STREET Sharnbrook Bedford
II	STABLES NORTH WEST OF SHARNBROOK HOUSE HIGH STREET Sharnbrook Bedford
II	GATE PIERS TO OUSE MANOR HIGH STREET Sharnbrook Bedford
II	GRANARY AT MANOR FARM PARK LANE Sharnbrook Bedford
II	RIVERSIDE LODGE 33 MILL ROAD Sharnbrook Bedford
II	GATES GATE PIERS AND WALL TO TOFTE MANOR SOULDROP ROAD Sharnbrook Bedford
II	1 AND 2 SHARNSIDE Sharnbrook Bedford
II	61 HIGH STREET Sharnbrook Bedford
II	91 HIGH STREET Sharnbrook Bedford
II	FORMER FARMHOUSE AT HILL FARM MILL ROAD Sharnbrook Bedford
II	107 HIGH STREET Sharnbrook Bedford
II	WRYDE HOUSE 25 HIGH STREET Sharnbrook Bedford
II	51-55 HIGH STREET Sharnbrook Bedford
II	95 HIGH STREET Sharnbrook Bedford
II	43-47 HIGH STREET Sharnbrook Bedford
II	49 HIGH STREET Sharnbrook Bedford
II	105 HIGH STREET Sharnbrook Bedford
II	STABLES TO NORTH OF BARN AT OUSE MANOR HIGH STREET Sharnbrook Bedford
II	LITTLE THATCH PARK LANE Sharnbrook Bedford
II	BARN NEAREST HOUSE AT OUSE MANOR HIGH STREET Sharnbrook Bedford
II	WALL PIERS RAILINGS AND GATES OF STRICT BAPTIST CHAPEL HIGH STREET Sharnbrook Bedford
II	NORTH LODGE Sharnbrook COLWORTH ESTATE  Bedford
II	115 AND 117 HIGH STREET Sharnbrook Bedford
II	STONEY COTTAGE PARK LANE Sharnbrook Bedford
II	JAY'S COURT 12-14 CHURCH LANE Sharnbrook Bedford
II	KISSING GATE ON EAST SIDE OF CHURCHYARD CHURCH LANE Sharnbrook Bedford
II	GOBLON HOUSE GODFREY LANE Sharnbrook Bedford
II	37 HIGH STREET Sharnbrook Bedford
II	26 HIGH STREET Sharnbrook Bedford
II	WROUGHT IRON GATES TO ST PETER'S CLOSE FROM CHURCHYARD CHURCH LANE Sharnbrook Bedford
II	MANOR FARMHOUSE PARK LANE Sharnbrook Bedford
II	ROSE COTTAGE GODFREY LANE Sharnbrook Bedford
II	28-32 HIGH STREET Sharnbrook Bedford
II	97 HIGH STREET Sharnbrook Bedford
II	2 HIGH STREET Sharnbrook Bedford
II	48 HIGH STREET Sharnbrook Bedford
II	TWIN LODGES AND CONNECTING ARCHWAY Sharnbrook COLWORTH ESTATE Bedford
II	NEW FARMHOUSE Sharnbrook COLWORTH ESTATE  Bedford
II	ANTONIE FARMHOUSE Sharnbrook COLWORTH ESTATE  Bedford
II	OUSE MANOR HIGH STREET Sharnbrook Bedford
II	21 HIGH STREET Sharnbrook Bedford
II	71-75 HIGH STREET Sharnbrook Bedford
II	42 HIGH STREET Sharnbrook Bedford
II	STONE COTTAGE 22 HIGH STREET Sharnbrook Bedford
II	MOAT HOUSE KENNEL HILL Sharnbrook Bedford

- I PARISH CHURCH OF ST PETER CHURCH LANE Sharnbrook Bedford
- MAGNIAC MAUSOLEUM ST PETER'S CHURCHYARD CHURCH LANE Sharnbrook
- II Bedford
- II STRICT BAPTIST CHAPEL HIGH STREET Sharnbrook Bedford
- II\* COLWORTH HOUSE Sharnbrook COLWORTH ESTATE Bedford
- II TOFTE MANOR SOULDROP ROAD Sharnbrook Bedford

Scheduled  
Monument

MOATED SITE CASTLE CLOSE, Sharnbrook,Bedford

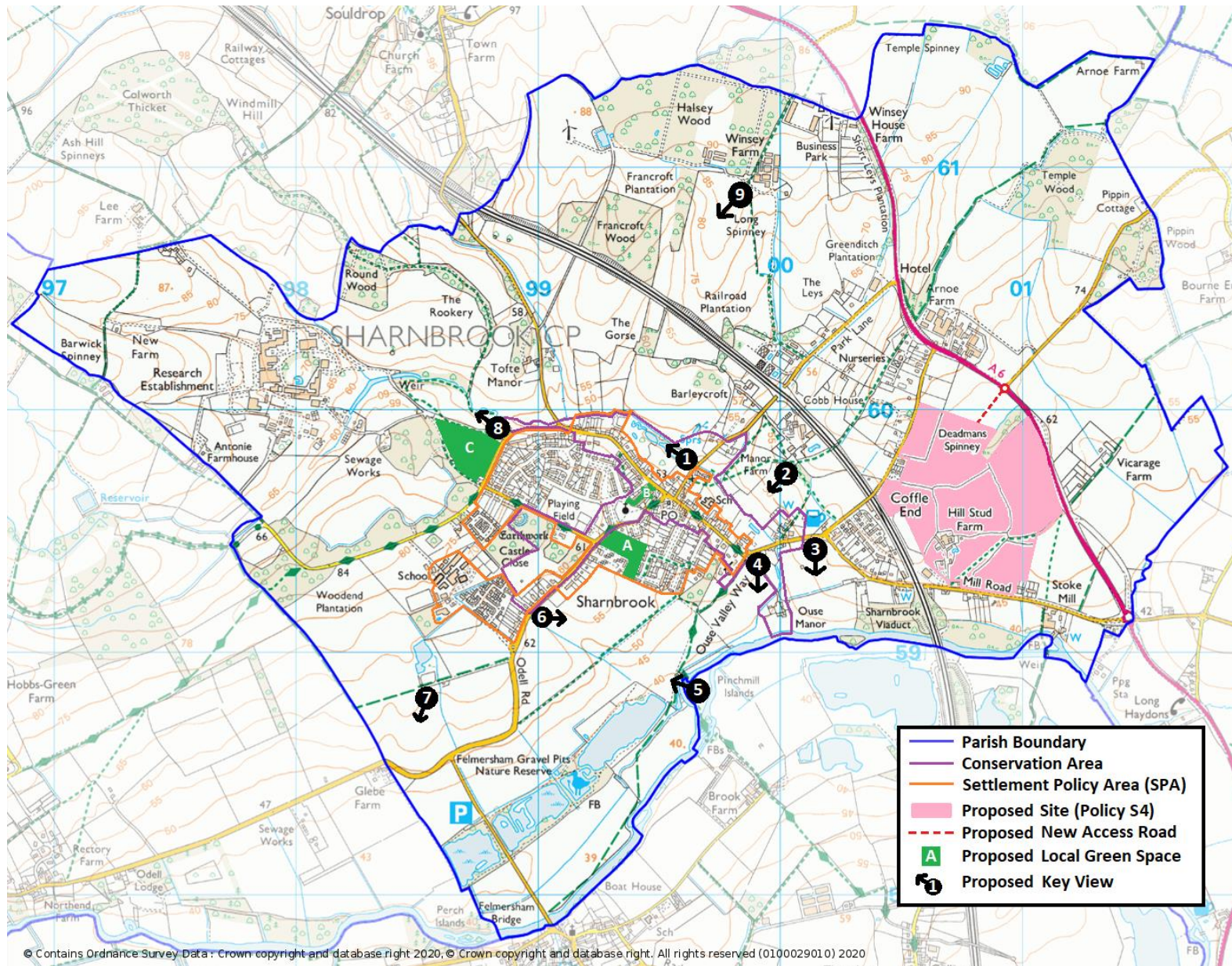
## APPENDIX 2 - LOCAL GREEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

<b>Local Green Space</b>	<b>Reasonably close proximity to the community it serves</b>	<b>Demonstrably special to the local community</b>	<b>Local in character and not an extensive tract of land</b>
Allotment Gardens, Odell Road (LGS1)	Located off Odell Road and is easily accessible by residents of the village.	The allotments are in active community use and well used by residents. A valuable community facility run by the Parish Council in conjunction with Sharnbrook Allotment Association.	It is an integral part of the village and measures 1.9 ha.
Land at St Peter's Close (LGS2)	Located off the High Street and is easily accessible by residents of the village.	A grassed area which provides an important amenity area for residents of St Peter's Close and the village as a whole. Provides an important view towards the church.	It is an integral part of the village and measures 0.8 ha.
Land at The Swell (LGS3)	Located off Colworth Road and is easily accessible by residents of the village.	Used by residents for walking and cycling and provides a valuable recreational space.	Located on the edge (north-west) edge of the village and measures 3.8 ha. Attractive woodland area.

## LOCAL GREEN SPACES







## APPENDIX 4 - GLOSSARY OF TERMS

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

**Archaeological interest** There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them.

**Biodiversity** The whole variety of life encompassing all genetics, species and ecosystem variations, including plants and animals.

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

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

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

**Development Plan** A document setting out the local planning authority's policies and proposals for the development and use of land and buildings in the authority's area. This includes adopted Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans and is defined in Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

**Flood Risk Assessment** An assessment of the likelihood of flooding in a particular area so that development needs and mitigation measures can be carefully considered.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Localism Act 2011** The Localism Act 2011 has devolved greater powers to councils and neighbourhoods and given local communities more control over housing and planning decisions.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Public Open Space** Urban space, designated by a council, where public access may or may not be formally established, but which fulfils or can fulfil a recreational or non-recreational role (for example amenity, ecological, educational, social or cultural images).

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

**Windfall Site** Sites which have not been specifically identified as available in the Local Plan process. They normally comprise previously developed sites that have unexpectedly become available