



BEDFORD  
BOROUGH COUNCIL



# Local Plan 2040

Have Your Say on the Future of Your Borough

## LOCAL PLAN 2040 PLAN FOR SUBMISSION April 2022





## **Contents**

1.0	Introduction	2
2.0	Vision and objectives	11
3.0	Climate Change	17
4.0	Spatial strategy and Site allocations	22
5.0	Town centre and retail policies	84
6.0	Development management policies	95

## **Appendices**

APPENDIX 1	Status of Development Plan policies	116
APPENDIX 2	Monitoring and review	128
APPENDIX 3	Opportunity sites	129
APPENDIX 4	Affordable housing commuted sum	131
APPENDIX 5	Non-designated heritage assets	133
APPENDIX 6	Glossary	137

# 1.0 Introduction

## Background

- 1.1 Bedford Borough Council (the Council) has an up to date local plan that makes provision for growth to 2030. Normally local plans are reviewed every five years but this update was required sooner with the intention that it would reflect emerging national policies for the Oxford to Cambridge Arc (the Arc).
- 1.2 Policy 1 of the Local Plan 2030 required that the review was progressed swiftly, with the submission of the plan to government for examination by January 2023 to avoid local plan policies being deemed to be ‘out of date’ in the same way as they would be if the Council was unable to show a five year supply of housing land. In those circumstances local control over where development happens would be much reduced.
- 1.3 The timetable set for the Council’s plan review was challenging before the Covid-19 pandemic began, but the change in working practices and limitations placed on the Council’s staff, partner organisations and the Council’s consultants over the past two years has meant that keeping on-track has been extremely difficult. Progress has been slowed as a result of the switch to remote working, restrictions on site visits (especially during the first half of 2020) and depleted staff resources across the Council and within other agencies.
- 1.4 Nevertheless, two consultations have taken place as scheduled; a first ‘Issues and Options’ consultation during summer 2020 and a ‘Draft Plan: Strategy options and draft policies’ consultation during summer 2021. The responses to those consultations have informed the policies in this plan.

## National context and plan period

- 1.5 National Policy requires that strategic policies in local plans should look ahead over a minimum of 15 years from adoption<sup>1</sup>. With adoption planned for late 2023, the shortest end-date for this plan would be 2038. A longer timescale would have the advantage of giving certainty for a longer period but as is explained in the paragraphs below, many important strategic decisions that will affect the scale and form of growth in and close to Bedford Borough in the medium and longer term are

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<sup>1</sup> NPPF 2021 Para 22. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1005759/NPPF\\_July\\_2021.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1005759/NPPF_July_2021.pdf)

likely to be made in the next few years. As a result, and having considered the Issues and Options consultation responses, the Council's view is that 2020 – 2040 is an appropriate time period for this plan. With a requirement now for five-yearly local plan reviews there will be sufficient opportunity to plan beyond 2040 once the regional planning context is clearer.

- 1.6 The government's ambition for the Arc is well-reported. In the document 'The Oxford-Cambridge Arc Government ambition and joint declaration between Government and local partners' (2019)<sup>2</sup> lead Ministers recognised the existing qualities of the location and its potential to attract additional higher quality jobs for existing and new communities. They promoted a long term view to 2050 and beyond, and committed to embedding 'natural capital' thinking throughout the government's approach to growth across the Arc.
- 1.7 The declaration itself is silent on housing numbers. It recognises that the Arc is first and foremost an area of significant economic strength and opportunity, and through the joint declaration the partners (including the then 43 local authorities across the Arc) set out to meet the Arc's full economic potential for the benefit of existing and future local communities and businesses, and in the national interest. There was acknowledgement that to achieve this would demand collective determination over the long-term to deliver homes across the Arc of the right quality and in the right places to meet its needs; also, that this might include the expansion of existing as well as the development of new settlements.
- 1.8 It will require long-term commitments to provide the necessary enabling infrastructure ahead of the arrival of new communities, and to meet economic and housing ambitions whilst overall improving rather than degrading the environment in the Arc, in line with commitments in the government's 25 Year Environment Plan<sup>3</sup>.
- 1.9 In February 2021 the government published a policy paper entitled 'Planning for sustainable growth in the Oxford – Cambridge Arc: an introduction to the spatial framework'<sup>4</sup>. It explains why the government is committed to developing a spatial framework for the Arc; what it will mean for growth, spatial planning and infrastructure provision in the area, and how government will work with communities and local partners to develop it. The intention is to '...develop a long-term Spatial Framework for the Arc that will support better spatial planning, provide a blueprint for better-targeted public investment, give investors and businesses greater long-term certainty over growth plans, and allow communities to shape the long-term

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<sup>2</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/799993/OxCam\\_Arc\\_Ambition.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/799993/OxCam_Arc_Ambition.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-for-sustainable-growth-in-the-oxford-cambridge-arc-spatial-framework>

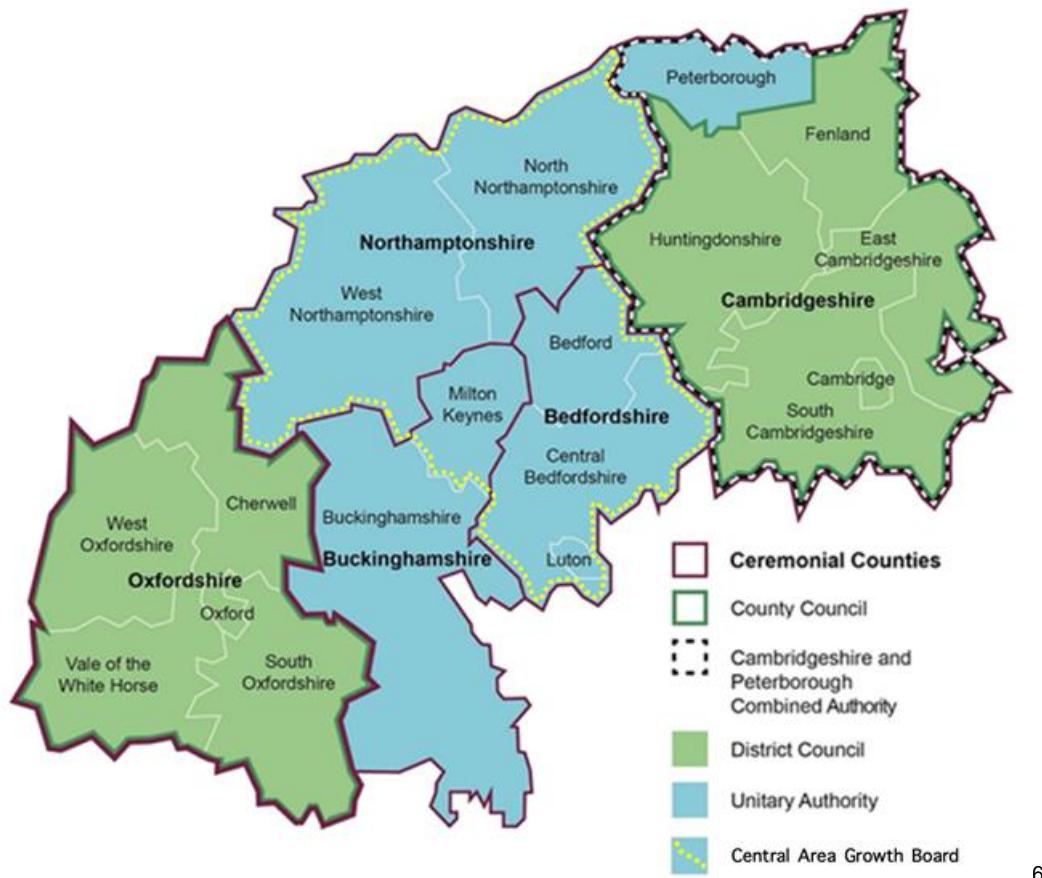
future of places across the region. The nature and content of the Spatial Framework will be subject to the outcome of both detailed consultation and sustainability appraisal' (para 2.1).

- 1.10 A first consultation paper 'Creating a vision for the Oxford – Cambridge Arc' was published in July 2021<sup>5</sup>. Government invited views to help create a vision for the spatial framework, and in doing so guide the future growth of the area to 2050. Views were also sought on the initial work done to scope the sustainability appraisal. Confirmation is given in the consultation paper that the spatial framework will form national planning and transport policy for the Arc area and local planning and transport authorities will need to have regard to it when preparing local development plans and local transport plans. In addition, the spatial framework will be capable of being a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
- 1.11 Along with the Central Bedfordshire, Luton Borough, Milton Keynes, West Northamptonshire and North Northamptonshire councils, Bedford Borough Council is a member of the Arc's Central Area Growth Board. The Board was set up to demonstrate to government that together the authorities are committed to working more closely to deliver a step change in sub-regional collaboration. The Growth Board allows the area to speak with one voice to government on cross-boundary issues and matters of sub-regional importance in order to achieve the best outcomes for the people served by those councils.
- 1.12 Figure 1 below shows the geography of the Arc.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/creating-a-vision-for-the-oxford-cambridge-arc>

Figure 1: The Oxford – Cambridge Arc



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- 1.13 The timetable for the production of the Arc Spatial Framework has changed over recent years. In 2019 when the examination of the Local Plan 2030 was taking place, the government's intention was to progress an engagement exercise in Summer 2019 to kick start the process. It was on the understanding that swift progress would be made with this

<sup>6</sup> Diagram taken from the document Planning for sustainable growth in the Oxford Cambridge Arc -an introduction to the spatial framework, and CAGB added.

framework that the Inspectors recommended, and the Council agreed to, the new Policy 1 and the timetable for the local plan review. A quickly updated local plan would provide detailed policies to deliver the principles set out in the overarching strategy.

- 1.14 No engagement took place in 2019 and inevitably the onset of the Covid 19 pandemic led to further timetable delays.
- 1.15 In response to this, and in order to create a more joined up and legible process, some local authorities in the Arc have adjusted their local plan review timetables so that local plan activity follows the completion of the spatial framework. Government, however, has urged Councils in the Arc to carry on with plan-making and, in Bedford Borough's case, the consequences of not doing so could be significant for the reasons relating to policies becoming "out of date" described above; so local plan work in Bedford Borough continued.
- 1.16 Whilst this local plan has emerged alongside rather than after the development of the Arc Spatial Framework, it shares many of the overarching principles relating to a focus on climate change, economic growth and the natural environment.
- 1.17 A review of business space has informed the allocation of new employment land in order to support the expansion of existing businesses and to attract inward investment. Where housing growth is concerned, as a result of existing commitments (including those made and to be made in neighbourhood plans) and new allocations made in this plan, the Council will make provision for significantly more homes as described in the Arc joint declaration. It will do this as a result of government's new standard method for calculating housing need, which it will deliver in full, and which results in an uplift of 40% when compared to the locally-calculated housing growth planned for in the Local Plan 2030, and by allocating sites that will continue to build out beyond the 2040 plan end date.
- 1.18 The natural environment and the need to deliver on climate change are high on the agenda when it comes to ambitions for the Arc. The Arc Environment Working Group was set up to take forward the environmental pillar outlined in the joint declaration.
- 1.19 To do this, the Arc authorities have developed a set of environmental principles which each authority has endorsed<sup>7</sup>. The Council considered and endorsed the principles in June 2021, alongside a report on the draft Local Plan 2040. The five overarching principles are:

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<sup>7</sup> [Shared regional principles for protecting, restoring and enhancing the environment in the Oxford-Cambridge Arc](#)

- to target net zero carbon at a pan-Arc level by 2040;
  - to protect, restore, enhance and create new nature areas and natural capital assets, including nationally and locally designated wildlife sites and priority habitats through the implementation of the spatial planning mitigation hierarchy of “avoid, mitigate, compensate and gain”;
  - to be an exemplar for environmentally sustainable development, in line with the ambitions set out in the government’s 25 Year Plan. This will incorporate a systems-based and integrated assessment and implementation approach. We will aim to go beyond the minimum legislated requirements for development;
  - to ensure that existing and new communities see real benefits from living in the Arc;
  - to use natural resources wisely.
- 1.20 The next step for the group is to put in place an Arc Environment Strategy, and both the principles and the strategy when it is in place will help to support the strengthening of policies in local plans.
- 1.21 For the Local Plan 2040 this work has underpinned a new policy seeking to achieve environmental net gain as well as biodiversity net gain, in order to help deliver the ambitions in the government’s 25 Year Environment Plan<sup>8</sup>.
- 1.22 Similarly, important is the need to tie this agenda to the economic vision for the Arc. This linkage is set out within the Oxford – Cambridge Arc Economic Prospectus 2020<sup>9</sup>:
- “By 2050, the Arc will be a world leading place for high-value growth, innovation and productivity. A global hub where ideas and companies are generated and thrive, home to exemplary models of 21<sup>st</sup> Century development, with a high-quality environment and outstanding quality of life, and with a strong economic focus that drives inclusive clean growth.”*
- 1.23 Delivery of other national projects also has a bearing on this plan and its success. Foremost amongst these is East West Rail (EWR), a new railway connection between Oxford, Bedford and Cambridge. This is a major infrastructure project to deliver much needed connections between these communities and places further afield, linking people with job opportunities, new homes and economic hubs both locally and across the UK.
- 1.24 It is being introduced in three stages.
- Stage One is from Oxford to Bletchley / Milton Keynes.

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.semlep.com/oxford-cambridge-arc/>

- Stage Two will extend that service to Bedford
  - Stage Three will connect Oxford all the way to Cambridge.
- 1.25 The track between Oxford and Bicester is already complete and the next part from Bicester to Bletchley is underway. The section to Bedford involves refurbishing existing lines and is expected to follow on from Stage One.
- 1.26 The last stage from Bedford to Cambridge is more challenging because it will involve the construction of a completely new stretch of track from Bedford north towards Sandy / St Neots and Cambourne, then on to Cambridge. As this local plan is being prepared, no detailed route alignment between Bedford and St Neots has been chosen, though consultation has taken place and the feedback is being reviewed by the East West Rail Company before a decision is made by central government.
- 1.27 A brand new rail station will be provided in the area between Sandy and St Neots where the EWR route crosses the East Coast Main Line, and a new station will be provided on the Marston Vale Line between Stewartby and Kempston Hardwick. Bedford Midland Station will also be refurbished, supporting regeneration in the centre of Bedford.
- 1.28 The full route to Cambridge is expected to be operational by 2030.
- 1.29 Another significant infrastructure project is the upgrade of the road route between the Black Cat Roundabout (A421 / A1 junction) and the Caxton Gibbet roundabout on the A428. This will involve the building of a new 10 mile dual carriageway and a number of junction improvements, including the Black Cat on the A1. National Highways explain that 'the scheme will improve journeys between Milton Keynes and Cambridge, bringing communities together and supporting long term growth in the region'<sup>10</sup>. These works will be complete by 2026.

## Neighbourhood planning

- 1.30 Several of the borough's parish councils have already played a significant role in progressing commitments for housing growth in the first part of the period covered by this plan. Given the opportunity back in 2017, ten local communities chose to prepare neighbourhood plans and make their own allocations for development in accordance with requirements in the Local Plan 2030. Despite the challenges presented by Covid-19, all have submitted their neighbourhood plans to the Council and

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<sup>10</sup> <https://nationalhighways.co.uk/our-work/a428-black-cat-to-caxton-gibbet/>

as of April 2022 nine of the ten are now formally ‘made’. A number of other villages have also taken the opportunity to prepare neighbourhood plans, even though they had not been given an allocation.

- 1.31 In total, the ‘made’ neighbourhood plans will deliver around 2,381 dwellings during the 2020-2040 period. This contribution is acknowledged and taken into account as the local plan strategy is rolled on to 2040. The following table shows the estimated number of dwellings allocated in ‘made’ and emerging neighbourhood plans at the time the plan was prepared (April 2022).

Table 1

<b>Parish</b>	<b>Dwellings allocated</b>
Carlton and Chellington	32
Oakley	40
Bromham	500
Thurleigh	30
Bletsoe	11
Stevington	None
Clapham	500
Great Barford	500
Sharnbrook	500
Harrold	25
Milton Ernest	25
Turvey	50
Willington	50
Wootton	105
Felmersham and Radwell	13
Odell	None
Wilshamstead	None

- 1.32 As has already been the case, in future, communities may decide to make neighbourhood plans and allocate development sites even though the local plan strategy doesn’t require growth to be located there. Should this continue to happen, it will add choice and flexibility on top of allocations made in the development plan.

1.33 We will continue to encourage groups to prepare neighbourhood plans and to support and work with local councils in a joined-up way to make sure that local and neighbourhood plans work together to support planning at the local level.

## **Summary**

1.34 Whilst there remain many uncertainties about planning for our borough area as a result of the emerging Oxford to Cambridge Arc Spatial Framework, the selection of a detailed route for EWR and indeed the timing of the introduction of a new national planning system following consultation by government on the 'Planning for the Future' White Paper<sup>11</sup>, this local plan has been progressed so that the Council and local communities can maintain control through their planning policies over where and when new development takes place.

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-the-future>

## 2.0 Vision and objectives

2.1 The purpose of the vision is to demonstrate the focus and direction of the local plan.

By the end of the plan period:

The borough will have become a greener, more sustainable, more attractive and prosperous place to live and work. Tackling climate change and adapting to and mitigating its effects will be at the heart of new development throughout the borough.

Well-planned growth supported by appropriate infrastructure and avoiding areas of high flood risk will enable the creation of strong, safe and resilient local communities in environments that facilitate healthy and independent living for all. Sustainable development and transport, the use of sustainable and renewable energy technology, green infrastructure and new green spaces will all contribute to reducing the borough's carbon footprint and securing a net-gain in both biodiversity and environmental quality.

The development of new settlements at Little Barford and Kempston Hardwick will play a primary role in delivering much needed housing to 2040 and beyond. The development at Stewartby Brickworks will be complete, forming a new community on the old brickmaking site, celebrating its heritage.

The development of East West Rail through Bedford will be complete. Bedford will benefit from a new town centre railway hub with direct links to Oxford and Cambridge, increasing connectivity, investment and growth. As a requirement of the planning process, local development will be well served up-front transport links and speedy internet access. Development of high quality commercial and office spaces, greater connectivity and the completion of significant infrastructure projects will have a positive impact on the local economy attracting high tech employment sectors, creative industries and supporting existing retail centres.

In Bedford town centre a wide range of uses will provide greater variety and a broader visitor experience that will make the town centre more diverse and sustainable. Improvements to the High Street will make it a more enjoyable place, where local independent retailers thrive and people choose to linger. Previously planned vibrant new town neighbourhoods will be complete, widening housing choices in and close to the town centre, and transforming brownfield sites on the western side of the town and south of the river. Additional town centre living will encourage sustainable methods of travel, enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre

and support for local businesses. A regenerated Mayes Yard will bring vacant spaces back into use. The town centre will be used increasingly as a community space, accessible to residents in the town, the borough and beyond.

Good design will help to improve quality of life and to create safer, vibrant and more sustainable places, both in the urban area of Bedford and Kempston and in the surrounding village communities. More walkable neighbourhoods that can include schools, health facilities, community halls, green spaces including allotments and other services will be in place. The borough's built heritage and wider historic environment will continue to be respected, protected and enhanced.

Development will be sensitively planned to complement the borough's natural environment. The borough's countryside, its intrinsic character and beauty including areas of tranquil retreat will be recognised. Rural communities will embrace appropriate development, in many instances through their own neighbourhood plans. This development will reflect each area's unique local character whilst providing and supporting much needed housing and employment, rural facilities and services, including high speed broadband and public transport. Locally important green spaces and valued local landscapes will be protected and enjoyed by all.

The Embankment and formal Victorian parks in Bedford, along with the River Great Ouse valley and its riverside villages, will continue to form the backbone of the borough's rich green and blue infrastructure. There will be new multi-functional green spaces to complement and expand the existing network of paths and green corridors. Country parks north of Brickhill, west of Bedford and in the new town centre neighbourhoods will have matured and along with the Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway Park will encourage healthy lifestyles, tourism and a diverse ecology.

The Forest of Marston Vale will continue to grow and mature, transforming the landscape. Together with the completed Bedford River Valley Park this part of the borough will be transformed through new leisure opportunities, encouraging increased visitor numbers.

## 2.2 The following themes reflect the vision.

## **Theme 1: Greener** – Working towards making Bedford a net zero carbon emissions borough whilst improving, enhancing and creating green infrastructure and spaces

Objectives:

Work towards making Bedford a **carbon neutral borough**

Deliver high quality growth that **integrates closely with the surrounding landscape**, facilitating more sustainable and inclusive local communities, which can respond better to the impacts of climate and economic change and offer the opportunity to live healthier lifestyles.

**Develop a strong and multi-functional urban and rural green infrastructure network** through protecting, enhancing, extending and linking landscapes, woodland, biodiversity sites, heritage sites, green spaces and paths.

Improve access to green and blue infrastructure for the enjoyment and health of all.

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

Move towards a **greener town centre** with enhanced connections to the river.

## **Theme 2: More accessible** – Encouraging sustainable travel as well as taking the opportunities offered by strategic infrastructure for greater regional and national connectivity

Objectives:

**Reduce congestion in the borough**, particularly into and around the town centre, including making journeys by public transport, walking and cycling more attractive to encourage an increase in more sustainable and healthy modes of transport.

**Improve East-West connectivity and enhance multi-modal travel through the construction of the East West Rail line** routed through Bedford Midland station. Re-introduce faster north-south travel.

**Improve “first mile / last mile” local connections to strategic infrastructure**, allowing for easier access and greater integration

### **Theme 3: More prosperous** – Supporting new innovative businesses, educational and employment opportunities

Objectives:

**Support a stronger local economy** by building on the strengths of the emerging higher value clusters, to become a location for innovative businesses, with a strategically important employment site as a local innovation hub.

Allocate land to provide locations for the **delivery of high value jobs**.

Create a distinctive, **attractive and multi-functional town centre** for the future, with a focus on leisure, culture and visitor economy activities, and high quality urban living.

**Deliver the necessary health and social infrastructure to increase well-being** in both the urban and rural areas of the borough.

**Improve the borough's transport infrastructure** in time to support growth in the local economy and to make the borough more attractive as a place to live and do business.

### **Theme 4: Better places** – Developing high quality, well-designed and beautiful places for all to use and enjoy

Objectives:

**Deliver the level of housing growth required by the Government's standard methodology calculation.**

**Support and create a high quality, inclusive and safe built environment which promotes healthy living, values and enhances local landscapes and settlement character**, and which conserves and enhances the historic environment to be enjoyed by all.

**Encourage the re-use of land that has been previously developed** where it is viable and sustainable to do so.

**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 **making the housing stock more adaptable and resilient**.

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 are supported, enabling all residents to lead healthy and independent lives.

2.3 The interaction between themes and objectives is illustrated below.



## **The scope of the plan**

- 2.4 The Local Plan 2030 was adopted in January 2020 and the vast majority of its policies are up to date and do not need to change. Remaining policies in the earlier Allocations and Designations Local Plan have also been reviewed and, in the majority of cases, they remain fit for purpose and similarly do not need to change at this time. Existing development plan policies that are to be replaced are identified in brackets, and more information about this is given in Appendix 1.
- 2.5 The development strategy to 2030 is already set and it is important that it is allowed to deliver. For that reason, the policies in this local plan build on it, and in doing so, to put in place a robust strategy for growth to 2040.
- 2.6 Taking account of responses received to the Issues and Options (2020) and Draft Plan Strategy (2021) consultations, the plan focuses on the following key policy areas:
- Climate change
  - The Development Strategy to 2040, and site allocations in order to meet national policy requirements
  - Town centre and retail policies in order to support a more flexible future for our centres
  - New and updated development management policies (those used to help make decisions on planning applications) to do with:
    - A refreshed housing chapter including:
      - Affordable housing (replaces LP2030 Policy 58S<sup>12</sup>)
      - Review mechanisms (new policy)
      - Housing mix (replaces LP2030 Policy 59S)
      - First homes exception policy (new policy)
      - Self-build and custom housebuilding (new policy)
    - Residential space standards (new policy)
    - Environmental net gain (replaces LP2030 Policy 43)
    - New employment development in the countryside (replaces LP2030 Policy 75)
    - Horse and Equestrian Activities (new policy)
    - Non-designated heritage assets (new policy)
    - Outdoor sports space in association with new development (partially replaces ADLP policy AD28)
    - Tall buildings (new policy)

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<sup>12</sup> Policies with the suffix 'S' are strategic policies

## 3.0 Climate change

- 3.1 Climate change is a strategic priority for national policy across all areas of the UK and is central to policy formation. It has been established that changes to the global climate are happening at an ever-increasing rate. Increasing average temperatures, changes to weather patterns, rising sea levels and greater risk of flooding are all potential consequences of a ‘change-nothing’ approach to the way we develop our communities going forward.
- 3.2 The government has recognised the increasing risks to the country that climate change poses and, through the Climate Change Act 2008 and the subsequent Amendment Order (Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019) has committed the UK to reaching net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.
- 3.3 The Paris Agreement in December 2015 resulted in international agreement to keep global temperature increases “well below” 2.0C and “endeavour to limit” the rise to 1.5C. More recently, in 2021 COP26 took place in Glasgow where all agreed to revisit and strengthen their current emissions targets to 2030. The Glasgow Pact increased requirements for long term strategies and the need to keep them up to date and it keeps the 1.5C limit in sight but only if countries take concerted and immediate action.
- 3.4 The Climate Change Committee has published The Sixth Carbon Budget<sup>13</sup> which provides ministers with advice on the volume of greenhouse gases the UK can emit during the period 2033-2037. The Budget can be met through four key steps:
  - Take up of low carbon solutions
  - Expansion of low-carbon energy suppliers
  - Reducing demand for carbon-intensive activities
  - Land and greenhouse gas removals
- 3.5 Climate is impacted by all services, not just planning, and mitigating and adapting to climate change is the responsibility of everyone in the community, not just the council and government. However, planning is an important part of the solution. Policies can affect buildings and changes to the landscape, the way places grow and change and the demand and reliance places have on using fossil fuels.
- 3.6 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local planning authorities to include in their local plans policies to ensure development, and use of land contribute to the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change. Our policies set requirements for buildings that use less energy and that will survive future climate change.

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<sup>13</sup> <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/sixth-carbon-budget/>

## National Planning Policy

- 3.7 The Government sets national planning policy, Building Regulations and other legislation that must be taken into consideration. The government's national planning policy guidance sets out examples of how local plans might address climate change.
- 3.8 To achieve sustainable development, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states as part of its environmental objective of sustainable development that the planning system should "contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy."
- 3.9 It requires plans to "take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures".

## Bedford Borough Council Approach

- 3.10 The Council declared a climate emergency in March 2019 and pledged to make its own operations carbon neutral by 2030. It has developed a Carbon Reduction Delivery Strategy setting out how it will achieve this aim. As part of this strategy the Council has pledged to incorporate the carbon neutral ambition into all Council strategies, including the Local Plan 2040. The Mayor set up a climate change fund in 2009, which offers grants to community groups to help with the cost of carbon reduction projects, and a Climate Change Committee in 2019 to monitor best practice and track the progress towards the aim of achieving carbon neutrality by 2030.
- 3.11 The Council's new Corporate Plan 'Together Bedford Borough' 2022 – 2026<sup>14</sup> embraces climate change as a cross cutting theme. It recognises that there are measurable activities that indicate whether the local environment is being well managed and maintained and on track in delivering a local response to climate change.
- 3.12 Similarly, climate change is a cross cutting theme through the Local Plan because it is influenced by most policy areas. Future development will need to incorporate different features to not only **minimise** their carbon emissions but also to be resilient to the climate change already happening. They will need to **mitigate** any remaining impacts through more efficient building, flood resilience, the incorporation of renewable energy sources, and by allowing the means for communities to shift their methods of travel. The role of the local plan in affecting climate change is one of facilitating the right environment for measures to be included in

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<sup>14</sup> <https://bbcdevwebfiles.blob.core.windows.net/webfiles/Your%20Council/About%20the%20Council/corporate-plan-2022-2026.pdf>

existing and future development to **adapt** as necessary. It will take the combined efforts of communities, residents, businesses and the development industry in the borough to embrace those measures.

- 3.13 The spatial strategy for growth to 2040 (to be) adopted by the Council sets out a pattern of development which encourages fewer greenhouse gas emissions, by focussing development in the urban area and at locations with great accessibility to rail stations and where walking neighbourhoods will be created– more detail is provided in section 4.0 Spatial Strategy and Site Allocations.
- 3.14 The Local Plan 2030 incorporates methods of both adaptation and mitigation in response to the climate change emergency. It includes a chapter on resources and climate change which contains policies requiring the effective use and re-use of land, consideration of water quality and supply and energy efficiency. Policy DS1 brings together all of the different policy areas from the suite of development plan documents into a comprehensive overarching policy.
- 3.15 Consultants were commissioned to prepare a new Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA). The SFRA is an essential piece of the evidence base as it models the flood zones for the borough. Since the Local Plan 2030 was adopted, new guidance has been released by the government on how to take into account climate change allowances when modelling the flood zones. The climate change allowances are a percentage increase on the current flood zone 3a, and this allows the Council to see what the extent of flooding might look like in different scenarios. The percentage increase applied depends on the circumstances, for instance the type of development (residential, commercial, etc.) and the likely lifetime of the development (usually forecast as 60 years for commercial development and 100 years for residential). The SFRA has informed the selection of development sites for allocation and where relevant, an exceptions test has been carried out.
- 3.16 The Council continues to work with the Environment Agency, Anglian Water and the Bedfordshire and River Ivel Internal Drainage Board to ensure flood risk, surface water management, water supply and waste water management issues resulting from planned development are fully considered.
- 3.17 Through the lifetime of the Local Plan 2040 the Council will continue to gather evidence to inform and develop further guidance and policy to reflect changes in technologies in areas such as renewable energy and sustainable construction.

## **Policy DS1(S) Resources and climate change**

Development must support a move to carbon neutrality in the following ways:

### **A) Minimising carbon emissions, including by:**

- i. Being located so as to minimise the need to travel and where there are opportunities to maximise the ability to make trips by sustainable modes of transport (in accordance with policies AD36, AD39, 53, 87, 88 and 89);
- ii. Delivering a density of development that makes the most of accessible sites (in accordance with policies 30, 31, 32 and 53);
- iii. Contributing to more walkable and cycle-able neighbourhoods that reduce demand for car use (in accordance with policies AD36, AD39, 31 and 53) and incorporating electric vehicle charging points (in accordance with Policy 89);
- iv. Protecting and taking opportunities for the more sustainable movement of freight (in accordance with Policy 88);
- v. Adopting the principles of the energy hierarchy and seeking energy efficient buildings (in accordance with Policy 54);
- vi. Taking opportunities to generate, incorporate and connect to renewable and low carbon energy infrastructure wherever feasible (in accordance with Policies 54 - 57);
- vii. In the case of existing buildings, retrofitting them with measures to reduce energy consumption, in a manner consistent with their heritage interest (in accordance with policies 28S, 29, 30 and 41S).

### **B) Maximising carbon storage and sequestration, including by:**

- i. Protecting, and where appropriate supporting the provision or restoration of habitats that provide a carbon storage function (Policy DM7);
- ii. Incorporating green infrastructure, such as trees and woodland, that helps to sequester carbon from the atmosphere (in accordance with policies 35S, 36S, 38, 39, 40 and Policy DM7);
- iii. Minimising degradation and erosion of soil (in accordance with policies 40 and 47S).

### **C) Mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change, including by:**

- i. Managing flood risk associated with higher peak river flows and more extreme weather events, and relocating vulnerable uses where appropriate (in accordance with policies 92 and 93);
- ii. Providing shade and green infrastructure to reduce overheating of urban areas during warmer summers (in accordance with policies 28S, 29, 30, 35S, 36S and 53);
- iii. Creating a place that promotes social interaction, since people who are isolated can be more vulnerable and less able to cope with the impacts of climate change (in accordance with policies 28S and 29);
- iv. Delivering an environmental net gain that enables animals and plants to adjust to a changing climate (in accordance with Policy DM7);

- v. Incorporating appropriate water efficiency and water recycling measures, to help minimise the potential for drought (in accordance with policies 50S and 52);
- vi. Minimising and mitigating air pollution (in accordance with policies 32 and 47S).

**D) Responding to the economic and policy changes that are likely to accompany climate change, including by:**

- i. Reducing the reliance on the private car and road freight (in accordance with policies AD36, AD39, 53, 87, 88 and 89);
- ii. Protecting high grade agricultural land (in accordance with Policy 46S).

**E) New development will be required to demonstrate through Sustainability and Energy Statements** how it will take account of embedded carbon and contribute to mitigating and adapting to climate change and to meeting targets to reduce carbon dioxide emissions having regard to the above.

## 4.0 Spatial strategy and site allocations

- 4.1 The spatial strategy is an important part of the local plan as it explains where homes and jobs will be delivered through new allocations. It also provides the framework for the determination of planning applications which come forward on unallocated sites. Certain strategic policies and allocations from Local Plan 2030 (listed in Appendix 1) are not being replaced by this local plan and therefore are taken into account as the spatial strategy is rolled on to 2040. Other policies and allocations are being replaced in response to the Council's updated vision and objectives.
- 4.2 The spatial strategy provides for the completion of strategic growth previously allocated in local plans and also in neighbourhood plans produced by Parish Councils. This previously allocated growth is located on a number of sites in and around the Bedford / Kempston urban area, in the rural area as extensions to certain key and rural service centres, and at the former Stewartby brickworks brownfield site.
- 4.3 In addition to this, the spatial strategy directs the further growth required to meet assessed needs to 2040 to locations that are currently accessible, or will become accessible during the period covered by the local plan. This means that new development will be focussed firstly on brownfield sites within the urban area and town centre regeneration opportunities. In addition, sites beyond, but close to, the urban area will give the opportunity for gains in green infrastructure. The completion of EWR will result in the creation of highly accessible locations around new rail stations. By concentrating on accessible locations, the spatial strategy aims to minimise the need to travel by car and therefore reduce the emission of carbon dioxide in line with the objectives of the plan. The growth locations are as follows:
  - A. Within the urban area
  - B. At strategic locations adjacent to the urban area which contribute to the delivery of key green infrastructure projects
  - C. At new growth locations focussed on the EWR / A421 transport corridor with the potential for rail based growth, particularly in the south of Bedford area and at a new settlement at Little Barford.
- 4.4 Policy DS2 sets out a spatial strategy for the local plan that ensures the delivery of sufficient new development in sustainable locations to meet identified needs.

### **Policy DS2(S) Spatial strategy**

To deliver sustainable development and work towards making Bedford a net zero carbon emissions borough at the heart of the Oxford – Cambridge Arc, development will be focussed within the urban area, at specified strategic locations adjacent to the urban area and at growth locations within the A421 / East West Rail corridor. All new development will be required to contribute towards achieving the stated objectives and policies of this plan, in line with the Infrastructure Development Plan, through:

### **Within the urban area**

- i. Maintaining and enhancing Bedford town centre as a vibrant and resilient location and multifunctional destination.  
Regenerating vacant spaces and including the establishment of an expanded residential and cultural quarter at Mayes Yard and town centre living at Greyfriars;
- ii. Establishing a new station quarter and Midland Road gateway, including the redevelopment and regeneration of the area around Bedford Midland station to provide an academic and skills quarter and vibrant corridor between the town centre and rail station;
- iii. Establishing vibrant new areas for urban living in Bedford's urban core at sites on Ampthill Road and on sites allocated in Local Plan 2030 including land south of the river and at Ford End Road;
- iv. Making best use of brownfield and other available land within the urban area.

### **Strategic locations adjacent to the urban area which contribute to delivering the Bedford – Milton Keynes Waterway Park and the Bedford River Valley Park**

- v. Residential-led development focussed at Gibraltar Corner and the Bedford River Valley Park north of the A603 which enhances and expands areas of green infrastructure and, in doing so, prevents coalescence between the urban area and existing settlements to protect their separate character and identity;
- vi. Employment-led development at land south of Goldington Road.

### **Growth locations on the East West Rail / A421 transport corridor and with the potential for rail based growth**

#### South of Bedford policy area

- vii. Establishing an Arc-leading new settlement south of Bedford for innovation and an exemplar for landscape-led development and community building, based around the opportunity that the Stewartby Hardwick station on East-West Rail and the new Wixams station on the Midland Main Line presents;
- viii. The completion of Wixams new settlement, incorporating eastern and southern extensions, and the development of a strategic village expansion utilising brownfield land at Kempston Hardwick identified in Local Plan 2030;
- ix. An expansion of Shortstown to the west with active travel links to the rail network.

#### Little Barford area

- x. A new settlement and related employment provision at Little Barford well connected to the new East-West Rail station at its intersection with the East Coast Main Line.

#### Other employment sites

<p>xi. Locations well-related to the strategic road and rail network that will deliver employment growth, making Bedford an attractive place to do business.</p> <p><b>Rural area</b></p>	<p>xii. The completion of strategic Key Service Centre and more limited Rural Service Centre residential development identified in Local Plan 2030 on sites which are allocated in neighbourhood plans and the completion of Local Plan 2030 Policy 27 Land north of School Lane, Roxton;</p> <p>xiii. Safeguarding the intrinsic character of the countryside and the environment and biodiversity within it through the careful management of development to meet local needs whilst supporting the rural economy.</p>
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4.5 Further guidance on development in the rural area is provided by saved policies 4S-7S of Local Plan 2030.

### **The amount and timing of development**

4.6 The development strategy has been informed by the need to meet the requirements for additional jobs and housing over the plan period.

### **Housing**

4.7 Government guidance sets out a standard method for calculating future housing requirements which the Council must follow. As a result of the government's recent revisions to the standard method, the figure for Bedford borough currently is 1,355 dwellings per year, giving a total of 27,100 dwellings for the 20 year period from 2020 to 2040. This is the current starting point for the local plan housing requirement. Taking account of existing commitments, completions and an allowance for windfall, which amounts in total to 14,824 dwellings, this leaves 12,276 dwellings to be allocated in this plan.

4.8 The standard method approach to setting housing requirements uses inputs taken from population and affordability data. The Council's Local Housing Need Assessment (LHNA) and addendum demonstrate how these inputs are used to generate both the number of houses required and a dwelling-led population forecast which illustrates how the borough's population would change as new dwellings are delivered. It forecasts that an increase in population of around 50,000 people and in-migration of more than 22,000 people over and above existing trends will need to take place if dwellings are to be populated at the standard method rate of 1,355 dwellings per year. This represents a 40% increase on the housing requirement of 970 dwellings per year set in Local Plan 2030.

## **Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show People**

- 4.9 The Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) for Bedford borough was published in November 2021. The Assessment provides a robust analysis of the current and future need for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Show People's accommodation in the borough in the years up to 2040. Full details are set out in the evidence base document GTAA.
- 4.10 In relation to Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show People, national policy draws a distinction between those who travel and those who do not and those who do travel have historically been referred to as meeting the 'planning definition'. However, the planning system must now make provision for those who travel and those who do not.
- 4.11 The additional needs of those members of the Gypsy and Traveller community who do not meet the planning definition are set out in the Local Housing Needs Assessment. However, the way that these needs are accommodated are in practice the same. Recent case law says that it is inappropriate to require any of the travelling community to live in bricks and mortar dwellings, and instead their needs should be met through the provision of plots and pitches.
- 4.12 In the plan period there is an identified need for an additional 46 Gypsy and Traveller pitches and 13 Travelling Show People plots which form part of the borough's overall housing need (they are not additional to it), as follows:

Table 2

Plan years	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	Total
	2020-2025	2026-2030	2031-2035	2036-2040	
Gypsies & Travellers (meeting definition)	0	2	0	1	3
Gypsies & Travellers (not meeting definition)	22	6	7	8	43
<b>Total pitches</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>46</b>
Travelling Show People (all meet the definition)	8	3	2	0	13

- 4.13 The Council is planning to meet this identified need and is progressing planning applications. Proposals will be assessed against Policy 64 Design of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Show People Sites. In addition, the new settlements at Kempston Hardwick (Policy HOU14) and Little Barford (Policy HOU17) and will include an allocation for gypsy and traveller pitches.

## Transport Strategy

- 4.14 Bedford is part of the England's Economic Heartlands (EEH) Sub-National Transport Body. The EEH Transport Strategy provides an overall framework for transport policies and delivery across the region. It is drafted so that planning and highway authorities can develop their own suite of policies and plans which reflect their individual local issues.
- 4.15 However, the over-riding ambition set out in the Strategy is to shape the transport future and deliver change given the once in a lifetime opportunity presented. The basic premise for transport investment is that business as usual will not get us to where we need and want to be and will not enable the area to fulfil its economic and sustainable growth potential.
- 4.16 What this means is that in order to deliver sustainable growth; transport investment, travel behaviour and the way we think about moving around will need to change. The impact of continuing with current travel behaviour will have a detrimental impact on the very things that make the area successful, including the attractive environment and the network of small and medium sized towns and cities across the Arc.
- 4.17 Increased economic activity and growing populations, if left to continue in traditional patterns of movement and behaviour, will mean people spend longer on congested transport networks, the environment will be degraded, and quality of life expectations will not be met.
- 4.18 The EEH Strategy includes a five-point plan of action which is supported by the Council. The five actions are:
- Focus on **decarbonisation** of the transport system by harnessing innovation and supporting solutions which create green economic opportunities
  - Promote investment in digital infrastructure as a means of improving connectivity, in order to **reduce the need to travel**
  - Use delivery of EWR and mass rapid transit systems as the catalyst for the transformation of our strategic public transport networks
  - Champion increased investment in active travel and shared transport solutions to **improve local connectivity** to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to realise their potential
  - Ensure that our **freight and logistics needs continue to be met** whilst **lowering the environmental impact** of their delivery
- 4.19 Within Bedford, sustainable growth provides the context to deliver transport improvements for existing and new communities which reflect the ambitions of the EEH Transport Strategy which has four overarching principles:
- Principle 1 - Support the delivery of low carbon transport by working towards reduced congestion, digital connectivity, and a net zero carbon system by 2040

- Principle 2 – Promote connectivity and accessibility in new development, and link new and existing communities
- Principle 3 – Support opportunities for active travel and green infrastructure
- Principle 4 – Promote and support infrastructure development which reflects the ambitions of the three preceding principles.

4.20 National Highways has been commissioned by co-project sponsors the Department for Transport (DfT) and England's Economic Heartland (EEH), to undertake a study of the Oxford to Cambridge Arc Road connectivity. The purpose of the study is to identify where investment in key parts of the region's strategic road network is required in order to support existing identified locally planned growth in the area and alleviate existing issues and constraints on the network.

## **Infrastructure**

- 4.21 An Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) has been prepared to support the Local Plan 2040. It identifies the infrastructure required to meet the level of growth anticipated in the borough in a sustainable manner. The document covers all types of infrastructure from transport and mobility hubs to waste water and supply, energy to schools, health to police and fire services. The IDP identifies the infrastructure projects that will be required to meet the needs arising over the local plan period.
- 4.22 The borough faces a number of challenges which will impact on the timing of growth. These include the timing of the delivery of necessary infrastructure and the creation of economic drivers to act as a catalyst for growth and improve development viability in some parts of the borough, such as the town centre.
- 4.23 The potential of EWR to offer improved connectivity and create economic growth will be a critical catalyst for delivery and pivotal to achieving the plan's vision. The new links and stations however will not be operational until 2030 and other essential infrastructure (principally improvements to the A421) are expected to be delivered on similar timescales.
- 4.24 The Council's ambition is to establish Bedford as a place for innovation with an enhanced academic presence and new business / science parks linked to the attractiveness of locations served by the new rail stations, which will be essential in giving impetus to the housing market and housing delivery. These economic drivers, linked as they are to the delivery of EWR, will also take time to impact on in-migration and housing demand.

## **Stepped Trajectory**

- 4.25 The significant increase in the housing requirement alongside the focus on new settlements and the infrastructure delivery challenges described above mean that housing provision across the plan period will need to be "stepped"; continuing at the same rate as it is for Local Plan 2030 for the first five years, with more significant growth post-2030 once critical infrastructure is delivered

and the benefits for the local economy start to be felt.

- 4.26 Taking account of the infrastructure delivery challenges a stepped trajectory is proposed. The following policies set out the amount and timing of the delivery of growth to meet identified needs.
- 4.27 In the years up to 2030 housing supply is provided by sites allocated in Local Plan 2030 and early delivery on additional sites allocated in Local Plan 2040. After 2030, once EWR and highway improvements have been completed, the strategic growth sites allocated in this plan will be able to deliver substantial growth. Furthermore, development on some other urban sites also becomes increasingly viable. Given that the higher development rates in the second half of the plan period are primarily related to the provision of major infrastructure and strategic sites from 2030 onwards which is required to deliver them, there will be limited scope to bring forward sites to address any shortfall which may arise in the early years of the plan.
- 4.28 The Council will monitor the provision and delivery of infrastructure and, if necessary, bring forward a review of the local plan.

**Policy DS3(S) Amount and timing of housing growth**

Provision of a minimum of 27,100 new dwellings will be stepped as follows:

	2020/21 - 2024/25	2025/26 - 2029/30	2030/31 - 2039/40	Total
Dwellings (total)	4,850	4,850	17,000	27,100
Dwellings (per annum)	970	1,050	1,700	

Five-year land supply will be measured against the stepped requirement which is applicable at the time of the assessment. When undertaking the five-year supply calculation, should any shortfall arise it will be distributed across the remaining years of the plan period.

## **Employment**

- 4.29 In determining the number of jobs to be planned for the Council has taken account of two key forecasts; one produced by the East of England Economic Forecasting Model (EEFM) and one based on the figures for economic activity taken from the dwelling led forecast derived from the standard method. There is a substantial difference between these two forecasts, indicative of the fact that the EEFM work does not reflect the substantial change in labour supply inherent in the standard method projection. The predicted number of jobs in the standard method forecast is included as a target reflective of the Council's commitment to providing a balance of homes and jobs in the borough and in the context of the plan vision and strategy creating a high-value, highly skilled, economy, expanding its current strengths, and developing into a location where innovative businesses can thrive.
- 4.30 The number of jobs is however a forecast and not a target. As explained in the Council's Economic Growth Ambitions paper the focus is on creating the right kind of jobs which will strengthen the local economy and create a prosperous future for the Borough and its residents. The jobs created will span a range of sectors and the jobs related to office, industrial and warehousing development (about 39% of the new jobs likely to be needed) will require the allocation of additional land. The Employment Land Study topic paper sets out that it is appropriate for the plan to identify between 118 and 142 ha of employment land. Policies HOU 12, HOU 19 and EMP 1 - EMP8, identify sufficient land to meet the upper end of this forecast. The number of hectares of land allocated is sensitive to the employment types being planned for as different land uses have different space requirements.

### **Policy DS4(S) Amount of employment growth**

Provision of up to 26,700 additional jobs to support the Council's ambition to create a high-value, highly skilled, economy, expanding its current strengths, and developing into a location where innovative businesses can thrive.

- 4.31 Policy DS5S sets out where growth will be located. It takes into account existing commitments together with the additional growth required to meet needs to 2040. There will continue to be growth in villages as a result of policies in the Local Plan 2030 which allocate growth to some Key Service Centres and Rural Service Centres. No new allocations are made in these villages in the Local Plan 2040, although some Parish Councils may choose to allocate further sites for development in their neighbourhood plans to meet particular local needs.

### **Policy DS5(S) Distribution of growth**

In accordance with Policies DS3(S) and DS4(S), growth will be distributed as follows:

Location	Dwellings	Employment land (ha)	
Within the urban area	1,200	5*	
Strategic locations adjacent to the urban area which contribute to delivering the Forest of Marston Vale incorporating the Bedford Milton Keynes Waterway Park and the Bedford River Valley Park	1,500	7	
Growth locations on the A421 transport corridor and with the potential for rail based growth <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• South of Bedford including new settlement</li> <li>• Little Barford new settlement</li> <li>• Other employment sites</li> </ul>	7,050 3,800 -	70 4 50	
Some development will take place beyond the plan period	400		
Remaining rural area / villages	Completion of sites previously allocated in local plans and neighbourhood plans		

\*Does not include 20.4ha at Pear Tree Farm which is land allocated in ADLP Policy AD11 and counted as a commitment

- 4.32 The Council is also producing a Design Guide which will provide an overarching assessment of residential building design across the borough and contain design principles that will support the application of several design-related policies already in the development plan (28S, 29 and 30 LP2030). This will replace existing guidance which was prepared in 1997 and is in need of updating.
- 4.33 The Design Guide is also necessary in light of a new national emphasis on place-making, design and the creation of beautiful places. The NPPF was revised in July 2021, with references to the recently adopted National Design Guide and National Model Design Code included within it. Chapter 12 of the NPPF is titled 'Achieving well-designed places' and sets out the Government's policy priorities relating to good design and place making. Site allocations for the spatial areas are set out below. As specified in the site specific policies, for more complex sites the council will lead on the preparation of masterplans and design codes to be prepared in partnership with landowners. In other cases, there is a requirement for master plans and design codes to be prepared by the applicant and completed and approved by the Council before planning applications are submitted. The Council will produce

a protocol which will inform the scope, content and process to be followed when preparing the masterplan and design coding documents.

## Town centre

- 4.34 The Vision for the central Bedford town area is to create a number of key sites / quarters linked by the public realm improvements that are to be implemented through the Bedford Town Deal programme of works providing accessibility to the two EWR stations.

### Bedford Midland Station and Bedford Academic Quarter

- 4.35 Bedford Midland station will be redeveloped as part of the EWR project but the precise location and configuration of the station is as yet unknown. The Council's Town Deal programme includes proposals to improve the public realm in the area, once the location is finalised. The vision is to create a gateway to the town linking the station to the town centre, including establishing a new Station Square as well as improving links for pedestrians and cyclists and the provision of a mobility hub with secure cycle parking and electric vehicle charging points, together with provision for public transport to integrate with the railway
- 4.36 Given its location at a key transport interchange and the nearby urban amenities that the centre of Bedford has to offer including workforce, retail, cultural and leisure assets set within the Bedford Conservation Area, this is also an excellent site on which to develop a knowledge hub. Set between the world-class academic centres of Oxford and Cambridge and with a new direct link to both, this is an exciting opportunity for the town.
- 4.37 As proposals for the station become clearer, there may be the potential for land at, and in proximity to, the current station to be configured to enable the creation of an academic quarter co-located with an innovation centre, and business incubator / spin-out space which would help increase educational attainment, retain local skills, upskill residents and create a knowledge-base from which start-up companies can grow and prosper.
- 4.38 Until such time as the EWR proposals are confirmed the impact on the Jowett sidings and Royal Mail land to the south of Midland road are unknown. For this reason, the Jowett sidings and Royal Mail sites are included as an opportunity site in accordance with Policy DS6.

### **Policy EMP1 Land at Bedford Station, Bedford**

The station area will be developed for a mix of uses including transport interchange residential, office, academic and retail uses. Key principles of development:

- i. As part of the town deal programme the Council will lead on the preparation of a masterplan and design code prior to the submission of any planning application for the site;
- ii. The creation of a new mixed use academic quarter with offices, retail, residential and transport interchange and educational space to support the growth of spin-out companies linked to high-tech businesses based in the Oxford to Cambridge Arc benefiting from access to East West Rail;
- iii. A new station entrance and public square and the creation of improved linkages to Midland Road;
- iv. Re-provision of car and cycle parking including the potential for multi storey parking;
- v. Improvements to pedestrian access and public realm in Midland Road;
- vi. Provision of revised station access arrangements via Ashburnham Road with a mobility hub and appropriate provision for bus, taxi / private hire vehicles, cycle and pedestrian access and drop-off / pick-up points;
- vii. Contributions to town centre wide highway infrastructure improvements where required;
- viii. Development should preserve and where opportunities arise enhance the setting of Bedford Conservation Area.

#### Ford End Road

- 4.39 The former industrial land and railway sidings located between the railway line and Marston's Eagle Brewery are already identified as a regeneration site and allocated within Local Plan 2030 (Policy 12).
- 4.40 The site's close proximity to Bedford Midland station provides a key residential opportunity. The land at Ford End Road has the potential to create a new residential quarter for circa 700 homes adjacent to the station, providing a combination of flats and houses with a public park and enhanced public access to the river corridor, designed to provide a range of unit types but with a focus on family homes. The location of the quarter, which would have a western pedestrian access to the new station would provide opportunities to create both build to rent and build for sale developments.

#### Greyfriars / Midland Road

- 4.41 The former Bedfordshire Police Station site and the adjacent mixed-use block at Greyfriars are already allocated for residential and town centre uses in Local Plan 2030 (Policy 11). The Policy 11 includes a requirement to replace the existing roundabout with traffic signals, which is being taken forward through the Town Deal.
- 4.42 The adjacent sites including the BPHA estate to the north, the Allhallows multi-storey car park, Greyfriars ground level car park and Saffron Close are allocated for redevelopment to provide homes with ground floor active uses.

- 4.43 Greyfriars is linked to the Bedford Midland station via Midland Road. Midland Road is characterised by a multi-ethnic collection of eating and shopping experiences, including Polish, South Asian and Chinese. The Bedford Town Deal programme includes funding for public realm works along Midland Road to create a more attractive, pedestrian-friendly environment and improve the quality of the shopfronts as the key approach from the station to the town centre.
- 4.44 A masterplan and design code will be prepared for this site and will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). It is expected that work to inform the SPD (including any technical studies that are required) will be funded by the landowner / developer.

#### **Policy HOU1 Land at Greyfriars North, Bedford**

Land at Greyfriars North will be developed for residential and appropriate town centre uses. Key principles of development include:

- i. A masterplan and design code to be prepared and adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document prior to the submission of any planning application for the site. The preparation of the Supplementary Planning Document will be led by the Council in partnership with landowners / developers, stakeholders and the local community. It should pay particular regard to ensuring that the development is designed to reflect the site's important location and to preserve the setting of heritage assets, including The Bedford Conservation Area, listed buildings fronting Bromham Road and other taller heritage assets in the town centre;
- ii. Residential development with a mixture of retail and other town centre uses limited to ground floor fronting Hassett Street and Greenhill Street and Greyfriars to create an active frontage;
- iii. Preparation of an access strategy;
- iv. Provision of dedicated cycle routes and wide footways to reflect footfall and crossings to achieve pedestrian and cycle connectivity, whilst maintaining bus access;
- v. Provision of a mobility hub;
- vi. Contributions to town centre wide highway infrastructure improvements where required;
- vii. Pre-determination archaeological evaluation will be required for the areas of the site not already evaluated;
- viii. Archaeological mitigation required ahead of development for those areas already evaluated;
- ix. Financial contributions towards secondary school provision;
- x. A site specific flood risk assessment will be needed and mitigation required for all sources of flood risk where necessary. Opportunities to reduce surface water run-off and flood risk on and off site should be identified;
- xi. Delivery of a low carbon and environmentally resilient development that is adaptive to and resilient to climate change;
- xii. Early engagement with Anglian Water is required in order to identify connection to water network infrastructure.

## Mayes Yard / St Paul's Square

- 4.45 The town centre continues to undergo structural change, which has been accelerated due to the Coronavirus Pandemic with greater reliance on online shopping. This has resulted in a number of major retailers falling into administration or retreating from the High Street.
- 4.46 Bedford has recently lost retailers including Beales department store, Debenhams, Marks & Spencer and Argos. At the Mayes Yard block, the closure of the Beales and Debenhams stores, and the presence of Council assets such as the library and the Corn Exchange provide an opportunity to redevelop and reconfigure buildings to create smaller units for retail, food and beverage occupiers, and residential opportunities at upper floors.
- 4.47 Plans include consideration of an expanded auditorium (from 800 to 1,200 seats) within the Corn Exchange to attract a greater range of regional-level shows to Bedford, and the potential for an updated library facility. The site could be opened up to create pedestrian browsing routes linking St. Paul's Square, Silver Street, High Street and The Higgins as well as delivering new residential dwellings.
- 4.48 This would complement other potential sites around St Paul's Square, such as the Court Building and the former Bank site adjacent to Town Bridge which are already allocated for development (Local Plan 2030 Policy 8). In addition, the Town Deal programme includes funding for public realm works at St Paul's Square. This will follow on from public realm improvement works at High Street and Silver Street Square which have recently been completed, and the current High Street Heritage Action Zone project. The Mayes Yard redevelopment would create a focus for this cultural quarter of the town centre linking to Castle Quay and The Higgins.
- 4.49 A design code will be required to assist in achieving an appropriately designed scheme in this important town centre location which takes into account sometimes conflicting issues including car parking, waste collection, servicing, and historic environment concerns.
- 4.50 A masterplan and design code will be prepared for this site and will be adopted as SPD. It is expected that work to inform the SPD (including any technical studies that are required) will be funded by the landowner / developer.

## **Policy HOU2 Mayes Yard, High Street and Silver Street, Bedford**

Land at Mayes Yard and between High Street and Silver Street, Bedford will be developed for a mix of uses to create an extended cultural quarter in this part of the town, including residential, hotel, retail and leisure. Key principles of development include:

- i. A masterplan and design code to be prepared and adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document prior to the submission of any planning application for the site. The preparation of the Supplementary Planning Document will be led by the Council in partnership with landowners / developers, stakeholders and the local community;
- ii. Provision of residential and / or hotel on upper floors;
- iii. Scheme to involve conversion, redevelopment and new buildings including the reconfiguration of the site currently occupied by Bedford Corn Exchange;
- iv. Preparation of an access strategy;
- v. Heritage impact assessment must be submitted to the Council as a first stage of the masterplanning process;
- vi. Any new development must contribute positively to local character and distinctiveness and enhance or better reveal the significance of the conservation area and setting of any listed buildings;
- vii. Any new development will need to ensure the preservation of the scheduled monument of the 'Remains of the George Inn' and include measures for its conservation and public interpretation, and where opportunities arise, enhancements to its setting;
- viii. Pre-determination archaeological evaluation will be required;
- ix. Financial contributions towards secondary school provision;
- x. Delivery of a low carbon and environmentally resilient development that is adaptive to and resilient to climate change;
- xi. Early engagement with Anglian Water is required in order to identify connection to water network infrastructure.

### South of the River / Bedford St Johns Station

- 4.51 This is currently a large area with low density uses, industrial premises, car parks, and railway land south of the river between Cauldwell Street and Elstow Road around Bedford St Johns station.
- 4.52 The vision is for a residential-led mixed-use quarter around a new Bedford St Johns station to be constructed by EWR with the railway closer to the Hospital, creating a Station Square and a development area around Melbourne Street with a key thoroughfare from the station through Kingsway to the town centre, and this development area is already allocated for development (Local Plan 2030 Policy 14).

- 4.53 The land has capacity for in the region of 1,000 dwellings, which reflects densities for a high proportion of flats (80-85%) around the transport hub with building heights of up to five / six storeys and integrated high quality public open space. The area provides opportunities for a mix of residential products including build to rent and retirement living, together with build for sale. Active ground floor uses are promoted especially on the primary streets for a range of activities within Use Class E.
- 4.54 The residential quarter to be created around Bedford St Johns station could have an Italian influence to celebrate the town's rich historical links with Italy. The land at Britannia Road provides potential for Bedford Hospital to expand to accommodate planned growth, including a new multi-storey car park and attractive links to Bedford St Johns station. A development brief for the area is currently being prepared.

Southern Gateway (Ampthill Road and Kempston Road approaches to the town centre)

- 4.55 This southern approach to the town centre presents an opportunity to create a further new neighbourhood for urban living which will incorporate greenspace in the form of a new urban park. Between the development site boundary and the Midland Main Line can be found operational railway sidings and a range of employment uses, including a scrap yard, which will need to be taken into consideration. The area would benefit from a comprehensive approach and there may be potential for additional land / uses adjacent to the allocated site to be considered for re-development as part of the master planning of this area.
- 4.56 A masterplan and design code will be prepared for this site and will be adopted as SPD. It is expected that work to inform the SPD (including any technical studies that are required) will be funded by the landowner / developer.

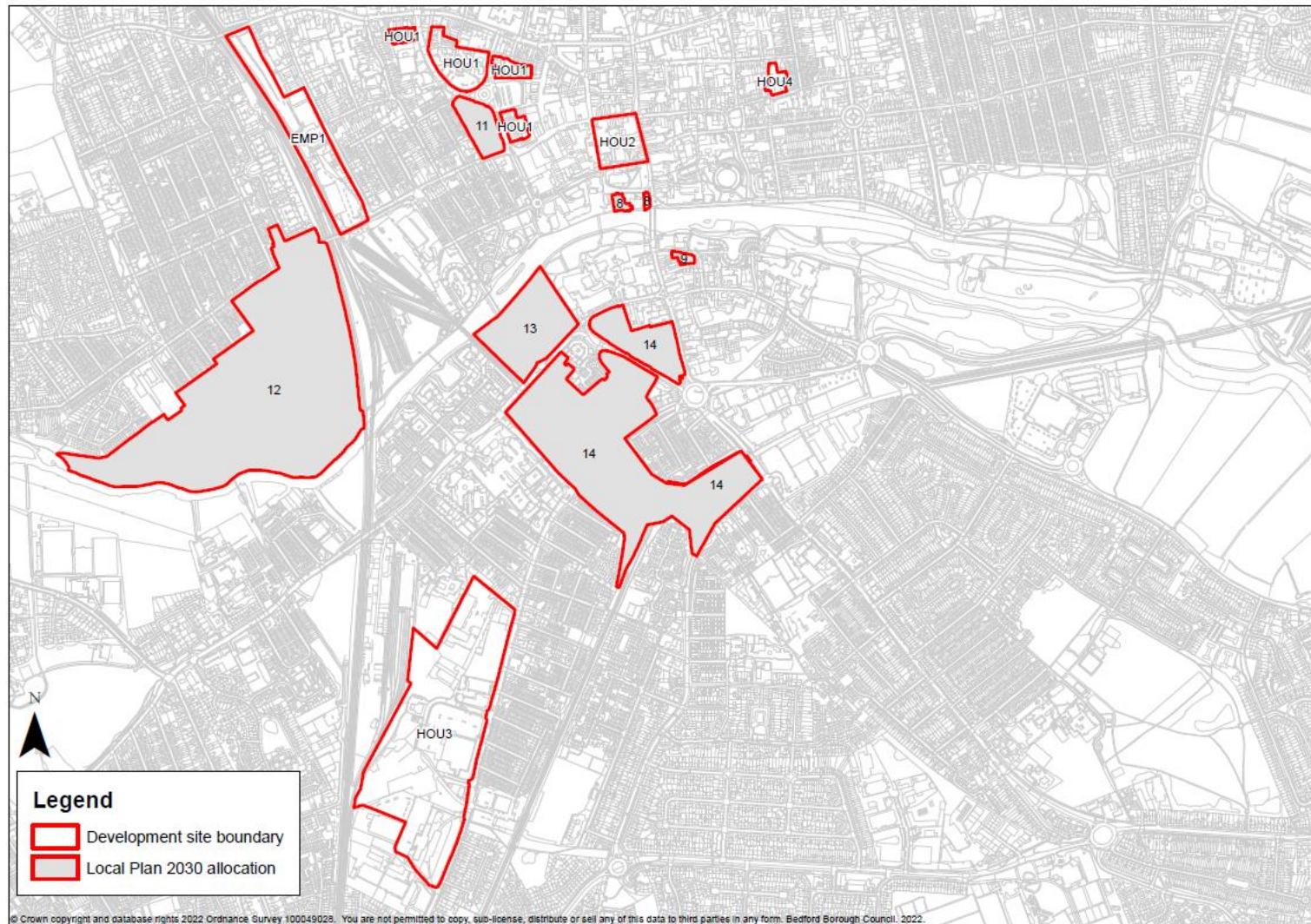
**Policy HOU3 Land at Ampthill Road, Bedford**

Land at the former Camford Works and Technology House on Ampthill Road, Bedford will be developed for a mix of residential and business uses. Key principles of development include:

- i. A masterplan and design code to be prepared and adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document prior to the submission of any planning application for the site. The preparation of the Supplementary Planning Document will be led by the Council in partnership with landowners / developers, stakeholders and the local community. It will pay particular regard to adjacent noise sources;
- ii. Provision of a mix of dwelling types and sizes;
- iii. Provision of greenspace in the form of a new urban park;
- iv. Preparation of an access strategy to include all modes;
- v. Provision of a vehicular and safe pedestrian connection between the site and Cauldwell School;
- vi. Provision of a mobility hub;

- vii. Provision of a layout which takes full account of the noise environment relative to the railway line and neighbouring land uses;
- viii. Pre-determination archaeological evaluation will be required;
- ix. Financial contributions towards secondary school provision;
- x. A site specific flood risk assessment will be needed and mitigation required for all sources of flood risk where necessary;
- xi. Opportunities to reduce surface water run-off and flood risk on and off site should be identified;
- xii. Assessment of the nature and extent of ground contamination and preparation of a remediation strategy for the site including methods of disposing of contaminated material, measures to prevent pollution of surface and ground water and provisions for future monitoring, to be approved by the Council;
- xiii. Delivery of a low carbon and environmentally resilient development that is adaptive to and resilient to climate change;
- xiv. Early engagement with Anglian Water is required in order to identify connection to water network infrastructure.

Figure 2: Town Centre sites: Local Plan 2030 allocations and Local Plan 2040 sites



## **Other Urban Sites**

4.57 The site formerly used by Peacocks auction house on Newnham Street Bedford is allocated for residential development. The site is well-located just beyond the town centre boundary, close to services and facilities both in the town centre and along Castle Road. Within the conservation area, the site currently contains a mixture of buildings and its development offers the opportunity to transform the site with an attractive residential scheme which is sensitive to the historic setting.

### **Policy HOU4 Former Peacocks Auction House, Newnham Street, Bedford**

Land at the former Peacocks Auction House, Newnham Street, Bedford will be developed for residential use. Key principles of development include:

- i. Preparation by the applicant of a masterplan and design code to be completed prior to and submitted with any planning application, and to pay particular regard to the site's relationship with the conservation area and surrounding listed buildings at 2-28 The Grove and 12-16 Newnham Street;
- ii. Provision of a mix of dwelling types and sizes to be accessed from Newnham Street;
- iii. Development should include two storey frontage development addressing Newnham Street and subservient development to the rear;
- iv. Development should preserve and, where opportunities arise, enhance heritage assets and their settings, including:
  - The Bedford Conservation Area
  - Grade II 2-28 The Grove
  - Grade II 12-16 Newnham Street;
- v. Preparation of an access strategy;
- vi. Reinstatement of the highway frontage to match surrounding area;
- vii. Financial contributions towards secondary school provision;
- viii. Assessment of the nature and extent of ground contamination and preparation of a remediation strategy for the site including methods of disposing of contaminated material, measures to prevent pollution of surface and ground water and provisions for future monitoring, to be approved by the Council;
- ix. Pre-determination archaeological evaluation will be required;
- x. Delivery of a low carbon and environmentally resilient development that is adaptive to and resilient to climate change.

### Land at Abbey Field, West of Elstow

4.58 The importance of retaining the separate identity of Elstow is recognised. Development contained within the south western corner of the site will facilitate the protection in perpetuity of the area to the north as strategic green space which offers views across to

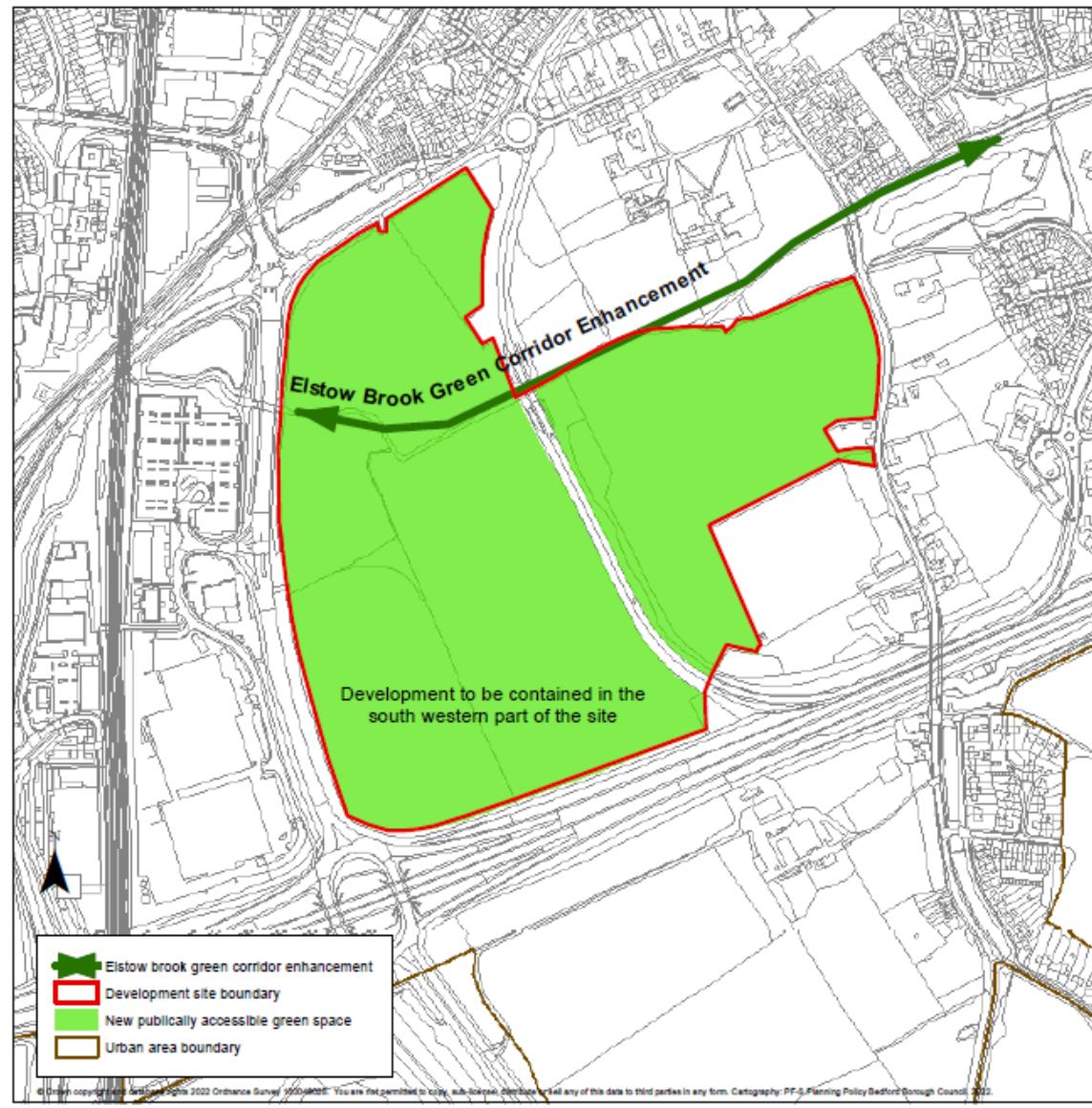
Elstow Abbey as well as opening the area up to public and the creation of a walk alongside the Elstow Brook. To be developed with an appropriate vernacular architecture that reflects its location within the landscape setting of historic Elstow.

#### **Policy HOU5 Abbey Field, West of Elstow**

Land at Abbey Field, will be developed for residential use and provide public access to existing urban open space, linking into the Elstow Brook corridor. Key principles of development include:

- i. Preparation by the applicant of a masterplan and design code to be completed prior to and submitted with any planning application, to pay particular regard to:
  - a. ensuring that the development is designed to reflect the site's important location and to preserve the setting of heritage assets where possible,
  - b. ensuring development will be contained west of Abbey Fields and south of the Elstow Brook, with significant open space to the north and east of the development site to open up the Elstow Brook corridor and the wider area for public access from which views of the Abbey and the scheduled monument of Elstow Manor House (remains of) can be enjoyed,
  - c. identifying opportunities to enhance green infrastructure including connections to existing networks,
  - d. identifying and mitigating noise pollution from adjoining road and nearby industrial development.
- ii. Provision of a mix of dwelling types and sizes to be accessed from Abbey Fields;
- iii. Preparation of an access strategy to include:
  - a. Provision of a pedestrian / cycle bridge across the A421 between the site and Pear Tree Farm,
  - b. Provision of pedestrian and cycle routes through the site and along Abbey Fields and safe crossing points to facilitate connections with the wider network including at Progress Park, West End and Wilstead Roads facilitating connections to / from the South of Bedford Policy area.
- iv. Financial contributions towards secondary school provision;
- v. Pre-determination archaeological evaluation will be required;
- vi. A site specific flood risk assessment will be needed and mitigation required for all sources of flood risk where necessary. Opportunities to reduce surface water run-off and flood risk on and off site should be identified;
- vii. An assessment of the site-specific ecological impacts of the proposal to be undertaken prior to the submission of any planning application;
- viii. Delivery of a low carbon and environmentally resilient development that is adaptive to and resilient to climate change;
- ix. Early engagement with Anglian Water is required in order to identify connection to water network infrastructure.

Figure 3: Abbey Field West of Elstow



## The Cloisters, Church Lane, Bedford

- 4.59 Redevelopment of land at Bury Court currently containing garage blocks, a church hall and the vicarage provides the opportunity for an additional access north to Elliot Crescent and also the relocation of the church hall. Development of the area is to be influenced by and enhance the adjacent St. Mary's Church and design out existing anti-social behaviour experienced on the site. The site offers the opportunity to include additional pedestrian access routes and areas of public open space and a community garden framing views to the church.

### **Policy HOU6 The Cloisters, Church Lane, Bedford**

Land at Bury Court, Church Lane, Bedford will be developed for residential use and include the relocation of the church hall with access onto Church Lane. Key principles of development include:

- i. Preparation by the applicant of a masterplan and design code to be completed prior to and submitted with any planning application to pay particular regard to the site's important location to preserve the setting of heritage assets and existing veteran trees along the western boundary;
- ii. Development should where possible preserve, and where opportunities arise, enhance the significance of Grade II\* St. Mary's Church and the contribution made by setting to significance;
- iii. Development will be limited to a two storey height and public open space provided along the western boundary adjacent to the churchyard to preserve a spatial buffer from views of St Mary's Church within the churchyard;
- iv. Provision of a range of housing types and sizes;
- v. Improvements to transportation networks, including widening and surface improvements to existing pavements to accommodate wheelchair users (approx. 10m);
- vi. Retention of connections to existing pedestrian and cycle routes via The Copse / The Spinney / Bury Walk to the east;
- vii. Widening of the existing pedestrian cycleway south across Goldington Green to improve cycle connectivity and north along Church Lane to Queens Drive;
- viii. Financial contributions towards secondary school provision;
- ix. Identification of opportunities to enhance green infrastructure including connections to existing networks and increased public access routes to increase natural surveillance;
- x. Pre-determination archaeological evaluation will be required;
- xi. A site specific flood risk assessment will be needed and mitigation required for all sources of flood risk where necessary. Opportunities to reduce surface water run-off and flood risk on and off site should be identified;
- xii. Delivery of a low carbon and environmentally resilient development that is adaptive to and resilient to climate change.

## Williamson Road, Kempston

4.60 Land to the south west side of Williamson Road is situated next to Kempston Challenger Academy, in the middle of Kempston. It is immediately surrounded by residential and educational uses. There is an established cycleway to the north. The site can deliver a well-connected, urban residential development.

### **Policy HOU7 Land at Williamson Road, Kempston**

Land on the south west side of Williamson Road, Kempston will be developed for residential use. Key principles of development:

- i. Provision of a range of housing types and sizes;
- ii. Submission of noise survey to determine and mitigate the effects of the neighbouring Challenger Academy on development;
- iii. Suitable access arrangements and appropriate pedestrian and cycle connectivity to existing infrastructure required;
- iv. Suitable landscaping to take account of neighbouring Challenger Academy;
- v. Financial contributions towards secondary school provision;
- vi. Opportunities to reduce surface water run-off and flood risk on and off site should be identified;
- vii. Delivery of a low carbon and environmentally resilient development that is adaptive to and resilient to climate change.

## Land adjacent to Police Headquarters, Woburn Road, Kempston

4.61 The site adjacent to the Police Headquarters offers the opportunity for additional residential development within the urban area. Formerly playing fields used by the sports and social club, the site has not been used for recreational purposes for some time and has been partly used for car parking since 2011. An additional access road has recently been built – initially to serve the new custody suite located on the main Police HQ site.

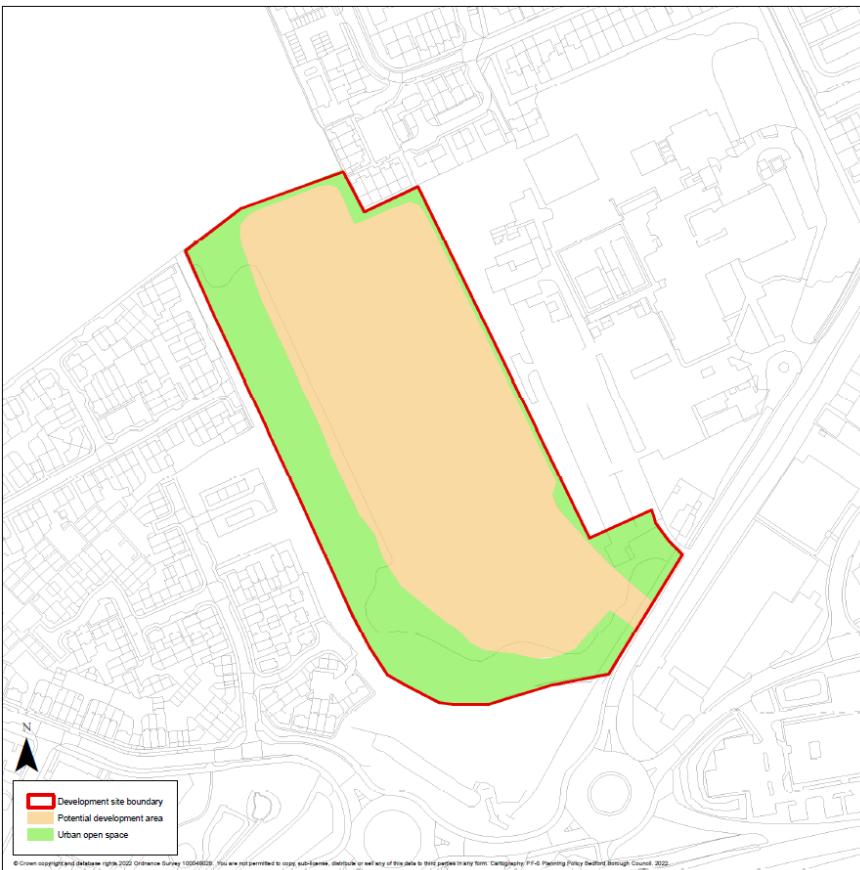
4.62 The site is designated as an Urban Open Space. The reasons for designation were that the site provides a green break in the built up area and also provides a linkage with the playing fields at KCA to the north. It will be possible to design the site to retain the green break as seen from Woburn Road, through the careful design and location of open space within the site. In addition, the treed area along the western boundary will be retained and a landscape buffer created between the site and the custody suite on the eastern boundary. These will provide wildlife corridor and green infrastructure connections to the playing fields to the north as required by Policy AD43.

## **Policy HOU8 Land west of Police Headquarters, Woburn Road, Kempston**

Land to the west of the Police Headquarters, Kempston will be developed for residential use and open space. Key principles of development include:

- i. Preparation by the applicant of a masterplan and design code to be completed prior to and submitted with any planning application and to pay particular regard to the comprehensive consideration of green space and access to it;
- ii. Provision of a range of housing types and sizes;
- iii. Submission of a wildlife and habitat survey with appropriate mitigation and enhancements;
- iv. Suitable siting of development and landscaping to take account of surrounding uses;
- v. Development should preserve and where opportunities arise, enhance the significance of Grade II Sailors Bridge Cottages;
- vi. Pre-determination archaeological evaluation will be required;
- vii. Provision of a Transport Assessment demonstrating suitable access and detailing assessment of impact on surrounding highways, and identifying mitigations measures where required;
- viii. Provision of pedestrian and cycle links through the site to improve access to surrounding green infrastructure and connections to existing networks to the surrounding residential areas;
- ix. Provision of improvements to pedestrian and cycle route running along the B531 north to Kempston and south to employment areas;
- x. Financial contributions towards secondary school provision;
- xi. A site specific flood risk assessment will be needed and mitigation required for all sources of flood risk where necessary;
- xii. Opportunities to reduce surface water run-off and flood risk on and off site should be identified;
- xiii. Delivery of a low carbon and environmentally resilient development that is adaptive to and resilient to climate change.

Figure 4: Land West of Police Headquarters, Kempston



### Land at Chantry Avenue

- 4.63 This site at Chantry Avenue has been derelict for many years. The development of this previously developed site in the urban area offers the opportunity to enhance the local environment. Located between a residential area and an industrial estate, planning permission will be permitted for a layout that designs out the likely harm to the amenity of future residents and this is achievable

with careful design of the site including the orientation of the buildings and their windows and noise attenuation fencing along southern and western boundaries.

#### **Policy HOU9 Land at Chantry Avenue, Kempston**

Land at Chantry Avenue, Kempston will be developed for residential use. Key principles of development include:

- i. Preparation by the applicant of a masterplan and design code to be completed prior to and submitted with any planning application and to pay particular regard to adjacent noise sources;
- ii. Provision of a mix of dwelling types and sizes to be accessed from Chantry Avenue;
- iii. Submission of a Transport Assessment to include measures to mitigate impact of the development on the highway network and to maximise opportunities for sustainable travel;
- iv. Financial contributions towards secondary school provision;
- v. A site specific flood risk assessment will be needed and mitigation required for all sources of flood risk where necessary; Opportunities to reduce surface water run-off and flood risk on and off site should be identified;
- vi. Delivery of a low carbon and environmentally resilient development that is adaptive to and resilient to climate change.

The council would be supportive of an element of live / work units on this site.

#### Land at Bedford Heights, Manton Lane, Bedford

4.64 The site offers the opportunity to make use of an area of surplus car parking. The housing mix and massing will need to have regard to the impact of development in this elevated location.

#### **Policy HOU10 Land at Bedford Heights, Manton Lane, Bedford**

Part of Bedford Heights car park, Bedford will be developed for residential use. Key principles of development include:

- i. Preparation by the applicant of a masterplan and design code to be complete prior to and submitted with any planning application and to pay particular attention to the adjacent noise sources, layout and massing of the site having regard to its elevated location;
- ii. Access from Brickhill Drive;
- iii. Provision of safe pedestrian and cycle links to adjacent networks;
- iv. Landscaping on and around the site to soften the interface with the adjacent car park;
- v. Financial contributions towards secondary school provision;
- vi. Delivery of a low carbon and environmentally resilient development that is adaptive to and resilient to climate change;

- vii. Early engagement with Anglian Water is required in order to identify connection to water network infrastructure.

#### Former playing field, ARA, Manton Lane, Bedford

- 4.65 The former playing field of the Aircraft Research Association provides an opportunity to extend the existing employment area around Manton Lane and provide a range of employment uses suited to this urban setting. As the site lies on the edge of the town, its development will allow landscaping and pedestrian access improvements to be delivered. The height of the development should be restricted because of the site's location on high ground.

#### **Policy EMP2 Former playing field, ARA Manton Lane, Bedford**

Land at the former playing field, ARA Manton Lane will be developed for industrial, warehousing and distribution uses. Key principles of development include:

- i. Preparation by the applicant of a masterplan and design code to be completed prior to and submitted with any planning application and to pay particular regard to landscape and visual impact issues;
- ii. 1.6 hectares employment site;
- iii. Landscape and visual impact assessment to be submitted;
- iv. Submission of a Transport Assessment to assess the impact of the development on Manton Lane / Brickhill Drive signal junction, to explore opportunities to maximise sustainable travel improvements and to accommodate all parking within the site.
- v. Pre-determination archaeological evaluation will be required;
- vi. A site specific flood risk assessment will be needed and mitigation required for all sources of flood risk where necessary;
- vii. Delivery of a low carbon and environmentally resilient development that is adaptive to and resilient to climate change;
- viii. Early engagement with Anglian Water is required in order to identify connection to water network infrastructure.

#### Land south west of Interchange Retail Park

- 4.66 The land south west of Interchange Retail Park between the A421 and railway is within the urban area and currently occupied by a radio transmission mast. This is shortly to become non-operational, giving the opportunity to develop this area for a range of employment uses.

### **Policy EMP3 Land south west of Interchange Retail Park and north of A421, Kempston**

Land south west of Interchange Retail Park and north of A421 will be developed for industrial, warehousing and distribution uses.

Key principles of development include:

- i. 3.3 hectares employment site;
- ii. Submission of a Transport Assessment to identify the impact of traffic on the B530 / Polo Field Way roundabout and Cow Bridge, and identifying mitigation measures where required which ensure access for both pedestrians and cyclists to ensure sustainable travel to / from the development;
- iii. Access from Interchange Way;
- iv. Provision of pedestrian and cycle links to the Interchange Retail Park, Woburn Road industrial estate, Cow Bridge and Ampthill Road;
- v. Pre-determination archaeological evaluation will be required;
- vi. A site specific flood risk assessment will be needed and mitigation required for all sources of flood risk where necessary; Opportunities to reduce surface water run-off and flood risk on and off site should be identified;
- vii. Delivery of a low carbon and environmentally resilient development that is adaptive to and resilient to climate change;
- viii. Early engagement with Anglian Water is required in order to identify connection to water network infrastructure.

### Land south of Goldington Road, Bedford

- 4.67 This site is well-located on the edge of the urban area and adjoining the existing Elms Farm industrial estate. Its position on the edge of Bedford means that it has good access to the strategic road network and is suitable for a range of employment uses. The site adjoins the River Great Ouse and there are opportunities for the site to contribute to achieving the objectives of the Bedford River Valley Park (Policy AD26).

### **Policy EMP4 Land south of Goldington Road, Bedford**

Land south of Goldington Road will be developed for office, industrial, warehousing and distribution uses. Key principles of development include:

- i. Development to be guided by a masterplan and design code to be completed by the applicant prior to and submitted with any planning application and to pay particular regard to the importance of this location as a gateway to Bedford;
- ii. 7.2 hectares employment site;
- iii. Contribution to achieving the objectives of the Bedford River Valley Park (Policy AD26);

- iv. Development should where possible preserve and where opportunities arise enhance the significance of heritage assets associated with the Howbury Hall Estate and the regionally significant Risinghoe Castle and the contribution made by their settings;
- v. Pre-determination archaeological evaluation will be required;
- vi. Submission of a biodiversity report with appropriate mitigations;
- vii. Submission of a Transport Assessment to include the need for mitigation on the adjacent highway and measures to ensure sustainable travel to / from the development;
- viii. A site specific flood risk assessment will be needed and mitigation required for all sources of flood risk where necessary; Opportunities to reduce surface water run-off and flood risk on and off site should be identified;
- ix. Delivery of a low carbon and environmentally resilient development that is adaptive to and resilient to climate change;
- x. Early engagement with Anglian Water is required in order to identify connection to water network infrastructure.

### Residential Opportunity Sites

- 4.68 In past local plans, the Council has identified 'Opportunity Sites'. These are sites that are in locations suitable for development, usually the urban area, but where specific technical issues prevent positive allocations being made. The reason for identifying them has been to promote their availability and invite the development industry to work with us to find ways of addressing the sites' constraints.
- 4.69 Through work on the local plans 2030 and 2040 the Council has been able to resolve many of those technical matters and most of the former opportunity sites are either an allocation in this plan or have planning permission and are counted as commitments. However, the Bedford Blues site still has outstanding technical issues. If these can be resolved, the site will provide additional development capacity in the urban area.
- 4.70 The inclusion of an additional site currently occupied by the Royal Mail delivery office would increase the number of residential units that could be delivered within close proximity to the station. For this reason, the Jowett Sidings and Royal Mail sites are included as an opportunity site in accordance with Policy DS6 (which replaces Local Plan 2030 Policy 26). The Town Deal programme, includes funding for works around Midland station designed to develop a gateway to the town and promote sustainable travel. More information about opportunity sites is given in Appendix 3.

## **Policy DS6 Opportunity Sites**

Within the urban area a number of opportunity sites have been identified that have redevelopment potential for housing development. These are described in Appendix 3. The Council will work with land owners and other interested parties to investigate such opportunities and bring them forward through the development management process where possible.

### **Adjacent to the urban area**

- 4.71 Two residential allocations adjacent to the urban area are included in the plan because they provide the opportunity to help deliver two of the Council's strategic green and blue infrastructure priorities alongside residential development.

#### Gibraltar Corner

- 4.72 An allocation for residential development is made at Gibraltar Corner. As well as being adjacent to the urban area, Gibraltar Corner also falls within the South of Bedford policy area and the allocation policy is contained in the policies dealing with that area (see Policy HOU13 below). The dual status of the site has no strategic significance. A new settlement policy area has been defined which maintains the area's separate character and prevents coalescence with other settlement including the urban area. Development here benefits from good links with Bedford and the opportunity to access rail stations. It also delivers significant green and blue infrastructure improvements including a section of the Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway Park and additional planting areas contributing to the Forest of Marston Vale.

#### Bedford River Valley Park

- 4.73 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 (Allocations & Designations Local Plan Policy AD23). 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.
- 4.74 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 to serve the recreational needs of Bedford's expanding population. Development of the

site will enable the consolidation of a number of piecemeal areas of green infrastructure and will foster biodiversity improvements through habitat creation and sensitive landscaping.

- 4.75 The development will become a gateway into the eastern side of Bedford providing pedestrian and cycle links connecting into the existing networks. The area has high archaeological significance which will be enhanced and interpreted for the benefit of the wider public. Policy AD26 sets the Bedford River Valley Park Framework. The watersports lake will become a multi-activity area for local residents, as well as providing a regional facility for watersports events.
- 4.76 A masterplan and design code will be prepared for this site and will be adopted as SPD. It is expected that work to inform the SPD (including any technical studies that are required) will be funded by the landowner / developer.

#### **Policy HOU11 Land at Bedford River Valley Park**

Land at Bedford River Valley Park will be developed for a mix of residential, education, open space and recreational uses including the delivery of a watersports lake and strategic green infrastructure improvements. Key principles of development include:

- i. A masterplan and design code to be prepared and adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document prior to the submission of any planning application for the site. The preparation of the Supplementary Planning Document will be led by the Council in partnership with landowners / developers, stakeholders and the local community;
- ii. Delivery of a mix of residential units;
- iii. Submission of a Transport Assessment detailing impact on the surrounding highway network, necessary mitigations and opportunities for internal and external connectivity and active and low carbon travel;
- iv. Provision of two vehicular access points onto the A603;
- v. Provision of pedestrian and cycle routes and links to existing networks including NCN51;
- vi. Provision of a mobility hub;
- vii. Provision of a serviced site with a minimum area of 2.4 ha to accommodate a two form entry primary school and to include early years' provision;
- viii. Financial contributions to secondary school provision;
- ix. Delivery of a watersports lake before the completion of the 500<sup>th</sup> dwelling appropriate for regional standard events and associated infrastructure including boat house, club house and adequate car parking;
- x. Provision of links to existing green infrastructure networks;
- xi. Masterplan to ensure that development is designed to preserve and where opportunities arise, enhance the significance of heritage assets and the contribution made by setting, including for
  - Grade II Octagon Farmhouse
  - Grade II Dog House
  - Assets within Willington including the Scheduled Stables and Dovecote, and Grade II St Lawrence Church;

- xii. The retention and appropriate reuse of Octagon Farmhouse and its outbuildings as part of the overall development;
- xiii. A buffer should be provided between the scheduled monument, 'Two Barrows' 500m NE of Octagon Farm and the cycle path proposed ensuring that the significance of the asset is not harmed by redevelopment through physical impacts of redevelopment;
- xiv. Pre-determination archaeological evaluation in areas not previously subject to quarrying or archaeological investigation;
- xv. Investigation into the diversion of Elstow Brook in consultation with the Internal Drainage Board;
- xvi. A site specific flood risk assessment will be needed and mitigation required for all sources of flood risk where necessary. Opportunities to reduce surface water run-off and flood risk on and off site should be identified;
- xvii. Contribution to the Forest of Marston Vale with a minimum of 30% tree cover to be provided on the site;
- xviii. Submission of a wildlife and habitat survey with appropriate mitigation and enhancements;
- xix. Delivery of a low carbon and environmentally resilient development that is adaptive to and resilient to climate change;
- xx. Early engagement with Anglian Water is required in order to identify connection to water network infrastructure;
- xxi. Investigation of opportunities for a district heating network associated with the nearby Water Recycling Centre.

## **Growth locations on the EWR / A421 transport corridor and with the potential for rail-based growth**

### **South of Bedford**

4.77 The South of Bedford Strategic policy area extends from the edge of the urban area to the borough boundary south and west of Bedford. It includes locations where strategic development is already planned or has recently taken place and new opportunities for strategic rail-based growth at the core of the Arc to deliver new jobs and homes. In addition, the area is within the Forest of Marston Vale, where there is an established agenda for landscape improvement and enhancing green infrastructure.

### **Overarching Vision**

**The South of Bedford area will be an Arc-leading place of innovation, set against the backdrop of a strong, multi-functional green infrastructure network structured around a maturing Forest of Marston Vale where distinctive healthy, walkable neighbourhoods enable people to meet their needs locally and travel actively, and where the possibilities for lower carbon living are maximised for all.**

**The Stewartby Hardwick rail station will open up a unique location for the creation of a new settlement set within a Forest Park of around 4,000 dwellings incorporating an innovation hub to provide high quality, local employment opportunities. The newly opened station at Wixams will support expansion of the established new settlement in proximity to further innovation-based employment provision at Pear Tree Farm.**

**With its good connections to Bedford, Shortstown will bring additional development opportunities including the re-use of brownfield land at the DVSA site. Also close to Bedford, development at Gibraltar Corner will support the provision of a further section of the Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway Park which is a strategic green infrastructure priority for the Council.**

**Across the policy area, and against the backdrop of the Forest of Marston Vale, existing and new communities will be better linked by active travel routes, reducing car use, congestion and emissions.**

#### **Policy HOU12 South of Bedford area**

Within the South of Bedford policy area development will take an environment led approach and focus on enhancing natural capital by continuing to deliver the Forest of Marston Vale and enhancing the multifunctional green infrastructure network to provide the basis for distinctive place making and the setting for:

- An Arc leading new settlement incorporating a new strategic Forest Park and an innovation hub at Kempston Hardwick served by a new station on the East West Rail line at Stewartby Hardwick (Policy HOU14);
- Eastern and southern expansions to Wixams new settlement and the delivery of new station on the Midland Main Line (Policies HOU 15 and 16);
- Development at Shortstown; land at the former DVSA site (Policy HOU18) and at College Farm incorporating a mobility hub (Policy HOU17);
- Development focussed at Gibraltar Corner delivering an additional section of the Bedford Waterway Park, wet woodland and additional access to nearby green infrastructure (Policy HOU13);
- A high value business park (primarily research and development with elements of manufacturing, warehousing and distribution) at Pear Tree Farm, Elstow (Policy EMP5).

Development will be delivered in tandem with infrastructure and will require contributions to the delivery of:

- The Forest of Marston Vale (LP 2030 Policy 36S) involving a minimum of 30% tree cover to be provided across the policy area and connections to the wider network;
- The Bedford Waterway Park (Allocations and Designations Plan Policy AD27);
- Strategic transport infrastructure;
- An enhanced active travel network including an expanded Green Wheel and connections to National Cycle Network Route 51;
- Environmental regeneration including biodiversity net gain, particularly through the remediation of sites associated with the brickmaking industry;

- Healthy walking neighbourhoods;
- Multi user routes to be provided wherever possible including upgrading existing routes to bridleway status;
- Links between Stewartby Hardwick and Wixams Stations including the provision of a dedicated shuttle bus service which also connects Gibraltar Corner and East Wixams.

Development should also explore the potential for:

- Strategic solution surface water management issues;
- Community heating (LP 2030 Policy 55).

The Council will prepare a **strategic place making framework** to guide development across the policy area which will be adopted as Supplementary Planning Document. This will focus on matters including:

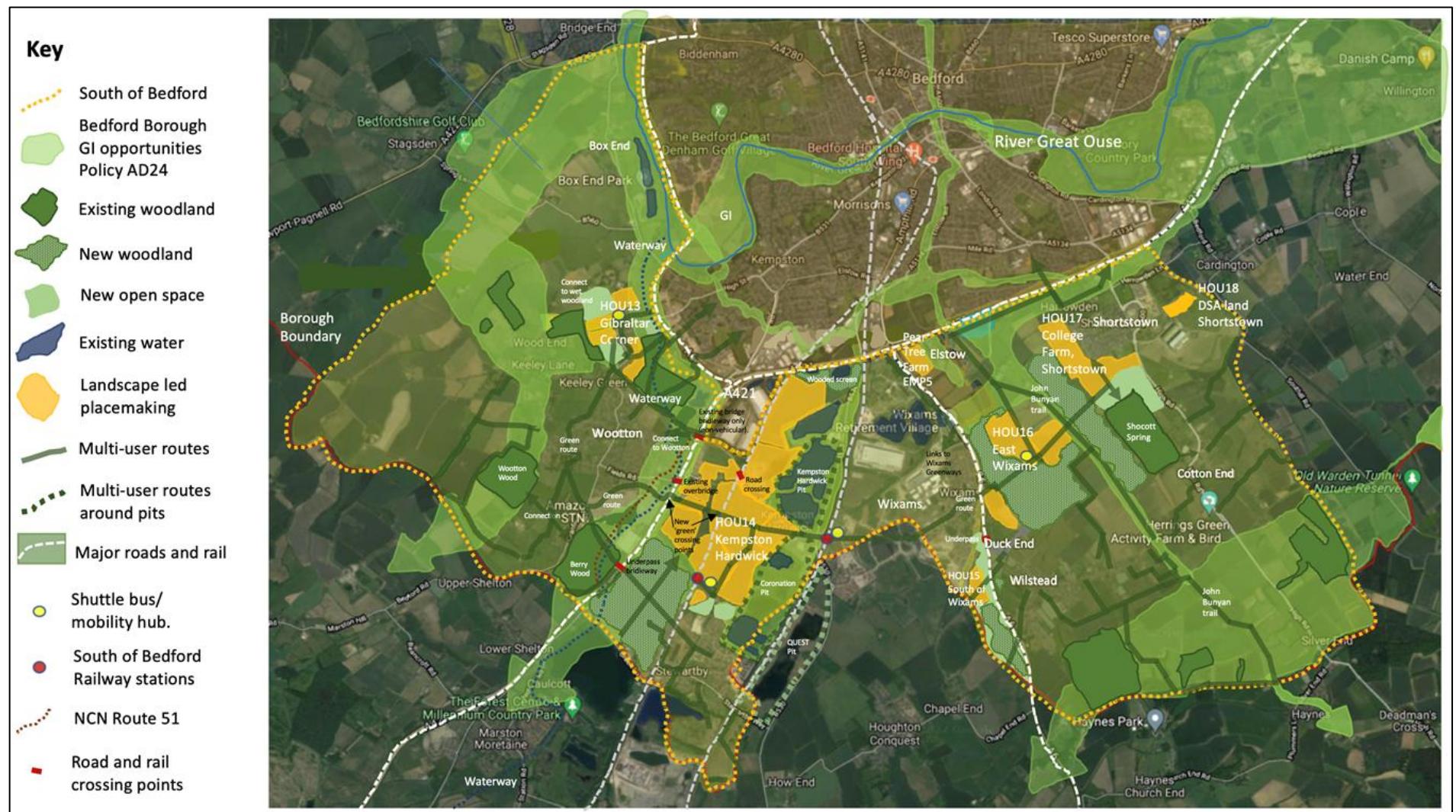
- Landscape, natural capital and green infrastructure;
- Internal and external connectivity and active and low carbon travel;
- Environmental regeneration and remediation;
- Strategic master planning and place making principles;
- Approaches to governance and stewardship of community assets;
- Infrastructure delivery in accordance with the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

The allocated residential and employment sites must be well designed and respond to the vision for the area. To ensure that quality will be created and maintained design guidance will be prepared, having regard to the strategic place making framework and where appropriate Garden City Principles, will be prepared in the form of development briefs, masterplans and design codes depending on the size of the individual sites and as specified in policies HOU13-18 and EMP5.

Elsewhere within the policy area, outside of the settlement limits defined on the policies map the adopted policies of the development plan and in particular Policy 7S will apply.

4.78 The key elements of the vision are illustrated in the strategic concept plan below

Figure 5: South of Bedford area



### Land at Gibraltar Corner, Kempston Rural

- 4.79 Development of land at Gibraltar Corner, Kempston Rural will contribute to the delivery of key green and blue infrastructure projects in the south of Bedford area including a section of the Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway Park and the Forest of Marston Vale, with a particular opportunity to provide areas of wet woodland within the site. Development will help to facilitate a new school and pedestrian and cycle paths linking Wootton and Kempston. This area also contains good examples of ridge and furrow which can be incorporated into the green infrastructure of the site.
- 4.80 A masterplan and design code will be prepared for this site and will be adopted as SPD. It is expected that work to inform the SPD (including any technical studies that are required) will be funded by the landowner / developer.

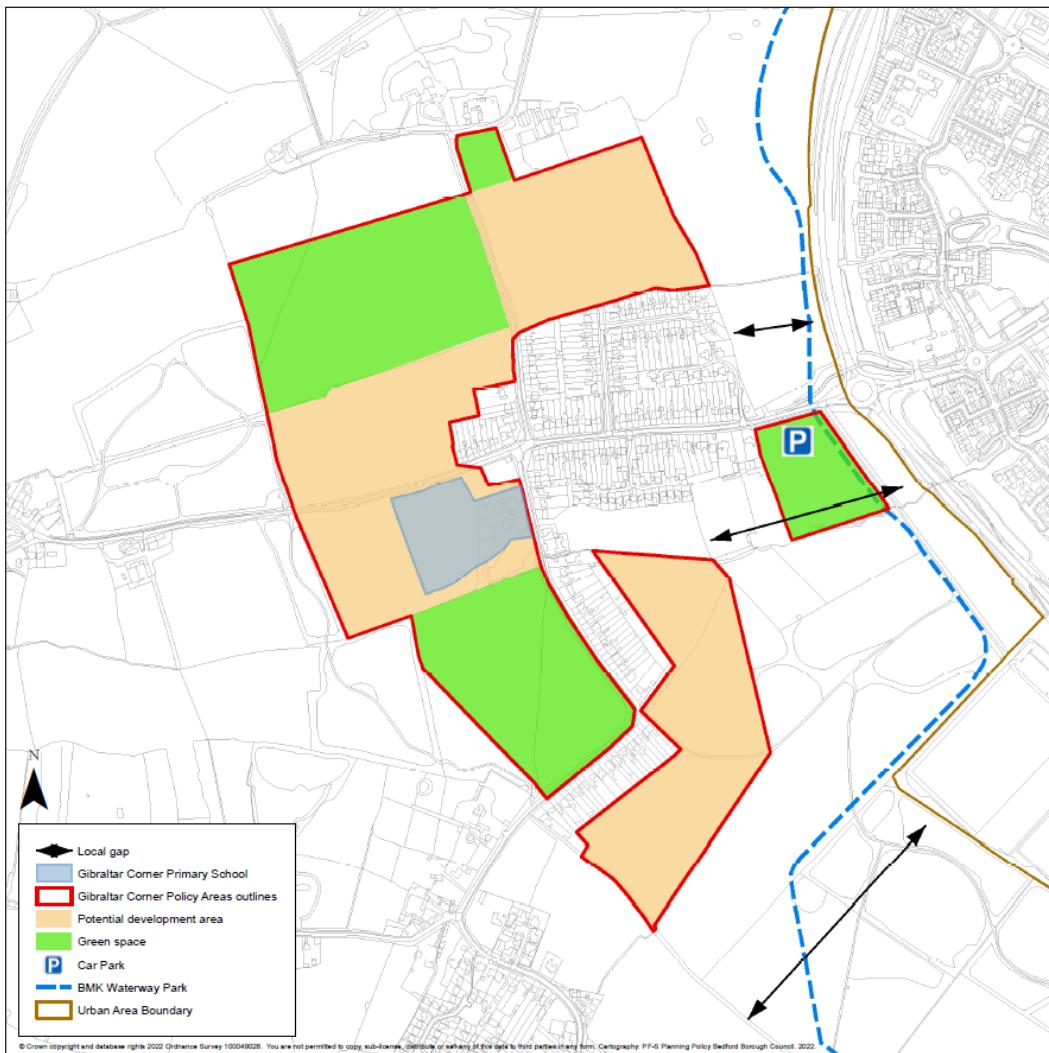
#### **Policy HOU13 Land at Gibraltar Corner, Kempston Rural**

Land at Gibraltar Corner, Kempston Rural will be developed for a mix of residential uses and open space including the delivery of strategic green infrastructure improvements. Key principles of development include:

- i. A masterplan and design code to be prepared and adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document prior to the submission of any planning application for the site. The preparation of the Supplementary Planning Document will be led by the Council in partnership with landowners / developers, stakeholders and the local community. This document will accord with the South of Bedford strategic framework and will be prepared in advance of the submission of a planning application and will pay particular regard to ensuring that the development is designed to preserve the setting of heritage assets;
- ii. Provision of a mix of dwelling types and sizes;
- iii. Submission of a Transport Assessment;
- iv. Measures to facilitate access by bus services across the site including a shuttle bus connecting the site with Kempston Hardwick and Wixams railway stations and the provision of a mobility hub;
- v. Provision of a pedestrian cycleway between the site, Kempston and surrounding green infrastructure and NCN 51;
- vi. Provision of a 2.4ha serviced site to accommodate a 2FE Primary school to include early years' provision;
- vii. Financial contribution towards secondary school provision;
- viii. Delivery of improvements to the green infrastructure network;
- ix. Masterplan to ensure development is designed to preserve and, where opportunities arise, enhance the significance of heritage assets and the contribution made by setting including for:
  - Grade II listed The Cottage,
  - Grade II Kempston House,

- Grade II Ramsay Cottage,
  - Grade II 157 Bedford Road, and
  - Listed buildings in and around Keeley Green;
- x. Include appropriate mitigation measures where necessary for heritage assets listed under ix;
- xi. Pre-determination archaeological evaluation for the parts of the site to be developed;
- xii. Areas of ridge and furrow earthworks to be protected during construction;
- xiii. The developable area shall be located within Flood Zone 1;
- xiv. Contribution to the Forest of Marston Vale with a minimum of 30% tree cover to be provided on the site with appropriate public access and may include areas of wet woodland;
- xv. Submission of a wildlife and habitat survey with appropriate mitigation and enhancements;
- xvi. Provision of land to facilitate the Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway Park to the east of Gibraltar Corner;
- xvii. Provision of a public car parking area to provide parking for local residents and visitors, including those to the Bedford and Milton Keynes Waterway Park, Forest of Marston Vale, walking and cycling routes. The proposed car park shall be designed and located to minimise disturbance to the best preserved sections of ridge and furrow earthworks in this area;
- xviii. A site specific flood risk assessment will be needed and mitigation required for all sources of flood risk where necessary. Opportunities to reduce surface water run-off and flood risk on and off site should be identified and could consider the ability of the Waterway Park to assist with flood mitigation;
- xix. Delivery of a low carbon and environmentally resilient development that is adaptive to and resilient to climate change;
- xx. Early engagement with Anglian Water is required in order to identify connection to water network infrastructure.

Figure 6: Land at Gibraltar Corner



### Kempston Hardwick

- 4.81 Land at Kempston Hardwick is allocated as a new settlement. The site is located at the heart of the South of Bedford Strategic policy area and the core of the Arc.

- 4.82 The site has unique locational strengths and qualities which, if properly realised and guided by appropriate design principles, will enable it to be an exemplar for low carbon living and innovation.
- 4.83 Provision of new rail stations giving direct access to Oxford, Cambridge and London will make the site an ideal location for a new settlement incorporating a highly accessible innovation campus with the potential for linked academic activities, vital for facilitating a more skilled and prosperous borough. The size and scale of the Kempston Hardwick site and the new on-site rail provision provides the opportunity to create a sustainable innovation campus which is a world class destination for clean growth with high-specification business space of offices, labs, manufacturing space and affiliated distribution space within the buildings for knowledge based industries including life sciences, technology and engineering.
- 4.84 The site has the capacity to deliver at least 4,000 homes and the potential to deliver a distinct new place which will be structured around a site wide park which would help create the campus setting needed for high tech innovative employment uses and fulfil the requirement to provide at least 30% woodland cover and through the remediation of the lake areas to create attractive waterside environments. Within this regenerated landscape the park will have an important role in establishing the character and identity of the settlement, providing a landscaped framework to link the settlement centre at the EWR hub providing community, local employment and co-working spaces, leisure, health and cultural facilities with walking neighbourhoods providing for residents' day to day needs. The likely timing of key infrastructure provision, particularly EWR and the A421 mean that development will take place later in the plan period and deliver around 3,800 homes by 2040.
- 4.85 The main land uses are indicated on the plan below. The South of Bedford Framework will further develop the vision set out in paragraph 4.73 and will include guidance on the scale, character and functions of the settlement. A masterplan and design code will be prepared for this site to show how the new settlement can be delivered in accordance with the Framework and will be adopted as SPD. It is expected that work to inform the SPD (including any technical studies that are required) will be funded by the landowner / developer.

#### **Policy HOU14 Kempston Hardwick New Settlement**

As identified on the Key Diagram, South of Bedford concept plan and Policies Map, land at Kempston Hardwick is allocated as a new settlement to create an Arc leading environment and landscape led, beautiful, healthy and sociable community. It will deliver at least 4,000 homes set in a new strategic Forest Park, which will also provide the landscaped setting for an innovation hub and business / science campus primarily focussed on innovation, research, development and education providing around 70ha of employment land. Development will be located in close proximity to the proposed new rail station on the East West Rail Line at Stewartby Hardwick and a new rail station on the Midland Main Line at Wixams.

The new settlement will provide all the key services and facilities to address its own needs, including health, education, retail, culture and community components, and will foster a strong local community based approach to the ownership and long-term stewardship of assets.

It will have a distinct identity based on a landscape led approach which values and enhances the natural environment and responds directly to its context. It will be developed to a high design quality achieved through a process of master planning and design coding and will be an exemplar for a new urban form and design of high tech business environment appropriate to its highly accessible location. It will incorporate a range of homes, employment, an integrated and multi-purpose green infrastructure network fully structured around a Forest Park achieving at least 30% woodland cover and lending context and character to walking neighbourhoods which will enable residents to meet the majority of their day to day needs locally and achieve access to the rail stations by active travel modes.

A strategic masterplan and design code is to be prepared by the Council in conjunction with the landowners, stakeholders and local community and adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document. This document will need to be produced ahead of the submission of any planning application and will accord with the South of Bedford strategic framework. The document will demonstrate how the new settlement will deliver the policy principles below and will include:

- A Natural Capital impact assessment and biodiversity study with appropriate mitigation and enhancements;
- A remediation and environmental regeneration strategy for the areas impacted by previous brickmaking and clay extraction activities;
- A Green Infrastructure strategy;
- A strategy for building healthy communities;
- A transport and movement strategy including infrastructure needs and access to both stations for all modes;
- A phasing strategy to ensure that the required infrastructure investment is provided in tandem with or ahead of the development it supports;
- An infrastructure delivery plan setting out the timing, funding, and provision of green, social, and physical infrastructure, including schools, community facilities and local centres in tandem with housing development;
- A strategy for sustainable long-term governance and arrangements for the stewardship of community assets;
- A site specific flood risk assessment including identifying opportunities to reduce surface water run-off and flood risk on and off site.

In order to ensure that the new settlement is brought forward in a high quality, strategic and comprehensive manner, planning permission will only be granted following the adoption of the strategic masterplan and design code.

Development must demonstrate how it has been holistically planned to accord with the objectives of the Local plan, the South of Bedford framework and the specific principles below:

#### GREENER

- i. The provision of high quality planning, design and place-making, and management of built and public realm so that the Kempston Hardwick new settlement is characterised as a distinctive Arc leading place which embraces the opportunity for compact urban form that capitalises on local assets and establishes environments that promote health, and wellbeing;
- ii. The provision of a site wide park providing multifunctional green infrastructure delivering the 30% tree cover required as a contribution to the Marston Vale incorporating and enhancing the site's ecological and open water assets and providing well-integrated green space (formal, natural and allotments); and providing environmental net gains as well as connections and contributions to the South of Bedford green infrastructure network;
- iii. As part of the green infrastructure network, cycle and pedestrian links to facilitate active travel within and between the neighbourhoods, business and educational areas, connectivity hubs and surrounding areas;
- iv. An integrated surface water management solution including the integration of Sustainable Drainage Systems into the network of open spaces and lakes, to mitigate potential flood risk and enhance the environment;
- v. Measures to ensure resilience to climate change including measures to ensure the efficient use of energy including the exploration of the potential for district heating utilising heat from the Rookery South Energy Recovery Facility, Stewartby and sustainable drainage;
- vi. The protection and / or enhancement of heritage and biodiversity assets within and surrounding the site, to include:
  - Pre-determination archaeological evaluation for the areas of site not already evaluated,
  - Archaeological mitigation ahead of development for those areas already evaluated and which contain archaeological remains,
  - Masterplan to ensure development is designed to preserve and where opportunities arise enhance heritage assets and their setting, including the scheduled Moated Manor at Kempston Hardwick,
  - Submission of a biodiversity report with appropriate mitigation and enhancements.

#### PLACEMAKING

- vii. Place making based on a landscape led approach which draws on the heritage of the area and achieves environmental regeneration, to create an Arc leading place structured around a new Forest Park and characterised by vibrant neighbourhoods and places to work and learn, set against the backdrop of its enhanced forest setting;
- viii. The provision of a range of house types and tenures in accordance with the most up to date assessment of housing need, including affordable housing in accordance with required levels as set out in Policy DM1(S) to meet the needs of the wider community including the ageing population;

- ix. The provision of a mix of beautifully and imaginatively designed homes at a range of densities reflecting the context and character of different parts of the site, in particular higher densities and compact urban forms around the rail hub and settlement centre;
- x. The provision for a wide range of construction opportunities, offering prospects for a variety of house builders and developers including small and medium sized enterprises and including the provision of serviced plots for self-build and custom homebuilding in accordance with Policy DM5;
- xi. The provision of serviced sites for secondary and primary schools including early years facilitates at the heart of the local neighbourhoods to serve the new development:
  - Provision of serviced sites to accommodate primary schools to provide at least 8 Forms of Entry with early years provision (2x 3FE 3ha and 1 x 2FE 2.4ha),
  - Provision of a serviced site within the settlement centre providing a minimum area of 10.1ha to accommodate 8FE secondary school with space for sixth form,
  - Financial contribution towards secondary school provision.
- xii. The provision of pitches for Gypsy and Travellers and plots for travelling show people to contribute to the need identified in a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment;
- xiii. The provision of leisure and sports facilities at accessible locations in line with current standards to serve the settlement;
- xiv. The provision of multi-functional community space and healthcare facilities within local centres at the heart of walkable vibrant sociable neighbourhoods;
- xv. Foster healthy living through access to green space as a key driver of the settlement design and opportunities for local food production, including through the provision of allotments and orchards;
- xvi. The establishment at an early stage in the development of the new settlement of appropriate and sustainable long-term governance and stewardship arrangements for community assets including green space, public realm areas and community and other relevant facilities. Such arrangements are to be funded by the development and include community representation to ensure residents have a stake in the long-term development, stewardship and management of their community;
- xvii. Design of the new settlement should incorporate appropriate mitigation measures in relation to noise sources including railway lines and the remediation of contaminated land.

#### ACCESSIBLE

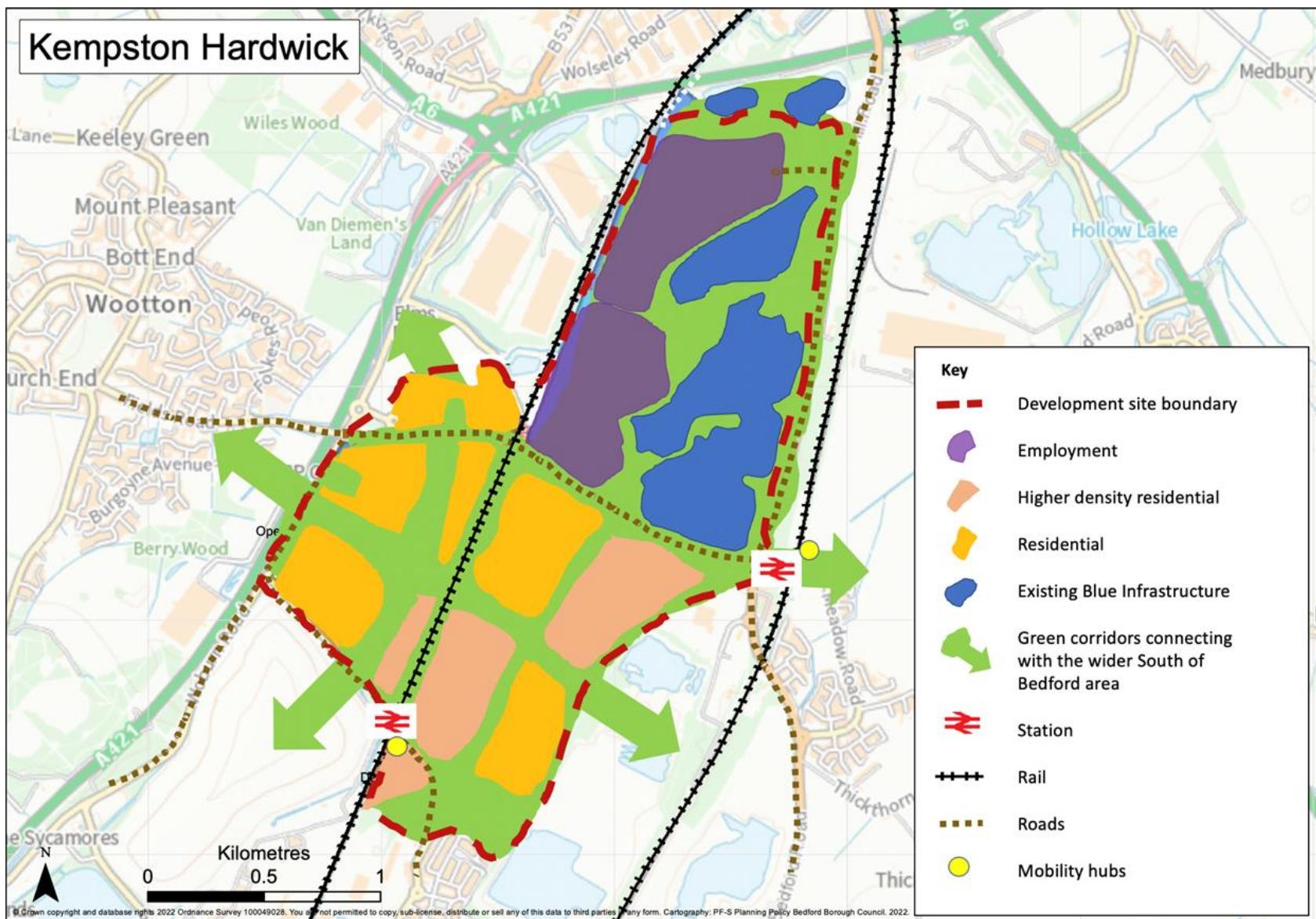
- xviii. In accordance with the transport and movement strategy, the provision of a balanced package of measures to encourage smarter transport choices to meet the needs of the new development including the integration of technology to deliver 'on-demand' travel information and measures to reduce the number of single occupancy car trips;

- xix. Measures should maximise the opportunities for active travel through the provision of a network of footpaths, cycle ways and bridleways to enhance permeability within the site and to the adjoining area and will include:
  - connections between communities across the East West Rail Line at Stewartby Hardwick, Manor Road and one additional location between these two points to facilitate accessibility,
  - new multi user routes to connect with the wider rights of way network and active travel links to Bedford,
  - measures to facilitate access by bus services across the site including a shuttle bus connecting the site with Gibraltar Corner and Wixams,
  - car clubs and mobility hubs,
  - appropriate measures to facilitate autonomous vehicles,
- xx. A programme of measures to facilitate accessibility and minimise and mitigate the traffic impacts on the local and strategic road network to include:
  - Additional access to the B530 and the conversion of B530 / Manor Road junction to a roundabout as part of access to / from Wixams Station,
  - Addition of flared approaches on the B530 approaches to the Kiln Road Roundabout,
  - Realignment of Manor Road and connections to Fields Road,
  - Upgrades to Broadmead Road,
  - Contributions towards the provision of a footbridge to Wixams Station (west) and foot and cycle connections to Manor Road,
  - The development is dependent on the delivery of transport improvements which will need to be secured before development can take place, in accordance with an agreed Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

#### **PROSPEROUS**

- xxi. The delivery of new neighbourhoods that are sociable, vibrant, and walkable (20 minutes) neighbourhoods with equality of access for all. The new settlement will provide a range of community services and facilities including health, education, retail, culture, community meeting, co-working spaces and local employment opportunities around the station and in local neighbourhoods, multifunctional open space and sports and leisure facilities;
- xxii. An innovation hub with the potential for the incorporation of academic and science park uses with elements of high tech manufacturing;
- xxiii. Installation of super-fast broadband for all businesses and community facilities and also for all dwellings to support home working, at the outset of each phase of development.

Figure 7: Kempston Hardwick New Settlement



## Land South of Wixams

4.86 The site adjoins the A6 and is located to the south of the existing Wixams development. Development of the site will allow for connections to Bedford and the Wixams for cyclists and pedestrians. Development will also include significant green infrastructure improvements including tree and hedgerow planting to provide publically accessible green infrastructure providing noise mitigation from the A6 and a long term buffer between Wixams and Wilstead.

### **Policy HOU15 Land South of Wixams**

Land at south of Wixams will be developed for residential uses and open space. Key principles of development include:

- i. Preparation by the applicant of a masterplan and design code to be completed prior to and submitted with any planning application and to accord with the South of Bedford strategic framework;
- ii. Provision of a mix of dwelling types and sizes;
- iii. Submission of a Transport Assessment to include:
  - Improved pedestrian and cycle access from the site via the A6 and Bedford Road;
  - An access strategy for vehicle access to the site and wider Wixams;
  - Multi-user routes to connect to existing networks in Wixams and surrounding areas;
  - A new bus stop to provide an extension to the existing bus service route in Wixams;
- iv. Provision of a mobility hub;
- v. Financial contributions towards secondary school provision;
- vi. A noise report should guide the location and design of dwellings on the site and establish any required mitigation measures.
- vii. Contribution to the Forest of Marston Vale with a minimum of 30% tree cover to be provided on the site with appropriate public access;
- viii. Submission of a wildlife and habitat survey with appropriate mitigation and enhancements;
- ix. Creation of a strategic green corridor to secure a permanent green buffer between Wixams and Wilstead;
- x. Development should preserve and where opportunities arise enhance heritage assets and their setting, including assets located in Duck End and Wilstead;
- xi. Pre-determination archaeological evaluation will be required;
- xii. A site specific flood risk assessment will be needed and mitigation required for all sources of flood risk where necessary; Opportunities to reduce surface water run-off and flood risk on and off site should be identified;
- xiii. Delivery of a low carbon and environmentally resilient development that is adaptive to and resilient to climate change.

## Land East of Wixams

- 4.87 The site is located to the east of the A6 and the existing Wixams development. The proposals will complement the existing development at Wixams and provide additional facilities and infrastructure including schools and an employment hub to cater for a range of flexible employment uses. The site also has the potential to create pedestrian and cycle connections to Shortstown and the Wixams. The additional development and new population will allow for an extension of the public transport service to allow for more sustainable travel to Bedford. The Meteorological Research Unit at Cardington located to the east of the site will be an important consideration in the masterplanning of the site due to the potential impact of new development on its current operations.

### **Policy HOU16 Land at East Wixams**

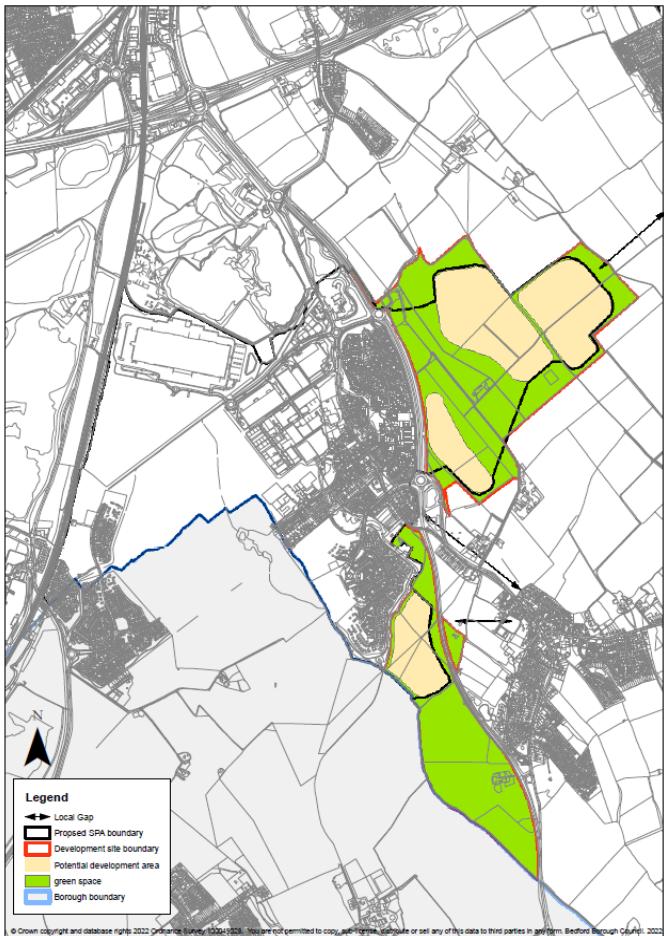
Land at East of Wixams will be developed for residential, community and open space uses.

Key principles of development include:

- i. Preparation by the applicant of a masterplan and design code to be completed prior to and submitted with any planning application and to accord with the South of Bedford strategic framework. The masterplan and design code should be prepared in consultation with the Met Office to ensure that the limitations created by the proximity of the Meteorological Research Unit at Cardington Airfield are fully considered;
- ii. Provision of a mix of dwelling types and sizes;
- iii. The development is dependent on the delivery of transport improvements which will need to be secured before development can take place in accordance with an agreed Infrastructure Delivery Plan;
- iv. Provision of a full Transport Assessment to be submitted with any planning application;
- v. Traffic mitigation for the existing roundabouts off A6 to accommodate the new development;
- vi. Extension of the bus service from the existing Wixams bus network including the provision of new bus stops to service the new development, measures to facilitate a shuttle bus connecting the site with Gibraltar Corner and Kempston Hardwick and a mobility hub;
- vii. Provision or upgrading of existing pedestrian and cycle links to bridleway status to allow active travel to Shortstown and Wixams including the crossing of the A6;
- viii. Provision of two 2.4ha serviced sites to accommodate two form entry primary schools to include early years' provision;
- ix. Provision of an 11ha serviced site to accommodate a nine form entry secondary school to include sixth form provision;
- x. Financial contribution towards secondary school provision;
- xi. Contribution to the Forest of Marston Vale with a minimum of 30% tree cover to be provided on the site with appropriate public access;
- xii. Development should preserve and, where opportunities arise, enhance heritage assets and their setting, including assets located in Duck End, with appropriate mitigation measures adopted along the southern boundary of the site;

- xiii. Pre-determination archaeological evaluation will be required;
- xiv. A site specific flood risk assessment will be needed and mitigation required for all sources of flood risk where necessary;
- xv. Delivery of low carbon and environmentally resilient development that is adaptive to and resilient to climate change.

Figure 8: Land South and East of Wixams



## College Farm, Shortstown

4.88 Land at College Farm, Shortstown offers the opportunity for sustainable residential development which will also contribute to the wider south of Bedford area allowing sustainable transport and green infrastructure linkages with Wixams to the west and beyond, including to the Wixams and Stewartby Hardwick railway stations. The proposals will complement the existing development at Shortstown and provide additional facilities including a new Primary School. The Meteorological Research Unit at Cardington, located to the east of the site will be an important consideration in the master planning of the site due to the potential impact of development on its current operations.

### **Policy HOU17 Land at College Farm, Shortstown**

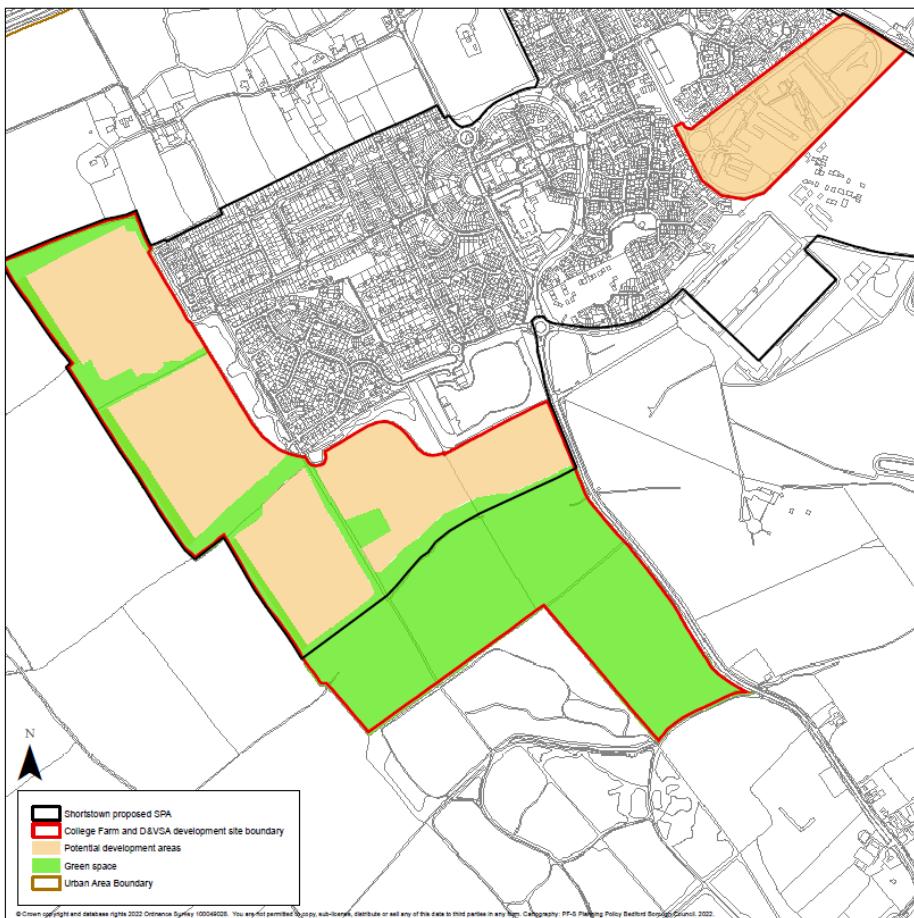
Land at College Farm, Shortstown will be developed for residential uses and open space.

Key principles of development to be addressed include:

- i. Preparation by the applicant of a masterplan and design code to be completed prior to and submitted with any planning application and to accord with the South of Bedford strategic framework. The masterplan and design code should be prepared in consultation with the Met Office to ensure that the limitations created by the proximity of the Meteorological Research Unit at Cardington Airfield are fully considered;
- ii. Provision of a mix of dwelling types and sizes;
- iii. The development is dependent on the delivery of transport improvements which will need to be secured before development can take place in accordance with an agreed Infrastructure Delivery Plan;
- iv. Submission of a Transport Assessment to include measures to mitigate impact of the development on the local and strategic route network and to maximise opportunities for sustainable travel;
- v. Provision of a mobility hub;
- vi. Provision of a 2.4ha serviced site to accommodate a 2FE Primary school to include early years' provision;
- vii. Financial contribution towards secondary school provision;
- viii. Buffer planting and landscaping to assimilate the development into the surrounding landscape;
- ix. Contribution to the Forest of Marston Vale with a minimum of 30% tree cover to be provided on the site with appropriate public access;
- x. Identification of opportunities to enhance green infrastructure including connections to existing networks;
- xi. Provision of public open space;
- xii. Development should be designed to preserve and, where opportunities arise, enhance heritage assets and their setting, including:
  - Grade II\* Cardington Sheds 1 and 2
  - Listed buildings in Harrowden

- xiii. Pre-determination archaeological evaluation across part of site not already subject to evaluation;
- xiv. A site specific flood risk assessment will be needed and mitigation required for all sources of flood risk where necessary; Opportunities to reduce surface water run-off and flood risk on and off site should be identified. New development will be steered to areas of lowest flood risk;
- xv. Submission of a wildlife and habitat survey with appropriate mitigation and enhancements;
- xvi. Delivery of a low carbon and environmentally resilient development that is adaptive to and resilient to climate change.

Figure 9: College Farm and DVSA sites, Shortstown



## Land at Former Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) Site, Shortstown

- 4.89 Following the closure of the DVSA at Shortstown, the site is now available for redevelopment. The site is surrounded by residential development to the north and west and is suitable for residential use. The site is however adjacent to the Grade II\* listed Cardington Airship Sheds and this will need to be taken into consideration.

### **Policy HOU18 Land at Former DVSA Site, Shortstown**

Land at the former DVSA site, Shortstown will be developed for residential use. Key principles of development include:

- i. Preparation by the applicant of a masterplan and design code to be completed prior to and submitted with any planning application and to accord with the South of Bedford strategic framework;
- ii. Provision of a mix of dwelling types and sizes;
- iii. Submission of a Transport Assessment to include measures to mitigate impact of the development on the local and strategic route network and to maximise opportunities for sustainable travel;
- iv. Provision of a mobility hub;
- v. Provision of a footway and cycleway to link in with the existing network and adjacent sites;
- vi. Development should preserve and, where opportunities arise, enhance heritage assets and their setting, including:
  - Grade II\* Cardington Sheds 1 and 2
  - Grade II Cardington Railway Station
  - Cardington Conservation Area
- vii. Pre-determination archaeological evaluation will be required;
- viii. Financial contributions to secondary school provision;
- ix. Contaminated land assessment to be submitted with the planning application;
- x. Habitat survey required as the site is identified as high risk for Great Crested Newts;
- xi. Contribution to the Forest of Marston Vale with a minimum of 30% tree cover to be provided on the site;
- xii. A site specific flood risk assessment will be needed and mitigation required for all sources of flood risk where necessary; Opportunities to reduce surface water run-off and flood risk on and off site should be identified;
- xiii. Delivery of a low carbon and environmentally resilient development that is adaptive to and resilient to climate change;
- xiv. Early engagement with Anglian Water is required in order to identify connection to water network infrastructure.

## Land at Pear Tree Farm, Elstow

- 4.90 The site at Pear Tree Farm, Elstow is a strategically located site at the junction of the A421 and A6 roads with pedestrian and cycle connections to Wixams and EWR stations. The design and location of buildings within this site will be important in order to minimise landscape impact and avoid coalescence with Wixams and Elstow. A key design consideration will be to ensure that sufficient separation is provided between the proposed employment development and Elstow village. For this reason, land between the development allocation and the village is identified on the Policies Map as Urban Open Space. This complies with criterion (vi) of Policy AD43 Urban Open Space. Proposals for development within the Urban Open Space will be determined in accordance with Policy AD43.
- 4.91 Significant green infrastructure benefits outside the allocated site will be delivered in association with the development, such as pedestrian and cycle links, recognising the objectives of the Bedford Green Wheel and Forest of Marston Vale projects.

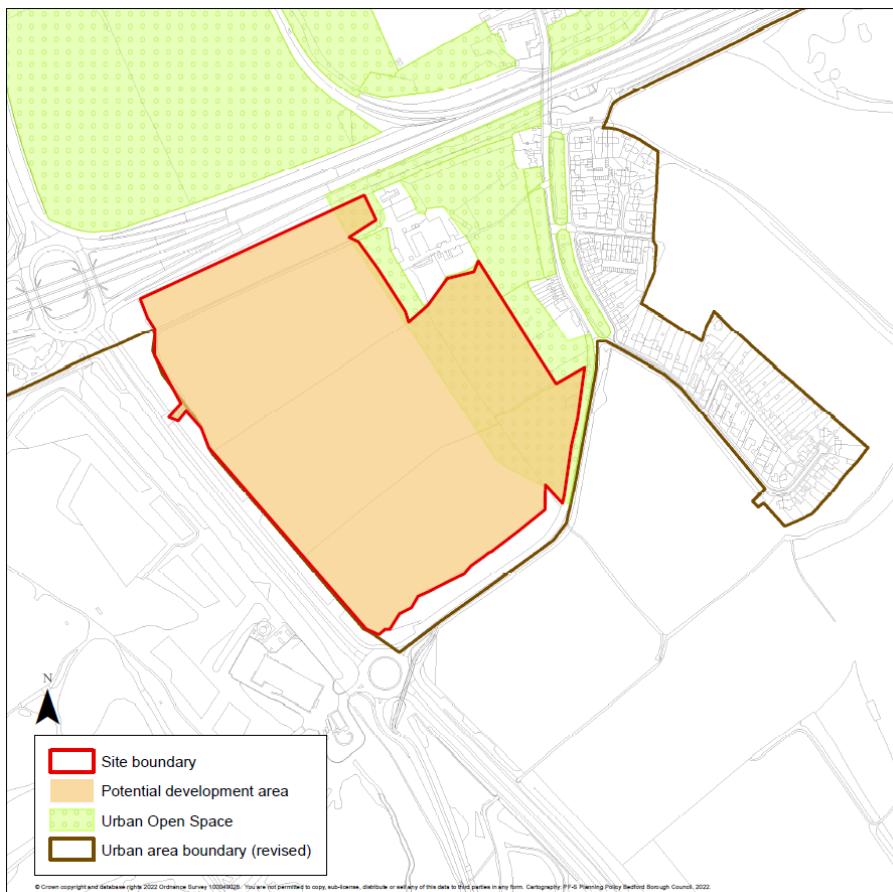
### **Policy EMP5 Land at Pear Tree Farm, Elstow**

Land at Pear Tree Farm will be developed for a science park (primarily research and development with elements of manufacturing, warehousing and related distribution). Key principles of development include:

- i. Preparation by the applicant of a masterplan and design code to be completed prior to and submitted with any planning application and to accord with the South of Bedford strategic framework. The masterplan and design code will ensure that the site is developed as a high value business park providing primarily research and development space in a landscaped setting;
- ii. 20.4 hectares employment site;
- iii. Design to respect local landscape priorities, with particular regard to views of Elstow Abbey and ensuring separation from Elstow village;
- iv. Retention of open land to maintain separation between the development and Elstow Village;
- v. Contribution to the Forest of Marston Vale with a minimum of 30% tree cover to be provided on the site;
- vi. Delivery of Forest of Marston Vale planting as a buffer along the boundary with the A421;
- vii. Provision of a green corridor incorporating a pedestrian and cycle route south of the A421 west / east from the A6 to Bumpy Lane and the A600;
- viii. A site specific flood risk assessment will be needed and mitigation required for all sources of flood risk where necessary; Opportunities to reduce surface water run-off and flood risk on and off site should be identified and implemented;
- ix. Development should preserve and where opportunities arise enhance heritage assets and their setting;
- x. Pre-determination archaeological evaluation will be required;
- xi. Submission of a wildlife and habitat survey with appropriate mitigation and enhancements;

- xii. Submission of a Transport Assessment to include measures to mitigate impact of the development on the local and strategic route network and to maximise opportunities for sustainable travel;
- xiii. Provision of a pedestrian / cycle bridge across the A421 between the site and Abbey Field or contribution towards pedestrian and cycle links required on the west side of the A6 from Wilstead Road roundabout and across the A421 / A6 junction to Bedford and Wixams;
- xiv. Delivery of a low carbon and environmentally resilient development that is adaptive to and resilient to climate change.

Figure 10: Land at Pear tree Farm, Elstow



## **Little Barford**

- 4.92 Land at Little Barford is allocated as a new settlement, contributing to the delivery of the Bedford Local Plan's spatial growth strategy. The development of Little Barford will make a key contribution towards the additional homes required to be delivered across the borough by 2040, delivering at least 4,000 new homes overall, of which an estimated 3,800 will be within the current plan period.
- 4.93 The new settlement is located to the north east of Bedford, close to the neighbouring town of St Neots. The East Coast Main Line railway line runs north to south through the site and the proposed A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet relief road runs through the site providing an opportunity for a strategic road junction. In addition, EWR will be crossing in the vicinity, possibly through the site, and will include a station offering the opportunity of a highly sustainable site accessible by rail and the strategic road network. In addition to the allocation site there is further land within the same ownership which is identified as a contingency area, should land be required to facilitate the EWR route and / or station within the site. The allocation site and contingency land are illustrated by the plan below.
- 4.94 The proximity of the site to the existing Little Barford employment area to the north offers the opportunity to locate new employment development by way of extension and / or in other areas of the site to benefit the local economy and provide further employment opportunities.
- 4.95 The site has unique locational strengths and qualities which, if properly realised and guided by appropriate design principles, will enable it to be an exemplar for low carbon living and innovation.
- 4.96 The potential to designate a conservation area at Little Barford is being investigated by the Local Planning Authority.

### **Policy HOU19 Little Barford New Settlement**

As identified on the Key Diagram and Policies Map, land at Little Barford is allocated as a new settlement to create a landscape led beautiful, healthy and sociable community located in close proximity to the proposal for a new station on the East West Rail line delivering at least 4,000 new homes and in the region of 4 hectares employment. It will provide all the key services and facilities to address its own needs, including health, education, retail, culture and community components, and will foster a strong local community based approach to the ownership and long-term stewardship of assets.

The new settlement will have a distinct identity based on a landscape led approach which values and enhances the natural environment and responds directly to its context. The settlement will be developed to a high design quality achieved through a process of master planning and design coding and will incorporate a range of homes, employment, an integrated and multi-purpose

green infrastructure network lending context and character to walking neighbourhoods which will enable residents to meet the majority of their day to day needs locally and achieve access to the new East West Rail station by active travel modes.

A strategic masterplan and design code is to be prepared by the Council in conjunction with the landowners, stakeholders and local community and adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document. This document will need to be produced ahead of the submission of any planning application and will demonstrate how the new settlement will deliver the policy principles below and will include:

- A Natural Capital impact assessment and biodiversity study with appropriate mitigation and enhancements;
- A Green Infrastructure strategy;
- A transport and movement strategy including infrastructure needs and the relationship to East West Rail;
- A phasing strategy to ensure that infrastructure investment is provided in tandem with or ahead of the development it supports;
- An infrastructure delivery plan setting out the timing, funding, and provision of green, social, and physical infrastructure, including schools, community facilities and local centres in tandem with housing development;
- Character assessment and master planning;
- Design coding;
- A strategy for sustainable long-term governance and arrangements for the stewardship of community assets;
- A detailed assessment of the mineral resource within the Mineral Safeguarding Area to examine quantity, quality and feasibility of extraction;
- A site specific flood risk assessment including identifying opportunities to reduce surface water run-off and flood risk on and off site;
- A detailed heritage impact assessment.

In order to ensure that the new settlement is brought forward in a high quality, strategic and comprehensive manner, planning permission will only be granted following the adoption of the strategic masterplan and design code. Development must demonstrate how it has been holistically planned to accord with the objectives of the Local plan and the specific principles below:

#### GREENER

- i. The provision of high quality planning, design and place-making, and management of built and public realm so that the Little Barford new settlement is characterised as a distinctive place that capitalises on local assets and establishes environments that promote health, and wellbeing;
- ii. The provision of a multifunctional green infrastructure which: retains, enhances, connects, and increases accessibility to the green infrastructure network including the River Great Ouse and on site woodland areas; provides well-integrated green space (formal, natural and allotments); and provides environmental net gains;

- iii. As part of the green infrastructure network, cycle and pedestrian links to facilitate active travel within the neighbourhoods and surrounding areas;
- iv. Integration of Sustainable Drainage Systems into the network of open spaces, to mitigate potential flood risk, and measures to ensure resilience to climate change including measures to ensure the efficient use of energy and water in accordance with Policy 93;
- v. The Council will consider whether any areas of the Little Barford settlement merit designation as a Conservation Area. In the event of its designation, development must preserve and where opportunities arise, enhance its special interest.
- vi. The protection and / or enhancement of heritage and biodiversity assets within and surrounding the site, to include:
  - Any new development should contribute positively to local character and distinctiveness and enhance or better reveal the significance of any designated heritage assets affected,
  - Pre-determination archaeological evaluation in all areas which will potentially be impacted by development and where the nature and significance of the archaeological resource does not necessitate preservation in situ,
  - Development should also seek to sympathetically reuse built heritage and retain those non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest in situ, including above ground settlement and associated earthworks, which make a positive contribution to the appearance, understanding, appreciation and interpretation of the historic settlement,
  - Submission of a biodiversity report with appropriate mitigation and enhancements.

#### PLACEMAKING

- vii. Place making based on a landscape led approach to creating a vibrant place which is sensitive to local character and creates distinctive neighbourhoods;
- viii. The provision of a range of house types and tenures in accordance with the most up to date assessment of housing need, including affordable housing in accordance with required levels as set out in Policy DM1(S) to meet the needs of the wider community including the ageing population;
- ix. The provision of a mix of beautifully and imaginatively designed homes at a range of densities reflecting the context and character of different parts of the site, in particular lower densities in accordance with the historic character of the western side of the site and higher densities in areas with higher accessibility to the East West Rail station and local centres;
- x. The provision for a wide range of construction opportunities, offering prospects for a variety of house builders and developers including small and medium sized enterprises and including the provision of serviced plots for self-build and custom homebuilding in accordance with Policy DM5;
- xi. The provision of serviced sites for secondary and primary schools including early years facilitates at the heart of the local neighbourhoods to serve the new development, (2 x 5.5ha 4FE primary and 1 x 10.1ha 8FE secondary schools);

- xii. Due to the lack of capacity in existing schools, additional capacity will be required to be open prior to the occupation of the first dwelling. Financial contribution towards secondary school provision;
- xiii. The provision of pitches for Gypsy and Travellers and plots for travelling show people where need is identified in a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment;
- xiv. The provision of leisure and sports facilities at accessible locations in line with current standards to serve the settlement;
- xv. The provision of multi-functional community space and healthcare facilities within local centres at the heart of walkable vibrant sociable neighbourhoods;
- xvi. The fostering of healthy living through access to green space as a key driver of the settlement design and opportunities for local food production;
- xvii. The establishment at an early stage in the development of the new settlement of appropriate and sustainable long-term governance and stewardship arrangements for community assets including green space, public realm areas and community and other relevant facilities. Such arrangements are to be funded by the development and include community representation to ensure residents have a stake in the long-term development, stewardship and management of their community;
- xviii. Layout and design of the new settlement should incorporate appropriate mitigation measures in relation to high pressure gas pipelines, overhead power lines and noise sources including railway lines.

#### ACCESSIBLE

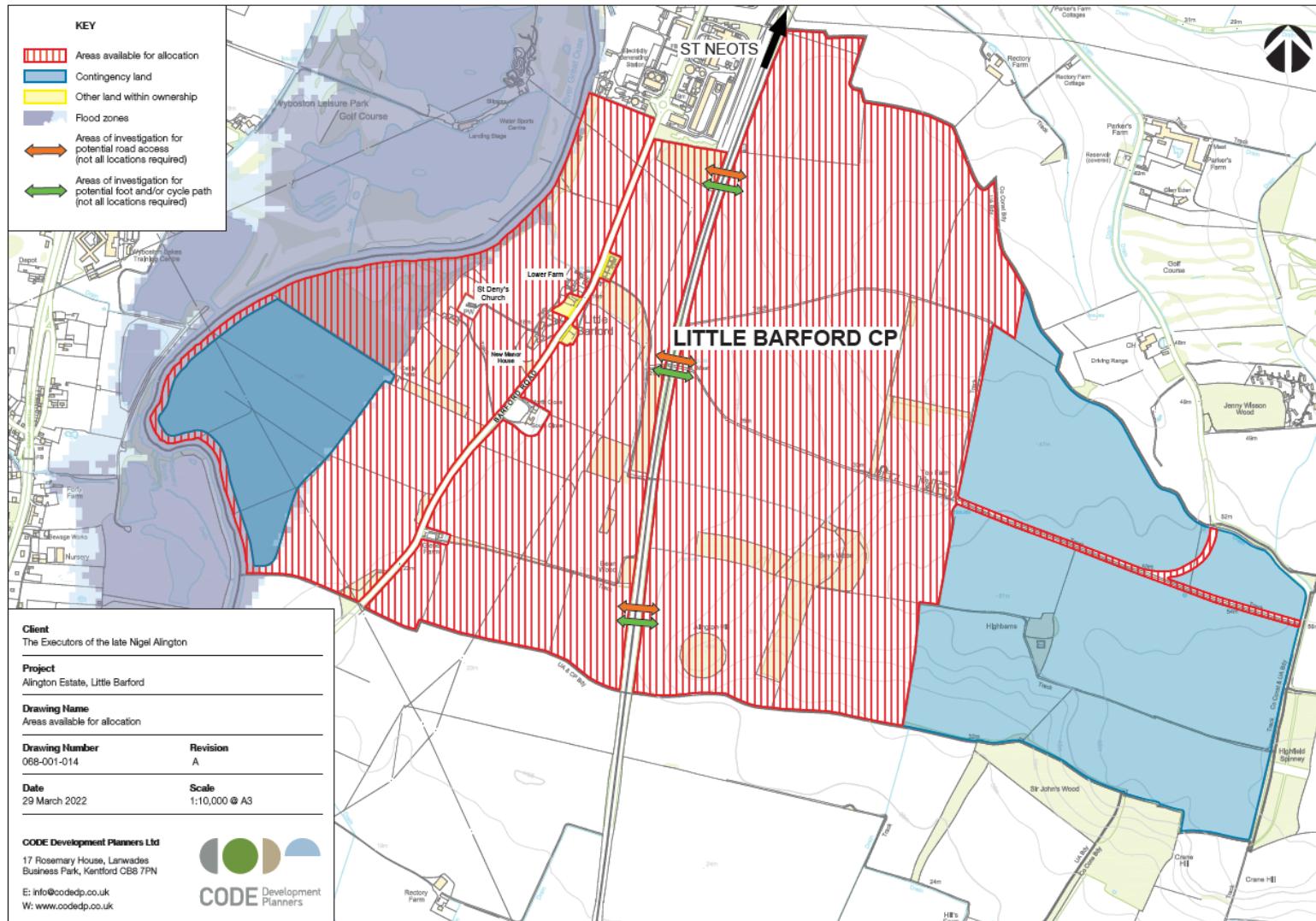
- xix. In accordance with the transport and movement strategy, the provision of a balanced package of measures to encourage smarter transport choices to meet the needs of the new development including the integration of technology to deliver 'on-demand' travel information and measures to reduce the number of single occupancy car trips;
- xx. Measures should maximise the opportunities for active travel through the provision of a network of footpaths, cycle ways and bridleways to enhance permeability within the site and to the adjoining area and will include:
  - connections between communities across the East Coast Main Line at a minimum of two locations,
  - new footway and cycle routes including the integration of National Cycle Network (NCN) route 12 through the site,
  - links to the East West Rail station including the provision of a dedicated shuttle bus service from the site,
  - measures to facilitate access by bus services across the site,
  - provision of charging points for electric vehicles,
  - car clubs and mobility hubs,
  - appropriate measures to facilitate autonomous vehicles,
- xxi. A programme of measures to facilitate accessibility and minimise and mitigate the traffic impacts on the local and strategic road network to include:

- widening of Barford Road and any necessary new junctions,
- widening of the existing footway and conversion to a cycle / pedestrian route on Barford Road up to the A428 roundabout,
- provision of a multi-user route alongside River Great Ouse and potential to cross the river,
- The development is dependent on the delivery of transport improvements which will need to be secured before development can take place in accordance with an agreed Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

#### **PROSPEROUS**

- xxi. The delivery of new neighbourhoods that are sociable, vibrant, and walkable (20 minutes) neighbourhoods with equality of access for all. The new settlement will provide a range of community services and facilities including health, education, retail, culture, community meeting spaces, multifunctional open space and sports and leisure facilities;
- xxii. Approximately 3.6 ha of industrial and warehousing employment land, to be located adjacent to and act as an expansion of the existing Little Barford employment area;
- xxiii. Installation of super-fast broadband for all businesses and community facilities and also for all dwellings to support home working, at the outset of each phase of development.

Figure 11: Little Barford New Settlement<sup>15</sup>



<sup>15</sup> (Figure 11 was replaced on 29/4/22 following approval of the local plan by Executive on 27/4/22. The main change being the references to 'Contingency land' and 'Other land within ownership')

## **Other employment sites**

### Land at Water End and St Neots Road

- 4.97 The site at Water End / St Neots Road lies adjacent to a junction on the A421 east of Bedford and has excellent links to the strategic road network. Particular attention should be paid to the impact of additional traffic movements on the junction. The site provides the opportunity to develop a modern research campus-style development, primarily for research and development with elements of manufacturing, warehousing and distribution all within a landscaped setting. Such a campus-like environment is suitable for higher-end business occupiers to enable them to attract and retain skilled staff. In developing the site, it will be important to ensure that there is adequate separation from the existing residential buildings at Green End.

## **Policy EMP6 Business Park, Land at Water End and St Neots Road**

Land at Water End and St Neots Road will be developed for a campus-style development (primarily research and development with elements of manufacturing, warehousing and distribution). Key principles of development include:

- i. A research campus of approximately 30 hectares in total on two sites at Water End and St Neots Road;
- ii. Preparation by the applicant of a masterplan and design code to be completed prior to and submitted with any planning application. The master plan and design code will ensure that the site is developed as a high value business park providing primarily research and development space in a landscaped setting;
- iii. Design to respect local landscape priorities, ensuring separation from Renhold, Green End village and the need for sensitive external lighting;
- iv. Provision of high quality landmark / gateway buildings at A421 junction in a landscaped environment;
- v. Pre-determination archaeological evaluation will be required;
- vi. Development should be designed where possible to preserve and where opportunities arise, enhance the significance of heritage assets and the contribution made by setting, including for:
  - Scheduled monument of Howbury ringwork and Medieval Trackway,
  - Grade II listed Great Dairy Farmhouse,
  - Grade II listed Hill Farmhouse,
  - Grade II listed 52 Green End,
  - Grade II listed Howbury Hall and associated heritage assets,
- vii. Include appropriate mitigation measures where necessary for heritage assets listed under vi;
- viii. Delivery of a low carbon and environmentally resilient development that is adaptive to and resilient to climate change;
- ix. Submission of a Transport Assessment to include:
  - a. Improvements to the A421 junction roundabouts,
  - b. Measures to ensure sustainable travel to / from the development,
- x. Provision of a mobility hub;
- xi. Submission of a wildlife and habitat survey with appropriate mitigation and enhancements;
- xii. A site specific flood risk assessment will be needed and mitigation required for all sources of flood risk where necessary. Opportunities to reduce surface water run-off by on and off site should be identified;
- xiii. Early engagement with Anglian Water is required in order to identify connection to water network infrastructure.

## Land at College Farm

- 4.98 Land at College Farm will be accessed from a new Black Cat roundabout at the junction of the A421 and A1. The junction is being redesigned to accommodate the A421 extension eastwards to Caxton Gibbet. Given the site's excellent links to the strategic road network it is suitable for a variety of roadside service facilities as well as employment uses.

### **Policy EMP7 Land at College Farm, Black Cat roundabout**

Land at College Farm, Black Cat roundabout will be developed for roadside services, industrial, warehousing and distribution uses. Key principles of development include:

- i. Roadside service facilities including, service station, hotel, lorry park and associated roadside service facilities;
- ii. 3.0 hectares employment site;
- iii. A site specific flood risk assessment will be needed and mitigation required for all sources of flood risk where necessary;
- iv. A Transport Assessment will be required to identify the impact of traffic on the highway and necessary mitigations including measures to ensure sustainable travel to / from the development;
- v. Archaeological excavation of areas within the proposal site not previously investigated / excavated ahead of quarrying or in connection with the A428 scheme;
- vi. Submission of a wildlife and habitat survey with appropriate mitigation and enhancements;
- vii. Design should consider the need for sensitive external lighting;
- viii. Delivery of a low carbon and environmentally resilient development that is adaptive to and resilient to climate change.

## Land to South West of Black Cat Roundabout

- 4.99 To the south-west of the Black Cat roundabout the site of the Roxton Garden Centre is allocated for employment. Its excellent links to the strategic road network make it particularly suited to warehousing and distribution uses. In developing the site, it will be important to ensure that there is adequate separation from the existing residential buildings at Roxton.

### **Policy EMP8 Land at Roxton, south west of the Black Cat roundabout**

Land at Roxton, south west of the Black Cat roundabout will be developed for warehousing and distribution uses. Key principles of development include:

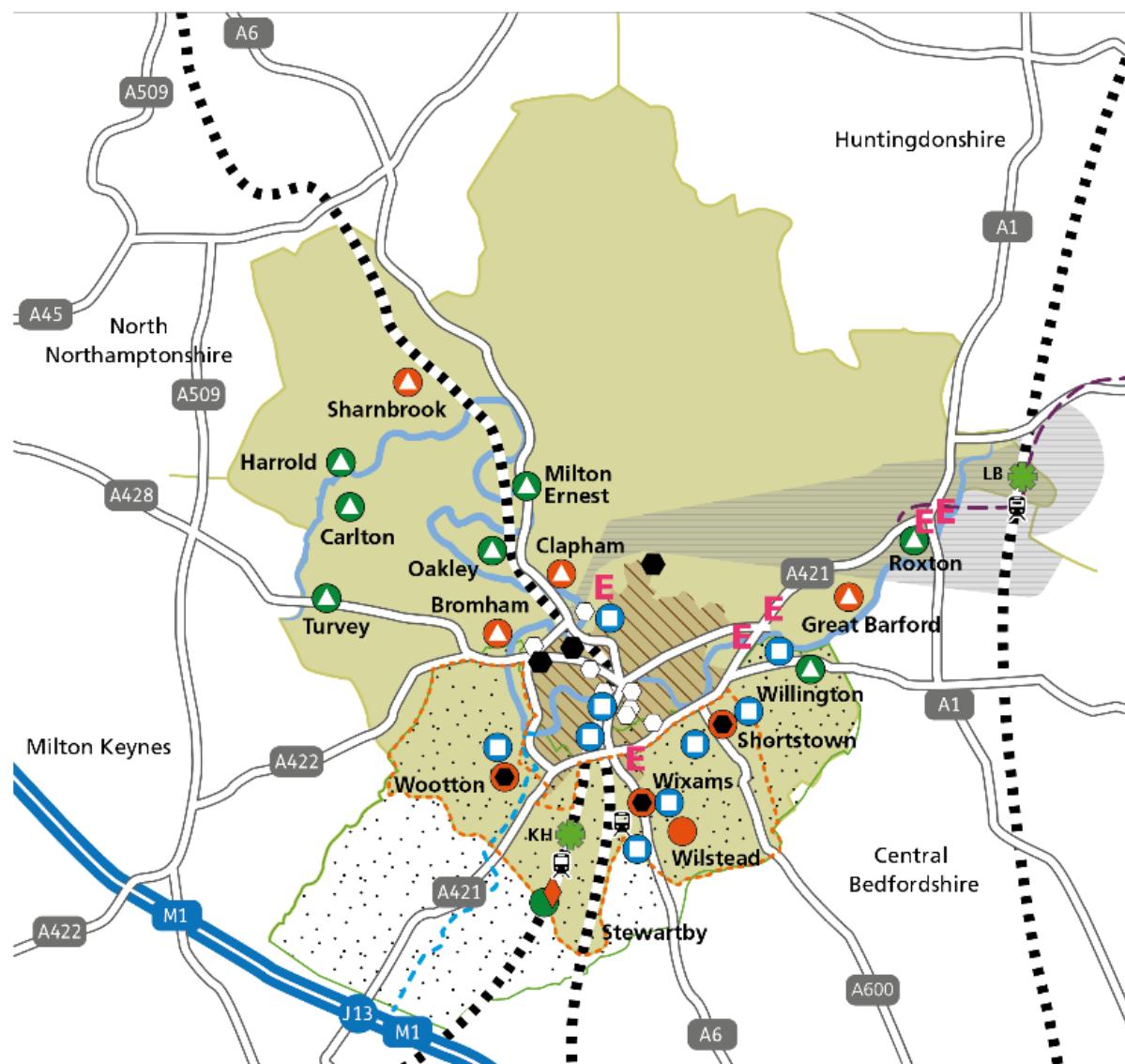
- i. 17.0 hectares employment site;

- ii. Preparation by the applicant of a masterplan and design code to be completed prior to and submitted with any planning application. The masterplan and design code will ensure that the site is developed in a landscaped setting that minimises its impact on nearby residential properties;
- iii. Design to respect local landscape priorities, ensuring separation from nearby residential properties in Roxton;
- iv. A site specific flood risk assessment will be needed and mitigation required for all sources of flood risk where necessary; Opportunities to reduce surface water run-off and flood risk on and off site should be identified;
- v. Pre-determination archaeological evaluation will be required;
- vi. Development should be designed to preserve and where opportunities arise enhance the significance of heritage assets and the contribution made by their setting including for:
  - Scheduled monument of Tempsford Bridge,
  - Roxton Conservation Area and assets within,
- vii. Include appropriate mitigation measures where necessary for heritage assets listed under vi;
- viii. Submission of a wildlife and habitat survey with appropriate mitigation and enhancements;
- ix. A Transport Assessment will be required to identify the impact of traffic on the highway and necessary mitigations including measures to ensure sustainable travel to / from the development;
- x. The development is dependent on the delivery of transport improvements which will need to be secured before development can take place in accordance with an agreed Infrastructure Delivery Plan;
- xi. Design should consider the need for sensitive external lighting;
- xii. Delivery of a low carbon and environmentally resilient development that is adaptive to and resilient to climate change.

4.100 The Local Plan 2040 Key Diagram is below.

Figure 12: Key Diagram

### Local Plan 2040 key diagram



### Key details

- Bedford Borough Administrative Area
- Bedford / Kempston Urban Area
- Major Road
- Railway
- Proposed Stations
- River Great Ouse
- Proposed Route of Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway Park
- Forest of Marston Vale
- Key Service Centre
- Rural Service Centre
- Strategic Allocation Stewartby Brickworks
- Strategic Allocation - Key Service Centre
- Strategic Allocation - Rural Service Centre
- Strategic Housing Commitment - Key Service Centre
- Strategic Housing Commitment
- Housing Allocation - Urban area and edge of urban area >25 dwellings

### Proposed Key details

- Strategic Housing
- Strategic Employment
- New Settlement (Kempston Hardwick, Little Barford)
- South of Bedford Policy Area
- A428 Black Cat Caxton Route
- Corridor for EWR

## 5.0 Town centre and retail policies

### Recent changes

- 5.1 The long-term trends affecting town centres identified in Local Plan 2030 have not changed. Centres are still challenged by the rise in internet shopping, the concentration of national chain retailers in larger retail centres outside of the borough and competition from out of centre shops. However, these pressures have been intensified by Covid-19 lockdowns and the reluctance of people to visit crowded areas as well as supply chain challenges. As a result, a number of businesses have had to close permanently and vacancy levels have risen.
- 5.2 In response to the above challenges, the government has provided support to town centres through a number of initiatives. The government's Town Deal Fund aims to drive the economic regeneration of towns across the country. Bedford has been awarded £22.6m to develop its proposals into Business Cases for delivery up to 2026. Bedford High Street has also been selected as a Heritage Action Zone to secure improvements to buildings and the public realm. The government has also introduced greater flexibility in the uses that can occupy shop units by creating a new use class for commercial, business and service uses, and permitting their change to residential use up to a certain size.
- 5.3 The Council has also produced a Bedford Town Centre Plan which sets out a series of actions to tackle challenges facing the town centre. The Plan covers the six themes of environment, regulation and property, promotion, strategy, connectivity and events. It sets out the Council's vision for the town centre as "Bedford – a place to live, work, shop, learn and explore".
- 5.4 As part of this local plan review the Council asked the public about the issues facing town centres and retailing in the borough. A wide range of comments were made and these can be grouped into the following areas:
  - focussing on niche and independent small businesses
  - enhancing physical and cultural features
  - promoting events and activities, community space and leisure facilities
  - increasing the number of town centre dwellings
  - managing the night-time economy to reduce disturbance
  - making the town safer
  - increasing green spaces
  - improving cleaning and maintenance
  - promoting sustainable transport

- 5.5 These comments have informed the Council's work on regenerating and promoting town centres, and also the policy approach of the local plan. This section sets out an up-to-date planning policy approach that responds to the issues facing town centres.

### Hierarchy of Town Centres

- 5.6 The Bedford Town Centre Study commissioned by the Council confirms that the town centre hierarchy set out in Local Plan 2030 remains appropriate. It confirms that Bedford town centre is the main focus for retailing in the borough. In order to maintain and enhance its role, it is important that the primary shopping area of Bedford town centre continues to be the preferred location for new retail development and other town centre uses.
- 5.7 Kempston (the Saxon Centre together with parades on Bedford Road and Bunyan Road) continues to perform the role of a district centre. In addition, the Council has identified a number of local centres which serve smaller catchment areas. Five local centres are designated within the Bedford urban area, whilst in the rural parts of the borough a number of Key Service Centres are designated which serve their surrounding rural areas. Remaining groupings of shops which are of purely neighbourhood significance are identified as neighbourhood centres. Wixams new settlement is identified as a potential Key Service Centre as, over the course of the plan period, the planned town centre will be constructed and, once completed, will serve the settlement and wider rural area.
- 5.8 Town centre boundaries are shown on the Policies Map. These are important for the operation of the government's 'town centres first' policy.

#### **Policy TC1(S) Hierarchy of town centres**

The hierarchy of centres is as follows –

<u>Type of centre</u>	<u>Designated centres</u>
1) Strategic centre	Bedford town centre
2) District centre	Kempston (including the Saxon Centre, Bedford Road and Bunyan Road)
3) Local centres	<u>Urban centres</u> Castle Road, Bedford Church Lane, Bedford Ford End Road, Bedford

Midland Road (west), Bedford  
Tavistock Street, Bedford

Key Service Centres

Bromham  
Clapham  
Great Barford  
Sharnbrook  
Shortstown  
Wilstead  
Wixams (proposed new town centre)  
Wootton

- 4) Neighbourhood centres      Remaining centres (small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood significance which are not town centres in retail policy terms)

New main town centre uses<sup>1</sup> are required to locate in Bedford town centre, Kempston district centre and the local centres. If no suitable sites are available, edge of centre<sup>2</sup> locations should be considered.

Development should contribute positively to the vitality and viability of the centre, and should be appropriate to the scale, character and function of the centre.

<sup>1</sup> Main town centre uses:

Defined in the National Planning Policy Framework as retail development (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; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).

<sup>2</sup> Edge of centre:

For retail purposes, a location that is well connected to, and up to 300 metres from, the primary shopping area. For all other main town centre uses, a location within 300 metres of the town centre boundary. For office development, this includes locations outside the town centre but within 500 metres of a public transport interchange.

## **Amount of Development Required**

- 5.9 The town centres' study has assessed the future need for new retail floor space in the borough over the plan period taking account of expected population growth, competition from other centres, internet shopping and unimplemented planning permissions. The study shows that there is insufficient quantitative demand to support the provision of additional convenience goods floor space in the immediate future, but that by 2030 demand could support up to 2,500 m<sup>2</sup> of net additional floor space, increasing to 5,800 m<sup>2</sup> net by 2040.
- 5.10 For comparison goods, quantitative demand to support the provision of additional floor space does not arise until after 2035 and only by 2040 could there be demand to support up to 12,400 m<sup>2</sup> of net floor space. However, the town centres' study advises that the use of long-term projections should be treated with caution and reviewed regularly in order to test the accuracy of the forecasts against emerging datasets. Recent changes in shopping habits may mean that additional floor space is not needed.
- 5.11 The town centres' study also includes an assessment of the need over the plan period for new commercial leisure facilities (including leisure and entertainment facilities such as cinemas, restaurants, bars and pubs, nightclubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres, bingo halls, theatres and concert halls). The study concludes that for most commercial leisure categories there is already adequate provision. Although no new allocations are made in the plan, any future proposals for new commercial leisure facilities that come forward will be considered on their merits.

## **Location of Development**

- 5.12 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 town centres' study has considered potential development opportunities in and on the edge of Bedford town centre and no sites additional to those allocated in Local Plan 2030 have been identified.
- 5.13 If there is demand later in the plan period for retail and other town centre development, and there are no suitable vacant units available in and on the edge of town centres, then the Council accepts that that development will occur in accessible out of centre locations that are well-connected to the town centre in accordance with government guidance.
- 5.14 It is recognised that certain uses that are defined in the NPPF as 'main town centre uses' and therefore expected to locate as a preference in town centres, may have particular market and locational requirements which mean that exceptionally they may only

be accommodated in specific locations. This may particularly be the case for bulky goods retailing and certain types of office and leisure development that require a parkland or main road setting. These types of development have specific needs that often cannot easily be accommodated in town centre locations. Furthermore, the business model of some commercial, business and service uses means that they prefer not to locate in a town centre. In such cases the Council will encourage them to locate in edge of centre locations and within easy walking distance of a town centre in accordance with the NPPF.

- 5.15 To ensure that out of centre development does not have an adverse impact on town centres, the NPPF states that proposals for new retail, leisure and office development should consider the impact on town centre vitality and viability, as well as on existing, committed and planned investment in centres in the catchment area of the proposal. The town centres' study has confirmed that for retail proposals the locally set thresholds in Local Plan 2030 remain appropriate given the vulnerabilities of the various centres.
- 5.16 Proposals for out of centre retailing will be expected to include details of the nature of the use proposed so as to demonstrate that the requirements of the sequential test are met. To ensure that a development does not change its character unacceptably in ways that would create a development that should have been refused on grounds of adverse impact on the vitality and viability of an existing centre, it may be appropriate to grant planning permission subject to conditions limiting the type of goods to be sold and preventing the development being subdivided.

### **Policy TC2 Out of centre development**

New retail, leisure and office development is required to locate in Bedford town centre, Kempston district centre and the local centres as defined in Policy TC1S – Hierarchy of town centres. If no suitable sites are available, edge of centre\* locations should be considered. Only if suitable sites are not available should out of centre sites be considered. These should preferably be accessible sites which are well connected to the town centre. Certain uses that have particular market and locational requirements may exceptionally be permitted in out of centre locations provided that they accord with the National Planning Policy Framework and subject to sufficient justification.

Any retail and leisure development proposed outside of the defined town centres must be subject to an impact assessment if it exceeds the following thresholds.

For leisure development the threshold is 2,500 m<sup>2</sup> gross floor space.

For retail development:

- i. If the nearest centre to the proposed development is Bedford town centre or Kempston district centre, the threshold is 500 sq m net floor space.

- ii. If the nearest centre to the proposed development is a local centre, the threshold is 200 sq m net floor space.

The assessment will relate to the impact on Bedford town centre, Kempston district centre and local centres within the catchment and demonstrate that development will not have a significant adverse impact on town centre vitality and viability or existing, committed and planned investment in the centres. Proposals for new retail development permitted in accordance with this policy will, where necessary, be subject to conditions to ensure that the development does not subsequently change its character unacceptably. Such conditions may limit the type of goods to be sold and prevent the development being subdivided.

\* Edge of centre:

For retail purposes, a location that is well connected to, and up to 300 metres from, the primary shopping area. For all other main town centre uses, a location within 300 metres of the town centre boundary. For office development, this includes locations outside the town centre but within 500 metres of a public transport interchange.

## **Bedford Town Centre**

- 5.17 The extent of Bedford town centre is shown on the Policies Map. This encloses the area predominantly occupied by main town centre uses, which are defined in the NPPF as: retail development (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; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries, concert halls, hotels and conference facilities). The area is unchanged from that defined in Local Plan 2030.
- 5.18 A primary shopping area is also defined on the Policies Map, which encloses the area where retail activity is concentrated within the town centre. Retail uses are expected to locate as a preference within the primary shopping area. By defining a primary shopping area, the aim is to retain a core of activity, which is one of the main attractions and purposes of the town centre.
- 5.19 Within the town centre a range of uses appropriate to a town centre location will be encouraged. Allowing a wide range of uses will reduce vacancies and increase flexibility, giving niche retailers the freedom to locate where it best suits them. However, it is important to avoid a concentration of similar uses which might have a cumulative impact on such things as environmental quality, amenity or parking, or would increase the risk of anti-social behaviour and reduce the vitality, viability and diversity of the town centre.

- 5.20 Where an application for planning permission for residential use is required, the premises should primarily be located above ground floor level because of the importance of maintaining active frontages at street level, however outside of the primary shopping area, residential use at ground floor level may also be appropriate if it would not adversely impact the vitality and viability of the town centre as a whole.

### **Policy TC3 Bedford town centre – changes of use**

Within Bedford town centre a range of uses will be supported provided that:

- i. They contribute to the vitality, viability and diversity of the town centre, and;
- ii. They avoid the concentration of similar uses whose cumulative impact would be to the detriment of environmental quality, amenity or parking, or would increase the risk of anti-social behaviour or would create a significant length of inactive frontage at ground floor level.

Acceptable uses in the town centre other than retail will include: commercial, business and service uses, hot food takeaways, public houses, night clubs, cinemas, theatres, concert halls, community uses, educational uses and other uses appropriate to a town centre.

Where an application for planning permission is required for residential use, it will be supported for premises above ground floor level throughout the town centre, provided that the use would have safe and convenient access and would not inhibit the functioning of the ground floor use. Outside of the primary shopping area residential use at ground floor level may also be appropriate if it can be shown that the proposed residential use would not adversely impact the vitality and viability of the town centre as a whole.

### **Local shopping**

- 5.21 Government guidance in the NPPF recognises the importance to communities of local shopping facilities which provide for people's day-to-day needs. Local plans should promote the retention and development of local shops in local centres and villages. Local shopping facilities reduce the need for residents to travel long distances and are particularly important for those with mobility difficulties, or who do not have access to a car. They promote sustainable living by encouraging travel on foot and by cycle. Local shops are also valuable for 'top-up' shopping trips for mobile, car-owning households. Policy TC1(S) (Hierarchy of town centres) identifies district, local and neighbourhood centres as being important for local shopping.

- 5.22 The town centres' study supports the identification of Kempston (Saxon Centre together with parades on Bedford Road and Bunyan Road) as a district centre. As a town centre, Kempston is a preferred location for new retail development. The town centre boundary is shown on the Policies Map and is unchanged from that defined in Local Plan 2030. A primary shopping area has not been defined for Kempston district centre as its size does not justify this.
- 5.23 Residential use should primarily be above ground floor level because of the importance of maintaining active frontages at street level, however in fringe areas of the district centre, residential use at ground floor level may also be appropriate, if it would not adversely impact the vitality and viability of the centre as a whole.

#### **Policy TC4 Kempston district centre – new commercial, business and service use development**

Proposals for new commercial, business, service and other uses appropriate to the district centre will be supported if:

- i. They will enhance the appearance of the district centre; and
- ii. They will be of a scale and form which is appropriate to the function of the district centre;  
and
- iii. Satisfactory servicing and car parking facilities can be provided to avoid on-street congestion and to protect highway safety;  
and
- iv. The proposal will be accessible by a choice of means of transport other than the private car.

#### **Policy TC5 Kempston district centre – changes of use**

Within the district centre a range of uses will be supported provided that:

- i. They contribute to the vitality, viability and diversity of the district centre; and
- ii. They avoid the concentration of similar uses whose cumulative impact would be to the detriment of environmental quality, amenity or parking, or would increase the risk of anti-social behaviour or would create a significant length of inactive frontage at ground floor level.

Acceptable uses in the district centre other than retail will include: commercial, business and service uses, hot food takeaways, public houses, night clubs, cinemas, theatres, concert halls, community uses, educational uses and other uses appropriate to a town centre.

Where an application for planning permission is required for residential use, it will be supported for premises above ground floor level throughout the district centre, provided that the use would have safe and convenient access and would not inhibit the functioning of

the ground floor use. In fringe areas of the district centre residential use at ground floor level may also be appropriate if it can be shown that the proposed residential use would not adversely impact the vitality and viability of the centre as a whole.

- 5.24 After Bedford town centre and Kempston district centre, Policy TC1(S) (Hierarchy of town centres) identifies the largest centres within the urban area as local centres. These have a good range of shops that are locally important, together with non-retail services and local public facilities. As town centres, they are the preferred locations for new retail development. The boundaries of the centres are shown on the Policies Map. These are unchanged from those defined in Local Plan 2030. Primary shopping areas have not been defined for local centres as their restricted geographical extent does not warrant this. The aim of Policy TC7 is to protect the diversity of uses and ensure that the vitality and viability of local centres is not adversely affected by changes of use.
- 5.25 In rural areas, Key Service Centres also perform the role of local centres and are important in serving their surrounding rural areas. Town centre and primary shopping area boundaries have not been defined for such centres because the town centre uses within them are often dispersed. They are instead protected by Policy TC7 which applies to all shops associated with the centre.

#### **Policy TC6 New commercial, business and service uses in local centres**

Proposals for new commercial, business, service and other uses appropriate to a local centre within or on the edge of existing local centres, or in existing or proposed new residential areas where there is a local need, will be supported if the proposal is of a scale appropriate to the role and function of the centre or residential area and is intended primarily to serve the needs of the local community.

#### **Policy TC7 Local centres (including key service centres) – changes of use**

Within local centres a range of uses will be supported provided that:

- i. They contribute to the vitality, viability and diversity of the centre; and
- ii. They avoid the concentration of similar uses whose cumulative impact would be to the detriment of environmental quality, amenity or parking, or would increase the risk of anti-social behaviour or would create a significant length of inactive frontage at ground floor level.

Acceptable uses in local centres will include: commercial, business and service uses, hot food takeaways, public houses, community uses, educational uses and other uses appropriate to a local centre.

Where an application for planning permission is required for residential use, it will be supported for premises above ground floor level throughout local centres, provided that the use would have safe and convenient access and would not inhibit the functioning of the ground floor use. In fringe areas of local centres residential use at ground floor level may also be appropriate if it can be shown that the proposed residential use would not adversely impact the vitality and viability of the centre as a whole.

- 5.26 Neighbourhood centres, which can be either in rural or urban areas, are smaller centres which have a small catchment serving local needs and are of purely neighbourhood significance. They are not considered to be town centres in policy terms and are not defined on the Policies Map, nevertheless the essential shops within them can be important for those who do not have access to a car or for 'top-up' shopping trips. Smaller groupings of shops which are not large enough to form a centre, together with individual shops may also be important locally where they provide for essential needs.
- 5.27 In 2020 the government established new Use Class F2 which includes small shops of under 280 m<sup>2</sup> floor space mostly selling essential goods, including food, where there is no other such facility within 1,000 m distance. The creation of a separate class for such uses means that planning permission is needed before they can be used for other purposes. Public houses can also be important for local communities, particularly in rural areas. The aim of Policy TC8 therefore is to maintain essential local shops and public houses which are important for the local community and where there are no others nearby.

#### **Policy TC8 Essential local shops and public houses – changes of use**

The Council will only grant planning permission for the change of use of essential local shops within Class F2 or public houses to other uses when:

- i. There is an alternative facility within 1,000 metres providing a similar service; and
- ii. The applicant can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Council that the current (or last) use is no longer economically viable by providing evidence that the property has been actively and appropriately marketed and supplying evidence that the use cannot viably be sustained; and
- iii. The proposed use would not lead to the concentration of similar uses whose cumulative impact would be to the detriment of environmental quality, amenity or parking, or would increase the risk of anti-social behaviour.

## **Impact of town centre uses**

5.28 In order to avoid any over-concentration of un-neighbourly facilities, for example restaurants and hot food takeaways, and to maintain residential amenity close to residential areas, it may be necessary to restrict the opening times of town centre uses. In addition, it will be important that restaurants and hot food takeaways provide appropriate refuse facilities.

### **Policy TC9 Impact of town centre uses**

Town centre uses\* will be supported where they will not give rise to a significantly detrimental effect (either individually or cumulatively) on adjacent uses or the character and amenity of the area through noise, smell, litter, traffic problems or other side effects. The Council will consider restricting the opening hours of premises where necessary.

This policy applies to town centres, neighbourhood centres and individual shops throughout the borough.

\* Town centre uses:

Defined in the National Planning Policy Framework as retail development (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; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).

## 6.0 Development management policies

6.1 This section contains new or replacement development management policies. Policies that are replaced are listed in Appendix 1.

### Housing

- 6.2 The Council's Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) Addendum (April 2022) establishes the standard method housing requirement for housing in Bedford for the period 2020–2040 to be 27,100. This includes a need for affordable housing of 6881 dwellings over the same period equivalent to an average of 344 dwellings per year.
- 6.3 Affordable housing as defined by the NPPF 2021 comprises housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and / or is for essential local workers) which accords with the NPPF definitions of affordable housing for rent, starter homes, discounted market sales housing and other affordable routes to home ownership.
- 6.4 First Homes are now the Government's preferred discounted market tenure and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) advises that they should account for at least 25% of all affordable homes delivered by developers through section 106 planning obligations and that policies for First Homes should reflect this requirement.
- 6.5 First Homes are defined in the PPG as discounted market sale units which must be discounted by a minimum 30% against the market value, are sold to persons meeting specific eligibility criteria, are restricted on their title to ensure the discount is passed on and must be sold after discount at a price no higher than £250,000.
- 6.6 In the context of this national definition Local Authorities may set an appropriate discount against market value in their area and may set local eligibility criteria. The PPG also makes provision for the development of First Homes exception sites (on land which is not already allocated for housing). See Policy DM4 below.

#### Local eligibility criteria

- 6.7 In order to ensure that local people are given priority in accessing First Homes in the borough the following eligibility criteria will be applied:
- At least one of the purchasers of the property should, immediately prior to agreeing terms to purchase, either

1. Have lived in Bedford borough for at least three of the last five years or
2. Have a close relative (mother, father, adult children, sister, brother, grandparents, grandchildren or corresponding step relations) who has lived in Bedford borough for at least three years or
3. Be employed full or part time (at least 16 hours per week on average) at a place of work in Bedford borough for at least the last twelve weeks or
4. Be a member of the Armed Forces, a spouse or civil partner of a deceased member of the armed forces (if their death was wholly or partly caused by their service) or a veteran within 5 years of leaving the armed forces or
5. Be a key worker who works in health, education, the police or Local Government.

### First Homes discount

- 6.8 The LHNA analyses income levels in relation to housing costs. On the assumption that all those who can afford social rent without housing benefit could afford shared ownership or First Homes at a 30% discount and that 35% of household income is assigned to housing costs there is a need for 83.3% of the affordable housing provided to be affordable rent, 6.4% to be provided as shared ownership and 10.3% as First Homes.
- 6.9 The LHNA addendum demonstrates that in order to meet the requirement for 25% of the homes to be First Homes it will be necessary for 30% of homes to be affordable housing; with 75% as affordable rent and 25% as First Homes at a 50% discount.
- 6.10 The Council has undertaken a plan-wide viability study to test the ability of a range of housing scheme types likely to come forward in the borough to deliver affordable housing. The study found that with an affordable housing tenure split of 75% affordable rent and 25% First Homes at a 50% discount, 30% affordable housing remains a reasonable target.
- 6.11 In cases where the affordable housing quantum proposed is less than 30% or a tenure split is proposed which provides less than 75% of the affordable housing as affordable rented accommodation the Council will expect the application to be accompanied by a viability appraisal which evidences this to the Council's satisfaction. The verification of viability appraisals will be undertaken by the Council at the applicant's cost. Where affordable housing provision is approved at a level below the policy requirement, it will be subject to a review mechanism.
- 6.12 The maximum affordable rent that can be charged is 80% of the market rent. Many households who require affordable housing can only afford a rent at this level with assistance from housing benefit. The Council does not propose a general reduction on this percentage and benefit regulations change from time to time, but consideration will be given to the access to benefit that will be available at the time that an application is considered.

- 6.13 On the basis of the Government's preference for First Homes and the findings of the Council's LHNA as explained in paragraph 6.9 above, shared ownership will not form part of the preferred tenure mix for section 106 sites. Shared ownership may however come forward in other contexts and should be offered on the basis of a range of initial share purchases from 10% - 80%.
- 6.14 Affordable housing will be required on sites of ten or more dwellings, or 0.5 hectares or more. In all cases, in determining whether the threshold has been met, the Council will take account of the net number of additional dwellings which are to be built.
- 6.15 Where a commuted sum is deemed to be acceptable, more information is given in Appendix 4.

#### **Policy DM1(S) Affordable housing**

Sites of 10 or more residential units or 0.5 hectares or more will provide 30% affordable housing with 75% of the dwellings as social or affordable rented properties and the remainder (25%) as First Homes at a 50% discount.

Affordable rents will be 80% of open market rents but a lower percentage should be set where this would preclude access to housing benefit.

Where shared ownership is offered it will be on the basis of a range of initial share purchases from 10 - 80%.

The size mix of the affordable dwellings should reflect the type and size mix of the market dwellings within the proposed scheme and take account of the needs set out in the Council's current Local Housing Needs Assessment and other current sources of housing needs information.

Where on grounds of viability the total number of affordable dwellings or the affordable housing tenure split is proposed to be other than that outlined above the application should be accompanied by a viability assessment justifying the quantum and mix of affordable housing. Where affordable housing provision is approved at level below the policy requirement it will be subject to a review mechanism (Policy DM2).

On sites providing a mix of affordable and market homes the Council will expect the affordable housing to be integrated within the market housing and affordable housing clusters should not exceed 15 dwellings and should not be readily distinguishable from market housing.

The policy will apply where a planning application could have been submitted for a larger site within the above policy threshold.

Other than in exceptional circumstances, affordable housing provision should be made on site rather than through the payment of commuted sums in lieu of provision.

### **Affordable Housing Review mechanisms.**

- 6.16 The Council wants to ensure that development is policy compliant and maximises public benefits in line with the policies of the development plan. This includes the provision of affordable housing in line with Policy DM1(S).
- 6.17 The NPPF indicates that it is the responsibility of the applicant to demonstrate whether particular circumstances justify the need for a viability assessment at application stage in order to deviate from policy requirements. Where there is clear viability evidence to do so, Policy DM1(S) allows the Council to consider granting permission for schemes which provide less than 30% affordable housing.
- 6.18 Where this is the case, national planning guidance recognises the potential for changes in viability post permission being granted and allows for the review of scheme viability to ensure that divergence from policy compliance is minimised over time. This means that improvements in scheme viability between the point at which the original viability appraisal was undertaken and viability established at a later date(s) can result in an enhanced affordable housing contribution compared to that which was considered viable at the point that permission was granted.
- 6.19 Guidance indicates that plans should set out circumstances where review mechanisms may be appropriate, as well as clear processes and terms of engagement regarding how and when viability will be reassessed.
- 6.20 To ensure that affordable housing contributions are maximised over time, the Council will require a viability review, secured through a S106 agreement, in all cases where reduced affordable housing provisions have been agreed on viability grounds (Policy DM2).
- 6.21 The Council will generally seek a mid-stage viability review because at this point, actual costs and sales values are likely to be quantifiable and a revised assessment can confidently be made.
- 6.22 However, it may be that there is justification for the review taking place at a different point. For example, where the site is large-scale, it involves phased development and delivery will occur across different stages in an economic cycle, it may be appropriate to require more than one viability review. Where this is the case the approach will be individually negotiated and detailed in the legal agreement.

- 6.23 Where the review(s) evidence that additional affordable housing is viable, the Council's preference is for this to be provided on site. Where this is considered inappropriate the Council will expect the payment of an affordable housing commuted sum in lieu.
- 6.24 At the point of review, applicants will be required to submit an updated viability assessment consistent with the format submitted at planning application stage, along with any supplementary information / evidence that the Council requires. The Council's costs associated with commissioning independent assessment of these reviews will be met by the applicant. The approach should be agreed with the Council prior to submission of an updated viability assessment.
- 6.25 The implementation of a viability review cannot result in the scheme providing a reduced level of planning obligations from that of the originally permitted scheme. It is a means to ensure full, or fuller, policy compliance over time, optimising the benefits from contributions to affordable housing.
- 6.26 Viability appraisals will be made publically available.

#### **Policy DM2 Review Mechanisms**

To ensure that affordable housing delivery is maximised as a result of any future improvement in viability, the Council will require schemes that have been viability tested and which have resulted in an affordable housing contribution below policy compliant levels, to be subject to viability review(s).

Detailed requirements will be set out in a S106 agreement and will depend on the size, nature and complexity of the scheme. Save exceptionally, viability reviews will be undertaken where 50 % of the open market dwellings have been sold or after five years of the date of the independent viability assessment upon which the original reduced affordable housing requirement was based, whichever is the sooner. For schemes with more than one phase or developer, more than one review may be required.

The Council will require any additional affordable housing provision required as a result of the viability review to be provided on-site in accordance with the provisions of the S106 agreement unless it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Council as part of the review that this is not achievable.

## Housing mix

- 6.27 The growth in the number of older persons' households is a key feature in the population and household change which is expected to occur in the period to 2040. During the Local Plan period almost two fifths (39 %) of the overall population growth implied by the Standard Method is projected to be aged 65, almost a quarter of which are projected to be over 75. This is particularly important when establishing the types of housing required and the need for housing specifically for older people.
- 6.28 The LHNA Addendum found that, considering the increase in households from 2020 to 2040, half of this household growth is likely to have household representatives aged 65 or over. Over two thirds (68%) of this group (34% of the overall household growth) are likely to have household representatives of 75 or over. Given this context, the maximum need of around 12,600 dwellings for adapted housing in the plan period supports the need for at least 47% of all dwellings to meet Category 2 requirements, providing that this does not compromise viability.
- 6.29 Around 1-in-30 households in England (3.3%) have at least one wheelchair user, although the rate is notably higher for households living in affordable housing (7.1%). The rates are also higher for older households and, given that the number of older person households is likely to increase over the period to 2040, the proportion of households needing wheelchair housing in future is also likely to be higher.
- 6.30 The LHNA Addendum found that the amount of wheelchair adapted housing likely to be needed in Bedford Borough is likely to increase by approximately 1,190 over the period, equivalent to around 4.4% of the overall Local Housing Need. This comprises around 760 market dwellings (4.0% of the market Local Housing Need) and around 390 affordable dwellings (6.0% of the affordable Local Housing Need). The evidence therefore supports the need for 4% of market and 6% of affordable housing to meet Category 3 requirements.
- 6.31 This approach is consistent with the NPPG advice at Paragraph 9<sup>16</sup> which states that planning policies for housing can set out the proportion of new dwellings which will be delivered to the various M4 standards. Part M of the Building Regulations sets a distinction between wheelchair accessible (a home readily useable by a wheelchair user at the point of completion) and wheelchair adaptable (a home that can be easily adapted to meet the needs of a household including wheelchair users) dwellings. Wheelchair accessible homes will only be required where the Council is responsible for nominating a person to live in the dwelling.
- 6.32 Around 35% of the growth in households during the Plan period comprises households aged 75 or over. It is likely that many of these households would also be identified as needing specialist housing for older persons. The analysis of the needs of older people identified a need for almost 5,000 specialist older person housing units for households aged 75 or over, whilst the analysis

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<sup>16</sup> ID: 63-009-20190626 updated on 26 June 2019

of disability and mobility housing needs identifies an increase in need of around 720 wheelchair adapted dwellings for households in the same age group.

- 6.33 Whilst not all households aged 75 or over needing wheelchair adapted housing will live in specialist older person housing, at any point in time it is likely that up to a third of those living in specialist housing may need wheelchair adapted homes. However, it is important to recognise that as individual household circumstances change, it is likely that some households will start using a wheelchair whilst living in specialist housing if their health deteriorates. On this basis, a higher proportion of specialist older person housing units will need to be wheelchair adapted. The evidence in the LHNA supports the need for a target for all specialist housing for older people to meet Category 3 requirements.

#### **Policy DM3(S) Housing mix**

New housing developments will be expected to provide a mix of dwelling size and type to meet the identified needs of the community including families with children, older people, people wishing to build their own homes and people with disabilities and special needs in accordance with the Council's current Local Housing Needs Assessment and other current assessments of housing need including the Older Person's Accommodation Strategy, the Learning Disabilities Accommodation Strategy, the Mental Health Accommodation Strategy (or their successor Strategies) and evidence in respect of the needs of other specialist groups.

All developments of 500 dwellings or more in suitable locations, will be required to include self-contained housing designed to meet the needs of older persons, and / or supported living accommodation in accordance with the Council's most up to date statement of need on older person's accommodation.

All developments of 100 dwellings or more in suitable locations, will be required to include specialist housing designed to meet the needs of those with a learning disability or mental health need in accordance with the Council's most up to date statement of need

- i. On sites of 3 or more dwellings 47% of all new residential development should meet Category 2 (Accessible and Adaptable dwellings) of approved Document M; Volume 1, and on sites of 20 or more dwellings a minimum of 4% of all market housing and 6% of affordable housing should meet Category 3 requirements,
- ii. All specialist housing for older people should meet Category 3 requirements,

Affordable housing will be sought from all C3 development including and where a site provides a mix of C2 development and C3 dwellings, from the C3 element of the development.

## First Homes Exception Sites

- 6.34 First Homes Exception Sites are a potential option for developers wishing to build affordable homes on sites beyond the borough's existing built up areas where certain planning constraints may make approval of an open market housing scheme less likely. However, they should not be viewed as an alternative to rural exception housing defined in the Local Plan 2030 Policy 67 which provides for the delivery of housing to meet specific local needs in the rural area. Sites should be adjacent to and proportionate in size to the settlement to which they relate. Proportionality will be assessed in relation to the scale of the proposal and its impact on the character of the settlement.
- 6.35 To ensure applicants take account of Policy DM4 (ii), where it is proposed that a scheme requires market housing to be included to make an exception site viable, submission of a development appraisal will be required to demonstrate that this is the case.
- 6.36 External consultants will be appointed at the applicant's cost to provide an independent assessment of the scheme's viability.
- 6.37 Policy DM4 (iii) is in line with PPG, which allows the proportion of affordable housing on a First Homes exception site to be altered to include small quantities of other affordable housing products. The evidence that applicants will be required to provide will need to be in the form of a Local Housing Needs Assessment, local authority Housing Register, or other sufficiently robust local evidence.

### **Policy DM4 First Homes Exception Policy**

- i. Residential development proposals on qualifying small sites comprising primarily First Homes will be permitted where:
  - the site is adjacent to an existing settlement and the scale of the scheme is appropriate to the structure form and character of the size of the settlement; and
  - the development contributes positively to the character of the settlement, maintains landscape character, does not lead to coalescence with other settlements and protects and where appropriate enhances the historic environment.
- ii. The minimum number of market homes required to make delivery of a First Homes Exception Site viable without grant funding will be permitted where:
  - an applicant demonstrates that the scheme would be unviable without the inclusion of market housing;
  - inclusion of market housing does not inflate the threshold land value; and
  - any market housing is suitably integrated into the First Homes development.
- iii. Small quantities of other forms of affordable housing may also be permitted on a First Homes exception site where the applicant demonstrates evidence of significant local need for that type of housing.

## **Self-build and Custom Housebuilding**

- 6.38 The Self-build & Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 introduced the concept of an individual's Right to Build a home and the requirement on Local Authorities to keep a register of both individuals and associations who are seeking to do so. It has since been amended by the Housing and Planning Act 2016.
- 6.39 Further regulations<sup>17</sup> require Local Authorities to grant sufficient planning permissions for self-build and custom housebuilding plots to meet annual register-evidenced demand.
- 6.40 Councils are required to have regard to the register when carrying out their functions relating to planning, housing, the disposal of the authority's land and regeneration.
- 6.41 Self-build and custom housebuilding is defined in the Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 as:  
the building or completion by—  
(a) individuals,  
(b) associations of individuals, or  
(c) persons working with or for individuals or associations of individuals, of houses to be occupied as homes by those individuals.
- 6.42 Self-build is where individuals, or associations of individuals, including those in community-led projects, are directly responsible for the design and construction of their own homes. These may be traditional DIY self-build homes where the eventual occupiers carry out all or much of the project management, construction and finish; or, increasingly, where a self-builder commissions all or much of the work, employing others to carry out the actual build for them.
- 6.43 Custom build homes are where developers, builders or industry specialist 'home-builders' work with individuals or associations to deliver finished or shell homes to a pre-agreed bespoke design standards and quality of finish. The developer may provide a plot, manage the construction and arrange the finance for the new home as a package. Whilst this is therefore more of a hands-off approach for the final occupier, the homes will still be tailored from initial inception to match an individual's requirements, within certain agreed parameters.
- 6.44 Whether self or custom-build, the instigators, funders or commissioners of the work must be the occupiers of the dwelling.

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<sup>17</sup> Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Regulations 2016 and the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding (Time for Compliance and fees) Regulations 2016

- 6.45 The Council's Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Register is divided into two parts:
- Part 1 – requires evidence from the individual or association to demonstrate a defined local connection to the area. Registrants on part 1 will be given first refusal on self-build plots that become available in the borough either through the application of Policy DM5 (below) or as a result of the Council disposing of its own land (where it is suitable for and is being disposed of for self-build).
  - Part 2 – Other individuals or associations that have an interest in self-build plots in the borough but who do not have the required local connection to the area. Any plots that are available but are not taken up by anyone on part 1 of the register will then be offered to those on part 2 before being more widely marketed.
- 6.46 Neighbourhood Plans may also allocate sites for self-build and / or custom housebuilding plots and where this is so, developers will be required to have regard to relevant policies and marketing requirements.
- 6.47 The Council has a duty to provide serviced plots to meet the demand on Part 1 of its Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Register but will take into account the demand shown by both parts of the register in considering planning applications. To help to do this, the Council will require qualifying developments to make available serviced plots specifically to provide self-build and custom housebuilding opportunities. The number of serviced plots to be made available will be determined by the capacity of the site.
- 6.48 The policy sets out marketing requirements for advertising the availability of self-build and custom housebuilding plots. These broad requirements differ depending on the number of dwellings proposed for a site. On sites of 49 dwellings or fewer, the timetable for marketing plots will generally be shorter. This is due to the fact that smaller sites will build out faster, meaning there is a greater possibility that lengthier marketing would delay the delivery of dwellings.
- 6.49 Whilst the nature of some proposals, for example high density sites of predominantly apartments or conversions of existing buildings, might mean individual self-build plots may not be available or practical, such dwellings do provide opportunities for custom build. The Council therefore expects that all qualifying sites will meet the requirements of Policy DM5.
- 6.50 As an example, a planning application submitted for 80 dwellings would be required to provide 30% affordable housing, which means that 24 of the plots on the site would be affordable housing. 56 plots would therefore be for private dwellings and subject to providing self-build plots. Using the scale set in the policy below, a site providing 56 private dwellings would be required to provide five self-build / custom housebuilding plots.

## **Policy DM5 Self-build and custom housebuilding**

- i. The Council will require applications for new housing development to include plots for self-build and custom house builders in accordance with the following, based on the overall number of net-additional dwellings proposed:
  - 1-4 dwellings = no requirement
  - 5-9 dwellings = 1 plot
  - 10-29 dwellings = 2 plots
  - 30-49 dwellings = 3 plots
  - 50-69 dwellings = 5 plots
  - 70-89 dwellings = 6 plots
  - 90-100 dwellings = 7 plots
  - 100+ dwellings = by negotiation
- ii. Self-build and custom housebuilding plot sizes should take account of register evidenced demand;
- iii. All plots must be serviced with suitable connections to utilities such as water and drainage, electricity, gas and broadband;
- iv. Prior to commencement of development, developers will be required to agree a marketing plan with the Local Planning Authority that complies with the following:
  - Self-build and Custom Housebuilding plots will be offered at an open value established by a RICS valuer,
  - Where an expression of interest in a plot has been rejected by the developer, evidence must be provided to the Local Planning Authority, upon request, as to why it was not suitable.

For sites of 50 or more dwellings:

- Plots will be marketed solely to individuals and associations on Part 1 of the Council's Register in the first instance for an initial period of two months (minimum) from the commencement of the site being marketed. Following the initial marketing period, the offer of any unreserved plots will be extended to those on Part 2 of the Council's Register and any new registrants to Part 1 having joined during the initial period. If the developer can provide evidence to the satisfaction of the Council that suitable purchasers from the Register have not been forthcoming within 6 months (minimum) of commencement of marketing the plots, they may be offered for unrestricted market sale to self-build and custom homebuilders including industry sector specialist companies,
- Any plots not reserved within a further 6 months (minimum) will be released from this specific policy requirement, following a total of 12 months of marketing.

For sites of 49 or fewer dwellings:

- Plots will be marketed solely to individuals and associations on Part 1 of the Council's Register in the first instance for an initial period of 1 month (minimum) from the commencement of marketing,

- Following the initial marketing period, the offer of any unreserved plots will be extended to those on Part 2 of the Council's Register and any new registrants to Part 1 having joined during the initial period. If suitable purchasers from the Register demonstrably have not been forthcoming within 3 months (minimum) of commencement of marketing the plots, they may be offered for unrestricted market sale to self-build and custom homebuilders including industry sector specialist companies,
  - Any plots not reserved within a further 3 months (minimum) will be released from this specific policy requirement, following a total of 6 months of marketing.
- v. To ensure timely delivery of plots, the S106 agreement will contain triggers that link the marketing of self-build and custom housebuilding plots to the occupation of specified percentages of open market housing;
- vi. Developments required by virtue of this policy to provide self-build and custom housebuilding plots will, in addition and as a priority, be expected to deliver affordable housing across the whole development site in accordance with the Council's adopted policy (Policy DM1) by way of on-site provision or in exceptional circumstances by payment of commuted sums for off-site delivery, where appropriate. The Council will not normally expect self-build serviced plots to be included as part of the site affordable housing proportion unless this has been agreed in writing within the Heads of Terms of the proposed S106 agreement;
- vii. Where a development is phased, the siting and provision of self-build and custom housebuilding plots will be set out in a phasing plan;
- viii. The number of self and custom build plots to be provided will be based on the capacity of the site net of any affordable housing requirement. Development that constitutes 100% affordable housing will be exempt from providing self-build and custom housebuilding plots.

## **Quality of development and space standards**

- 6.51 The quality of buildings and places, and how they integrate with the natural environment, have been shown to affect how people interact with them. Good quality development can create environments which promote wellbeing and happiness, as well as provide functional, well-built places.
- 6.52 The Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030 has a set of design policies requiring that development proposals fully consider design issues. The following documents are also available and give guidance on different aspects of design:
- Sustainable Drainage System SPD 2018
  - Parking Standards for Sustainable Communities SPD 2014
  - Open Space SPD 2013
  - Shopfronts and Advertisements in Conservation Areas SPD 2005

- Achieving Quality in Residential Layouts SPG 1997
- Residential Extensions, New Dwellings and Small Infill Developments SPG 2000
- Houses in Multiple Occupation SPD 2020

## Current National Guidance

6.53 Chapter 12 of the NPPF, “Achieving well-designed places”, supports good design and the creation of high quality places. It encourages plans to set out a clear vision and expectations on design quality in the local area.

## Nationally Described Space Standards

6.54 The government has set out appropriate nationally described space standards for new developments. These space standards are predicated on the number of bedrooms and the number of people each new dwelling is intended to cater for.

6.55 For example, a single bedroom, one-storey dwelling for one person should be a minimum of 37m<sup>2</sup>; and a single bedroom, one-storey dwelling for two people should be a minimum of 50m<sup>2</sup>.

6.56 These standards have recently become mandatory for all new dwellings developed under permitted development rights<sup>18</sup>. This is in recognition of the fact that many have fallen below these standards in the past and created inappropriately sized homes. To be consistent with this approach the Council will expect all new dwellings (including newly formed dwellings through conversion) to conform with nationally described space standards.

6.57 Further information can be found at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/524531/160519\\_Nationally\\_Described\\_Space\\_Standard\\_Final\\_Web\\_version.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/524531/160519_Nationally_Described_Space_Standard_Final_Web_version.pdf). Separate Regulations apply to sleeping accommodation floor areas in licenced HMOs.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ksi/2020/1243/made>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ksi/2018/616/made?view=plain>

## **Policy DM6 Residential space standards**

The Council will require all new dwellings to conform to nationally described space standards as a minimum.

## **Natural environment**

- 6.58 Royal Assent for the Environment Bill was granted on 9 November 2021, with the Statutory Instruments setting out the environmental targets to be laid before parliament in 2022. The biodiversity net gain requirements are not likely to take effect until 2023, two years after Royal Assent. For the Local Plan 2040 this means that we will need to monitor progress and may need to amend policies during the plan's examination.
- 6.59 Due to the United Kingdom withdrawing from the European Union, there is now no relevance to previous references to European designated sites or Natura 2000 sites. To assist with the interpretation of current local plan policies, any references to Natura 2000 sites should now be read as referring to '[the new national site network](#)'.

### What is biodiversity net gain?

- 6.60 The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) Biodiversity Metric was first introduced in 2012 and the third version was published in July 2021. The metric is a calculator that is used to measure the biodiversity losses and gains that will result from development. It is designed as a template to which applicants can input their baseline and development information, and it will then produce a figure for net biodiversity gain. The Environment Act 2021 requires a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain, however it has not become law at this stage.

### What is Natural Capital?

- 6.61 Natural Capital is defined in the government's 25 Year Environment Plan as "the sum of our ecosystems, species, freshwater, land, soils, minerals, our air and our seas. These are all elements of nature that either directly or indirectly bring value to people and the country at large. They do this in many ways but chiefly by providing us with food, clean air and water, wildlife, energy, wood, recreation and protection from hazards". The 25-Year Environment Plan introduced the concept of embedding an 'environmental net gain' principle for development, and the concept of expanding net gain approaches used for biodiversity to include wider natural capital benefits.

## Environmental net gain

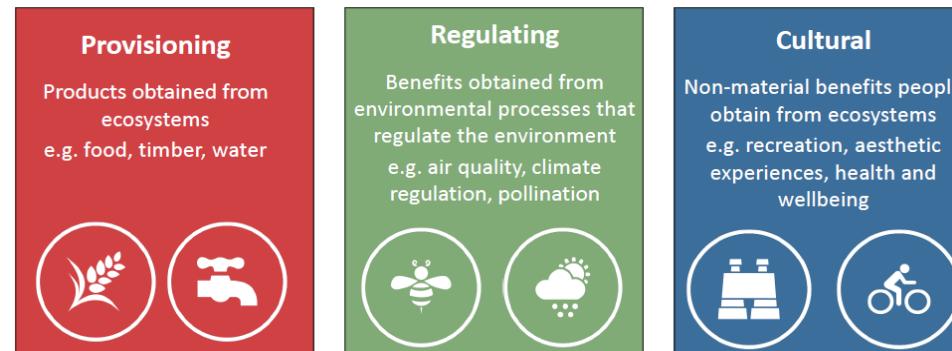
- 6.62 In line with the NPPF, biodiversity net gain was a concept first introduced in planning policy in Bedford in the Local Plan 2030. However, since the plan was adopted, the environmental agenda has moved on and it is now suggested we should go further than biodiversity net gain and adopt an environmental net gain approach in planning and development. The Local Plan 2040 provides an opportunity to update our policy. Environmental net gain is defined as:

**Environmental net gain = biodiversity net gain + natural capital gain**

- 6.63 HM Treasury's Green Book further describes ecosystem services as: "Stocks of natural capital provide flows of environmental or 'ecosystem' services over time. These services, often in combination with other forms of capital (human, produced and social) produce a wide range of benefits. These include use values that involve interaction with the resource and which can have a market value (food, timber, water) or non-market value (such as recreation, landscape amenity and health and wellbeing). They also include non-use values, such as the value people place on the existence of particular habitats or species."

**Natural Capital** is the stock of natural assets, for example, habitats, soils, water and biodiversity

This natural capital produces a wide range of **ecosystem services** that provide **benefits** to people



Source: Bedfordshire Natural Capital Assessment, Natural Capital Solutions

- 6.64 Environmental net gain builds upon the biodiversity net gain principle, but goes further to include a focus on natural capital assets and the associated benefits such as flood protection, improved water and air quality that can be achieved from developments.

- 6.65 The Council has been working with DEFRA as part of the Ox-Cam Arc Local Natural Capital Plan project which looked at how a natural capital approach can be implemented and incorporated into planning policy across the Arc; the documents are available to view on the website – <https://www.oxcamlncp.org/>. The Ecosystem Services Baseline and Comparison report was completed in March 2021. The information that has been mapped is at a strategic scale across the Arc area. A Natural Capital Accounting Tool has also been produced.
- 6.66 In order to obtain information at a more local level, The Bedfordshire Local Nature Partnership has commissioned natural capital and ecosystem services opportunity mapping for Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Luton Borough Councils. This work will also inform Local Nature Recovery Strategies which are a requirement of the Environment Act. Further detail is set out in the evidence base document, 'Bedford Borough Natural Capital Assessment Report'. We have incorporated consideration of the combined opportunities into our site assessment methodology.
- 6.67 Other work by the Arc Environment Working Group has led to the production of Arc-wide environment principles which in due course will lead to the development of an Arc Environment Strategy. The draft principles, support the concept of net environmental gain and commit partners to working with government to develop a net environment gain metric for use within the Arc. The aim is to put in place technical groups to assess net gain propositions on behalf of Local Planning Authorities and provide planning committees with independent advice.

#### **Policy DM7 Environmental Net Gain**

Proposals for major development should provide an environmental net gain (in accordance with government policy), securing a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain, through the following:

- i. Enhancement of the existing features of the site, particularly where these deliver significant levels of ecosystem services; or
- ii. The creation of additional habitats on the site; or
- iii. Where it is not possible to deliver net gain solely on-site, there will be a requirement to enhance or create off site habitats.

Where possible and appropriate, linkages should be created with existing habitats and ecological networks with adjoining features.

Planning applications should demonstrate how net biodiversity and net environmental gain will be achieved through the production of a supporting statement that considers the contribution the proposal could make to the borough's natural capital.

Major development is defined as residential sites of 10 or more units; or on a site where the number of units is unknown, a site area of 0.5 hectare or greater. For non-residential uses, sites where the floorspace to be created is 1,000 square metres or greater or the site area is 1 hectare or greater.

## New employment development in the countryside

6.68 Policy 75 of Local Plan 2030 encouraged new employment development that needs to be in the countryside in order to support the rural economy. Although the policy has only recently been adopted, the opportunity has been taken to review the policy to provide greater clarity around the intentions of the policy and make it more effective in its implementation.

### **Policy DM8 New employment development in the countryside**

New office, industrial, warehousing and sui-generis business uses such as builders' yards will be supported in the countryside in the following circumstances:

- i. Where it is within an existing employment area; or
- ii. Where it reuses land last used for office, industrial, warehousing or sui generis uses or reuses existing buildings; or
- iii. Where it enables the expansion of an established business within its existing operational site; or
- iv. Where it enables the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses; or
- v. Where it enables the limited enlargement of an existing employment area.

In all instances applicants will be required to demonstrate all of the following:

- vi. If a new building is proposed, there are no existing buildings that could be used for the proposed use;
- vii. Open storage is ancillary to employment buildings and is located in well-contained and screened areas of the site with an appropriate height restriction;
- viii. The proposal would not generate traffic movement and volume that would lead to unacceptable environmental impacts or detriment to highway safety objectives;
- ix. The proposal would not have a significant adverse effect on the established character of the area and the local amenities and adjoining land uses and accords with Policy 41S;
- x. There would be no adverse impact on biodiversity including national site network (formerly Natura 2000) sites in accordance with Policy 42S.

## **Horse and Equestrian Activities**

6.69 Keeping and riding horses can help provide new opportunities for employment in rural areas. However, high standards of design and construction for the necessary buildings are required to ensure there is no adverse impact on the countryside. A high standard of maintenance is also essential to prevent a harmful impact on the environment.

### **Policy DM9 Horse and Equestrian development / activities**

Proposals for horse related non-residential development will be permitted provided that the proposal would:

- i. not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the countryside; and
- ii. not be detrimental to the amenity of neighbouring properties; and
- iii. ensure a safe and acceptable form of access; and
- iv. be of a high standard of design and construction (including details of stabling, tack rooms, feed rooms, fencing, manure storage and disposal); and
- v. not have an adverse impact on biodiversity including national site network (formerly Natura 2000) sites in accordance with Policy 42S.

## **Non-designated heritage assets**

6.70 Non-designated heritage assets are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets. These places derive significance through their archaeological, historic, architectural and artistic interest. They also often make an important contribution to local distinctiveness.

### **Policy DM10 Non designated heritage assets**

Non-designated heritage assets will be identified through the plan making process, through the planning decision-making process, through conservation area appraisals and reviews, through reviews of the data held in the Bedford Borough Historic Environment Record, or in conjunction with the Bedford Borough Council Historic Environment Team.

Once identified, non-designated heritage assets will have their status recorded on the Bedford Borough Historic Environment Record and given material weight in the planning process in accordance with Policy 41S and NPPF paragraph 203. In each instance, the Council will identify non-designated heritage assets based on sound evidence, with assets expected to meet two or more of the

selection criteria within Appendix 5 unless comprising archaeological remains where they will be required to meet only the Archaeological Interest criterion.

The selection criteria will also be used to identify non-designated heritage assets for inclusion on a Local List for Bedford borough.

## **Outdoor sports space**

- 6.71 The Council commissioned a Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy to assess the existing provision of, and future demand for, outdoor sports facilities. The document was prepared by consultants in accordance with Sport England guidance and an Action Plan was produced to help inform and guide future outdoor sports development in the borough. The outputs from the strategy feed into the Sport England Playing Pitch Calculator which should be used to determine the amount of space required for future pitch sports in association with new development and, where provision on site is not possible or preferred, monetary contributions for the provision or enhancement of facilities off-site.
- 6.72 The Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy looked at the following sports:
- Cricket
  - Football
  - Rugby union
  - Rugby league
  - Hockey
  - Bowls
  - Tennis
  - Netball
  - Athletics
  - Multi use games areas (MUGA)
  - Informal sports facilities such as outdoor gyms, trim trails
- 6.73 The Sport England Playing Pitch Calculator covers football, rugby union, rugby league, hockey and cricket. Tennis and outdoor lawn bowls are not included; the priority is to improve existing tennis and bowls facilities in the borough to increase usage.
- 6.74 As a result of this work, there is a need to partially update existing Policy AD28 (Provision of Open Space in New Developments). Standards relating to outdoor sports space are replaced by the following policy. Other open space standards in Policy AD28 have been reviewed and do not need to change.

### **Policy DM11 Outdoor sports space in association with development**

All new residential development which results in additional dwellings will be required to contribute to additional outdoor sports provision either through the enhancement of existing facilities or provision of new facilities. The Council will have regard to the Sport England Playing Pitch Calculator, the Bedford Playing Pitch Strategy (as amended) and the Council's priorities for sports and leisure, to determine the amount of open space and type of contribution in association with new development.

Where new pitches are provided on-site, the developer will be required to deliver the pitches and the Council's preference is for the ownership of those facilities to be transferred to Bedford Borough Council or a Parish or Town Council.

Where a monetary contribution is sought, this will be collected through a Section106 agreement.

### **Tall buildings**

- 6.75 When planning tall buildings, it is important to understand the nature of the areas around them, and the impact they would have on heritage assets and historic character of places: the very things that make places distinctive and that people cherish. Tall buildings will generally be located in the town centre. Tall buildings can make a positive contribution to the skyline but in some cases they can also have a lasting adverse impact due to an unsuitable location, poor design, construction or management. Defining what a tall building is depends on the context in which it would be located, and is a building which 'breaks the skyline' and is significantly taller than the prevailing heights of buildings in the area. The Council will prepare an SPD to assist with the application of this policy.

### **Policy DM12 Tall buildings**

Tall buildings will be located in the urban area. Tall buildings should:

- i. Achieve high architectural quality and innovative design (which includes sustainable design and construction practices); and
- ii. Achieve a good relationship to other buildings and structures, the street network / development at street level, public and private open spaces (particularly at street level), and / or other townscape elements and characteristics; and which has ground floor activities; and
- iii. Provide a positive contribution to the skyline, when perceived from all angles during both the day and night, ensuring that important local views and vistas are protected; and

- iv. Where residential uses are proposed, include high quality and useable private and communal amenity space and ensure an innovative approach to the provision of open space; and
- v. Not adversely impact on sensitive locations such as: heritage assets (both designated and non-designated), local views, or other areas which have been designated as inappropriate for tall buildings; and
- vi. Not adversely impact on; the microclimate of the surrounding area, including the proposal site and public spaces, or the biodiversity of open spaces, including watercourses and waterbodies and their hydrology, as well as their settings and views to and from them; and
- vii. Provide positive social and economic benefits and contribute to socially balanced and inclusive communities; and
- viii. Comply with aviation and navigation operational requirements and not interfere, to an unacceptable degree, with telecommunication, television and radio transmission networks.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Status of development plan policies**

The following table lists the existing development plan policies and identifies their status once the Local Plan 2040 has been adopted.

#### **Local Plan 2030**

<b>Policy number</b>	<b>Policy name</b>	<b>Status - Delete, replace or save</b>	<b>Proposed policy in Local Plan 2040</b>
1S	Reviewing the Local Plan 2030	Delete	
2S	Healthy communities	Save	
3S	Spatial strategy	Replace	DS2(S) – Spatial Strategy
4S	Amount and distribution of housing development	Replace	DS3(S) – Amount and timing of housing growth
5S	Development in villages with a Settlement Policy Area	Save	
6	Development in Small Settlements	Save	
7S	Development in the countryside	Save	
8	Key development sites in St Paul's Square	Save	
9	Land at Duckmill Lane / Bedesman Lane, Bedford	Save	
10	The station area, Ashburnham Rd, Bedford	Save	
11	Greyfriars, Bedford	Save	
12	Land at Ford End Road, Bedford	Save	
13	Land at Borough Hall, Bedford	Save	

<b>Policy number</b>	<b>Policy name</b>	<b>Status - Delete, replace or save</b>	<b>Proposed policy in Local Plan 2040</b>
14	Land south of the river, Bedford	Save	
15	Town centre uses	Replace	TC3 – Bedford town centre – changes of use
16	Bedford High Street	Replace	TC3 – Bedford town centre – changes of use
17	Riverside development	Save	
18	Land at Gold Lane, Biddenham	Save	
19	Land at 329 Bedford Road, Kempston	Save	
20	Land at Mowbray Road, Bedford	Save	
21	Land north of Beverley Crescent, Bedford	Save	
22	Land at Lodge Hill, Bedford	Save	
23	Land to the rear of Bromham Road, Biddenham	Save	
24	Land at Grazehill, Bedford	Save	
25	Former Stewartby Brickworks	Save	
26	Opportunity Sites	Replace	DS6 – Opportunity sites
27	Land north of School Lane, Roxton	Save	
28S	Place making	Save	
29	Design quality and principles	Save	
30	The impact of development – design impacts	Save	
31	The impact of development – access impacts	Save	

<b>Policy number</b>	<b>Policy name</b>	<b>Status - Delete, replace or save</b>	<b>Proposed policy in Local Plan 2040</b>
32	The impact of development – disturbance and pollution impacts	Save	
33	The impact of development – infrastructure impacts	Save	
34	Advertisements	Save	
35S	Green infrastructure	Save	
36S	Forest of Marston Vale	Save	
37	Landscape character	Save	
38	Landscaping in new development	Save	
39	Retention of trees	Save	
40	Hedgerows	Save	
41S	Historic environment and heritage assets	Save	
42S	Protecting biodiversity and geodiversity	Save	
43	Enhancing biodiversity	Replace	DM7 – Environmental net gain
44	River Great Ouse	Save	
45	Local Green Space	Save	
46S	Use of previously developed land and use of undeveloped land	Save	
47S	Pollution, disturbance and contaminated land	Save	

<b>Policy number</b>	<b>Policy name</b>	<b>Status - Delete, replace or save</b>	<b>Proposed policy in Local Plan 2040</b>
48	Minerals and waste restoration policy	Save	
49	Waste	Save	
50S	Water resources	Save	
51S	Climate change strategic approach	Replace	DS1(S)- Resources and climate change
52	Water demand	Save	
53	Development layout and accessibility	Save	
54	Energy efficiency	Save	
55	Renewable energy – district heating	Save	
56	Renewable energy – broad locations suitable for renewable energy development	Save	
57	Renewable energy – general impact	Save	
58S	Affordable housing	Replace	DM1(S) – Affordable Housing
59S	Housing mix	Replace	DM3(S) – Housing Mix
60	Specialist housing	Save	
61	Provision of Gypsy and Traveller pitches and Travelling Show People plots	Save	
62	Kempston Hardwick Gypsy and Traveller site	Save	
63	Proposals for Traveller sites on unallocated land in the countryside	Save	

<b>Policy number</b>	<b>Policy name</b>	<b>Status - Delete, replace or save</b>	<b>Proposed policy in Local Plan 2040</b>
64	Design of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Show People sites	Save	
65	Reuse of rural buildings in the countryside	Save	
66	The replacement and extension of dwellings in the countryside	Save	
67	Affordable housing to meet local needs in the rural area	Save	
68	Accommodation for rural workers	Save	
69S	Amount and distribution of employment development	Replace	DS4(S) – Amount of employment growth DS5(S) – Distribution of growth
70	Key employment sites	Save	
71	Other employment sites	Save	
72S	Additional strategic employment development	Save	
73	Wyboston Lakes	Save	
74	Employment skills	Save	
75	New employment development in the countryside	Replace	DM8 – New employment development in the countryside
76	Improvement and provision of new visitor accommodation	Save	
77S	Hierarchy of town centres	Replace	TC1(S) - Hierarchy of town centres
78	Out of centre development	Replace	TC2 – Out of centre development

<b>Policy number</b>	<b>Policy name</b>	<b>Status - Delete, replace or save</b>	<b>Proposed policy in Local Plan 2040</b>
79	Kempston district centre – new retail development	Replace	TC4 – Kempston district centre – new commercial, business and service use development
80	Kempston district centre – changes of use	Replace	TC5 - Kempston district centre – changes of use
81	New shops in local centres	Replace	TC6 – New commercial, business and service uses in local centres
82	Local centres (including rural key service centres) – changes of use	Replace	TC7 – Local centres (including key service centres) – changes of use
83	Neighbourhood centres and individual shops – changes of use	Replace	TC8 – Essential local shops and public houses – changes of use
84	All shop units	Delete	
85	Impact of town centre uses	Replace	TC9 – Impact of town centre uses
86S	Delivering infrastructure	Save	
87	Public transport	Save	
88	Impact of transport on people, places and environment	Save	
89	Electric vehicle infrastructure	Save	
90S	Transport infrastructure and network improvements	Save	
91	Access to the countryside	Save	
92	Flood risk	Save	
93	Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS)	Save	

<b>Policy number</b>	<b>Policy name</b>	<b>Status - Delete, replace or save</b>	<b>Proposed policy in Local Plan 2040</b>
94	Broadband	Save	
95	Domestic equipment	Save	
96	Communications infrastructure	Save	
97	New sports and leisure facilities	Save	
98	New community facilities	Save	
99	Loss of existing sports and community facilities	Save	

## Local Plan 2002

Policy number	Policy name	Status - Delete, replace or save	
H2	Britannia Iron Works	Delete	Development completed
H6	Biddenham Loop	Delete	Development completed
H7	Land west of Kempston	Delete	Development completed
H8	Land north of Bromham Road, Biddenham	Save	Development under construction
H9	Land at Shortstown	Save	Development under construction
H11	Land south of Fields Road, Wootton	Save	Development under construction
H12	Land north of Fields Road, Wootton	Delete	Development completed
H13	Land off Rousebury Road, Stewartby	Save	Development under construction
H14	Elstow Storage Depot	Save	Development under construction
H23	Housing in second order villages	Save	
E2	Land south of Cambridge Road	Delete	Development completed
E10	Elstow Brickworks	Save	
LR4	Rowing course	Save	Development started

## Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013

Policy number	Allocations and Designations Local Plan Policies (2013)	Status – Delete, replace or save	Proposed policy in Local Plan 2040
AD1	Sustainable Development Policy	Save	
AD3	Land at Hall End Road, Wootton	Save	
AD4	Land at Old Ford End Road, Queens Park, Bedford	Delete	Development completed
AD7	Land East of Eastcotts Road, Bedford	Delete	Development completed
AD10	Lansdowne Road, Warwick Avenue and Dynevor Road, Bedford	Save	Development under construction
AD11	Land at Medbury Farm, Elstow	Replace	EMP5 – Land at Pear Tree Farm, Elstow
AD12	Land at Bell Farm, Kempston	Save	Development under construction
AD13	Marston Vale Innovation Park Phase 2, Wootton	Save	
AD15	Manton Lane Reservoir Site, Bedford	Save	Development under construction
AD16	Land West of Manton Lane, Bedford	Save	
AD17	Land West of the B530, Kempston	Save	
AD18	Land North of the A6-A428 Link Road, Bedford	Save	
AD19	Land at Manton Lane, Bedford	Save	
AD20	Land at Bedford Road, Great Barford	Save	

<b>Policy number</b>	<b>Allocations and Designations Local Plan Policies (2013)</b>	<b>Status – Delete, replace or save</b>	<b>Proposed policy in Local Plan 2040</b>
AD21	Land at Chawston Lake, Roxton Road, Wyboston	Save	
AD22	Land North of Ravensden Road, Ralph End, Renhold	Save	
AD23	Bedford River Valley Park Enabling Development	Replace	HOU11 Land at Bedford River Valley Park
AD24	Green Infrastructure Opportunity Zones	Save	
AD26	Bedford River Valley Park	Save	
AD27	Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway Park	Save	
AD28	Provision of Open Space and Built Facilities in Association with New Development	Save	Partly replaced by Policy DM12 – outdoor sports space in association with development
AD36	Pedestrian Routes	Save	
AD38	Commercial Vehicle Parking and Motorists Facilities	Save	
AD39	Cycling	Save	
AD40	Village Open Spaces and Views	Save	
AD41	Urban Area Boundary	Save	
AD42	Local Gaps	Save	
AD43	Urban Open Spaces and Gaps	Save	

<b>Policy number</b>	<b>Allocations and Designations Local Plan Policies (2013)</b>	<b>Status – Delete, replace or save</b>	<b>Proposed policy in Local Plan 2040</b>
AD44	Former Land Settlement Association Area	Save	

### **Bedfordshire and Luton Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2005**

	<b>Bedfordshire and Luton Minerals and Waste Local Plan Policies (2005)</b>	<b>Status – Delete, replace or save</b>	<b>Proposed policy in Local Plan 2040</b>
W17	Land raising	Save	Also relevant is Policy 48 – Minerals and waste restoration policy
W22	Safeguarding existing sites	Save	

### **Strategic Policies in the LP2040**

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Strategic policy title</b>	<b>Chapter</b>
DS1(S)	Resources and Climate Change	Climate change
DS2(S)	Spatial Strategy	Spatial strategy and site allocations
DS3(S)	Amount and timing of housing growth	Spatial strategy and site allocations
DS4(S)	Amount of employment growth	Spatial strategy and site allocations
DS5(S)	Distribution of growth	Spatial strategy and site allocations
TC1(S)	Hierarchy of town centres	Town centre and retail policies

DM1(S)	Affordable housing	Development management policies
DM3(S)	Housing mix	Development management policies

## **Appendix 2**

### **Monitoring and Review**

The Local Plan 2040 will influence the way the borough is developed in the coming years. To assess how effective the Plan is in achieving the vision and objectives, the Council will fulfil its requirement to monitor the policies along with any other saved policies from other planning documents. It will do this through its monitoring reports.

The monitoring reports will assess the success of the Plan in meeting its aims and objectives by looking at how the policies are implemented. Targets and indicators to measure the effects of policies will be completed at regular intervals.

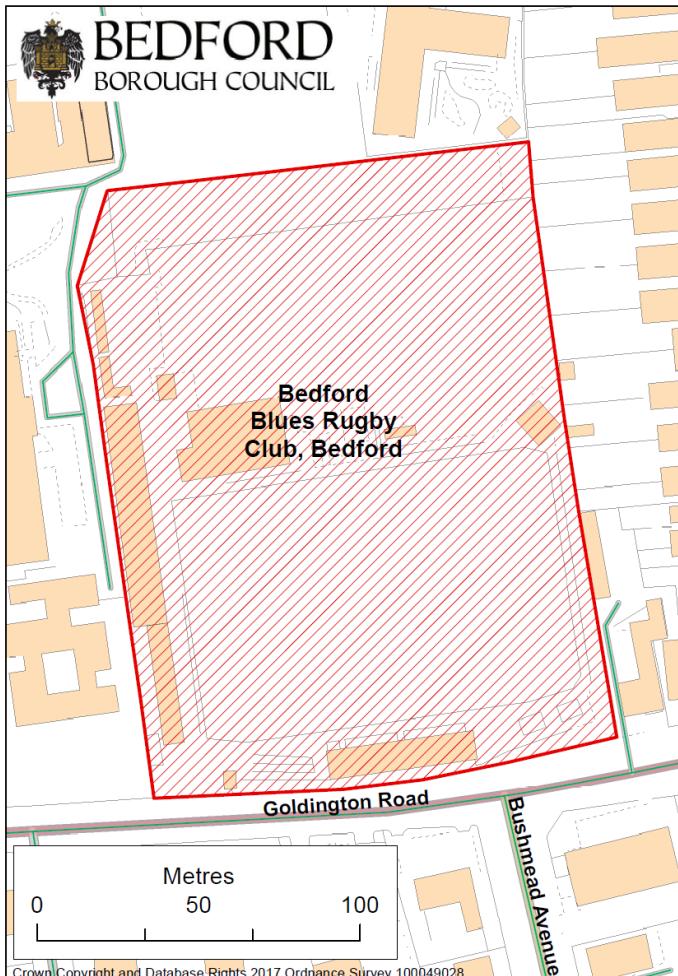
The collection of data will be from a range of sources. These will include surveys carried out by the Council, for example housing, employment and retail completion surveys as well as the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. Internal stakeholders will be consulted on areas the Council has direct knowledge of (such as cycleway improvements, the tenure of affordable housing, historic environment assets). External and partner stakeholders will be consulted to provide further information on areas that affect development in the borough but is governed by other agencies (such as progress on the Forest of Marston Vale and the use of renewable energy or water in households).

If monitoring indicates that targets are not being met, consideration will be given on why that might be the case and whether the Local Plan requires reviewing as a result.

## Appendix 3

### Opportunity Sites

#### 1. Bedford Blues Rugby Club, Bedford



There may be an opportunity to improve the major leisure facility at the Rugby Club, Goldington Road, Bedford and at the same time deliver new housing close to the town centre.

The size of the rugby pitch and stadium capacity does not meet the standards that would allow promotion of Bedford Blues to the rugby Premiership.

The Club wishes to improve its facilities and has sought policy support for some enabling development on the site. However, at the current time there is not sufficient certainty that the site is available for development.

More detailed design work will be required in relation to the impact of development on the adjacent listed building, conservation area and the surrounding local area.

Existing schools in the area have capacity to serve the development.

## 2. Jowett Sidings and Royal Mail Depot, Midland Road, Bedford



Bedford Midland station will be redeveloped as part of the EWR project but the precise location and configuration of the station is as yet unknown. Until such time as the EWR proposals are confirmed, the impact on the Jowett sidings and Royal Mail land to the south of Midland road is also unknown. As proposals become clearer, there may be the potential for additional land in this location to be included in development proposals.

As a result, the Jowett sidings and Royal Mail sites are included as an opportunity site in accordance with Policy DS6.

## **Appendix 4**

### **Affordable Housing Commuted Sum Calculations**

The commuted sum will be based upon the difference between the open market value of the property and the estimated revenues that would have been paid by a Registered Provider or achieved by the developer from the sale of First Homes for commensurate off-site provision. Sums will be calculated to two decimal places.

#### **1. Calculation of Commensurate Provision**

The Council's affordable housing requirement is 30%. With off-site provision of affordable housing the actual development (which is entirely market housing) equates to 70% of a notional development which does provide affordable housing. The affordable housing requirement for the purposes of determining a commuted sum is therefore assessed as follows:

$$\frac{\text{the number of dwellings in the actual scheme} \times 100}{70} = \text{calculation base for affordable housing requirement}$$

#### **2. Dwelling Mix for Affordable Housing:**

The assumed dwelling mix for affordable housing will be:

- For schemes that are predominantly houses:
  - 50% 2 Bedroom Houses ( $72\text{m}^2$ )
  - 50% 3 Bedroom Houses ( $82\text{m}^2$ )
- For schemes that are predominantly flats:
  - 34% 1 Bedroom Flats ( $40\text{m}^2$ )
  - 66% 2 Bedroom Flats ( $62\text{m}^2$ )

#### **3. Tenure Balance:**

The assumed tenure balance for the affordable housing will be:

- Affordable Rent 75%
- First Homes 25%

4. Affordable Housing Revenue Assumptions:

Revenue assumptions for the affordable housing will be:

- Affordable Rent:              Gross rent              80% of open market rent
- less management costs      30%
- Capitalised at                6%.
- First Homes                   Purchase Price (net of required discount)

## **Appendix 5**

### **BEDFORD BOROUGH'S NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS**



**19<sup>th</sup> century limestone bridge, Village Road, Bromham**

**BEDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL  
HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT  
PLANNING SERVICES**

## **1. Introduction**

This appendix sets out the criteria for identifying non-designated heritage assets in Bedford borough. Non-designated heritage assets are locally or regionally significant (see archaeology exception below) buildings, structures, monuments, sites, places, areas, or landscapes which have been identified as having a degree of significance that merits consideration in planning decisions and plan making. Non-designated heritage assets will possess different levels of significance, and the higher the level of significance, the more weight it will be given in planning applications which potentially impact on that significance.

The Council intends to create a single local list of non-designated heritage assets but until such time as that is produced, a criteria-based approach will be employed on a case-by-case basis to identify such assets. Once identified, a non-designated heritage asset will be added to the Bedford Borough Historic Environment Record (if its details are not already held in the Record) and have this status recorded; being already recorded in the Record does not automatically make a building, monument, landscape etc., a non-designated heritage asset; it must be identified as such in accordance with the criteria set-out in Table 1.

## **2. Criteria**

Non-designated heritage assets will be considered against the criteria set out in Table 1 below. Such assessments are likely to arise in the following situations: during local plan-making and making planning decisions; as part of conservation area appraisals and reviews; in reviews of data held by the Bedford Borough Historic Environment Record; or if put forward by members of the public or local groups. Non-designated heritage assets must fulfil at least two of the criteria set out below unless they comprise archaeological remains which are required to meet the Archaeological Interest criterion only. Some assets may however meet multiple criteria.

It should be noted that some archaeological sites identified as non-designated heritage assets and added to the local list will be nationally significant, but unscheduled, and will therefore need to be afforded the same consideration as scheduled monuments in planning decisions. Some nationally important sites cannot be designated as scheduled monuments because they are outside the scope of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 due to their physical nature, such as lithic scatters. However, the NPPF requires non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest, which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, to be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets.

**Table 1**

Criteria	Description
Age and Integrity	Structures constructed before 1840 which retain much of their original style, features, form, or construction materials and layout. If built between 1840-1919, the structure should retain most of its original external features; such as windows, doors and roof covering etc. If built after 1919, the structure should retain almost all of its original architectural features.
Rarity	Heritage assets which can be demonstrated to be rare examples locally and / or regionally.
Architectural Interest	Structures that represent well-preserved typical examples of particular architectural styles, building materials, or building form. Structures that show considerable innovation in the use of materials or techniques, or early examples of styles that subsequently became popular. High quality work by notable architects whether local or otherwise.
Archaeological Interest	Heritage assets identified as having the potential to provide evidence of past human activity. These may be in the form of below ground remains and / or in earthworks, structures, designed or historic landscapes. Please note that footnote 68 of the NPPF 2021 will apply to heritage assets with archaeological interest demonstrably equivalent in significance to a scheduled monument.
Artistic Interest	Heritage assets that demonstrate elements of creative skill including for example sculptures, paintings, decorations, advertisements, memorials, gates, and railings.
Historic Interest	Heritage assets which hold a significant association with important historic people or events. For example, former notable residents or landowners, commemorative or charity events, events and locations associated with religious or community groups. This category will not usually apply to assets associated with a living person.
Designed or Historic Landscapes	Heritage assets comprising locally or regionally important designed landscapes such as parks or gardens and assets formed through commercial, industrial, or agricultural processes.

Landmark Value	Heritage assets that hold a strong communal or historic association, hold high aesthetic value, or form part of an important view or place.
Group Value	Heritage assets that form a group with a clear visual design or historic relationship, for example terrace housing, farmyards, or estate buildings.

### 3. Bibliography

Historic England, 2021. *Local Heritage Listing: Identifying and Conserving Local Heritage. Historic England Advice Note 7 (2<sup>nd</sup> edition)*.

## Appendix 6 - Glossary

Glossary Term	Meaning
Affordable Housing	Housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and / or is for essential local workers); and which complies with definitions in the NPPF for affordable housing for rent, starter homes, discounted market sales housing, other affordable routes to home ownership.
Allocations	Sites specifically identified in the development plan and on the Policies Map for development.
Bedford and Milton Keynes Waterway Park	A proposed new broad beam canal set in a green corridor that will link the Great Ouse in Kempston to the Grand Union Canal in Milton Keynes, and connect the Fenland waterways to the central waterway network. The project is led by a Consortium of local authorities including Bedford Borough Council, together with the Environment Agency, Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterway Trust and others.
Bedford and Milton Keynes Waterway Trust	A non-profit group established to promote the development of a waterway park to link the Grand Union Canal in Milton Keynes to the River Great Ouse in Bedford.
Bedford River Valley Park	An area to the east of Bedford designated on the Policies Map for a new area of multi-functional greenspace.
Biodiversity	The variety of life on earth or in a specified region or area.
Biodiversity metric	A tool produced by DEFRA in which to assess an area's value to wildlife and calculate a biodiversity value.
Climate Change	Long-term changes in temperature, precipitation, wind and all other aspects of the earth's climate. Often regarded as a result of human activity and fossil fuel consumption.
Commitment	Where planning permission has been granted or there is a resolution to grant planning permission awaiting the finalisation of a legal agreement. This term can also be used to describe existing development allocations.
Conservation Areas	Under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, local planning authorities are able to designate as conservation areas any "areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance".

<b>Glossary Term</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Corporate Plan	The Council's plan for 2022-2026 which sets out actions to focus the Council's work on helping to achieve the potential of the borough. The plan includes four goals which are to support people, enhance places, create wealth and empower communities.
Countryside	Land outside Settlement Policy Areas and the built form of the defined Small Settlements.
Design Codes	A set of specific rules or requirements to guide the physical development of a site or place. The aim of design coding is to provide clarity as to what constitutes acceptable design quality and thereby provides a level of certainty for developers and the local community alike that can help to facilitate the delivery of good quality new development.
Design Guide	A series of general principles that allows for the creation of high quality places and buildings. Design guides often constitute the 'first step' in understanding acceptable design for a place, with design codes (see above) providing more detail for specific sites or areas.
Designations	Areas shown on the Policies Map to which specific policies apply (not allocations). These may be areas where development is prohibited or restricted.
Development Briefs	Adopted by the Borough Council as a detailed statement of its planning policies for a particular site and its aspirations in terms of uses, layout and design principles.
Development Plan	Under the Planning Acts, this is the prime consideration in the determination of planning applications. The development plan includes local plan(s) and neighbourhood plans.
England's Economic Heartland	Covers an area from Swindon to Cambridgeshire. Brings together political and business leaders to realise the region's economic potential whilst working towards net-zero. Provides the region's voice on strategic infrastructure.
East West Rail	A new railway service and railway lines from Oxford in the west through to Cambridge in the east.
Environmental Net Gain	Biodiversity net gain plus natural capital gain
First Homes	Houses which are discounted market sale homes which must be discounted by a minimum 30% against the market value and are sold to persons meeting specific eligibility criteria. There are restrictions on the title to ensure that the discount is passed on and must be sold after discount at a price no higher than £250,000.

<b>Glossary Term</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Forest of Marston Vale	One of twelve community forests established throughout England by the Countryside Commission and Forestry Authority. These multi-purpose forests on the edge of towns and cities will provide opportunities for recreation, forestry, education and the creation of wildlife habitats.
Green Infrastructure	A combination of natural and planned, accessible open spaces and amenity areas including recreation and sports facilities, pathways and routes, natural and historic sites, canals and water spaces, accessible countryside and other open areas that create a network and contribute to the character of towns and villages.
Green Wheel	A vision to develop and enhance the existing network of traffic free paths and quiet routes around the Bedford urban area for use by pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders where possible.
Gypsy and Traveller Pitch	The space required to accommodate one household with their caravans, parking and manoeuvring space and usually a day room.
Health Impact Assessment	A tool to measure the potential health impacts of a proposed project or plan on the wider population. This assessment is to appraise both the positive and negative impacts help to achieve better policies and developments.
Heritage Impact Assessment	A document outlining the historic and / or archaeological significance of a building or landscape within its wider setting. The document also includes an assessment of the proposed development on the setting of the heritage asset and a mitigation strategy.
Housing Trajectory	An illustration of the expected rate of housing delivery over the plan period
Historic Environment Record	An information source maintained by Bedford Borough Council for the whole borough covering historical assets such as archaeological sites and finds, historic landscapes and historic buildings.
Infrastructure Delivery Plan	A plan outlining the future infrastructure requirements over the lifetime of the local plan to support future development.
Innovation Hub	A grouping of uses in a highly accessible location providing high quality, local employment opportunities, potentially linked to academic activities which will facilitate a more skilled and prosperous borough.
Issues and Options	The first stage of the local plan process whereby the public is consulted on a number of different spatial options for the scope and detail of the Plan. Sometimes known as 'Regulation 18' consultation. May include more than one consultation.

<b>Glossary Term</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Key Service Centres	Large villages with a good level of services identified in the Local Plan 2030 as Bromham, Clapham, Great Barford, Sharnbrook, Shortstown; Wilstead, Wixams and Wootton.
Landscape led design	Designing development considering the existing landscape and the relationship between nature, communities and people.
Listed Buildings	Under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport has a statutory duty to compile lists of buildings of special architectural or historic interest. Buildings are graded I, II* or II to reflect their importance and permission is required for works which may affect their character as buildings of special architectural or historic interest.
Local housing needs assessment (LHNA)	An assessment of housing needs for a local authority using the government's standard method for determining the level of housing in plan period.
Local Transport Plan	A five-year strategy for the development of local, integrated transport, supported by a programme of transport improvements. It is used to bid to government for funding transport improvements.
Master Plan	An overarching planning document that provides a conceptual layout to guide and structure future growth and development.
Mixed Use Development	A development that promotes the integration and diversity of a number of land uses resulting in benefits such as reducing the need to travel and deterring criminal activity by generating different activities at different times of the day.
Mobility hub	A mobility hub is a recognisable place with an offer of different and connected transport modes supplemented with enhanced facilities and information features to both attract and benefit the traveller. <a href="https://como.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Mobility-Hub-Guide-241019-final.pdf">https://como.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Mobility-Hub-Guide-241019-final.pdf</a>
National Highways	A government owned company which plans, designs, builds, operates and maintains England's motorways and major A roads (known as the strategic road network – SRN), formerly Highways England.
Natura 2000 sites	A Europe-wide network of sites of international importance for nature conservation established under the European Community Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (92/43 / EEC 'Habitats Directive'). Following the UK's exit from the EU in January 2021 the Government has created a new national site network within the UK replacing the Natura 2000 sites but comprising the protected sites already designated.

<b>Glossary Term</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	National government policy for planning in England and how these are expected to be applied, introduced in 2012 and updated 2021.
Neighbourhood Plan	A plan prepared by a Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum for a particular neighbourhood area (made under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
Non-designated Heritage Assets	These are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which are not formally designated heritage assets.
Oxford to Cambridge Arc	The area between Oxford, Milton Keynes and Cambridge. It includes the ceremonial counties of Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire and Cambridgeshire.
Previously Developed Land	Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures; land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time.
Policies Map	Illustrates policies and proposals in the development plan.
Renewable Energy	Energy derived from sources that are available in an unlimited supply.
Rural Service Centres	Centres which have fewer facilities than Key Service Centres (above) and provide a more localised convenience and service role to meet day to day needs of residents and businesses in the rural areas. These are defined in the Local Plan 2030 as Carlton, Harrold, Milton Ernest, Oakley, Roxton, Stewartby, Turvey and Willington.
S106 agreement	Section 106 (S106) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 allows a local planning authority to enter into a legally-binding agreement or planning obligation with a landowner or developer in association with the granting of planning permission. These agreements are a way of delivering or addressing matters that are necessary to make a development acceptable in planning terms. They are used to support the provision of services and infrastructure, such as highways, recreational facilities, education, health and affordable housing.

<b>Glossary Term</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Scheduled Monuments	Archaeological sites and monuments of national importance legally protected under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (as amended). These monuments are given legal protection by being placed on the 'list' and once on this schedule, Scheduled Monument Consent is needed before any works can be carried out that would affect the monument.
Self-build and custom housebuilding	Defined in the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended) as "self-build and custom housebuilding means the building or completion by (a) individuals, (b) associations of individuals, or (c) persons working with or for individuals or associations of individuals, of houses to be occupied as homes by those individuals".
Settlement Policy Areas	A line drawn around the main built up part of a village in a local plan document.
Small Settlements	Settlements that do not have a defined Settlement Policy Area but have a definite built form. Small Settlements comprise a distinct group of buildings and their immediate surroundings that include 30 or more dwellings.
Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment	An assessment prepared by an applicant at the planning application stage to demonstrate how flood risk from all sources of flooding to the development site itself and flood risk to others will be managed and taking climate change into account.
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)	Prepared by or on behalf of the local authority, a study to inform the preparation of Local Development Documents, having regard to catchment-wide flooding issues from multiple sources which affect the area. The SFRA provides the information needed to apply a sequential approach in identifying land for development, with areas at the least risk of flooding being sequentially preferable to areas with higher risk.
Stepped trajectory	A trajectory which reflects step changes in the level of housing expected to be delivered across the plan period.
Sui Generis Uses	Certain uses that do not fall within any use class are considered 'sui generis'. Such uses include: betting offices / shops, pay day loan shops, theatres, larger houses in multiple occupation, hostels providing no significant element of care, scrap yards, petrol filling stations and shops selling and / or displaying motor vehicles, retail warehouse clubs, nightclubs, launderettes, taxi businesses, casinos, public houses, drinking establishments with expanded food provision, hot food takeaways, live music venues, cinemas, bingo halls and dance halls.
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 a specific site or on particular issues such as design. Supplementary planning documents are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but they are not part of the development plan.

<b>Glossary Term</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Sustainability Appraisal (SA)	A social, economic and environmental appraisal of strategy, policies and proposals that is required for all Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents. To be undertaken jointly with Strategic Environmental Assessment.
Sustainable Development	“Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987).
Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS)	A scheme for delivering a natural approach to managing drainage in developments.
Transport Assessment	A comprehensive and systematic process that sets out transport issues relating to a proposed development. It identifies what measures will be required to improve accessibility and safety for all modes of travel, particularly for alternatives to the car such as walking, cycling and public transport and what measures will need to be taken to deal with the anticipated transport impacts of the development.
Travelling Show People Plot	A ‘plot’ has been taken to be the space which typically provides for a mixed residential and business use, to enable on-site accommodation together with space for the secure storage, repair and testing of significant amounts of equipment. The site is traditionally the ‘winter quarters’ to which Show People return at the end of the show season, however sites may be occupied by some members of the family permanently.
Urban Open Space	Designated areas of open space within the Urban Area boundary which relate to Policy AD43 in the Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013.
Viability Appraisal	An assessment of the financial implications of a development, often to determine whether a policy compliant scheme would result in an acceptable return to the landowner and would therefore go ahead. Informs negotiations on S106 agreements.
Vitality and Viability	Essential elements in the stability and future prosperity of town centres. They stem not only from a variety of retail uses but from the range and quality of activities in town centres and their accessibility to people.
Windfall sites	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.