

Thriplow and Heathfield Neighbourhood Plan 2024 TO 2041

Made Version July 2025

Prepared by Thriplow and Heathfield Parish Council



The Thriplow & Heathfield Neighbourhood Plan vision

Thriplow and Heathfield will grow sustainably whilst remaining a ‘living’ community providing a high quality of life and social cohesion for residents of all ages across the whole parish, respecting its rural roots and enhancing the natural environment.

Access, via non-motorised (active-travel) routes, to our surrounding countryside and neighbouring settlements will be improved, bringing with it, social, mental and physical health benefits.

THEME 1	Protecting and enhancing the natural environment and the character of the parish
Objective 1:	The character and quality of the built environment and landscape in Heathfield will be protected and improved.
Objective 2:	The existing built environment and landscape character of Thriplow village will be protected and enhanced.
Objective 3:	New development will be sensitive to our rural environment and reflect our rural roots
Objective 4:	Recognise and protect accordingly all valued open spaces in the parish
Objective 5:	Seek to reverse the decline of the natural environment in the parish by protecting and increasing biodiversity

THEME 2	Living village and sustainable development
Objective 6	We will continue to be a living community, which sustains all amenities, including the primary school, shop, village hall and other facilities
Objective 7	There will be limited small scale additional housing development, focused in Thriplow near to existing shops and services
Objective 8	All development to use sustainable building materials and consider energy efficiency
Objective 9	Plan for improved outdoor recreational facilities in the parish
Objective 10	A safer less congested parish
Objective 11	The quality and quantity of our rural footpath network and interconnectivity with neighbouring settlements will be improved

THEME 3	Social cohesion and parish links
Objective 12	There will be more cohesion between the two communities of Thriplow and Heathfield

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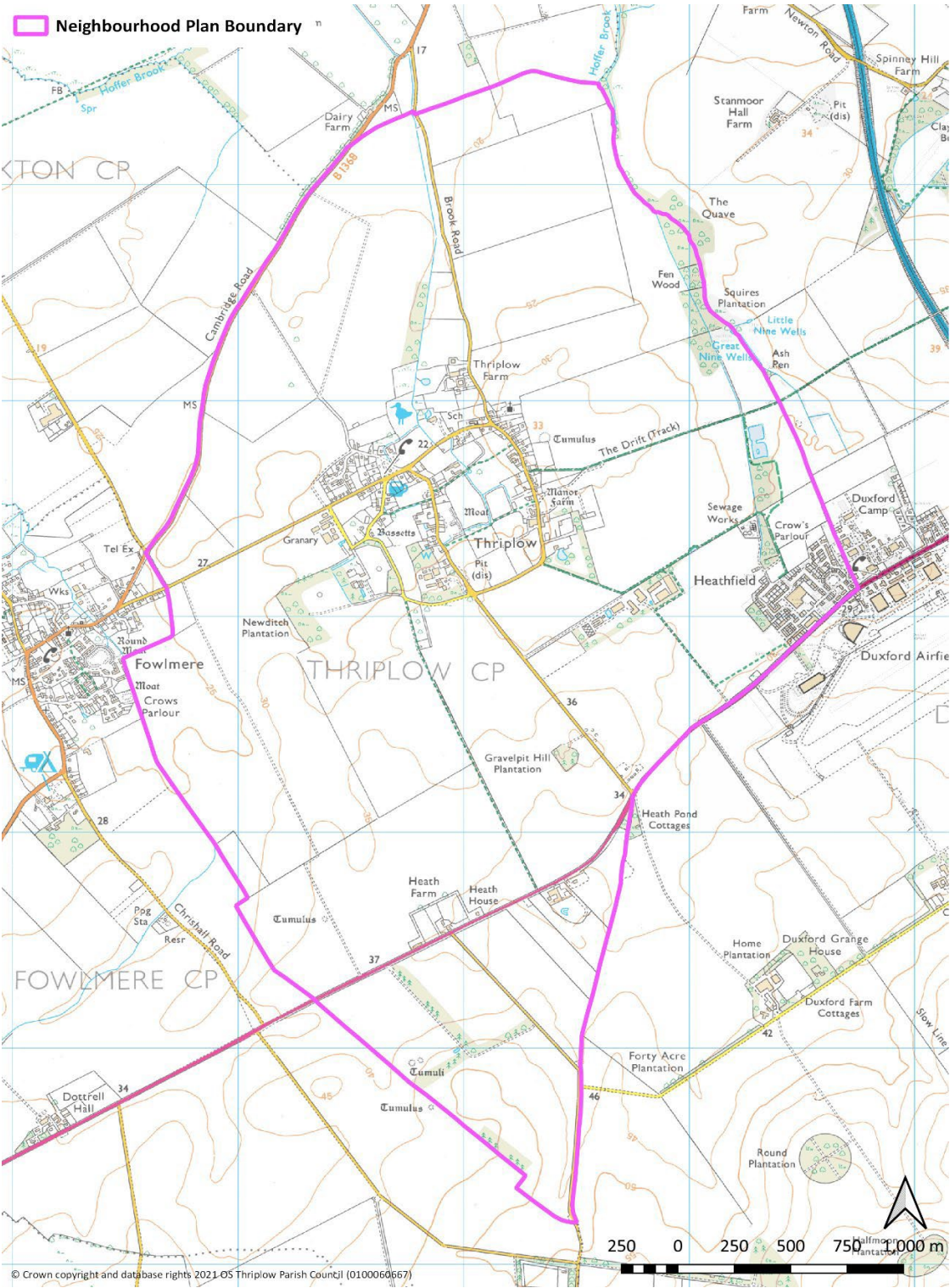
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 **This document is the made version of the Thriplow and Heathfield Neighbourhood Plan ("the NP") to cover the period 2024 to 2041. The purpose of the NP is to set a framework for future development in the plan area (see Map 1). The made NP carries the same legal weight as the adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan. Applications for development must be determined in accordance with the policies in the NP and other documents which are part of the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.**
- 1.2 The Thriplow and Heathfield Parish Council has listened to parishioners in the preparation of this Neighbourhood Plan, which covers the entirety of the parish. Chapter 3 of this plan provides a brief overview of the consultation that has taken place to date. All consultation activity has been reported in detail in a Consultation Statement which is available to view alongside this plan.
- 1.3 The work on the NP has been led by the NP steering group, which was set up in 2017. This comprises local people, a mixture of residents and parish councillors. Members have different skills to bring to the group, from marketing and surveying for developers, to architecture, to representatives from Natural England.
- 1.4 Funding has been obtained for Cambridgeshire ACRE to be engaged in advising and guiding the process, from the planning perspective. A questionnaire was sent out in July 2018. A demographic and socio-economic report and a Housing Needs survey were also carried out in early 2019 by Cambridgeshire ACRE. Since then Rachel Hogger from Cambs ACRE has been commissioned by the Parish Council, to assist the NP group with plan preparation work.
- 1.5 The Parish Council has also engaged a landscape architect, Lucy Batchelor-Wylam, to conduct a Landscape Character Appraisal of the parish and to assess the landscape and visual sensitivity of potential development sites in the parish. In addition, the landscape architect has provided advice on how the grainstore site could come forward in a way which contributes positively to the character of Thriplow at this key village gateway site.
- 1.6 To inform the NP, a Masterplan document covering the built-up area of Heathfield was prepared by AECOM in 2022. This work was commissioned by Locality, on the behalf of the Parish Council

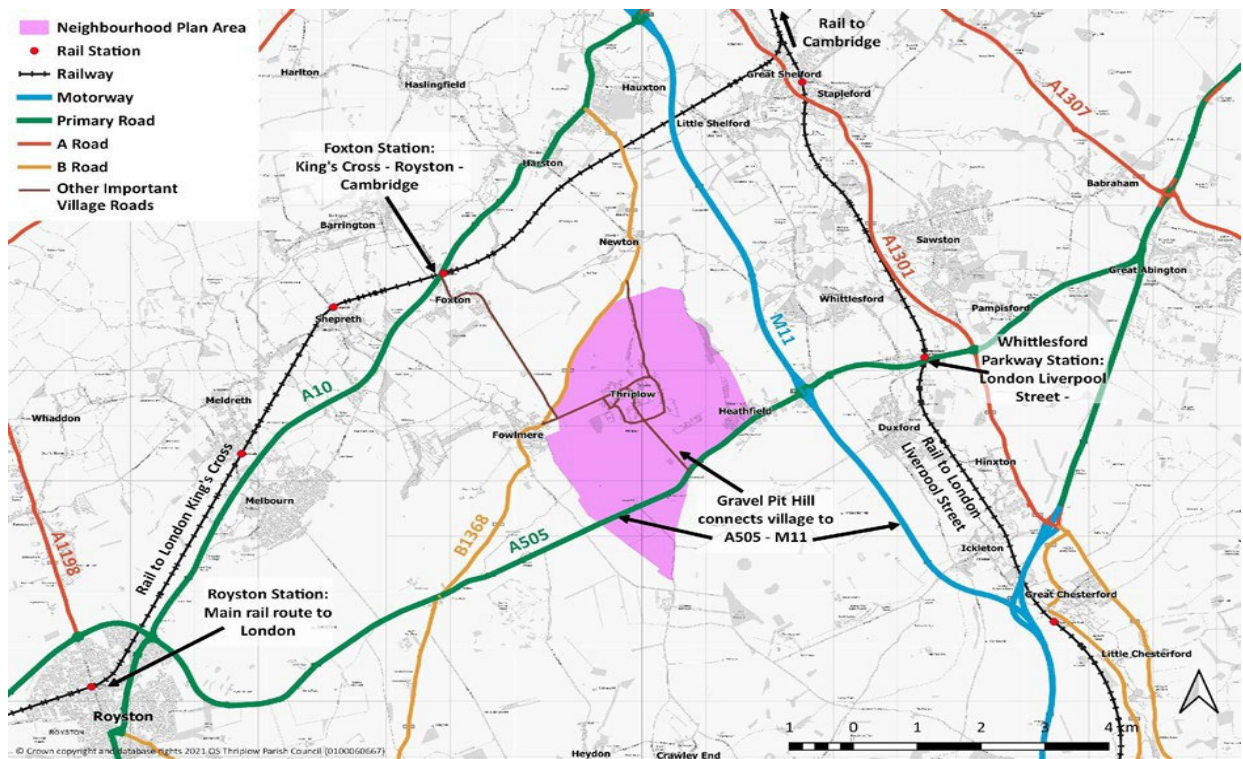
The Plan Area

1.7 The NP area is shown in Map 1.



Map 1: The Neighbourhood Plan Area

2. The Neighbourhood Area



Map 2: The parish and transport links to the surrounding area

Location

2.1 The Parish of Thriplow and Heathfield consists of two main separate settlements, firstly the village of Thriplow, which can trace its origins back to prehistoric times and secondly the settlement at Heathfield, which was originally the married quarters serving RAF Duxford. Heathfield lies to the south east of Thriplow alongside the A505. See Map 2 to view the parish in its surrounding context.

2.2 Thriplow village is enveloped by the Cambridge Green Belt and Heathfield is bounded by the Cambridge Green Belt to the north, north-east, south-west and west. The vast majority of the wider countryside also falls in the Green Belt save for the triangular shaped area of land located to the southern part of the A505.

Road Access

2.3 The parish is located in South Cambridgeshire District. It is 10 km north-east of Royston and 11 km south-west of Cambridge. It is very close to the A505 and the M11 junction.

2.4 Heathfield is located off the A505 and has vehicular access to the village only via the A505. Thriplow village is a much older settlement and has three access routes in different directions. Its oldest access is two ways to the B1368, which is an old coaching route from Cambridge to London, before the A10 and, then later still, the M11 were built. It connects to both Newton and Fowlmere. It also connects to the A505 via Gravel Pit Hill.

Other access

- 2.5 The parish is situated midway between Whittlesford Parkway and Foxton Railway Stations, approximately 4 miles from each (both being on different London to Cambridge rail routes), but there is no safe or designated cycle route.

Landscape and geology

- 2.6 The north and middle parts of the parish lie on the lower and middle chalk geology, overlaid with freely draining lime-rich loamy soils, with patches of Tasele Gravel on the higher ground in the south. In Thriplow village, the land rises from about 25m at the western end of the village rising to about 31m on the southern entrance to the village (junction of Middle St, Farm Lane & Church St.) and to the Church on which there is a benchmark of 32.56.

A brief history of Thriplow village and Heathfield with overview of its character today

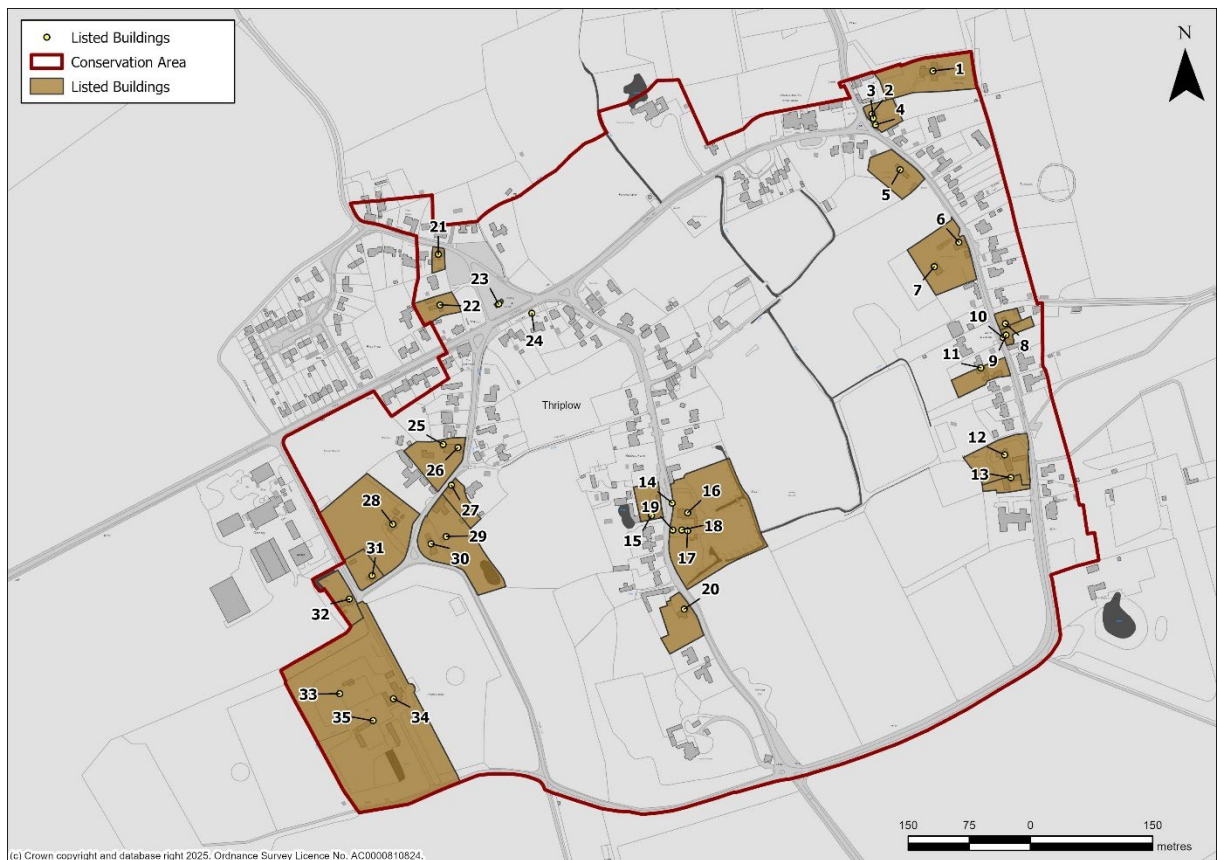
- 2.7 The village of Thriplow developed in a shallow valley, south-west of its church, which was built on the same elevated land on which a Bronze Age tumulus was discovered. Since medieval times it has been formed of a loose grid of lanes that served a number of manors - there were four recorded by the 14th century – The Bury, Barenton's, Bacons and Crouchmans. It has been suggested that the village's three main streets may have originated as tracks connecting the manors to the branches of the Icknield Way.

The parish has continued, since medieval times, to be important for arable farming, and the fertile soils here were cultivated on a three-course rotation in open field systems around the village until the Inclosure award in 1846. The scattered cottages along the lanes would have been added over the centuries to serve as accommodation for farm workers and together with the farm houses contribute notably to the character of the village. A number of timber-framed houses survive, including Gowards, a late medieval house altered in the early 17th century, Bassets or Bury Farm, a two-storeyed timber-framed and jettied house built in the second quarter of the 16th century, with a two-gabled extension added to the south in the 1560s, and Cochranes Farmhouse, a 17th-century farmhouse much altered in the 19th century.

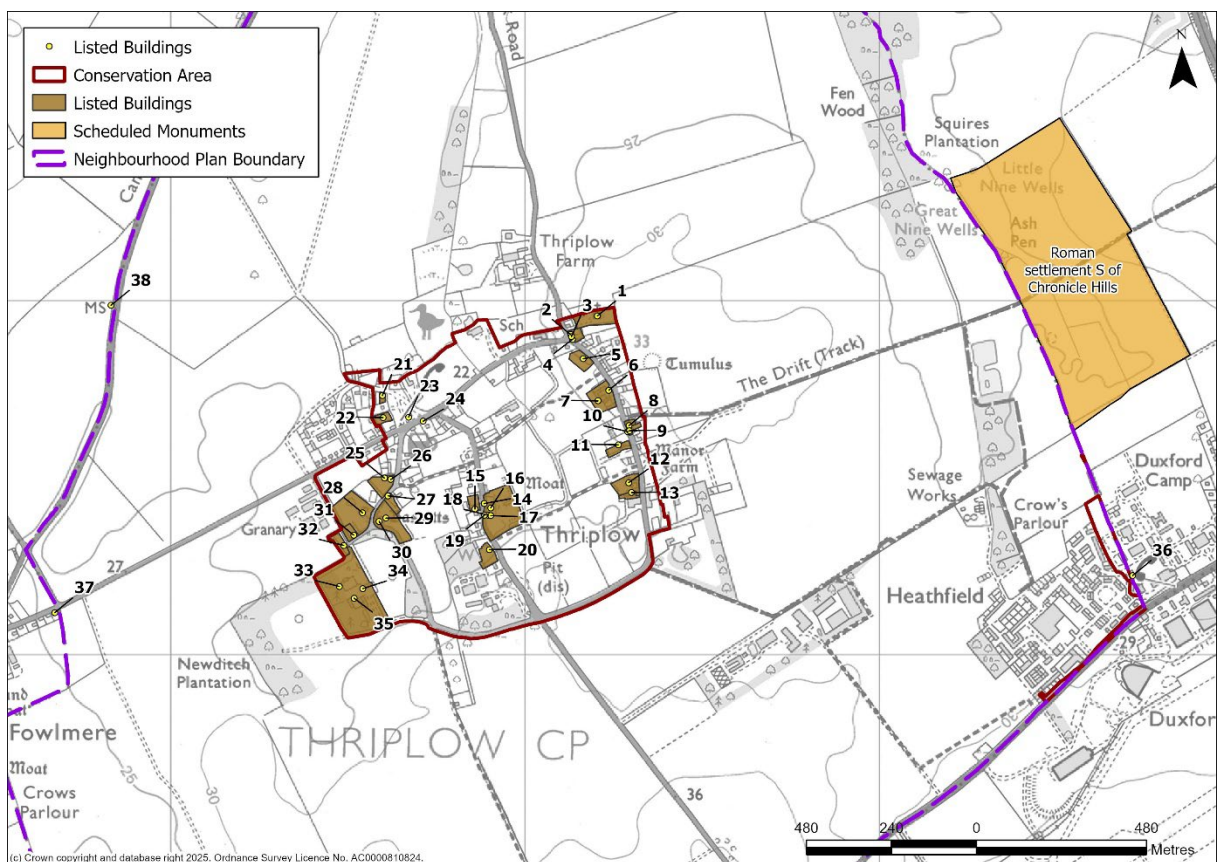
- 2.8 Thriplow village is attractive in its circular pattern of roads, and in its variety of open views, and windy wooded views, as one travels through it. The green rural centre is also the prime feature which makes the gradually sloping pastures at the heart of the village the key to its charms, along with the footpaths through the rural centre, which link up the roads.
- 2.9 The combination of houses set back from the road and some close to it, the variety of ages of houses and large proportion of listed houses (see Map 3) also contribute to the character. The majority of the village is within the conservation area (see Map 3). Together, the roads make a broadly ring-like form, formed by Church Street, Farm Lane, Lower Street and School Lane, with Middle Street cutting through the middle of the ring in a north-south direction. Perpendicular footpaths link the lanes east-west across the meadows that provide separation to many of the settled lanes.

Key: Listed buildings in Maps 3 and 4

1	Parish Church of St George	20	Goward's Farmhouse
2	Anno Domini Cottage	21	15, The Green
3	Pump Circa 6 Metres South of Numbers 5 and 7	22	Old Hall
4	9, Church Street	23	The Smithy
5	6 and 8 Church Street	24	Thriplow War Memorial
6	Bacon's Farmhouse	25	16, Lower Street
7	Barn to the West of Bacon's Farmhouse	26	Cochranes Farmhouse
8	Honeysuckle Cottage	27	17, Lower Street
9	47 Church Street	28	The Dower House
10	Pump to West of Number 47	29	Cottage to East of Number 21 Bassetts
11	40, Church Street	30	Bassetts
12	The Manor Farmhouse	31	30, Lower Street
13	Barn to South of Manor Farmhouse	32	The Lodge
14	Garden and Boundary Wall to The Manor House	33	Garden Wall to North West of Thriplow Bury
15	The Tithe Barn at Rectory Farm, Thriplow	34	Thriplow Bury
16	The Manor House	35	Dovecote to South of Thriplow Bury
17	Garden Ornament (A) To Rear of The Manor House	36	Buildings 7, 8, 9 And 13 (Airmen's Barracks)
18	Garden Ornament (C) to Rear of The Manor House	37	Fieldhouse
19	Garden Ornament (B) To Rear of The Manor House	38	Milestone Number 8, South of Newton Parish Boundary

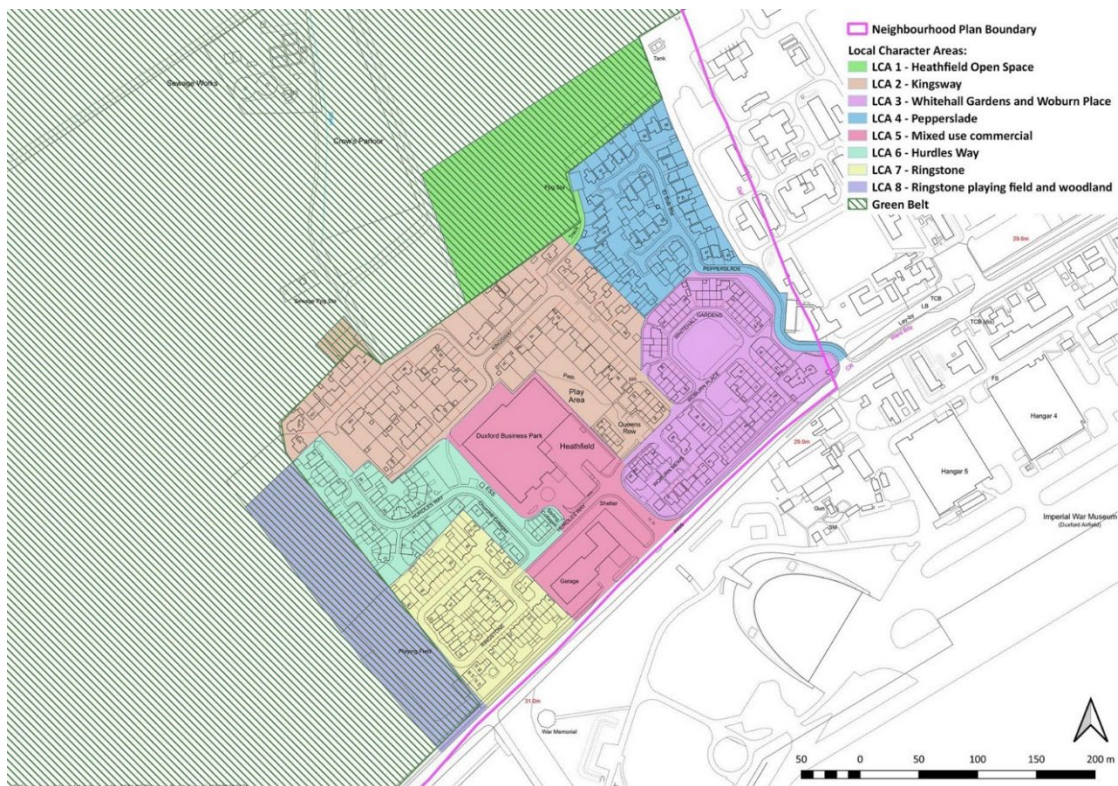


Map 3: Heritage assets in Thriplow parish



Map 4: Heritage assets in the parish and beyond

- 2.10 Heathfield is a settlement opposite the Duxford Imperial War Museum (formerly RAF Duxford) on the A505 about a mile to the south of Thriplow village. The airfield started in 1917/18 with many of the buildings being built by German prisoners of war. Housing built for RAF staff based at Duxford followed very soon after, starting in the 1920s. Houses at the eastern end were for the officers and these are in the neighbouring parish of Whittlesford. The Heathfield houses in Kingsway, Woburn Place and Whitehall Gardens (some 125 houses) were to house the 'other ranks'. They were built over a period of time, starting around 1925 with the last houses in Kingsway dating from the 1950's & 60's. When they were no longer needed for military personnel they were sold off to private individuals. This settlement was sold off by the government in the 1980's to the Blue Boar Group, who divided it into individual plots, which were sold to private owners. The name of Heathfield was adopted by common consent of the new residents, as it was located on an area of the parish formerly known as Heathfield. Many of these houses have since been extended and modernised by their owners who have brought some individuality to the street scenes. The former sergeants mess is now in light industrial use, in the centre of the settlement.
- 2.11 Since the 1990's three new private residential developments, Pepperslade, Hurdles Way and Ringstone, have been built to the east and west of the estate, more than doubling the original size of the settlement. Now there are some 300 houses at Heathfield, compared to around 200 in the village.
- 2.12 Map 5 below, is provided to assist with locating different roads and areas in Heathfield (referred to throughout this document). It also usefully illustrates how Heathfield is located alongside the busy A505, bounded by RAF Duxford land uses to the east and south and by Green Belt land to the north. The eight different character areas identified derive from the Masterplan drawn up, by AECOM, for the built-up area of Heathfield in 2022 to help inform the policies in this NP.



Map 5: Heathfield local character areas, as defined in the 2022 AECOM Masterplan report.

- 2.13 There is a great community spirit in Thriplow village, which has been able to maintain the essential elements of a village.
- 2.12 The Parish Council is an active council involving itself in all of the normal activities of a parish council including consultation with the District Council on planning matters. It was a Parish Council initiative to prepare a NP for the whole parish. The parish has always been active, ensuring there is a school, a pub, the church and the village shop, all kept going through difficult times, in the village of Thriplow.
- 2.13 This has been helped by the annual fundraising activities of Daffodil Weekend. This initially began in 1967 in order to repair the church. Due to its success, it was repeated the following year. Residents decided to raise funds by opening their gardens and making cups of tea for their visitors. The fete very soon grew into Daffodil Weekend - an event held in springtime and with upwards of 5000 visitors from all over the country over the weekend. This has continued and expanded ever since, to become a major focus for voluntary effort in the village, and a major source of income for nominated projects within the village, as well as raising funds for annually nominated charities. In 2011 the Committee received The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service (the equivalent of an MBE for charities).
- 2.14 The church has a relatively small congregation, though it is an active one, and is well maintained.
- 2.15 The primary school has expanded considerably over the past few decades and is incredibly popular. As well as pupils from Thriplow village and Heathfield, it also attracts pupils from many surrounding villages.
- 2.16 In the 1990s the village determined that a new village hall was needed and, under the Parish Council's auspices, a "New village hall committee" was formed. After much fund raising and grants from the National Lottery and the District Council the money was raised. 1999 saw the old hall demolished and a new village hall was built which was officially opened on the first day of the new millennium.
- 2.17 On 1st July 2007, the shop in Thriplow became the first community-run shop in South Cambridgeshire. Unfortunately, the post office was closed in 2009, however the shop has flourished with both paid staff and volunteers from the community combining to make it such a success. The shop also attracts customers from other villages who have no shop of their own.
- 2.18 Similarly, the Green Man, now a community pub, is owned by a large number of the local population and let commercially to tenants as a pub and restaurant.
- 2.19 Heathfield overall has lacked a united community, partly because of the physical divisions between Pepperslade, which has its own separate approach road off the A505, and the rest of the housing to the south.
- 2.20 However, in recent years the Heathfest has been taking place annually with good support and funds have been raised to build a children's playground.

Population and Demographics

- 2.21 A demographic and socio-economic report (the DSE review 2019) was prepared by Cambridgeshire ACRE in 2019 to support the NP and is available to view at <https://www.thriplowheathfieldnp.org/>. This reports that the latest estimate of population in the parish was 1,150. About 60 per cent live in Heathfield.

- 2.22 There are significant differences between the demographic profiles of Thriplow village and Heathfield. Thriplow has an older age profile. One in five households is comprised entirely of people aged over 65. As a consequence, health issues are more significant in the village. One in four households in Heathfield is a single person household aged under 65. Heathfield also has a higher proportion of households with children.
- 2.23 There is little deprivation in Thriplow. The parish scores well on indicators addressing income, employment, education, health and crime. However, access to services is an issue particularly for Heathfield. This is discussed further in Chapter 4.

Dwelling Stock

- 2.24 In 2011 there were 501 dwellings in the parish.
- 2.25 Between 2008-09 and 2016-17 there were only 13 new dwellings completed in the parish. In fact, there were only three (net) dwellings completed in Thriplow village over the period 2002-03 to 2016-17. Heathfield did experience significant growth: over a five year period, 2003-04 to 2007-08, 109 dwellings were completed in the Heathfield area.

Tenure

- 2.26 The DSE review 2019 reports that owner occupation is the dominant tenure across the parish. The younger age profile of homeowners in Heathfield means they are more likely to still be paying a mortgage. House prices are significantly higher in Thriplow village, generally above prices in neighbouring villages. Heathfield offers lower prices, partly related to the availability of smaller properties, which makes it a more affordable option for first time buyers.
- 2.27 The private rented sector is the second most common tenure in Heathfield. This probably offers the lowest cost housing options in the parish.

Affordable Housing

- 2.28 In 2017, the parish had 40 (8% of total housing stock) affordable dwelling units. These are socially rented and all in Thriplow village. The focus on bungalows and larger houses means it is generally inaccessible to younger, newly forming households. There are no affordable housing units in Heathfield.
- 2.29 A Housing Needs Survey (HNS) was undertaken in Thriplow in September 2018¹. This identified 22 households in need of affordable housing with a local connection to Thriplow parish. The need was predominantly for smaller homes (for 6 x 1 bed, 9 x 2 bed, 5 x 3 bed, 2 x 4 bed plus) although only three of the households would potentially be eligible for a bungalow. This need was identified through both the housing register (fourteen) and the survey process (8 additional units once duplicates from the housing register discounted). Most of the households identified through the survey were either living at homes with their parents or in private rented accommodation (in the parish). Most households identified through the housing register do not currently live in the parish and are headed by a person under the age of 40.
- 2.30 More recently, as at February 2024, South Cambridgeshire District Council record a total of 16 households with a connection to the parish and being in need of affordable housing that is available for social or affordable rent.

Employment

- 2.31 Unemployment is low in the parish. However, economic activity rates do vary. In Heathfield 90.7 per cent of people aged 16-74 are economically active. This falls to 68.0 per cent in Thriplow village. The South Cambridgeshire average is 76.2 per cent.
- 2.32 The 2019 DSE report found that many employed residents in the parish work locally. Forty-five per cent work within South Cambridgeshire. This includes 13 per cent who work from home. A further 24 per cent work in Cambridge. There are relatively small proportions (five per cent or less) of employed residents commuting to London, Essex, Hertfordshire and Suffolk.
- 2.33 A general picture can be drawn from local knowledge. Agriculture is still an important part of the local economy. There were over 50 people employed in the sector in 2011¹. However, to this must be added KWS, a seed specialist company employing a significant number of people in highly skilled roles. There are now also factory workers coming to the Savoursmiths site next to KWS.
- 2.34 Thriplow primary school is also likely to be one of the larger employers in the parish. Other employers include those at Nivtar Distribution in Heathfield, the sewage treatment works between the villages, a recycling centre adjoining the A505, Revivals Car Repairs at the Grainstore site, the swimming pool at Thriplow Heath and Specialist Dental Partners (formerly Clarion UK Translation Services). There is also the Cambridge County Council's recycling centre and Charlton's Recycled Parts adjacent to the recycling centre on Gravel Pit Hill, with the Thriplow Group, a road maintenance contractor in between. In total, these businesses provide limited employment opportunities for local people and the majority will need to travel a little further afield to find suitable work.

Greenbelt

- 2.35 The Green Belt surrounding Thriplow and Heathfield provides substantial protection from development and, together with Local Plan policies regarding development outside the Development Frameworks, provide a strategic framework for the consideration of development proposals in the neighbourhood plan area. Specific green belt policies in chapter 13 of the NPPF (2023) and Policy S/4 in South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018) ensure the policy protections of Green Belt designation.

¹ See Demographic and Socio-Economic Report for the Parish, Cambridgeshire ACRE 2019

3. The Consultation Process

- 3.1 **This chapter provides an overview of the consultation process; the consultation activity is reported in detail in the Consultation Statement that accompanies the NP.**
- 3.2 In July 2018 questionnaires were distributed to everyone in the parish as the Neighbourhood Plan Survey. A further second consultation was held in February and March of 2020, at which point the results of the 2018 consultation was reported and further issues were explored.
- 3.3 In November 2021, a third survey was undertaken, this time inviting feedback on:
- a) detail for preferred development sites, following an earlier call for sites and site assessment process
 - b) an emerging landscape enhancement strategy for Heathfield.

Neighbourhood Plan Engagement Feedback

- 3.4 The quantifiable results of the 2018 NP survey have been graphed to show 29% of Heathfield households responded and 57% of Thriplow households responded. A 41-page report providing the results of the survey is available to view here: https://www.thriplowheathfieldnp.org/uploads/7/5/6/3/75633463/full_results
- 3.5 The results of the November 2021 engagement area available to view here: <https://www.thriplowheathfieldnp.org/nov-2021-parish-feedback.html>

4. Key Issues

The assessment of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) in the plan area.

- 4.1 To help build a shared consensus on what the NP should be addressing, the NP group prepared and consulted on an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (the SWOT) facing the parish. The SWOT is an important part of plan preparation since a plan for the future should be focusing on protecting strengths, addressing weaknesses, managing threats and realising, where possible, opportunities.
- 4.2 The SWOT was presented to residents at the January and March 2020 consultation events. This was revised following the consultation to take on board the feedback. The revised SWOT is presented below.

Strengths

Heathfield:

- Proximity to Cambridge and M11
- Access to green spaces
- Good recreation grounds

Thriplow:

- Attractive and rural village, set in attractive landscape
- Peaceful, green, rural, with views onto green fields
- Heritage assets
- Village green and cricket ground

A rural parish

- Many open views out into the open countryside
- Working agricultural community
- Two Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI, woods and wildlife)

Strong Community Spirit

E.g. Daffodil Festival; community pub and shop; Heathfest in Heathfield

Access to Amenities

Thriplow:

- Good amenities (Village hall, pub, shop, school, cricket ground, church, playground)

Thriplow and Heathfield:

- Rural paths and bridleways

Conveniently located

- 8 miles from Cambridge
- 8 miles from Royston.
- Convenient access to train services at both Foxton and Whittlesford

Weaknesses

Heathfield

Conflicting land uses where employment uses and A505 undermine residential amenity.

Thriplow & Heathfield: two separate villages with two separate communities?

- Physically separate and nature of roads limits interaction between the two.
- Distinctly different demographics
- Only road access from Heathfield to Thriplow is via A505
- Lack of cycle paths to get anywhere, foot paths limited

Access to Amenities

- Poor access to amenities particularly for Heathfield residents
- Poor mobile and Broadband signal
- Shortage of informal and formal play space e.g. football field in Thriplow village
- Limited access for all to countryside walks
- Lack of community and retail space in Heathfield

Cost of Housing and low stock of affordable dwellings

- Thriplow housing is very expensive, unaffordable to most.
- Limited housing for younger, newly formed households and for elderly

Transport and Getting Around

Heathfield:

- Poor road connections with no connections from Pepperslade and lack of circulation in other parts of the Heathfield Estate;
- Car dependency very high and unsustainable. Poor bus service

Thriplow:

- Traffic speeds in Thriplow unsafe and inconsiderate street parking
- Need to limit large vehicles which get stuck with any cars parked on single track roads

Opportunities

Environment

- Go carbon neutral (e.g. Alternative energy projects at community level).
- More emphasis on biodiversity: More protected wildlife routes, more trees, village woodland, etc.
- Protect green views and more protected village amenity areas.

Community Amenities for Heathfield

- Increase amenities accessible to Heathfield residents through “getting around the parish” (see below) measures.

Getting around the parish

- Enhance footpath and cycle route access to the countryside, to neighbouring settlements to Whittlesford and Foxton, and between Thriplow and Heathfield.
- Shuttle bus between Heathfield and Thriplow.

Getting around Heathfield:

- Better access onto Heathfield from A505
- Provide a direct link between Pepperslade and rest of Heathfield. This creates additional access to A505.
- Campaign to get roads adopted by Highways.

Thriplow:

- Safer access off the A505 towards Thriplow (right hand turn).
- Campaign for 20mph zone and 7.5 ton weight limit
- Better provision of parking around school and more off-street parking.
- Footpaths improvement along roadside towards Fowlmere and along School Lane.

Increase affordable housing

- Bring forward a site for affordable housing in Thriplow village : identified need for 22 (2017 HNS) households and elderly.

Threats

Uncertainty regarding future strategic transport infrastructure

- Possibility of dual carriageway for A505 going between Heathfield and Thriplow village.
- Increased segregation between two villages
Increasing conflict of land uses at Heathfield.

Flooding threats in some areas:

- Poor drainage mainly affects foot and cycle paths, though roads also do not drain away easily.

Increasing isolation and car dependency at Heathfield and Thriplow.

Inadequate car parking and lack of public transport or cycle path connections.

Loss of working agricultural community through change of land use.

Industrial use of land between Heathfield and Thriplow needs environment to be protected.

Increase in through traffic in Thriplow particularly if the Foxton hub goes ahead.

If Green belt policy were to change there would be a threat of urbanization.

4.3 Alongside the community consultation and consideration of the planning context in which the NP sits, the SWOT helped in the identification of seven issues for this NP to address. These seven issues have a narrower scope than the comprehensive vision consulted on in 2020. This reflects the role of a NP to address land use matters at a local level and its limitations in addressing strategic matters (such as green belt policy which is dealt with at the national and district level):

ISSUE 1	Thriplow & Heathfield: two separate villages with two separate Communities
ISSUE 2	Access to Amenities
ISSUE 3	Transport and Connectivity
ISSUE 4	Heathfield specific environmental challenges
ISSUE 5	Thriplow: protect the village character
ISSUE 6	Housing Needs: cost and low stock of affordable housing
ISSUE 7	Biodiversity

Table 1: Seven key issues in the parish

4.4 **ISSUE 1: Thriplow & Heathfield: two separate villages with two separate communities**

Current

4.4.1 The physical separation of the old village from Heathfield limits interaction between the two. The unsafe access via the busy A505 is a key constraint but lack of amenities in Heathfield also play a role. Thriplow residents have little reason to go to Heathfield, and access to Thriplow amenities by Heathfield residents is not straightforward.

Distinctly different demographics

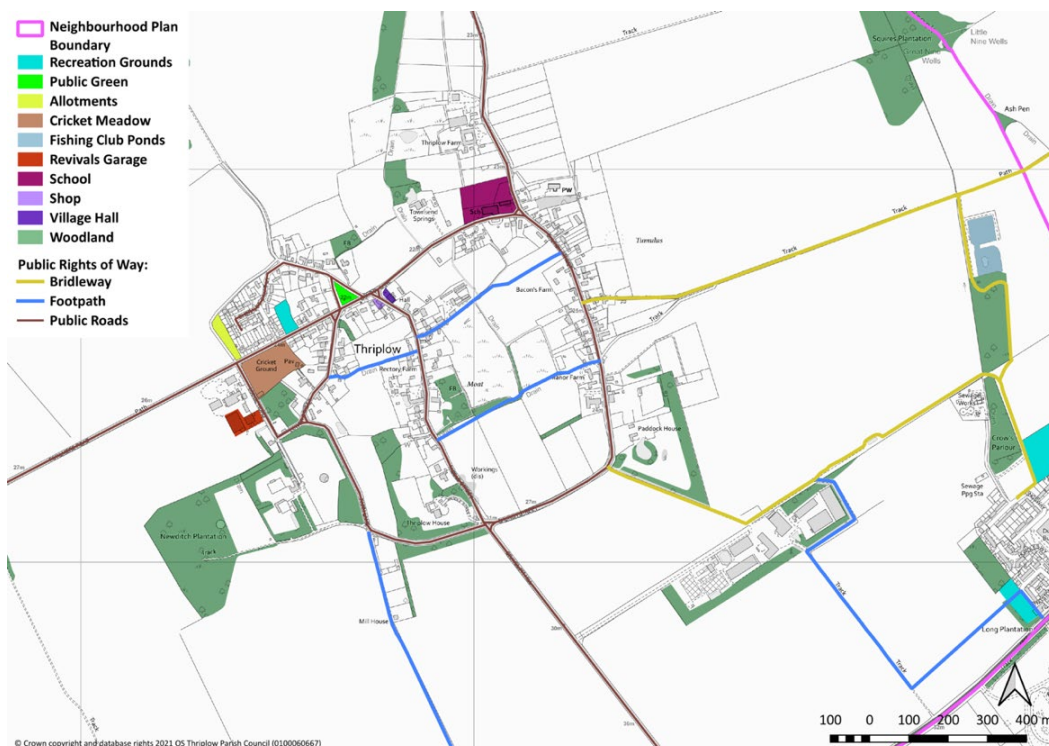
4.4.2 As noted in Chapter 3, Thriplow and Heathfield have distinctly different demographics with a very young population in Heathfield, together with a high proportion of 2- and 3-bedroom properties compared to an older population in Thriplow, with a high proportion of larger dwellings. Heathfield is a distinctly young community. It has very few households aged 65+ and a relatively large proportion of one person and family households aged under 65. Heathfield also has a higher proportion of households with children (dependent or otherwise). Thriplow village has a relatively high number of one person households aged 65+ (but is generally of a similar composition to South Cambridgeshire as a whole) and relatively low proportions of people aged in their 20s and 65+.

4.5 ISSUE 2: Access to amenities

4.5.1 A visual illustration of amenities, open spaces and woodland is provided through Maps 6 and 7. Heathfield residents have a large open space and a relatively new children's playground. All other amenities including the shop, pub, school, church and cricket ground are located in Thriplow.



Map 6: Outdoor recreation areas in Heathfield



Map 7: Community and outdoor recreation facilities in Thriplow village

Heathfield

- 4.5.2 There was a consensus from all who visited the early consultation events in 2019 and 2020 that there is a serious lack of amenities for Heathfield residents. It was agreed that Heathfield would benefit from a central amenity such as shop and/or community space. The closest shop to Heathfield is the garage along the A505 in Whittlesford Parish (BP MRH Aerodrome). The only way to safely access it is by car. Pedestrian routes go only via the A505 with very little protection from the busy road. Also accessed from the A505, is the Officers Mess Business Centre, in Whittlesford, en route to the M11. It offers a café and shared business use, at market rates.
- 4.5.3 Other amenities to be considered for Heathfield are youth activity, sports club house, external sports, internal sports/fitness facilities, social club/bar/cafe and library.
- 4.5.4 Heathfield Area Recreation Trust (HeART) in partnership with Heathfields Residents Association refurbished an existing playground located between part of Kingsway and Duxford Business Centre. This playground is known as Heathfield Residents Association Park. It was opened in 2017 and is intended for use by children in their formative years up to the age of 8. The area is owned and managed by Heathfields Residents Association.
- 4.5.5 Land to the west of Ringstone and Hurdles Way belongs to the parish council. The land adjoining Ringstone is known as the Ringstone Open Space. It is managed by the parish council. Play equipment for younger children has been installed on the south-west side. It is intended to develop the remainder of the area to accommodate football and ball games as well as other leisure activities. It is also intended to develop the wooded area to the west of Hurdles Way for leisure activities.
- 4.5.6 The parish council has developed a leisure park for older children on the area located to the north of Kingsway and Pepperslade known as the Heathfield Open Space. The area is owned and maintained by the parish council. The area also contains an outdoor gym available to all including adults. The area is used for leisure activities such as ball games and picnicking. The development was completed in 2021.
- 4.5.7 The Duxford Business Park is located in the former Sergeants Mess site in the middle of the Heathfield residential area has been restored, updated and expanded. It is currently owned by Nivtar Distribution, and formerly by Iceni. It comprises a distribution centre, office space, a meeting room and an entrance hall. There is a footpath between the rear of the Kingsway houses and the eastern boundary which is currently unused. There could be scope for some community use within this site.

4.6 ISSUE 3: Transport and Connectivity

- 4.6.1 In both parishes, car dependency is very high and unsustainable. The lack of satisfactory alternative transport (bus, train or bike) and the lack of employment in the parish means that car trips are required for all purposes. With the higher density settlement in Heathfield, car parking is generally an issue.
- 4.6.2 Lack of connectivity to public transport is common to both settlements. The bus service is inadequate apart from the school buses. For a working family, two cars are necessary.

Cycling

- 4.6.3 There are no cycle paths connecting to railway stations (Foxton and Whittlesford) or to other cycle routes, without using dilapidated and unsafe footpaths, or going over muddy farm fields. The NP group have explored options for improving cycle connectivity and opportunities are presented in chapters 6 and 7 in this plan.

Access to countryside walks and opportunities to improve walking connectivity to neighbouring areas

- 4.6.4 There is limited access to countryside walks. Circular walking routes and routes to get to other settlements are both lacking in the parish.
- 4.6.5 For example, the walk to Newton is only possible by walking along Brook Road with a 60mph limit and blind curves.
- 4.6.6 The NP group have explored options for improving connectivity and opportunities are presented in chapters 6 and 7 in this plan.

Pedestrian/cycle access between Thriplow and Heathfield

- 4.6.7 There is a concrete path running from the north of Heathfield to the south-east corner of Thriplow village (see Map 21). This is accessible to pedestrians and cyclists. It is also suitable for farm vehicles to use. During the 2020 consultation, 7 likes were registered for a desire to improve this path. The logical improvement would be electric lighting. There are different views on this, with energy conservation and night sky darkness going against increased amenity.
- 4.6.8 The existing route between Thriplow and Heathfield provides opportunities for improving parish-wide pedestrian and cycle connectivity to Whittlesford Station. However, as described further in Chapter 6, connectivity within the Heathfield estate itself is poor, which in turn impedes connectivity to Whittlesford.

Heathfield-specific connectivity issues

- 4.6.9 Road, pedestrian and cycle connectivity within the Heathfield settlement is poor. This is discussed further in Chapter 6, the planning policies.
- 4.6.10 Parish residents are also concerned about the current access off the A505 into the Heathfield settlement at the Heathfield Way/A505 junction. There is only one access on and off the estate and the current layout is widely regarded as a safety hazard.

Thriplow-specific connectivity issues

- 4.6.11 The old village is very limited in infrastructure by having little space for pavements, except on Fowlmere Road and School Lane.
- 4.6.12 The footpath on School Lane goes only from the shop to the school on one side and is mostly sub-standard and dilapidated, allowing single file only and definitely not appropriate for disabled or infirm.
- 4.6.13 The main route through Middle Street and Fowlmere Road is a short cut from the A505 to Foxton and other villages to the west, so gets all kinds of heavy traffic. Middle street is just wide enough for traffic in both directions, but not wide enough to have a dotted line demarcating two lanes.

Speeding through traffic (Thriplow)

- 4.6.14 To slow down traffic in the village, speed bumps have been put in at the three entrances to the village, though there are long straight sections on Fowlmere Road and School Lane after the speed bump, where traffic accelerates and outside traffic and lorries feel free to go through at unsafe speeds beyond 30mph. Middle Street has no pedestrian footpath and several blind curves, which make it too dangerous particularly for children to walk to school.
- 4.6.15 Other roads (Church St, Farm Lane, Lodge Road and Lower Street) are single lane farm roads. This makes access for heavy, large or long vehicles a hazard and on road parking a risk and stops letting parents allow their children to walk to school.

Congested School Drop off and car parking generally (Thriplow)

- 4.6.16 School Lane, then Fowlmere Road and also Church Street are used twice daily for the primary school drop off. Issues and potential solutions are detailed further in Chapters 6 and 7.

Dangerous access from A505

- 4.6.17 The busy and dangerous road junction on the A505 between Thriplow village and the A505 has been cause for concern to the village for many years. A survey taken of villagers in around 2018 showed great concern about the danger of this junction. The survey revealed that many people do not even use it but prefer to go onto the Fowlmere junction where there is a proper acceleration and deceleration lane. The survey also revealed that there had been many accidents here, perhaps not reportable and therefore the police and County Highways did not know about them, so they say that the junction is a safe junction. However, the amount of broken glass, etc. shows otherwise. Conversations held with local employees in the area further supports this assertion. Safety standards have been reduced

further at this junction, recently, since the general lane widening process took place in 2018, at the expense of the exposed central lane for turning right.

- 4.6.18 There is an ongoing campaign to increase safety at this junction. This is reflected in Chapter 7 to this plan – see Community Action 8.

The Future Threat

- 4.6.19 The potential of re-routing of the A505 between Heathfield and Thriplow village farmland has been the subject of government study: this has been mooted by a government traffic study as the most feasible way of making a dual carriageway all the way through Heathfield.
- 4.6.20 There were a strong numbers of complaints (38 dislikes) in the consultation to the idea of rerouting and building such a bypass to the A505, between Thriplow Village and Heathfield. This issue, which emerges from time to time, is a very emotive issue. Any such proposals are not currently included in the emerging Greater Cambridge Plan.

4.7 ISSUE 4: Heathfield specific environmental challenges

- 4.7.1 There are specific environmental challenges, which affect the settlement. Owing to its location alongside the busy A505 it suffers road noise and air pollution, and its eastern edge is just 1km from the M11.
- 4.7.2 The character of Heathfield reflects narrow developer led thinking that has led to the creation of four very distinctly different areas with little thought for connectivity or overall character.
- 4.7.3 Further detail on the challenges facing Heathfield is provided in Chapter 6, the planning policies. Map 8 provides a visual illustration of the key issues.

4.8 ISSUE 5: Thriplow – protecting our village character

- 4.8.1 Thriplow is an attractive rural village surrounded by open countryside which is also designated as Green Belt. The built environment and landscape character is recognised and described in the Thriplow Landscape Character Assessment. Generally, the existing Local Plan, together with national planning policy ensures that development in and around Thriplow village is undertaken in a sensitive manner.
- 4.8.2 A key priority in this plan is to ensure the existing special rural and landscape character in Thriplow village continues to be protected or enhanced when new development comes forward.

4.9 **ISSUE 6: Housing Needs: Cost and low stock of affordable homes**

- 4.9.1 The low number of affordable and the low number of desirable smaller homes in the parish are the issues. Thriplow village lacks smaller homes for younger families or single people and for the elderly. The housing in Thriplow village is very expensive and unaffordable to most. Whilst there is no affordable housing in Heathfield (it is all in Thriplow), the market housing in Heathfield is available at a lower cost. However, both this NP and the Local Plan establishes that Heathfield is not a sustainable location for the focus of additional housing growth.
- 4.9.2 The stock of affordable housing has declined in rural communities in recent years relative to urban areas. Rural communities have been more vulnerable to losses through Right to Buy. Also, difficulties in building new affordable homes in rural communities has been exacerbated by government guidance which has removed the requirement to provide any affordable housing on schemes of 10 dwellings or less.

Housing mix

- 4.9.3 In Thriplow village, where detached houses dominate, there is relatively little, smaller accommodation (26 per cent have two or less bedrooms). In contrast, there are significantly more large properties (44 per cent of all properties have four or more bedrooms).
- 4.9.4 Twelve out of 29 affordable homes managed by South Cambridgeshire District Council are 2 bed bungalows. In total, 16 of the properties are bungalows, which will tend to be prioritised for older people or those with mobility issues. All of the 13 houses have at least 3 bedrooms. Younger single or newly formed family households will have little chance of securing affordable housing in Thriplow through the choice-based lettings system.²

²'Housing Statistical Information Leaflet', South Cambridgeshire District Council (December 2018) 10 Table QS411EW, 2011 Census of Population (via NOMIS)

4.10 **ISSUE 7: Biodiversity**

- 4.10.1 The climate emergency demands that we protect the environment in our area, to maximize the increase in and renewal of biodiversity, in terms of plant life, micro-organism life, and animal life.
- 4.10.2 We therefore seek woodland renewal and protection of our existing ecological assets including the three areas of land currently protected as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). This could be through ensuring new development proposals are designed to complement the existing green infrastructure and ecological networks. Outside the scope of planning policy this could be through improved stewardship of the woodlands, by responsible access and voluntary work to be undertaken, to maintain conditions for re-introduction of wildlife.

Woodland areas in the parish

- 4.10.3 Areas of woodland in the parish are shown on Maps 6 and 7. The largest area of woodland in the parish is north east: Squires Plantation goes south of the fishing pond to the north of Heathfield. Fen Wood is a broadleaved, mix and yew woodland. Due to its ecological value, it is nationally designated as the Thriplow Peat Holes SSSI. The designated SSSI crosses over into the Whittlesford Parish. See Map 17 to see the extent of the SSSI.
- 4.10.4 The second largest area of woodland in the parish is south west of Thriplow village in the western part of the Bury estate in the south west of the village, Newditch plantation.
- 4.10.5 A small woodland also exists south of the cricket field, on Lodge Road which is also in private ownership and not publicly accessible. It is already protected as a Protected Village Amenity Area (PVAA) in the 2018 South Cambridgeshire Local Plan, though it is privately owned. The designation of PVAA is contested by the owner.
- 4.10.6 There are also woodland verges along parts of Lodge Road and Middle Street at the south of the village, which extends to the PVAA behind the cricket meadow.
- 4.10.7 There are other clusters of trees in private ownership, notably those on both sides of School Lane.

5. Vision and Objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan

- 5.1 Following early community engagement work (summarised in chapter 3), and subsequent exploratory work on identifying issues to be addressed through this plan (summarised in chapter 4) the NP group arrived at a vision, four themes and twelve objectives for this NP. The NP vision is:

Thriplow and Heathfield will grow sustainably whilst remaining a 'living' community providing a high quality of life and social cohesion for residents of all ages across the whole parish, respecting its rural roots and enhancing the natural environment. Access, via non-motorised (active-travel) routes, to our surrounding countryside and neighbouring settlements will be improved, bringing with it social, mental health and physical health benefits.

- 5.2 The vision is supported by the following four themes and twelve objectives.

THEME 1	Protecting and enhancing the natural environment and the character of the parish
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Objective 1:	The character and quality of the built environment and landscape in Heathfield will be protected and improved.
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- 5.3 Whilst this plan does not regard Heathfield as a suitable location for additional residential growth, it is important that planning policies are in place to help assess planning applications that do come forward. The existing challenges in Heathfield should not be used as an excuse to allow for poorly designed schemes that fail to protect existing qualities or fail to utilise available opportunities to improve the character of the area.
- 5.4 As part of this objective we have undertaken an analysis of the area and identified opportunities to improve the environmental quality and enhance the landscape character in Heathfield. This work has been informed by the Heathfield Neighbourhood Masterplan which includes an analysis of the built-up area in Heathfield, alongside a series of recommendations, in master plan form.
- 5.5 This objective also means we will support proposals which would deliver additional community facilities or amenities such as a shop.

Objective 2:	The existing built environment and landscape character of Thriplow village will be protected and enhanced.
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- 5.6 In the village, roots are based in agriculture and the church. The agricultural heritage gives us the fragile infrastructure of single track roads, lack of footpaths and low level of street lighting. These give the village its real limits but also provide its rural identity. These rural roots are to be preserved. The surrounding farms will remain a part of parish life. Grazing land for sheep, cattle and pigs as well as larger crop fields outside of the village is the local character.
- 5.7 The Thriplow and Heathfield Landscape Character Assessment (2020) provides further useful context to the special built environment and landscape features to be preserved.

Objective 3:	New development will be sensitive to our rural environment and reflect our rural roots
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- 5.8 This objective is closely linked to Objective 1 and 2 but applies parish wide rather than focusing on either settlement.
- 5.9 Key characteristics for preservation and enhancement are the open views to pasture and to crop fields, both within Thriplow village as well as looking outwards from its roads and paths. There are also outward looking views from the northern and western edges of Heathfield. The public rights of way network gives Heathfield residents good access to the open countryside to the north and community engagement work with Heathfield residents shows that this is a key positive aspect of living in the area³. This plan seeks to preserve and enhance this.

- 5.10 The countryside surrounding our settlements is designated as Green Belt, which means it is afforded considerable protection against inappropriate development. Nevertheless, we recognise that the varied rural activities in our parish, whilst valued has the potential to damage tranquillity and the rural environment if it is not sensitively managed.

Objective 4:	Recognise and protect accordingly all valued open spaces in the parish
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- 5.11 Through the NP we wish to afford the same protection to valued open spaces in Heathfield as the Local Plan currently does to open space in Thriplow.

Objective 5:	Seek to reverse the decline of the natural environment in the parish by protecting and increasing biodiversity
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- 5.12 When new development comes forward, the natural environment should be protected, and available opportunities should be taken to improve overall biodiversity in the parish.
- 5.13 Protection of our natural environment will include preventing development proposals in our rural economy where they contribute to unacceptable risk of soil or water pollution in our parish.
- 5.14 We will require development proposals to deliver net gains in biodiversity which could include the creation of new woodland in areas where this would extend or link well with existing habitats in the parish.
- 5.15 To complement our planning policies we will work outside the planning system, with our residents and landowner community. Please see Chapter 7 for further detail.
- 5.16 The second most popular issues from our February consultation were concerned with making the parish a living village and sustainable settlement.

³See report of Oct. and Nov 2021 community engagement.

THEME 2	Living village and sustainable development
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Objective 6	We will continue to be a living community, which sustains all amenities, including the primary school, shop, village hall and other facilities
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- 5.17 We need to ensure we continue to keep and develop amenities here, while not sacrificing the rural feel. The shop, village hall, pub, school, church and sports facilities are key to the community, essential to the well-being of the community. But, they are not always financially viable and, as detailed in Chapter 2 have required community input to keep them going.
- 5.18 The more families and businesses are based in the parish, the more they will support local amenities. And the more self- supporting they will become. This means allowing appropriate family housing to be developed.
- 5.19 Any new amenities will be prioritised to go to Heathfield, since it does not have its fair share of amenities, compared to its population.

Objective 7	There will be limited small scale additional housing development, focused in Thriplow near to existing shops and services
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- 5.20 The community would become more sustainable by having a larger population. We need to continue to be open to change and development of more amenities. Any additional housing development will be focused in Thriplow near to existing shops and services, for reasons of sustainability. Sustainability of growth is the allied issue in our vision statement to get the most approval. This is allied with Objective 4 on increasing biodiversity and encouraging zero carbon overall.

Objective 8	All development to use sustainable building materials and consider energy efficiency
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- 5.21 Any development is to use sustainable building materials and to demonstrate high standards of energy efficiency. The concept of zero carbon in building is to be aspired to. The life cycle assessment of all activities and materials is to be considered, to ensure the greatest possible sustainability in carbon footprint terms.

Objective 9	Plan for improved outdoor recreational facilities in the parish
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- 5.22 Play facilities for children have been improved in both Thriplow and Heathfield, though there is no specific football venue. Hence safer cycling routes between the villages are key to this sharing of provision.
- 5.23 'Allotment' space is provided at present on Thriplow Farm's land on the edge of Thriplow. This is not a formally recognised allotment. Thriplow Farms offered a site on the protected access route to the conservation meadow along School Lane, for a 'co-veg' scheme operating since 2020. The continuation of this after the pandemic is to be encouraged, though it depends on community support.
- 5.24 We wish to explore the provision of bike scrambling routes through woodland adjacent to settlements.

Objective 10	A safer less congested parish
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- 5.25 What we mean by this is:
- A safer access off the A505 towards Thriplow (right hand turn)
 - A 20mph zone in Thriplow village and in Heathfield.
 - Better provision of off-street parking around the school
 - More off-street parking, in well landscaped and appropriate positions
 - Footpath improvements along roadside towards Fowlmere and along School Lane.
 - Heathfield parking issues to be included in the enhancement of Heathfield.

Objective 11	The quality and quantity of our rural footpath network and interconnectivity with neighbouring settlements will be improved
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- 5.26 There is scope to improve:
- walking and cycling routes between neighbouring villages of Thriplow, Heathfield, Fowlmere and Newton.
 - access to circular walking routes and to some of the parish woodlands.
- 5.27 We wish to maintain existing provision and take opportunities to provide both better access to the countryside and our woodland and provide better pedestrian and cycle access to our neighbouring settlements.

THEME 3	Social cohesion and parish links
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Objective 12	There will be more cohesion between the two communities of Thriplow and Heathfield
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5.28 What we mean by this is:

- Protecting the amenity value of the pedestrian and cycle route between Thriplow and Heathfield.
- Ensure pedestrian and a cycle link between Pepperslade and the rest of Heathfield works well – see Map 9.
- Potentially locating a parish-wide recreational space such as a community woodland between the settlements to give cause to meeting of residents from different parts of the parish.

How these objectives are delivered through this plan

5.29 The twelve objectives presented under the three themes above cannot all or only be addressed through planning policies in this plan. Some of them will be addressed through community initiatives which are presented in Chapter 7 to this plan. The illustration below demonstrates the links between the themes, the objectives, the planning policies and community initiatives presented in this NP.

Table showing how NP objectives are delivered through the planning policies and community initiatives:

THEME 1. Protecting and enhancing the natural environment and the character of the parish		
NP Objective	Planning Policy (Chapter 6)	Community Initiative
1: The character and quality of the built environment and landscape in Heathfield will be protected and improved.	Policy THP1 – Improving the character and quality of Heathfield Policy THP2 – Provision of additional amenities in Heathfield See also Policy TH4 – Parish-wide Locally valued views	1, 2 and 3.
2: The existing village built environment and landscape character of Thriplow village will be protected and enhanced.	Policy THP 3 - Protecting and Enhancing Village Character in Thriplow See also Policy TH4 – Parish-wide locally valued views	
3. New development will be sensitive to our rural environment and reflect our rural roots	Policy TH4 – Parish-wide Locally valued views Policy TH5 – Supporting the rural economy	

4: Recognise and protect accordingly all valued open spaces in the parish	Policy THP 6 – Heathfield Local Green Spaces	3, 4, 5
5: Seek to reverse the decline of the natural environment in the parish by protecting and increasing biodiversity	Policy THP 7 – Promoting nature recovery by protecting existing sites and features, increasing parish biodiversity and delivering biodiversity net gains Policy THP 8 – Protecting and enhancing the parish tributary feeding the Hoffer Brook.	4

THEME 2.

Living village and sustainable development

NP Objective	Planning Policy (Chapter 6)	Community Initiative
6: We will continue to be a living community, which sustains the primary school, shop and facilities	Policy THP 9 – The Grainstore site Policy THP10– Rural exception sites in Thriplow	2
7: There will be limited small scale additional housing development focused in Thriplow near to existing shops and services	Policy THP 9 – The Grainstore site Policy THP 10– Rural exception sites in Thriplow	
8. All development to use sustainable building materials and consider energy efficiency	Policy THP 9 – The Grainstore site	
9. Plan for improved outdoor recreational facilities in the parish	Policy THP 13 - Development proposals resulting in better links between the Heathfield and Thriplow communities	5, 6 and 7
10. A safer, less congested village	Policy THP 11 – Improving parking provision and improving road safety in Thriplow and Heathfield	8
11. The quality and quantity of our rural footpath network and interconnectivity with neighbouring settlements will be improved.	Policy THP 12 - Protecting and improving the rural footpath network and sustainable connections to neighbouring settlements	6

THEME 3.

Social Cohesion and Parish Links

NP Objective	Planning Policy (Chapter 6)	Community Initiative
12. There will be more cohesion between the two communities of Thriplow and Heathfield	Policy THP 13 – Development proposals resulting in better links between the Heathfield and Thriplow communities.	7



Map 9: Heathfield enhancement strategy

Policy THP 1 – Improving the character and quality of Heathfield

- 6.1.1. Today, the area Heathfield has a tight, concentrated built form comprising different areas, which can be broadly categorized as follows: (See Map 5 to assist with locating the streets listed below).
- the original residential roads Kingsway, Woburn Place and Whitehall Gardens
 - Pepperslade, which was built later in the 1990s and has its own access onto the A505
 - the houses in Hurdles Way and flats and houses in Ringstone on the western extent of the settlement.
- 6.1.2. On the one hand, the settlement has a strong planned estate feel. There is a uniformity in design and layout in each area, albeit these are different in each area e.g., Pepperslade has a uniform layout which is very different to Hurdles Way and Ringstone.
- 6.1.3. Information on the history of Heathfield is given in Chapter 2 of this plan.
- 6.1.4. In recognition of the issues specific to Heathfield and to inform the development of the NP, a Masterplan for Heathfield was undertaken by AECOM, via a support package granted to the Parish Council by Locality in 2022. The document includes an analysis of different character areas within the built-up part of Heathfield, and provides a series of recommendations in masterplan form, to improve the public realm and overall appearance of Heathfield. The document defined eight different character areas in Heathfield – see Map 5.
- 6.1.5. Eleven broad issues have been identified at Heathfield. These are explained in the following paragraphs and illustrated in Map 8. Generally, there is a lack of cohesiveness in Heathfield and the way it functions. At the core of this is the design and the management of the roads.
- 6.1.6. The cul-de-sac nature of the settlement has direct implications for connectivity and there are different management regimes in place for different roads. The roads in Kingsway and Woburn Place/Whitehall Gardens are unadopted and managed by the Heathfield Residents Association. The roads in Hurdles Way are adopted but the common areas and car parking are managed by a private company. The roads in Ringstone and Pepperslade, however, are adopted and managed by the highways authority.



Figure 1: View entering Heathfield from A505, with Nivtar Distribution straight ahead. Feb. 2021

Heathfield issue number 1:

Poor street scene environment at the main approach to Heathfield, via Heathfield Way

- 6.1.7. The main approach to Heathfield, via Heathfield Way is visually dominated by highways infrastructure and commercial uses, comprising the car sales company, accessed directly off the A505 and Duxford Business Park, located off Hurdles Way. These uses obscure the identity of Heathfield, as the most populated residential area in the parish, and contribute to a confused arrival experience.
- 6.1.8. The Duxford Business Park is occupied by Nivtar Distribution (see Figure 3) who operate a factory and storage, packing and distribution facility. The building, sometimes referred to as Heathfield House was originally built as the Sergeants Mess. Landscaping is poor in this area. Boundary treatment to residential properties, (completed relatively recently at Woburn Place), alongside the eastern edge of Heathfield Way has been particularly unsympathetic, comprising a brick wall, a high close-boarded wooden fences and a narrow strip of verge (see Figures 2 and 3)
- 6.1.9. Landscaping has not been a priority in this area. There is no attention to pedestrian access to amenities on A505 along north eastern side and the narrow path is overgrown and poorly maintained.
- 6.1.10. The overall effect is an unwelcoming entrance to the estate. Green landscaping is limited to grassed areas, some trees, and hedgerows along the A505 and residential gardens. EMG have planted a laurel hedge recently which will require a great deal of maintenance. This limited landscaping, together with the commercial uses results in poor visual and noise screening from the A505.



Figure 2: View entering Heathfield from A505, EMG Duxford footpath into Heathfield



Figure 3. View from from EMG Duxford footpath towards NIVTAR DISTRIBUTION

Heathfield issue number 2: The A505 is a source of traffic noise and air pollution, affecting residential amenity at Heathfield.

- 6.1.11. Residential areas in Heathfield are exposed to noise and vibration from the busy A505 in addition to noise from the nearby M11. Any noise barriers between residential properties and the A505 are limited to a narrow band of trees along back gardens on Woburn Mews and the back gardens along Ringstone. Rear gardens are located just a 5-metre distance away from the A505 and the dwellings themselves approximately 12 metres. The car sales company occupying the corner plot at Heathfield Way / A505 junction may provide some limited amount of noise buffering to the southern side of the estate but detracts visually at the entrance point to the estate.
- 6.1.12. Noise pollution is clearly felt in outdoor amenity spaces including the recently completed play space at Ringstone (although the landscaping buffer here is wider than in other places).

Heathfield issue number 3: The A505 footpath

- 6.1.13. There is a footpath running parallel to the A505 on the northern side. It is poorly maintained and overgrown. It also comes to an abrupt end beyond the first farm

track/access to KWS to the west of the settlement, although at this point, there is a route which heads north towards the KWS site.



Figure 4: A505 footpath and cycle way

Heathfield issue number 4: Pepperslade and Woburn Place pedestrian link

- 6.1.14. Pepperslade, has its own access from the A505. The road winds around the residential areas of the rest of Heathfield to the west and reaches another cul-de-sac estate.
- 6.1.15. There is a physical link between Pepperslade and Woburn Place, provided by a gap in a brick wall that has ramped access on the western side. See Figure 4. Whilst the access is important and functional to users, visually it is not.

Heathfield issue number 5: Parking at Whitehall Gardens

- 6.1.16. There is a lot of car parking around the central open space in Whitehall Gardens. Each house has an allowance for two car parking spaces, which is a legal requirement. This can create a cluttered visual barrier and impedes and discourages access and the use of the central green space.



Figure 5: View into Whitehall gardens

Heathfield issue number 6: The cul-de-sac nature of the settlement

6.1.17. The cul-de-sac nature of the settlement presents connectivity barriers to all users including residents, visitors and emergency vehicles. There is no vehicular through route around the estate meaning there is a need to return to the estate entrance close to the A505, to move between areas. It is difficult to maintain orientation when walking as well as driving.



Figure 6: Disconnection between Hurdles Way and HRA open space

Heathfield issue number 7: Parking congestion, bins and garden fences visually dominate.

6.1.18. This is a detracting feature in a number of locations.



Figure 7: Kingsway house backs encroach on right

Heathfield issue number 8: The woodland and open space alongside residential development at Hurdles Way and Ringstone lacks management and offers limited recreation or utility value.

- 6.1.19. With the exception of Whitehall Gardens and the children's play area, the open amenity areas are all on the edge of the settlement boundaries. This affords those residential areas on the edge of the settlement outwards views into open countryside. However, due to the density and layout of the residential areas few other residential areas enjoy these views. Furthermore, the amenity value here is reduced through parking (see Issue number 9).
- 6.1.20. The woodland, to the west of Hurdles Way and Ringstone, has no footpath access, thereby limiting its amenity value considerably.

Heathfield issue number 9: Ringstone and Hurdles Way

- 6.1.21. Parking is a dominant and detractive feature. Rear parking courtyards and garages are under used and constitute hidden spaces.

Heathfield issue number 10: Lack of amenity facilities

- 6.1.22. The Heathfield settlement has no community facilities (for example, a shop or meeting space) other than open spaces, public footpaths and play areas.

Heathfield issue number 11: General lack of landscaping

- 6.1.23. There is a general lack of landscaping or poor use of landscaping within individual developments in a number of locations including around the perimeter of commercial areas (see Issue number 1), southern end of Kingsway, Whitehall Gardens and Ringstone.

Heathfield Analysis Map

- 6.1.24. Map 8 provides a useful analysis of existing issues and context relating to both transport, amenities and landscape in Heathfield.

Heathfield Enhancement Strategy

- 6.1.25. Together with Heathfield residents, the NP group have worked with stakeholders including the Parish Council to develop the Heathfield Enhancement Strategy. This identifies a number of measures, detailed below, and illustrated on Map 9, for improving residential amenity, landscape character and connectivity across the estates. The Heathfield Masterplan document, produced by AECOM in 2022 has helped with identifying these.

6.1.26. Measures for addressing lack of cohesiveness across the estate:

- a) Lobby the council for adopting of roads in HRA space. Seek understanding of how residents pay twice by paying council tax while not getting any cover and paying into a separate private organisation to maintain areas.
- b) Agree with Hurdles Way management company and HRA to help make open spaces between Hurdles Way and Kingsway accessible and welcoming. Explore fund raising possibilities such as Lottery funding for improving communities.
- c) Use section 106 funds and other locally available funding (e.g. CIL monies), to improve the public realm. Use for landscaping first Ringstone and Hurdles Way, seeking improvements to car parking with improvements to landscaping and circulation, then set as a model for all other areas.
- d) Provide new signage throughout, to unify sense of place within area.

6.1.27. Measures for improving the main approach to Heathfield (**addressing issue number 1**)

- a) Provide architectural signage arch or feature, near to the main entrance to provide a sense of arrival and identity. Any additional signage or street furniture should use consistent language and design.
- b) Provide tree planting to provide a softer green view adjacent to the roundabout and Heathfield sign.
- c) Provide a low maintenance evergreen hedge along both sides of approach, to provide screening and visual interest to the main approach.
- d) Surface finish at the entrance and roundabout to calm traffic and humanise.

6.1.28. Measures for addressing the A505 issues (**addressing issues number 2 & 3**)

- a) This route could provide active travel options for pedestrians and cyclists wishing to travel from Thriplow to the east. An adequate maintenance scheme would need to be in place, to keep the path clear of hazards (cracked pavement, overgrown trees and vegetation). Trees and low maintenance hedging adjacent to residential fences would be suitable but not immediately adjacent to the path.

6.1.29. Improving the Pepperslade and Woburn Place Gap (**addressing issue number 4**)

- a) Visually open-up and celebrate, with creative signage (consistent with main entrance signage), existing and new pedestrian routes, ensuring they are cycle friendly. Celebrate the vista beyond: the IWM site and boundary wall with trees.

6.1.30. Parking issues at Whitehall Gardens (**addressing issue number 5**)

- a) Allow for visitor parking, avoiding, large numbers of vehicles together. Use landscaping to reduce visual dominance of parked cars and increase sense of

the green space. Provide dedicated car free edges which can also provide pedestrian friendly routes to the central green space.

- b) Reprioritise the streetscape from vehicular use to pedestrian and sustainable travel modes with changes of surface material, signage and level changes.
- c) Maximise the biodiversity value of the green spaces with climate change resilient trees, informal planting and species-rich wildflower meadows within this Local Character Area. Provide good passive surveillance to offer the opportunity for safe play spaces for younger children.

6.1.31. Measures for managing connectivity issues arising from the cul-de-sac nature of the settlement (**addressing issue number 6**)

- a) Activate western green spaces between Kingsway and Hurdles Way with visually open boundary treatments such as low hedges, clear access points and a defined footpath to create an inviting recreational area and improved connectivity.
- b) Allow for an emergency access only route through green space, adjacent to Duxford Business Park, to Hurdles Way deterring a potential circular 'rat run' for other vehicular traffic. Ensure a peaceful environment for Hurdles Way residents by limiting this route.

6.1.32. Measures to address Kingsway related issues (**addressing issue number 7**)

- a) Include additional sympathetic traffic calming measures to increase road user awareness for children entering the HeART play space and create a more welcoming western approach for users of the play area.
- b) Plant trees to create defined parking bays as well as enhancing green corridors connecting to the surrounding countryside.
- c) Visually open-up access points and signpost to Heathfield Open Space and HeART play space to raise community awareness.
- d) Enhance existing 'pocket parks', each with its own character and theme.

6.1.33. Improving the utility and amenity value of open space (**addressing issue number 8**)

- a) Open up gap in boundary vegetation at public footpath entry from west to frame views into and out of settlement and create an enhanced sense of arrival.
- b) Provide meandering access routes with areas of open glades within woodland for 'nature trail' experience for local residents.
- c) Central area of mown amenity grass retained for informal 'kick-about' and other sports. Other areas could be maintained as wildflower meadow with informally mown footpaths. This could include log piles, hibernacula, bee hotels and other wildlife habitat features with information boards to increase biodiversity within the woodland area and engage the community.

6.1.34. Addressing parking issues at Ringstone and Hurdles Way (**addressing issue number 9**)


- a) Limit parking along the adjoining edge of Ringstone open space, with sensitive planting to keep the green space visually open to all.
- b) Undertake a design and access study of the rear parking courts at Ringstone and Hurdles Way to understand why they are underutilised and identify solutions.

6.1.35. Addressing the lack of amenity facilities (**addressing issue number 10**)

- a) Explore options to provide a small sensitively designed building on the open space north of the settlement to provide changing rooms facilities/community meeting space and/or allotments. Green belt restrictions apply. Ensure view is protected.
- b) Explore options for using units at the Duxford Business Park as a community meeting space or shop.

6.1.36. Addressing general lack of landscaping (**addressing issue number 11**)

- a) Fund raising and use of Section 106 moneys to improve clarity of design of roadways and pocket parks throughout.
- b) Designs suggested so far to be detailed, priced and incorporated into long term programmes of improvement. Council to contribute, where council tax is paid for unadopted road settlements.



Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.

NPPF 2023, paragraph 131



“Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes.”

NPPF 2023, paragraph 139

Policy intent

- 6.1.37. It is estimated that 60 per cent of the parish’s population lives in Heathfield⁴. Despite this, the settlement of Heathfield is not identified in this plan or the Local Plan as being an appropriate location for additional housing. This is because access to amenities, shops and services is lacking at Heathfield, as well as being surrounded by green belt. In addition, there are considerable noise and air pollution impacts from local main highways which affect residential amenity on the estate.
- 6.1.38. However, this does not mean that planning applications will not come forward, for example householder planning applications for minor development. In addition, proposals at the strategic level which impact on the parish cannot be ruled out. For example, in response to the “Call for sites” exercise, undertaken by Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service, four sites were submitted as being potentially available for development covering all of the open (and currently designated as green belt) land between Heathfield and Thriplow. The area is referred to as land to north of the A505 – Duxford. Whilst these sites were not taken forward as part of the First Proposals stage of the Local Plan, it is an example of what has been considered in this area in the past.
- 6.1.39. The purpose of Policy THP 1 is to ensure that any new development within Heathfield meets high design standards and to ensure that the existing challenges at Heathfield are not used as an excuse for poor standards of design in any future development. The policy also requires proposals to implement available opportunities for improving the overall character, quality and cohesiveness of Heathfield. This will apply on a proportionate basis and minor householder application schemes which otherwise are policy compliant will not be expected to contribute.

- 6.1.40. Policy THP 12 Improving parking provision and improving road safety in Thriplow and Heathfield will also help in addressing Heathfield issues number 5 and 9.
- 6.1.41. Proposals which will help deliver the initiatives, detailed in the Heathfield Enhancement Strategy are in principle supported and, indeed encouraged.
- 6.1.42. Some development proposals could exert further pressure on the Heathfield environment, including small schemes simply by bringing in new residents. To mitigate any adverse impacts, and to ensure a scheme is acceptable in planning terms, the policy allows for financial contributions to be sought towards the implementation of improvements set out in the Heathfield Enhancement Strategy.
- 6.1.43. It is recognised that the identified improvements will not all be delivered through the planning policies in the NP. They can only be delivered this way where a development proposal necessitates the improvement as a result of impacts from the development in question. Thriplow and Heathfield Parish Council is however committed to working with stakeholders to deliver some of the aspirations. See Chapter 7 for further detail.

⁴ See DSE Review 2019.

Policy THP 1 – Improving the character and quality of Heathfield

- 1) Development Proposals in Heathfield should achieve high-quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. This includes:
 - a) retaining existing landscape features that have amenity or ecological value and taking opportunities to incorporate new landscape features such as trees and hedgerows, particularly where this will have public amenity value;
 - b) the retention of existing trees within a proposed development site unless information is provided to the standards of BS5837: Arboricultural Impact Assessment to justify that their condition does not justify retention within the proposal; and
 - c) ensuring there is a high quality of architectural design and landscaping on any frontage to a public space, including residential streets and open spaces.
- 2) As appropriate to their scale, nature, and location of development, proposals in Heathfield, or which otherwise impact on the residential areas in Heathfield, should take available opportunities to improve the character, quality and cohesiveness of the area and the way it functions.
- 3) Where it is necessary to deliver sustainable development, and where it directly, fairly, and reasonably relates in scale and kind to the proposed development, off-site contributions will be secured from development proposals to achieve improvements set out in the Heathfield Enhancement Strategy.

Policy THP 2 – Provision of additional amenities in Heathfield

6.2. Whilst Heathfield residents have good access to outdoor amenity space, there is no access to amenities such as a shop or a community space. This is a significant issue especially considering that 60 % of the population lives in Heathfield and there is poor connectivity to the amenities in Thriplow.

6.2.1. This plan does not support additional residential development in Heathfield other than sensitively designed infill development that is allowed under the Local Plan. This plan would however welcome proposals which would deliver improvements in facilities and amenities in the area.

6.2.2. There is a clear grassed area to the west (north of Heathfield), which has been suggested by the local farm owner to be a possible development site. The site assessment undertaken as part of this plan found that the site would be unsuitable for residential development. However, subject to a proposal being compatible with the green belt designation, this site could be used as a village hall and/or sports pavilion.

6.2.3. The Duxford Business Park is a commercial building with its own off-street parking, located in the middle of Heathfield. It currently provides business units and is considered to be in a good location for providing amenity space for community purposes. Space is limited so suitable uses would be limited to a small shop or small community meeting space.

Policy intent

6.2.4. This is an aspirational policy supporting in principle development proposals for a new community meeting space or community facility such as a shop or sports facility. It is acknowledged those opportunities are limited given the green belt designation and Heathfield not being considered a suitable location for additional residential development other than appropriate and sensitively designed infill schemes.



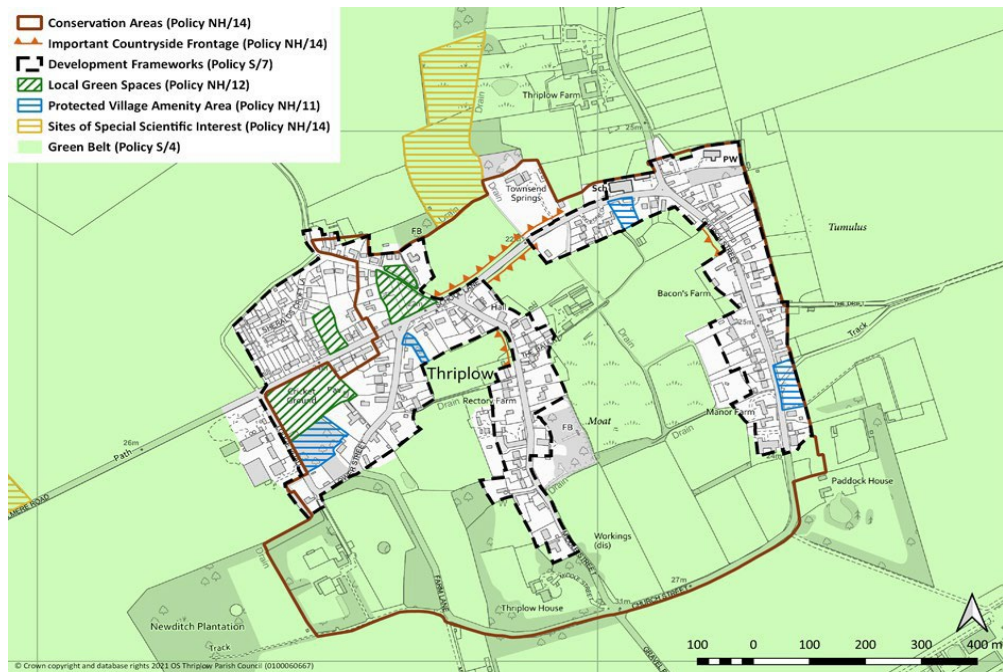
Map 10: Duxford Business Centre

Policy THP 2 – Provision of additional amenities in Heathfield

- 1) Development proposals for a new community meeting space or community facility to serve the Heathfield community including a shop or small community meeting space will be supported.
- 2) The provision of community meeting space facilities will be particularly supported as part of development proposals coming forward on the Duxford Business Park site (as shown on Map 10).

THEME 1	Protecting and enhancing the natural environment and the character of the parish
Objective 2:	The existing built environment and landscape character of Thriplow village will be protected and enhanced.

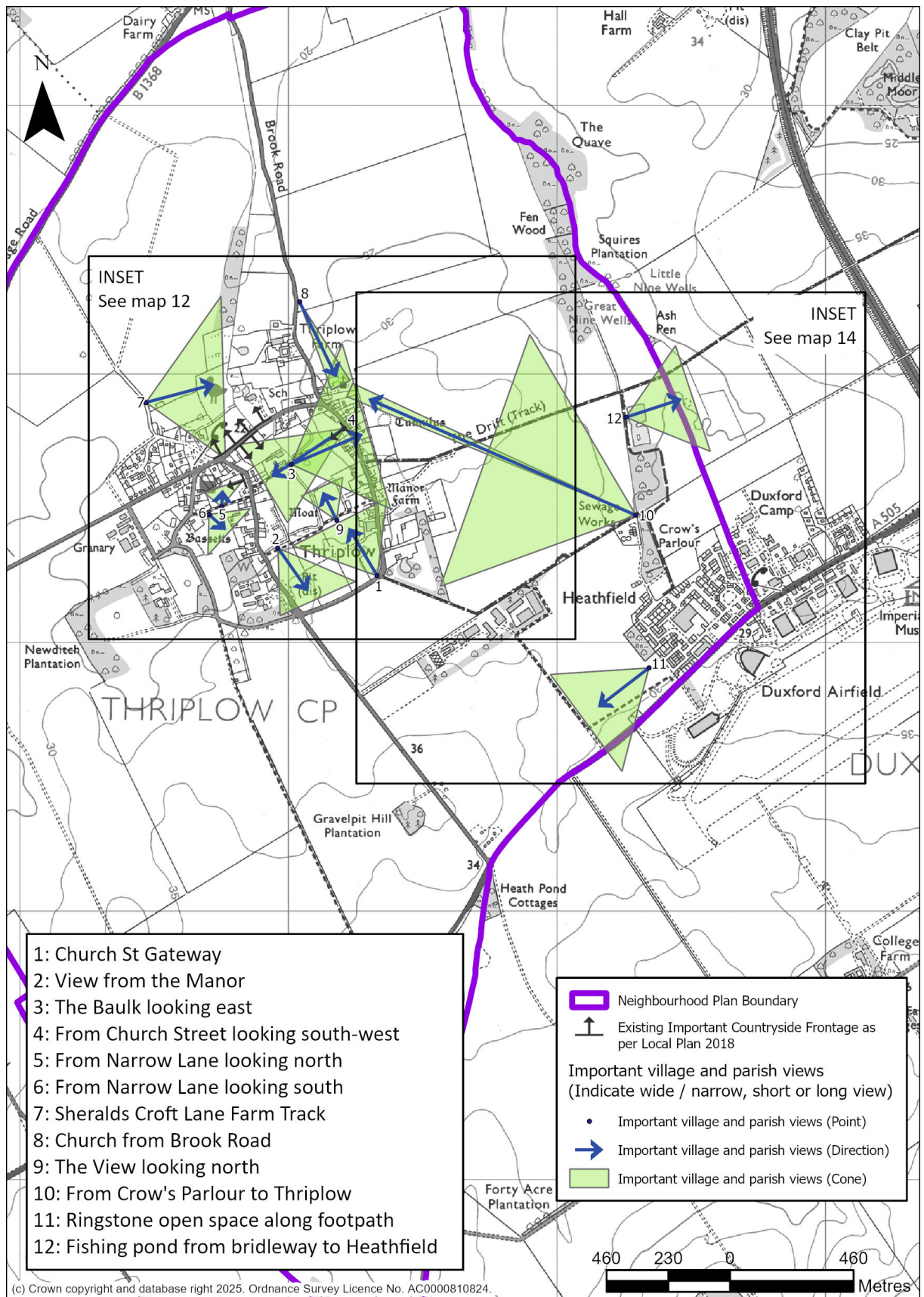
Policy THP 3 – Protecting and enhancing village character in Thriplow



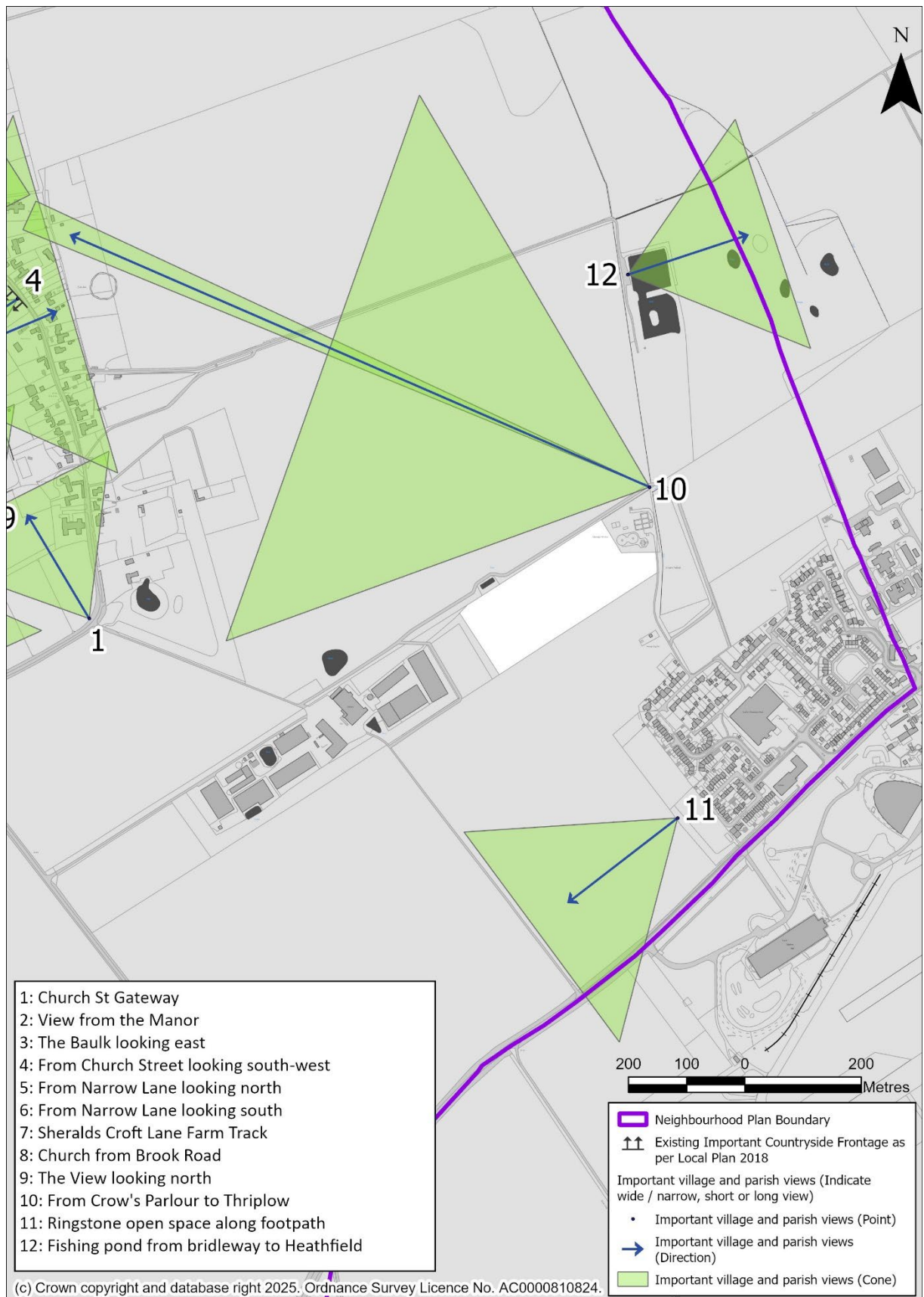
Map 11: 2018 Local Plan designations for Thriplow village



Map 12: Thriplow Locally Important Views (see Policy THP4)



Map 13: Parish-wide important views



Map 14: Heathfield locally important views and Public Rights of Way network

Context and rationale

6.3. Thriplow village is very much characterised by the open land, largely farmland, that surrounds it. Thriplow Farm, Dellers Farm and Smiths Farm frame the entire village. The village roads, Church Street, Farm Lane, Lower Street and School Lane/Fowlmere Road form a circular pattern of linear residential development with farmland and other open green space remaining in the centre. Middle Street cuts through the middle of this circle from north to south, again with a linear development pattern. Save for a few pockets of land, all of the open land around and between Thriplow's residential clusters (mostly linear) are in the Cambridge Green Belt.

6.3.1. The north west corner of Thriplow village departs from the character of the older parts of the village (south of Fowlmere Road). This is an area of twentieth century housing comprising planned estates of local authority housing.

6.3.2. There is a well-established and well-used network of public rights of way criss crossing Thriplow village. For example, public footpaths run in an East-West direction providing attractive pedestrian routes from Church Street to Middle Street via 'The Baulk' (also called Upper Gentleman's Walk), continuing on the other side of Middle Street through to Lower Street, via Narrow Lane Footpath. 'The View' footpath (also known as Lower Gentleman's footpath or Church End footpath) also runs from Church Street to Middle Street from Manor Farmhouse past The Manor.

Along these rural routes, walkers enjoy the views and setting provided by grazed meadows and attractive farmland.



Figure 8 (LEFT): Farmed grazing land viewed from Narrow Lane



Figure 9 (RIGHT): 'The View' public footpath, looking west from Church Street towards Middle Street

6.3.3. The tapestry of rural spaces between the buildings which make up Thriplow village is a distinctive characteristic of the village. It is a precious and valued attribute.

6.3.4. As can be seen from Map 11, the vast majority of Thriplow village falls in the Thriplow conservation area. The only areas that do not are the twentieth century development along Foreman's Road and Sherald's Croft Lane, semi-detached properties along Fowlmere Road and the grainstore site on Lodge Road.

- 6.3.5. A Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) was undertaken for the parish in 2020. This identifies six different areas in and around Thriplow village as follows: TP1 – Church Street, TP2 – Brook Road and School Lane, TP3 – Middle Street and Farm Lane, TP4 – The Green, TP5 – Sheralds Croft Lane & Fowlmere Road and TP6 – Lodge Road and Lower Street. Appendix 1 to this document provides, at Maps 1 and 2, the boundaries for each Local Character Area. It also includes a character appraisal of each of the Local Character Areas including a) Location and description b) Settlement pattern and character of built form c) Open spaces and interactions with settlement d) Aspects of value (Heritage and Access) and e) Perceptual and visual experience – important views.
- 6.3.6. Only landscape character area TP5 (Sheralds Croft Lane and Fowlmere Road) falls outside of the Thriplow conservation area.
- 6.3.7. In character area 1 the LCA finds that “twentieth century additions to the housing stock have been reasonably well absorbed into the historic pattern, disrupting it by sometimes sitting behind the primary building line and their presence only highlighted by modern materials on access points or curtilages”.
- 6.3.8. In character area 2, the LCA finds that “Pigeon’s Close is a small low density late twentieth housing estate set within maturing trees that is relatively unobtrusive”.

- 6.3.9. In addition to the conservation area status, its location in the Cambridge Green Belt, there are several other site-specific policy designations (shown on Map 11), which the Local Plan applies to Thriplow village:
- i. Policy NH/11: *Protected Village Amenity Areas* identifies Protected Village Amenity Areas.
 - ii. Policy NH/12: *Local Green Space* defines spaces in Thriplow as local green space sites.
 - iii. Policy NH/13: *Important Countryside Frontage* defines sites as having important countryside frontages. Important countryside frontages are shown on Map 11 at School Lane, Church Street and Middle Street.
- 6.3.10. The site-specific policies described above, together with the green belt status of the open land enveloping Thriplow village help to ensure that the local character is protected or enhanced when development proposals come forward.
- 6.3.11. In addition, because of the conservation area status of Thriplow village and the listed building status of a number of buildings in Thriplow village, Policy NH/14: *Heritage Assets* in the Local Plan will be highly relevant. Heritage assets include listed buildings, conservation areas and non-designated heritage assets.
- 6.3.12. It is considered that existing planning policies in the Local Plan provide an appropriate and good framework to ensure that planning decisions result in the protection or enhancement of the distinguishing features in Thriplow village. This is evidenced through the observations of modern development in the Thriplow Landscape Character Assessment (2020) prepared by Lucy Batchelor-Wylam.
- 6.3.13. In the context of Thriplow village, and as noted in the landscape character assessment the open land that remains in the village is a key distinguishing feature. The open spaces which currently separate out clusters of built form are also very much part of the historic character of the village.

Policy intent

- 6.3.14. The purpose of policy THP 3 is to ensure that when development proposals are being proposed in Thriplow village additional key characteristics that are not already specifically mentioned in the Local Plan are recognised and provide a basis for informing new schemes.
- 6.3.15. Bullet point 2c requires the built form and layout of proposed schemes to be appropriate given the existing site context and neighbouring sites. Appendix 1 should be referred to assist with understanding positive features of the settlement pattern and built form character.

Policy THP 3 – Protecting and enhancing village character in Thriplow

- 1) Development proposals in Thriplow should achieve high-quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.
- 2) As appropriate to their scale, nature, and location, development proposals in Thriplow village should contribute positively to the existing characteristics, including the tapestry of rural spaces that exists between the Thriplow village-built environment. This includes:
 - a) careful and well thought-through landscaping that takes into account the characteristics in the Local Character Area (defined and described in Appendix 1) in which it is located;
 - b) ensuring the scheme assimilates comfortably within its existing site context, blends into the existing wider rural setting and is not visually intrusive from the highway or other public places (including public rights of way);
 - c) built form and layout (including densities, scale and mass) is appropriate given the existing site context as well as the built form and layout on neighbouring sites.
- 3) Development proposals that would lead to the erosion of the character of Thriplow's rural lanes (Farm Lane, Lower Street, Lodge Road, Middle Street and Church Street) will not be supported. Proposals that could generate additional traffic along them will only be supported if it can be demonstrated the traffic impacts will not lead to unacceptable adverse impacts on their rural character, on road safety for all users and on the amenity value they provide as part of the wider network of rural walking routes.

THEME 1	Protecting and enhancing the natural environment and the character of the parish
Objective 3:	New development will be sensitive to our rural environment and reflect our rural roots

Policy THP 4 - Parish-wide locally valued views

- 6.4. Chapter 5 highlights the importance of preserving and enhancing valued views of the open countryside found within the village of Thriplow, on the edges of the Thriplow village, on the edges of the settlement of Heathfield and from the popular network of public rights of way.
- 6.4.1. A views assessment has been undertaken to identify the most valued views, alongside a description of their key features. This is found in Appendix 2.
- 6.4.2. Views which have been locally identified as being valued and contributing to the enjoyment of the rural nature of the parish in and around both settlements are shown on Maps 12, 13 and 14. The public rights of way network is also shown on these maps to illustrate how the views relate to popular routes in and around the settlements.

Policy intent

- 6.4.3. To recognise, preserve and enhance locally valued views.

Policy THP 4: Locally valued views

- 1) The scale, height, layout, and design of development proposals should respond positively to the locally important views identified on Policy Maps 12, 13 and 14.
- 2) Development proposals will not be supported if they unacceptably impact on the locally important views.

Policy THP 5 – Supporting the rural economy

- 6.5. As described in Chapter 2 of this plan the parish has a strong rural economy. This includes farming and land-based rural businesses such as the KWS seed development company and Savoursmiths factory, both of which are located at Russell Smith Farms. Rural businesses are valued, particularly where they provide local employment opportunities. Over the years, however, activities on land between Thriplow village and the Heathfield community has continued to grow, leading to growth in traffic movements along rural roads and at certain times of year, noise and light pollution.
- 6.5.1. The Thriplow and Heathfield Landscape Character Assessment (2020) notes in paragraph 32, how *“Thriplow village is surrounded by very gently rolling arable land arranged in large, straight sided fields. This is a result of the open field system operated in the medieval era, late inclosure and significant modification from mid 20th century. But whilst openness is the prevailing feel, the arable landscape is interrupted by limited tree cover, arranged in narrow, linear shelter belts. Despite their relative scarcity, where present, trees have a strong impact on the visual experience”*. The work identifies the openness of the landscape to be a key sensitivity in the parish. With respect to south of Thriplow, the LCA notes *“the moderate-scale structures at KWS agricultural seed research centre, enclosed by tree belts, interrupts the prevailing openness”*.

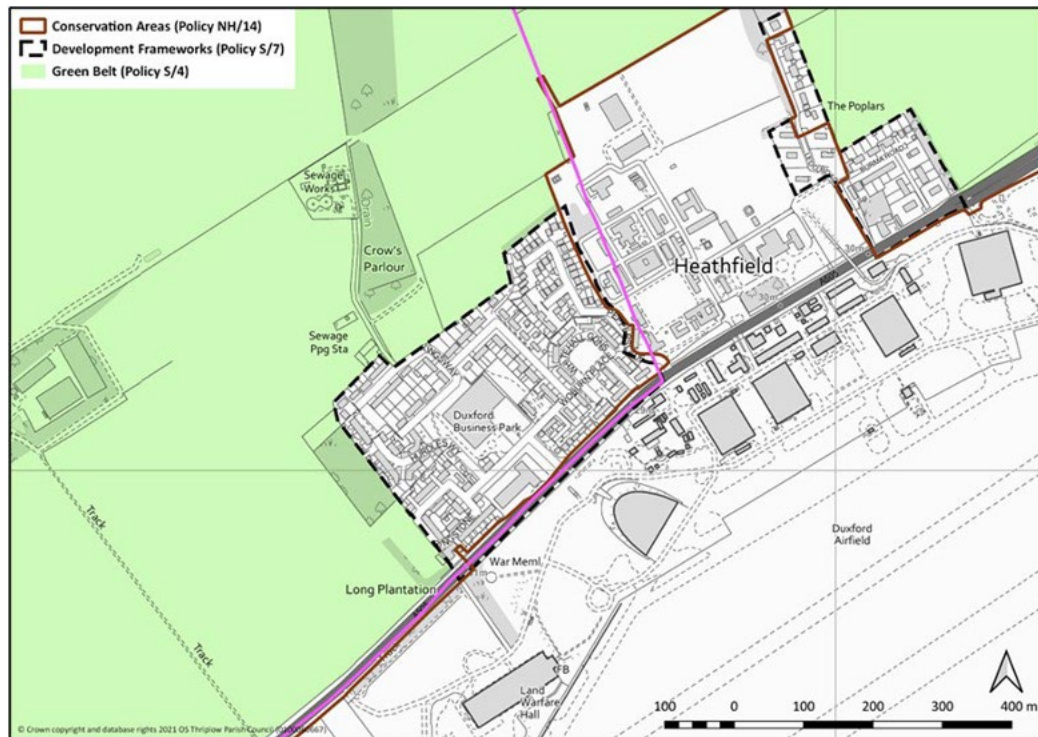
Policy intent

- 6.5.2. The intent of this policy is to recognise the importance of the rural economy in the parish whilst also requiring development proposals are always sympathetic to the parish’s rural roots and landscape setting and do not adversely impact residential amenity of parishioners.
- 6.5.3. Sub-paragraph e) has been added to the policy in response to the HRA undertaking for this plan. In addition to the requirements set out here, proposals must also comply with other policies in the development plan, including Policy THP 7: *Promoting nature recovery by protecting existing sites and features, increasing biodiversity and delivering biodiversity net gain.*

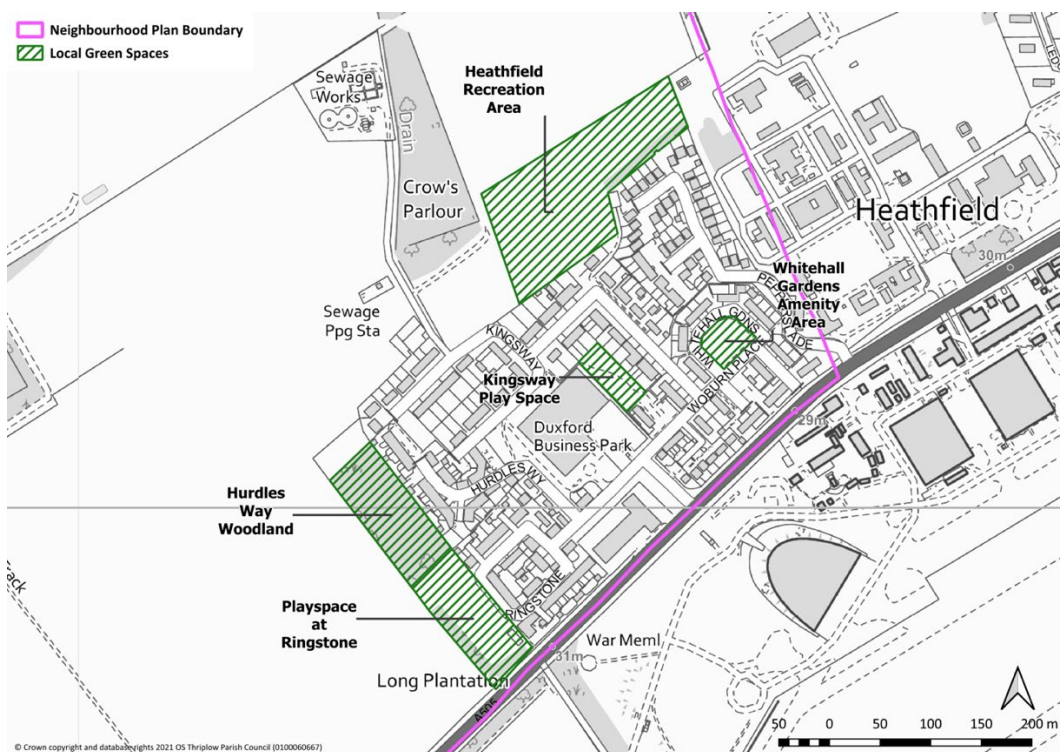
Policy THP 5 – Supporting the rural economy

- 1) Development proposals which would support and/or sustain existing agricultural and other land-based rural businesses in the parish will be supported where they:
 - a) are of a scale appropriate to the rural location of the existing business;
 - b) would safeguard the residential amenity of any residential properties in the immediate locality and can be accommodated within the local highway network;
 - c) would safeguard the rural character and tranquility of the parish;
 - d) would maintain and, where practicable, enhance the local character and prevailing openness of the landscape, as described in the Thriplow and Heathfield Landscape Character Assessment; and
 - e) avoid an unacceptable impact on hedgerows or any severance of bat flight lines to protect foraging and commuting habitat for Barbastelle bats which could belong to the population protected by Eversden & Wimpole Woods SAC.

THEME 1	Protecting and enhancing the natural environment and the character of the parish
Objective 4:	Recognise and protect accordingly all valued open spaces in the parish



Map 15: 2018 Local Plan designations for Heathfield



Map 16: Heathfield Local Green Spaces

Policy THP 6 – Heathfield Local Green Spaces

6.6. Heathfield currently enjoys the following open space facilities:

- Playing field to the west of flats at Hurdles Way and Ringstone
- Whitehall gardens green amenity area
- A play space located behind residential properties at Kingsway
- A large recreation area, Heathfield Open Space (also known as Heathfield Recreation Area) on the northern edge in the green belt.

6.6.1. As seen on Map 15, there are no Local Plan designations associated with these spaces.

Policy intent

6.6.2. The intention of Policy THP 6 is to give the same land use protection to the open spaces in Heathfield as the open spaces in Thriplow.

Policy THP 6 does not prevent Anglian Water from undertaking necessary operation works or enhancements to its assets (rising mains and sewers) located in the Heathfield Recreation Area, Hurdles Way Woodland or the Playspace at Ringstone.

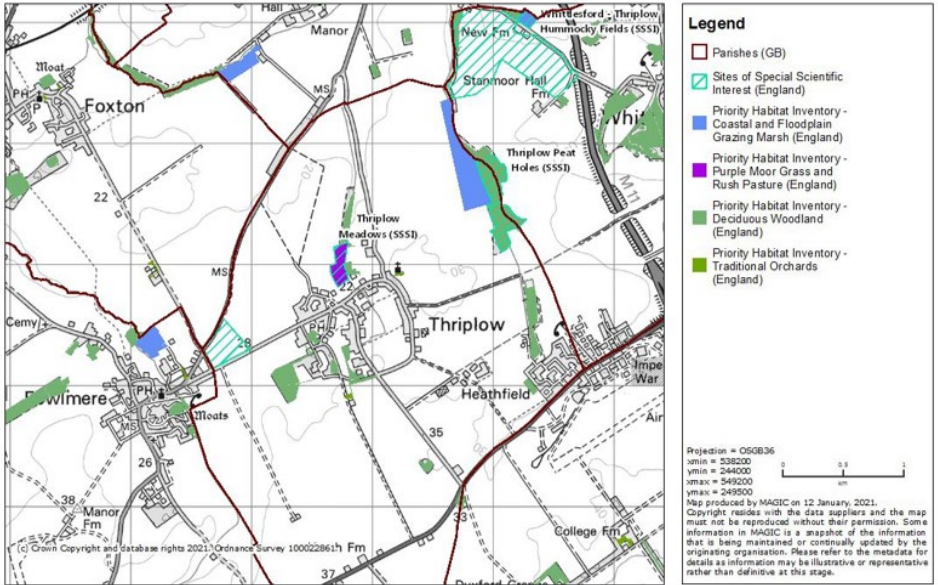
Policy THP 6 – Heathfield Local Green spaces

- 1) The following sites as shown on Policy Map 16 are designated as Local Green Spaces:
 - a) Heathfield Open Space (also known as Heathfield Recreation Area)
 - b) Kingsway play space
 - c) Whitehall Gardens Amenity Area
 - d) Play space at Ringstone
 - e) Hurdles Way Woodland.
- 2) Development proposals within the designated local green spaces will only be supported in very special circumstances.

THEME 1	Protecting and enhancing the natural environment and the character of the parish
Objective 5:	Seek to reverse the decline of the natural environment in the parish by protecting and increasing biodiversity

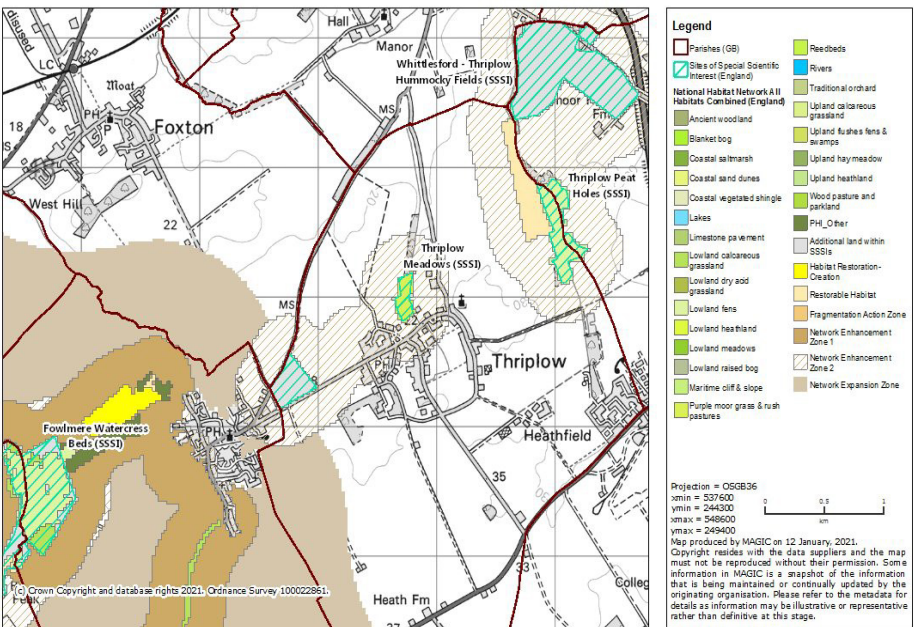
Policy THP 7– Promoting nature recovery by protecting existing sites and features, increasing parish biodiversity and delivering biodiversity net gain

MAGiC Priority habitats in Heathfield and Thriplow parish 2021

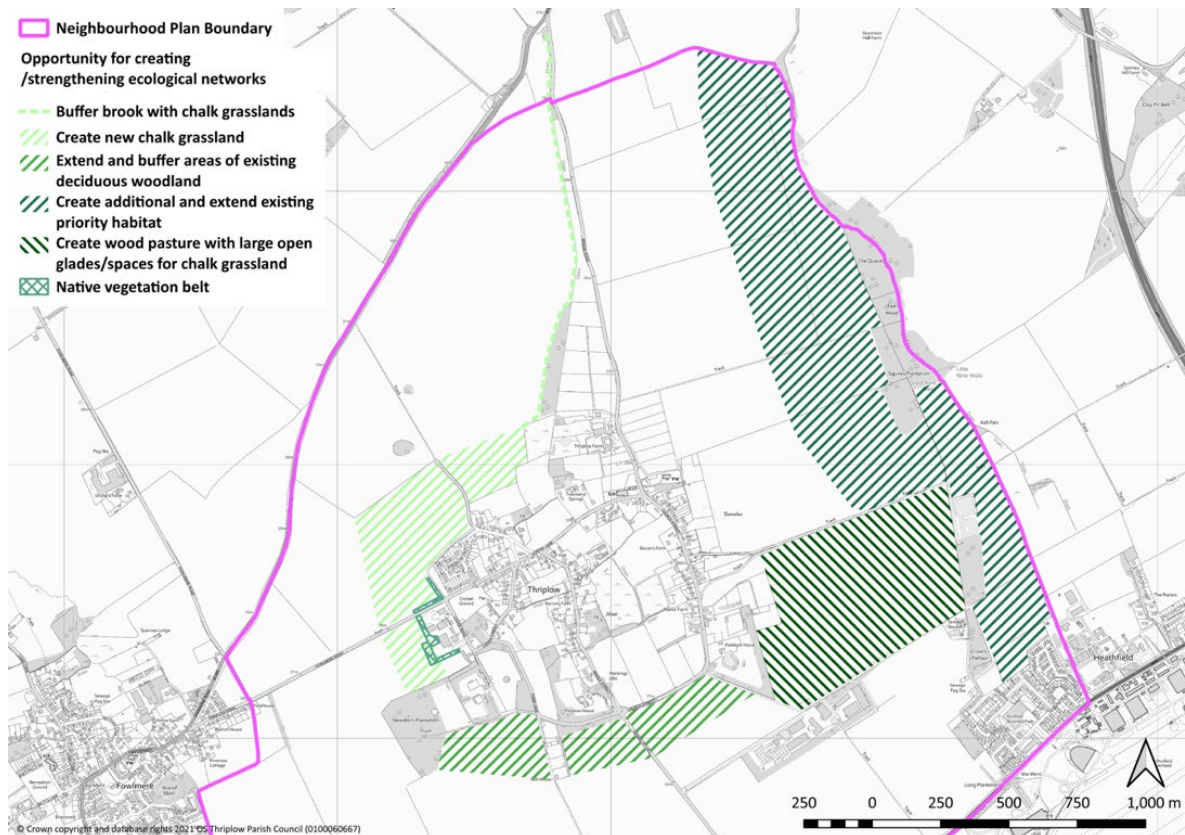


Map 17: Priority habitats in Heathfield and Thriplow parish. Source MAGiC, 2021

MAGiC National Habitat Network in the parish 2021



Map 18: Map showing the three SSSIs in the parish and the extent of the network enhancement zone 2. Source: MAGiC, 2021



Map 19: Opportunities to enhance existing ecological networks in the parish

Context and rationale

6.7. The NP recognises the significant role of the natural environment in delivering measures to reduce the effects of climate change through mitigation and adaptation. Green infrastructure and resilient ecological networks play an important role in aiding climate change adaptation as underpinned in the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan & and the subsequent Environment Act.

Existing sites of biodiversity value in the parish (Map 17)

6.7.1. The parish is fortunate to have three nationally recognised areas of land important for biodiversity (see Map 17). There are the three Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs): 1. Whittlesford/Thriplow Hummocky Fields 2. Thriplow Meadows and 3. Thriplow Peat Holes. They are all located in the northern half of the parish. The citations (providing the explanation for their designations) are appended to this plan for ease of reference.

6.7.2. The vast majority of the parish lies in the impact risk zones for at least one of these SSSIs. This means that when certain planning applications are being considered, the impact on these SSSIs should be assessed and, if applicable, mitigated against.

6.7.3. In addition to the SSSIs (and according to magic.gov.uk) the parish includes the following additional priority habitats – see Map 17.

- Purple moor grass and rush pasture
- Floodplain grazing marsh
- Areas of deciduous woodland
- Traditional orchards.

Opportunities to enhance ecological networks in the parish (Maps 18 and 19)

- 6.7.4. Natural Cambridgeshire, the Local Nature Partnership for the whole of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough provides strategic leadership for the recovery of nature under their Doubling Nature vision. This vision seeks to increase the amount of land managed for nature from 8% to 16% by 2050 and part of that strategy is to secure high quality ‘green’ (use of green elements, such as trees, forests, fields and parks) and ‘blue’ (use of blue elements, such as rivers, canals, ponds, wetlands, floodplains, water treatment facilities) infrastructure within new residential or commercial developments.
- 6.7.5. Green Infrastructure and resilient ecological networks play an important role in aiding climate change adaptation. Nature-based solutions such as tree planting are key but should follow Right Tree, Right Place principles - the need to increase tree cover whilst protecting what is special and valued in the landscape and keeping the environmental benefits already being delivered; for example, not planting trees on chalk grassland, areas of peat or underlying archaeology but focussing on areas which would benefit additional tree planting such as growing existing woodlands or tree planting in hedges.
- 6.7.6. Magic Map (magic.defra.gov.uk) identifies areas highlighted by Natural England (2020) as being part of a national habitat network (see Map 18). The habitat network maps are intended to be used to help identify areas for future habitat creation and restoration at a landscape scale but need to be considered alongside other local datasets and knowledge (Natural England 2020). Network enhancement zone 2 is defined by Natural England *as land connecting existing patches of primary and associated habitats which is less likely to be suitable for creation of the primary habitat. Action in this zone that improves the biodiversity value through land management changes and/or green infrastructure provision can be targeted here* (ibid.) See <https://data.gov.uk/dataset/0ef2ed26-2f04-4e0f-9493-ffbdbfaeb159/habitat-networks-england> for more detail on this. Map 18 shows those areas which are relevant to this NP, identified as network enhancement zone 2. These are two areas of land surrounding and in between the Whittlesford/Thriplow Hummocky Fields. Thriplow Meadows and Thriplow Peat Holes SSSIs.
- 6.7.7. In addition to the maps available from MAGIC, the NP group have prepared a further map, which identifies areas of important habitat, alongside areas where there are opportunities to provide improvements in parish biodiversity. This map complements and extends habitat network enhancement zones shown on Map 18 using local knowledge and green and blue infrastructure principles. The creation of better linked habitat network by conserving, creating and/or enlarging existing habitats can also help with adaptation to climate change. Opportunities which enable sequestration of carbon should also be prioritized. The middle and upper

fields of the three are the 'Orchid Meadows' or Thriplow Meadows Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The southern meadow is not part of the SSSI but it has, over the years, supported a handful of southern marsh orchids. The SSSI designation is not solely for the orchids but the presence of scarce dry and wet calcareous grassland. These are shown in Map 19.

- 6.7.8. Policy THP 7 requires all proposals to exploit available opportunities to improve biodiversity. Such opportunities will vary, depending on the location, type or scale of a scheme. For small schemes, measures could be limited to providing features in the design of new buildings (a green or biodiverse roof or integrating bird box features targeted at specific species) whereas larger schemes may present opportunities to create new habitats such as woodland, particularly where these would bring benefits to existing habitats nearby – see opportunities identified on Maps 18 and 19.
- 6.7.9. Maps 17 and 18 provide evidence which underpins the opportunities in map 19 for creating ecological networks. The eastern rectangular field, which is south of The Drift, is shown as an opportunity to create a large area of new ecological habitat (wood pasture with large open glades/spaces of chalk grassland bearing in mind the chalk soils) which will link the two settlements of Thriplow with Heathfield and provide opportunities for access to good quality natural green space for local people. The area which runs north/south along the eastern edge of the parish boundary is an opportunity for creating additional and extending existing priority habitat. The existing priority habitat is a mixture of deciduous woodland, fen and floodplain grazing marsh. Extending these habitats along the spring line and the Hoffer Brook would seek to link sites to the north and south of the parish boundary. The lighter green areas on Map 19 highlight opportunities for creation of new chalk grassland, linking existing priority habitats, deciduous woodland to the south and chalk grassland (established through the landowners agri-environment scheme) to the north. These areas will also link with Thriplow Meadows SSSI. Also highlighted is the opportunity to buffer the brook that runs roughly north/south parallel to Brook Road. This brook is a tributary of the Hoffer Brook and as such a reasonable buffer against the brook to reduce impacts from agricultural runoff should be encouraged. The mid green areas on map 19 show opportunities to link extend and buffer existing areas of existing deciduous woodland.

The mitigation hierarchy

- 6.7.10. Policy THP 7 expects development proposals to have applied the mitigation hierarchy in the planning of a scheme. The term 'mitigation hierarchy' refers to the requirements set out in paragraph 186 of the NPPF 2023 whereby if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort compensated for, then planning permission should be refused.

Delivering Biodiversity Net Gain

- 6.7.11. Policy THP 7 requires proposals to deliver measurable Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). The Environment Act has mandated that minimum measurable Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) should be achieved for all developments. This requires that the biodiversity value of the development exceeds the pre-development biodiversity value of the site by a minimum of 10%. Biodiversity value is measured using a metric produced by DEFRA and the baseline value is calculated from the condition of the site before any intervention has occurred.
- 6.7.12. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is an approach to development, and/or land management, which aims to leave the natural environment in a measurable better state and is a key policy requirement of the Environment Act. The NP should show a clear commitment to delivering high quality BNG within Cambridgeshire. Local Planning Authorities should seek a minimum of 10% net gain but may set a more ambitious BNG target for their county. Any target should be achievable and evidence based.

Policy intent (Policy THP 7)

- 6.7.13. The intent of Policy THP 7 is firstly to identify parish-specific sites and features, which must be taken account of when development proposals come forward.
- 6.7.14. The intent of Policy THP 7 is also to highlight local opportunities to deliver biodiversity improvements in the parish and provide a guide as to how sites could potentially achieve Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). This policy will be applicable to proposals coming forward in all parts of the parish.
- 6.7.15. With respect to delivering BNG, in its Biodiversity SPD, SCDC/Greater Cambridge Strategic Planning seeks a 20% level of BNG above pre-development baseline conditions.
- 6.7.16. For developments larger than 9 dwellings or 0.5 hectares, developers are expected to use the Defra Biodiversity Metric 3.0, or its successor for calculating the pre-development baseline and demonstrating a post development baseline.
- 6.7.17. For minor developments (fewer than 10 residential units or an area of less than 0.5 hectares) and householder applications, the Defra “small sites” biodiversity metric should be used
- 6.7.18. Policy THP 7 complements adopted Local Plan policy NH/4: *Biodiversity* and the guidance set out in the Greater Cambridge Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document 2022. With respect to the latter, this includes Biodiversity Issue B5 – *Biodiversity provision in the design of new buildings and open spaces*, Biodiversity Issue B6 – *Provision of biodiverse and living roofs* and Biodiversity Issue B7 – *Biodiversity Net Gain*

Policy THP 7 – Promoting nature recovery by protecting existing sites and features, increasing parish biodiversity and delivering biodiversity net gain

- 1) Development proposals which are adjacent to, or which could otherwise have impacts on the integrity of a site or feature of biodiversity value, should take full account of that value. This includes the following sites:
 - a) The designated Sites of Importance for Special Scientific Interest (see Map 18);
 - b) Areas of Priority Habitat, including purple moor grass and rush pasture, floodplain grazing marsh, areas of deciduous woodland and traditional orchards (see Map 17);
 - c) Sites identified locally as being important for biodiversity, including the tributary feeding the Hoffer Brook.
- 2) The delivery of biodiversity net gain (BNG) to meet national and local policy requirements should be achieved on development sites wherever possible. Any proposed off-site delivery of BNG should have regard to the latest guidance published by Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Interim Offsite Biodiversity Net Gain Protocol (July 2022) or any successor document.
- 3) Appropriate measures for the delivery of biodiversity enhancements (including BNG and whether it is off-site or on-site) in Thriplow and Heathfield parish could include:
 - a) Opportunities to grow and link existing ecological networks in the parish as shown on Policy Map 19, following the Lawton principle of “bigger, better, more joined up”.
 - b) Planting trees or areas of new woodland/wood pasture following right tree, right place principles (increasing tree cover whilst protecting what is special and valued in the landscape and keeping the environmental benefits already being delivered); creating new biodiverse green space such as chalk grassland in locations which will provide new habitat in close proximity to existing sites and increase or enhance existing ecological networks in the parish; creating or restoring new ponds or other water features which will help build on existing blue infrastructure.
 - c) Restoring existing hedges through coppicing/layering and gapping up and planting new hedgerows where appropriate.
 - d) Improvements to the Hoffer Brook tributary, see priorities in Policy THP 8.

Policy THP 8 – Protecting and enhancing the parish tributary feeding the Hoffer Brook



Figure 10: Hoffer Brook Chalk Stream as mapped in Greater Cambridge Chalk Streams Project Report, 2020

Context and rationale

6.8. The parish contains a tributary which feeds into the Hoffer Brook. The Hoffer Brook is approximately 8km in length and rises from the chalk aquifer near Thriplow village. A 2014 report completed by Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northants (BCN) Wildlife Trust considered that the Hoffer Brook should be considered a degraded chalk stream. <https://www.wildlifebcn.org/sites/default/files/2018-05/hofferbrookreport.pdf> Chalk streams are a habitat of national significance with 85% of global chalk streams found in the UK. An audit of chalk streams in the Upper Cam Catchment was commissioned by Cambridgeshire City Council and Cambridge Water in 2020. The parish falls within a medium and high risk area of water quality. As such, it is important that existing watercourses in the parish are not exposed to agricultural run-off or run-off from road surfaces as a result of new development proposals being permitted and coming forward. Some restoration works has been completed along the Brook. Guidance should be sought from the Environment Agency, South Cambridgeshire District Council and the BCN Wildlife Trust should any further works along the Hoffer brook be undertaken.

Policy intent

6.8.1. The intent of policy THP 8 is to ensure the protection of the Hoffer Brook is considered a priority in the consideration of new development proposals in the parish and opportunities for funding.

With respect to development and water management, Policies CC/8: Sustainable Drainage Systems and CC/9: Managing Flood Risk in South Cambridgeshire's 2018 Local Plan will apply alongside Policy THP 8.

Policy THP 8 – Protecting and enhancing the parish tributary feeding the Hoffer Brook

- 1) As appropriate to their scale, nature, and location development proposals should demonstrate that neither the Hoffer Brook nor waterways feeding into the Brook will be unacceptably harmed because of any surface water run-off caused by proposed development.
- 2) As appropriate to their scale, nature, and location, development proposals adjacent to the Hoffer Brook should incorporate sustainable drainage measures as a way of both managing surface water flood risk and protecting water quality in the parish, with reference to the Greater Cambridge Biodiversity SPD, Sustainable drainage systems (paragraph 5.5.16-5.5.20).
- 3) Where appropriate, the following initiatives are the types of work that may be required for the Hoffer Brook/tributaries of the Hoffer Brook and which may be sought, where necessary, to deliver sustainable development and where directly, fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to a proposed development; or as part of delivering biodiversity net gain under Policy THP 7. Works should be informed by an updated plan:
 - a) Sensitive de-silt – to remove some of the deep silt, which has accumulated over decades without management so that some areas can remain scoured clean.
 - b) Add gravel to unrestored sections of the lower reaches, where there is a suitable hard bed. Regrade banks to create a more natural bank profile if required.
 - c) Move augmentation point on Thriplow Meadows so that water flows over the land rather than by-passing it (SSSI consent will be required for this).
 - d) Replant if lost or continued management to pollard willows along watercourses
 - e) Sensitive tree/scrub removal to allow daylight to reach the watercourses.

THEME 2	Living village and sustainable development
Objective 6	We will continue to be a living community, which sustains all amenities, including the primary school, shop, village hall and other facilities
Objective 7	There will be limited small scale additional housing development, focused in Thriplow near to existing shops and services
Objective 8	All development to use sustainable building materials and consider energy efficiency

Context and rationale

- 6.9. There are no shops or community meeting facilities in Heathfield. There is a BP garage under 1200 m along the A505. However, pedestrian access to this facility is not safe giving this very limited amenity value for Heathfield residents.
- 6.9.1. In Thriplow village there are the following highly valued shops and community meeting facilities:
- Thriplow Church
 - Thriplow village hall
 - Thriplow shop
 - Thriplow pub
- 6.9.2. In addition, there is a cricket meadow and allotment site in Thriplow village.
- 6.9.3. Local Plan Policy SC/3: *Protection of Village Services and Facilities* gives land use protection to the village shop, hall and pub. The policy would refuse the planning permission for proposals that would result in the loss of the village shop, pub and hall where such loss would cause an unacceptable reduction in the level of community or service provision in the locality.
- 6.9.4. It is therefore not considered necessary to have a standalone policy in the NP to protect the Thriplow village services.
- 6.9.5. The Local Plan does not currently encourage anything other than very limited development in the settlement of Heathfield. Policy S/11 in the Local Plan states that schemes of not more than 2 dwellings will be permitted and exceptionally of up to 8 dwellings where it would recycle a brownfield site with an overall positive benefit to the village. The Local Plan defines a boundary, referred to as a development framework, around Heathfield within which this modest level of development will, in principle, be supported. This boundary is shown on Map 13. The only other Local Plan designations that apply in Heathfield are the Cambridge green belt designation which envelopes Heathfield to the north and west and a small section of the conservation area in the neighbouring parish. The green belt designation has the effect of constraining development to the north and west of Heathfield.
- 6.9.6. Policy S/10 of the Local plan identifies Thriplow as a group village. This is one place higher in the district-wide settlement hierarchy than Heathfield. This position reflects the better provision of village services in Thriplow when

compared to Heathfield including the primary school, the village shop, village pub, village hall and recreation areas. The Local Plan allows schemes of up to 8 dwellings in the development framework. This development framework is shown on Map 11. Exceptionally development may be permitted for up to 15 dwellings where this would make best use of a single brownfield site.

- 6.9.7. Thriplow village is fully enveloped by green belt land in all directions. This effectively constrains the extent to which Thriplow can grow.
- 6.9.8. Sites for residential development have been allocated across the district to ensure that sufficient land is brought forward to meet the identified need for housing in the district. There are no housing allocations identified in Thriplow or Heathfield.
- 6.9.9. However, under paragraph 68 of the NPPF 2023, SCDC has provided an indicative housing figure of 8 additional dwellings to be planned for as part of the NP. SCDC confirm that this figure provides the indicative housing number for the neighbourhood area until the issue is considered in the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan.
- 6.9.10. Importantly, this NP covers the period 2024 to 2041.
- 6.9.11. The NP also recognises Policy S/7 of the Local Plan. This allows for the NP to make additional allocations outside the development framework. Specifically, policy S/7 states: *'Outside development frameworks, only allocations within Neighbourhood Plans that have come into force and development for agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor recreation and other uses which need to be located in the countryside or where supported by other policies in this plan will be permitted.'*
- 6.9.12. The NP supports the overall approach taken in the Local Plan where any growth will be focused in Thriplow village rather than in Heathfield. The NP also aspires for Thriplow to be a 'living' community which sustains the Thriplow village primary school, shop and village services.

Policy THP 9– Grainstore site allocation

- 6.9.13. All potentially available sites have been considered in the process of identifying the grainstore site for development. A parish-wide call for sites was undertaken in 2020 to assist with this. A total of five sites were identified, four in Thriplow and one in Heathfield. All five sites were assessed using the same set of criteria and the results were shared with land promoters and published on the NP website. The work is available to view <https://www.thriplowheathfieldnp.org/jan-2021-draft-site-assessments.html>.
- 6.9.14. As an outcome of this process, the grainstore site presented the best opportunity for sustainable development in the parish.
- 6.9.15. The grainstore site is on the western edge of Thriplow village on Fowlmere Road. It comprises a range of farm buildings, sheds, storage, silos and associated structures and hardstanding. This site is well related to Thriplow village with good access to existing village amenities (including primary school, allotments, cricket ground, playground, village green, village hall, village shop and bus stop). The vehicle repair shop, located outside the site to the south, is a successful and valued local business.
- 6.9.16. The total area of the site is 1.23 hectares, including 0.4 hectares of land located in the Green Belt. The developable area of the site is 0.83 hectares.
- 6.9.17. Due to possibility of the land being contaminated by historic activity on the site, an appropriate site investigation and risk assessment will be required as part of applicable planning applications to be in line with Local Plan policy (See Policy SC/11: Contaminated Land in South Cambridgeshire’s 2018 Local Plan). The site investigation information will need to be prepared in line with NPPF 2023 requirements.

Explanation of site allocation criteria

Affordable housing

- 6.9.18. A Housing Needs Survey (HNS) undertaken in Thriplow in September 2018 identified 22 households in need of affordable housing with a local connection to Thriplow parish. The need was predominantly for smaller homes (for 6 x 1 bed, 9 x 2 bed, 5 x 3 bed, 2 x 4 bed plus) although only three of the households would potentially be eligible for a bungalow. This need was identified through both the housing register (fourteen) and the survey process (8 additional units once duplicates from the housing register discounted). Most of the households identified through the survey were either living at homes with their parents or in private rented accommodation (in the parish). Most households identified through the housing register do not currently live in the parish and are headed by a person under the age of 40.
- 6.9.19. More recently, as at February 2024, South Cambridgeshire District Council record a total of 16 households with a connection to the parish and being in need of affordable housing that is available for social or affordable rent.
- 6.9.20. Because of the high level of affordable housing need in the parish, the policy requires the affordable housing units are offered to people with a local connection (see glossary) on a preferential basis.

Lodge Road

- 6.9.21. The NP group engaged residents in November and December 2021 about the principle of development on the grain store site. Of the 114 people who responded, 66 per cent supported the principle of residential development on this site. Many residents did however raise concern with regards to village traffic and the impact that this site would have on village traffic. Specifically, residents are concerned about the impact development would have on Lodge Road which has the character of a narrow country lane.
- 6.9.22. The provision of a landscaped buffer along Lodge Road as part of the development scheme will help protect the rural character of the lane although to ensure good permeability it is also vital a pedestrian route is maintained.
- 6.9.23. The NP therefore requires that vehicular access is provided off Fowlmere Road rather than off Lodge Road. This site is a safe option due to the location of the site at the village gateway where traffic is moving at a slower pace.
- 6.9.24. Liaison has taken place with highways in the development of this site allocation policy.

Landscaping

- 6.9.25. The site allocation criteria has been informed by landscape sensitivity assessment undertaken by a landscape architect (which was undertaken for all sites assessed at the site assessment stage). This document is available to view alongside this plan. Overall, the assessment found that the site to have moderate sensitivity.

Although sensitive in visual terms, this brownfield site is much less sensitive in landscape terms and has good scope for development.

Something of the agricultural language of the site's forms and structures could be carried through to any future design proposal. Retain all trees and hedges to help assimilate development and provide maturity. Enclose with a strong boundary along the west side to reinforce the village edge.

Thriplow & Heathfield Site Selection: Landscape and visual Sensitivity Assessment (2020)

- 6.9.26. A breakdown of the landscape sensitivity assessment undertaken for this site is re-produced below.

Physical and natural landscape factors
<p>Low Sensitivity. This brownfield Site itself has few natural features and consists of agricultural scale buildings and hardstandings. Its roadside boundaries are vegetated and the trees have value in helping assimilate the bulky buildings within the skyline. Flat, open countryside to the west. A continuous hedge with trees lines Fowlmere Rd and trees have been planted in the verge along Lodge Lane.</p> <p>Good scope to retain all trees. There is a pond and copse just beyond the southern boundary which contain the Site to the south. The Site is flat and makes no notable contribution to character in terms of topography</p>

Historic and cultural landscape
Medium Sensitivity. There are no heritage features on the site, but its east boundary adjoins the Conservation Area and views in to the Site are possible from it. There are also a number of Listed Buildings within 250m although none with direct views onto the Site. Confers understanding of the historic agricultural role of the village.
Relationship to settlement/settlement form and edge.
Low Sensitivity. Site sits prominently along the west side of the village forming a strong edge. The buildings provide containment to the village after the openness of the cricket pitch. It provides a strong contrast in terms of scale of its built form compared to the residential land close by. Development here would not constitute an incursion into the countryside and could represent a enhancement opportunity.
Visual sensitivity factors – Views
High Sensitivity. Built form is visually prominent in views from the east and west. It contains and blocks views outward from the village, from points within the Conservation Area. It has a strong backdrop function to views over the cricket pitch. Current positive or scenic value is low however, although there is some visual interest from the colourful agricultural structures on site. Opportunity to allow some longer views through to the west in future site design.
Perceptual aspects
Low Sensitivity. Site alongside main road so subject to regular road noise. Sense of activity on the farmyard as well as from garage operations in one of the buildings.

Biodiversity

- 6.9.27. The site falls within a habitat network enhancement zone 2 (see Map 18). This is due its proximity to Thriplow Meadows SSSI. Such areas are defined by Natural England as land within close proximity to the existing habitat component that are unlikely to be suitable for habitat re-creation but where other types of habitat may be created or land management may be enhanced including delivery of suitable Green Infrastructure. The seventh part of the policy addresses these matters. In most cases, the submission of a Sustainability Statement to accompany planning applications will be an effective way to demonstrate how the proposed development will facilitate low-carbon living.

Landscape-led development brief

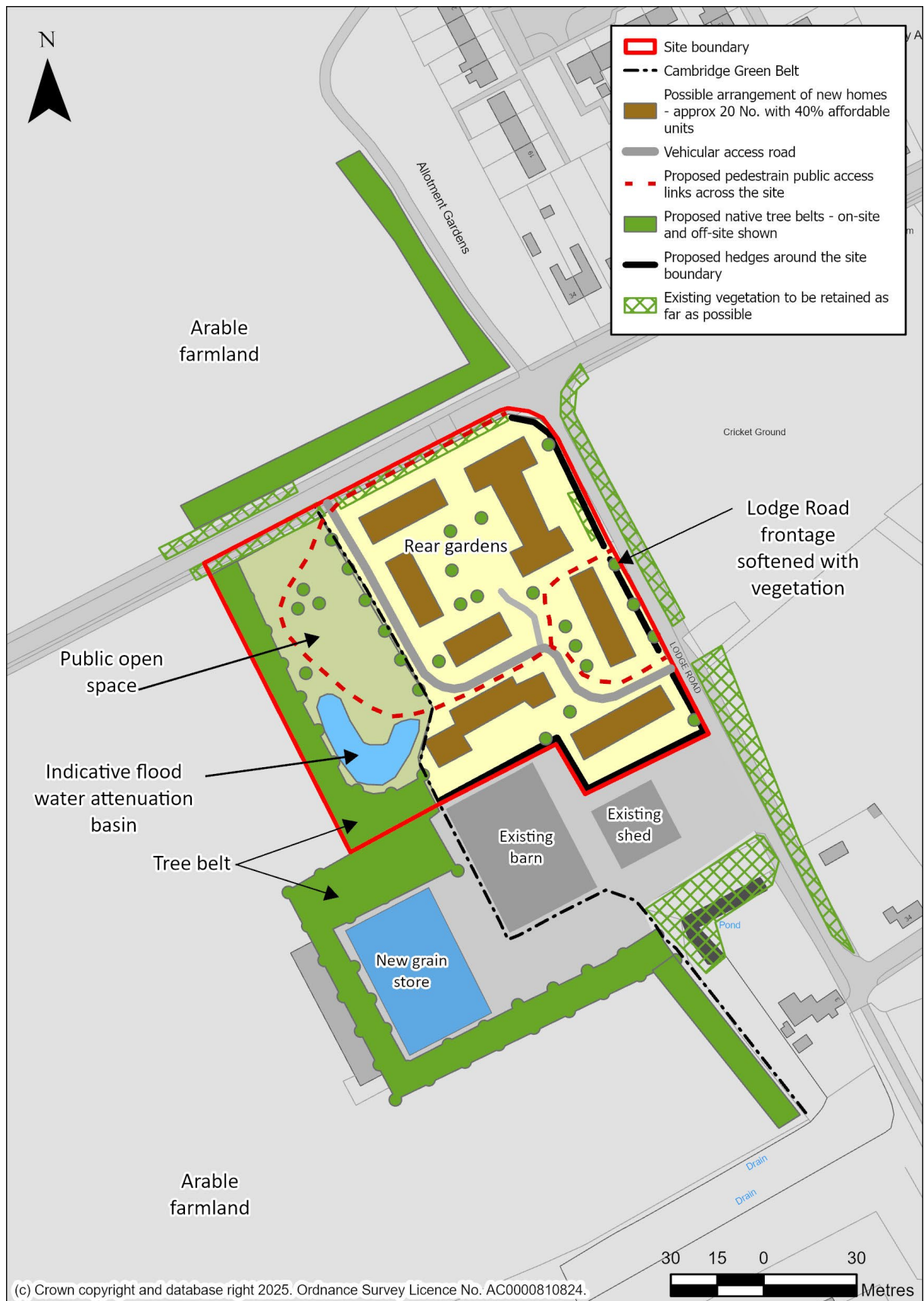
- 6.9.28. To inform and understand community priorities in relation to this site, a landscape architect Lucy Batchelor-Wylam was commissioned to develop a landscape-led development brief for the site. In November 2021, consultation was undertaken with the community which included proposed principles to be followed in the planning of the site. At that stage, the site area was larger. The key messages from this consultation were that the majority of the respondents (57.9%) agreed with the proposed site allocation, with the rest split between objecting (20.2%) and undecided (21.9%). The biggest concern by far with respect to development at this site was the unsuitability of the village roads and general transport issues. Of next importance was a priority to deliver affordable housing for local people, followed by village parking issues. Some respondents

mentioned the value in having a one-way system between Gravel Pit Hill and Lower Street.

- 6.9.29. The landscape led brief was revised following the consultation and following further liaison with the land promoter who advised the NP group the site available for development was to be reduced in order to allow for agricultural buildings to be built/remain to the south of proposed residential area.
- 6.9.30. The landscape-led brief was revised to address community feedback provided in late 2021 and to address changed circumstances in relation to site availability.
- 6.9.31. The landscape-led approach as resulted in the following priorities for the site:
- retain current hedgerows and trees,
 - plant native tree belt on the west side to provide screening and integrate the development with surrounding green belt land
 - maintain a quiet vegetated character of Lodge Road by lining with a hedge
- Habitats Regulation Assessment
- 6.9.32. Clause 7c has been added to the policy in response to the HRA undertaken for this plan. In addition, proposals must comply with Policy THP 7: Promoting nature recovery by protecting existing sites and features, increasing biodiversity and delivering biodiversity net gain through development proposals.

Delivering Sustainable Design

- 6.9.33. The Local Plan 2018 currently includes a requirement for schemes to be accompanied by a sustainability statement that demonstrates how a development embeds the principles of climate change mitigation and adaptation. See Policy CC/1: Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change. See also Policy CC/3: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy in New Developments and Policy CC/4: Water Efficiency.
- 6.9.34. The Grainstore site provides a precious opportunity to deliver energy efficient and low carbon homes.
- 6.9.35. Since the adoption of the Local Plan in 2018, SCDC have worked together with Cambridge City to produce the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document. This was adopted in January 2020. It provides guidance to planning applicants on how to prepare the required sustainability statement. It also includes in Appendix 1 a sustainability checklist for all applications coming forwards in South Cambridgeshire. The sixth part of the policy addresses these matters. In most cases, the submission of an Ecological Study to accompany planning applications will be an effective way to demonstrate how the proposed development will safeguard, and where practicable, enhance the habitat network.



Map 20: The Grainstore site

Policy THP 9 – Grain store site allocation

The site shown on Policy Map 20 is allocated for residential development for approximately 20 homes. The following site-specific considerations and requirements will apply:

1) Housing

- a) Incorporate a balanced mix of house sizes and tenure incorporating smaller units (1 and 2 bedroom units) suitable for older people seeking to downsize and younger adults seeking their first home as well as larger units (3, 4 and 5 bedroom properties), suitable for families.
- b) At least 40% of the homes to be provided as affordable housing and targeted to meet affordable housing needs in the parish. People with a strong local connection to Thriplow & Heathfield parish, as defined in the glossary, whose needs are not met by the open market will be given priority of allocation (be first to be offered the tenancy or ownership of the home) of the affordable housing (including any First Homes) provided on this site.

2) Vehicular Access

- a) The scheme must demonstrate safe highway access, and preferably off Fowlmere Road, that meets the satisfaction of local Highway Authority. This may include provision of traffic calming measures along Fowlmere Road.

3) Connectivity and permeability

- a) Incorporation of safe and attractive walking and cycling routes on site providing access links from both Lodge Road and Fowlmere Road.
- b) Improvements to be provided to pedestrian infrastructure along Fowlmere Road, in order to facilitate safe pedestrian crossing points and route to existing pavement infrastructure along Fowlmere Road and allow for safe walking routes to village services.

4) Landscaping

- a) To secure a high level of residential amenity, the incorporation of generous landscaping between the residential areas and vehicle repair shop to the south and the agricultural buildings to the west and south
- b) Retain existing boundary vegetation
- c) Ensure the new development is integrated well in its wider landscape setting at this settlement edge location through:
 - i) providing a landscaped buffer of a tree belt (selecting species that are both of local biodiversity value and resilient to the effects of climate change) along the western boundary of the site which ensures the maintenance of a soft vegetated edge to the village edge.
 - ii) incorporating a boundary hedge using mixed native species along the eastern edge to maintain the rural and vegetated character of Lodge Road.
- d) Conserve and enhance the setting of the Conservation Area through provision of improved vegetated buffers made up of native thicket and hedge species along Lodge Road.

5) Design

- a) The proposal must be the result of a design-led process which acknowledges the sensitivities and opportunities for improvement with respect to this village gateway location abutting both the countryside and the Thriplow conservation area. Of particular importance is the protection of the rural character of Lodge Road.
- b) A minimum of 2 car parking spaces must be provided within the curtilage of each dwelling in addition to visitor parking. Exceptionally, where a second in-curtilage space is not possible for smaller dwellings, this must be provided in a dedicated parking bay readily accessible and visible from the applicable dwelling. The proposal must be the result of a design-led process which acknowledges the sensitivities and opportunities for improvement with respect to this village gateway location abutting both the countryside and the Thriplow conservation area.

6) Sustainable design and construction

- a) Wherever practicable, development proposals should facilitate low-carbon living for future occupiers through:
 - i) the reduction of the need for energy through site layout, orientation and building fabric;
 - ii) the incorporation of low-carbon heating solutions, and
 - iii) the incorporation of renewable energy technology and other sustainability matters including measures to facilitate efficient use of potable water (appropriate fixtures, rainwater harvesting and utilizing opportunities for greywater recycling) set out in Appendix 1 to the Great Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD, or any updated version of that document.
- b) Proposals which adopt an innovative approach to the construction of low and net-zero carbon homes (for example construction to Passivhaus or similar standards) will be supported.

7) Biodiversity

- a) Development proposals should respond positively to the ecological significance of the site through:
 - i) establishing that there would be no negative impact on flora and fauna;
 - ii) if any negative impacts are identified, establishing that these negative impacts are suitably mitigated against; and
 - iii) the overall scheme will deliver a net gain in biodiversity.
- b) As part of delivering biodiversity enhancements, the opportunity to provide habitat that connects or strengthens links with existing priority habitat close by should be prioritised. For example, through the provision of a wooded biodiverse strip along the western boundary of the site and further south to connect with deciduous woodland at Newditch Plantation.
- c) Enhance vegetation and hedgerows to maintain and encourage bat foraging opportunities for Barbastelle bats which could belong to the population protected by Eversden & Wimpole Woods SAC.

Policy THP 10 – Rural exception sites in Thriplow

Context and rationale

- 6.10. As set out in Chapter 3, the Housing Needs Survey (HNS) undertaken by Cambridgeshire ACRE in September 2018 identified 22 households as being in need of affordable housing who either live in, or have a local connection to, Thriplow. Since the completion of this survey, no additional affordable housing units have been completed in the parish.
- 6.10.1. Every year, the housing team at SCDC provides updated figures on housing need in the parishes. As at April 2022, SCDC provided up to date figures indicating 12 households were on the housing register with a housing need for affordable rent or social rent in Thriplow and Heathfield parish. Six of these were for 1-bedroom properties, 3 for 2-bedroom properties, 2 for 3-bedroom properties and 1 for a 4-bedroom property.
- 6.10.2. The use of rural exception site policy is increasingly seen as one of the ways to to retain balanced rural communities. Rural exception sites are defined in the NPPF 2023 as *Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. A proportion of market homes may be allowed on the site at the local planning authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding.*
- 6.10.3. Applications for rural exceptions housing must be supported by evidence of local need and be prioritised for people with a local connection to the parish.
- 6.10.4. Respondents to Thriplow's Housing Needs survey showed that sixty-four per cent of respondents supported the principle of such a development and 35 per cent were opposed. There is a low proportion of affordable homes and they are all in Thriplow Village. The HNS 2018 reports 9 per cent of housing to be affordable housing for rent with one shared ownership property. The focus on bungalows and larger houses means housing is generally inaccessible to younger families and couples, being too expensive.
- 6.10.5. Rural exception sites are not considered appropriate on the edge of Heathfield due to its distance from Thriplow and lack of amenities.

Policy Intent

- 6.10.6. The intention of Policy THP 10 is to encourage the delivery of a rural exception site that is outside the Thriplow development framework but well related to village services.

Policy THP 10 – Rural exception sites in Thriplow

- 1) Proposals for small scale affordable housing schemes on rural exception sites for people with a Thriplow parish connection (see glossary) on the edge of Thriplow village are supported provided that:
 - a) the proposed development, by virtue of their size, scale and type, will not exceed the identified local needs for affordable housing;
 - b) the types of dwellings proposed meet the needs identified in Thriplow parish as identified in an up-to-date housing needs survey;
 - c) the homes are located within easy access to Thriplow village centre,
 - d) the affordable housing is provided in perpetuity; and
 - e) no significant harm would be caused to the character of the village, its setting or the countryside.

THEME 2	Living village and sustainable development
Objective 9	Plan for improved outdoor recreational facilities in the parish

- 6.10.7. Whilst an objective in this NP, there are no planning policies specifically related to this. Please see Community Initiative 5, which sits outside the land use planning process, which will assist with achieving this objective. In addition, Policy 12 and Policy THP 13, which sit under Theme 3 Social Cohesion and Parish links are applicable to the provision of outdoor recreation activities in the parish.

THEME 2	Living village and sustainable development
Objective 10	A safer less congested parish

Policy THP 11 – Improving parking provision and improving road safety in Thriplow and Heathfield

Context and rationale

- 6.11. The traffic-related issues in the parish need to be fully taken on board when development proposals are being considered in the parish. Chapter 7 in this plan includes a set of commitments that can be actioned outside the land use planning system.

Parish-wide concerns regarding junctions off the A505 into the settlements

- 6.11.1. The village of Thriplow is accessed from the south off the A505 either at Flint Cross via Fowlmere or onto Gravel Pit Hill and from the A10 to the north either via Newton or Fowlmere. The access off the A505 from the south is regarded by most who use it as hazardous. When travelling from the east, there is a need to sit in the middle lane whilst fast traffic rushes past on the left, until there is an adequate gap in the traffic to turn right into Gravel Pit Hill. According to Cambridgeshire County Council maintained statistics on road traffic accidents there has been one accident at this junction in the five year period 2014 to 2018 (inclusive). Based on reports by local people, it is considered this statistic understates the problem. See paragraph 4.6.18.
- 6.11.2. The parish residents aspire towards the provision of a safer junction at Gravel Pit Hill. However, it is outside the scope of this neighbourhood plan to resolve this issue. The parish council will continue to work with stakeholders to seek solutions. This is raised again in Chapter 7 of this plan.
- 6.11.3. Parish residents are also concerned about the current access off the A505 into the Heathfield settlement at the Heathfield Way/A505 junction. There is only one access on and off this area of the estate and the current layout and some residents regard it as a safety hazard. There is a separate access road to the Pepperslade area of Heathfield, but they are not joined, the planned joining route having been walled off at the time of development. No viable solutions have been identified to address the issue. The current situation, however, further highlights the reasons why additional development in Heathfield should be limited.

Parking provision and road safety within Thriplow village

- 6.11.4. Fowlmere Road and School Lane are the only village roads which benefit from having pavements and, as detailed in Chapter 4, the pavement along School Lane is in a poor state of repair. There is also a narrow footpath on one side only for part of Church Street. The rest of Church Street, along with other village roads, Farm Lane, Lodge Road and Lower Street are single lane farm roads. During term-time, Fowlmere Road, School Lane and Church Street are used for the twice daily school drop off. Due to the parked vehicles on the northern side, School Lane operates as a one way road for just under a kilometre during the school pick-up and drop-off period. Children are also dropped off along Church Street. Here, there is no clear pavement so children and their carers have a particular hazardous walk to school, having to walk along a road before then crossing the triangular junction with Church Street and Brook Road, where there are two blind corners and no footpath.
- 6.11.5. The speed and volume of through-traffic in the village is an identified concern. Middle Street and Fowlmere Road form a short cut for local traffic from nearby villages to the A505 and also all traffic in the area going to the nearby recycling centre.
- 6.11.6. A number of options for addressing traffic issues have been considered in the preparation of this plan. These include:
- a) Implementing a 20mph zone in the built-up areas of the residential areas. This is identified as a community aspiration in Chapter 7.
 - b) Better and more organised provision of off-street parking to cater for the Thriplow primary school.
 - c) More off-street parking generally. The policy below seeks to address this as far as new development proposals are concerned.
 - d) Better footpaths along Fowlmere Road and School Lane as a way of improving pedestrian safety for school children but also residents walking to Fowlmere. Improvements will be sought as part of any applicable new planning proposals.
 - e) Better provision of off-road public footpaths. See Policy THP 12 – Protecting and improving our rural routes for non-motorised users and creating sustainable connections to neighbouring settlements.
 - f) The provision of an all-weather cycling route to the nearest railway stations, Whittlesford and Foxton (See Policy THP 12 and Map 24); and
 - g) Restricting access to the village for heavy goods vehicles.

Road safety within Heathfield

- 6.11.7. The need for residents and visitors to park cars has been poorly planned for in the design and layout of the built environment at Heathfield. Problems associated with high levels of on street parking is well evidenced.
- 6.11.8. In response to the November 2021 consultation, 'car parking problems caused by high density accommodation' was the fourth most popular issue flagged up by respondents, following 'improve main entrance image', 'improve community amenities', and 'A505 lack of landscaping, maintenance and pollution'. When asked to prioritise required improvements in Heathfield, addressing car parking issues was the second most popular mentioned issue. Addressing the need to provide emergency vehicle access and the design and management of open spaces were also popular. These latter priorities are connected with the problems associated with on-street parking.
- 6.11.9. The Heathfield Masterplan document (2020) identifies a range of issues in the different Heathfield Local Character Areas. The issues specific to parking are repeated below:

LCA 2 (Kingsway)

- a) The road has become congested due to parking and the need for utilities such as bin storage
- b) On-street parking adds to the visual clutter of the street scape and impedes the movement of pedestrians and cyclists

Local Character Area 3 (Whitehall Gardens and Woburn Place)

- c) Unregulated parking around the central green space limits pedestrian access and creates a cluttered visual barrier, contributing to its overall lack of community use.



Figure 11: Whitehall gardens

LCA 4 (Pepperslade)

- d) Dominance of unrestricted parking defines streetscape and limits useability for other forms of sustainable transport.

LCA 6 (Hurdles Way)

- e) Parking congestion creates difficulty for emergency vehicles and other forms of inclusive access.
- f) Raised footpaths provide clear demarcation between pedestrian and cars but unrestricted parking reduces visibility and safety.
- g) Rear parking courtyards are hidden unwelcoming spaces contributing little to the overall character.
- h) The communal open space provides a seating area but is dominated by parking and hard surface with minimal planting to soften the space.



Figure 12: Hurdles Way parking entrance

LCA 7 (Ringstone)

- i) Parking congestion creates safety issues for pedestrians and cyclists, particularly at the corners of the road where visibility is notably reduced.
- j) Parking congestion along linear sections of the road significantly reduces the otherwise open aesthetic of the street.
- k) Parking along the edge of the green space dominates the area, restricts access, views and visually detracts from the edge of the development.



Figure 13: LCA 8: Ringstone playing field and Hurdles Way woodland

- l) Rear parking courtyards and garages are underused and constitute hidden spaces with limited positive contribution to the wider character (see page 80 of the 2022 AECOM Masterplan report).



Figure 14: Ringstone rear parking court

- m) Presence of parking congestion at the boundary of the green space diminishes the amenity value of the space and reduces inclusive accessibility.



Figure 15: Ringstone street scene

- 6.11.10. As with the infrastructure needed to achieve a safer junction at Gravel Pit Hill, the measures above cannot be achieved through planning policy or through planning policy alone. They are therefore identified as community-shared aspirations in Chapter 7 of this plan.

Policy intent

- 6.11.11. A planning policy however can ensure that any new development proposals do not exacerbate existing problems and where proportionate to the size of a proposed development, a planning policy can require new opportunities to be taken to improve road safety through a scheme.
- 6.11.12. Policy T1/3: *Parking provision* in the Local Plan requires of all development across the district to provide car parking provision through a design-led approach in accordance with indicative standards. In the village of Thriplow, most of the rural roads are without pavements and on-street parking becomes hazardous for pedestrians. This is a particular problem for school children and carers on the route to school. In Heathfield, the current roads are over-saturated with on-street parking, as documented above.
- 6.11.13. Policy THP 11 requires a design-led approach to be taken which is informed by existing problems related to parking and road safety in both Thriplow and Heathfield. The first part of Policy THP11 would normally mean providing dedicated parking on-plot and being guided by the indicative quantitative standards set out in the Local Plan (currently Policy T1/3) Parking Provision in the 2018 Local Plan. Off-plot parking provision will only be acceptable where spaces are provided in a convenient location, for example in the form of parking bays or inset bays, in front of or adjacent to the proposal and without impeding road safety, particularly for pedestrians and other non-motorised users. Tree planting and other landscaping should be incorporated to maintain or create a high-quality streetscape, that is not visually dominated by parked cars. The second part of policy THP 11 comments that a reliance on rear parking courtyards as providing suitable parking for residential properties will not normally be supported due to their proven under-utilisation in the parish and due to this resulting in damage to open space, amenity space and street scape through inappropriately parked vehicles. Rear parking courtyards, will only be considered as a viable option when all on-plot and on-street parking options are exhausted and evidence is submitted that the rear parking provision provides a convenient (easily accessed and exited), safe (with good surveillance) and attractive (incorporating landscaping) option for future occupiers.
- 6.11.14. The policy also identifies opportunities which will be sought to help address existing problems when new development comes forward. Any contributions being sought from new development will need to comply with national policy in particular paragraph 56 that states planning obligations must be a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms b) directly related to the development and c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. Where appropriate and practicable, opportunities will be sought from new development proposals to:
- improve existing pavements serving the development to make them more accessible for all users;

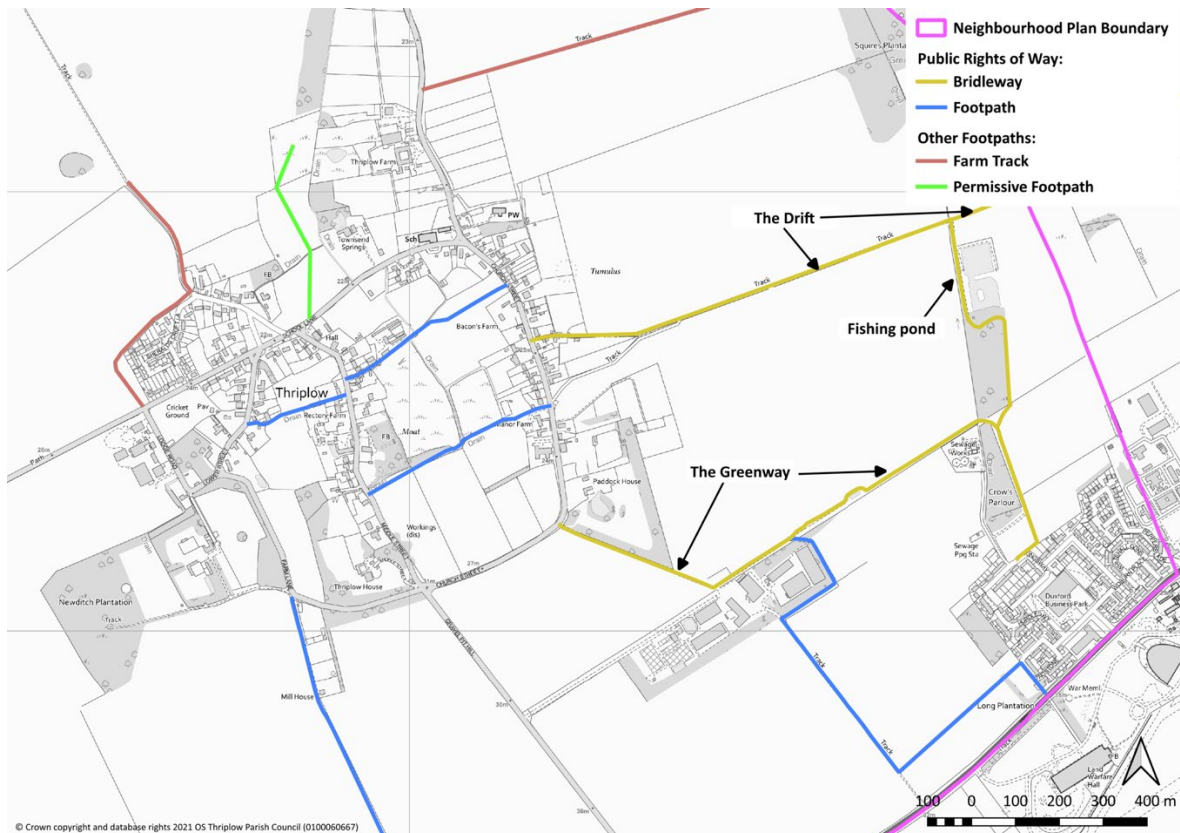
- alleviate existing congestion and on street parking issues particularly relating to the Thriplow primary school and in the parking issues in Heathfield; and
- where necessary to achieve a good quality and accessible walking and cycling environment to meet the needs of the users of the development and where directly, fairly, and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development, s106 contributions towards the initiatives identified above will be sought.

Policy THP 11 – Improving parking provision and improving road safety in Thriplow and Heathfield

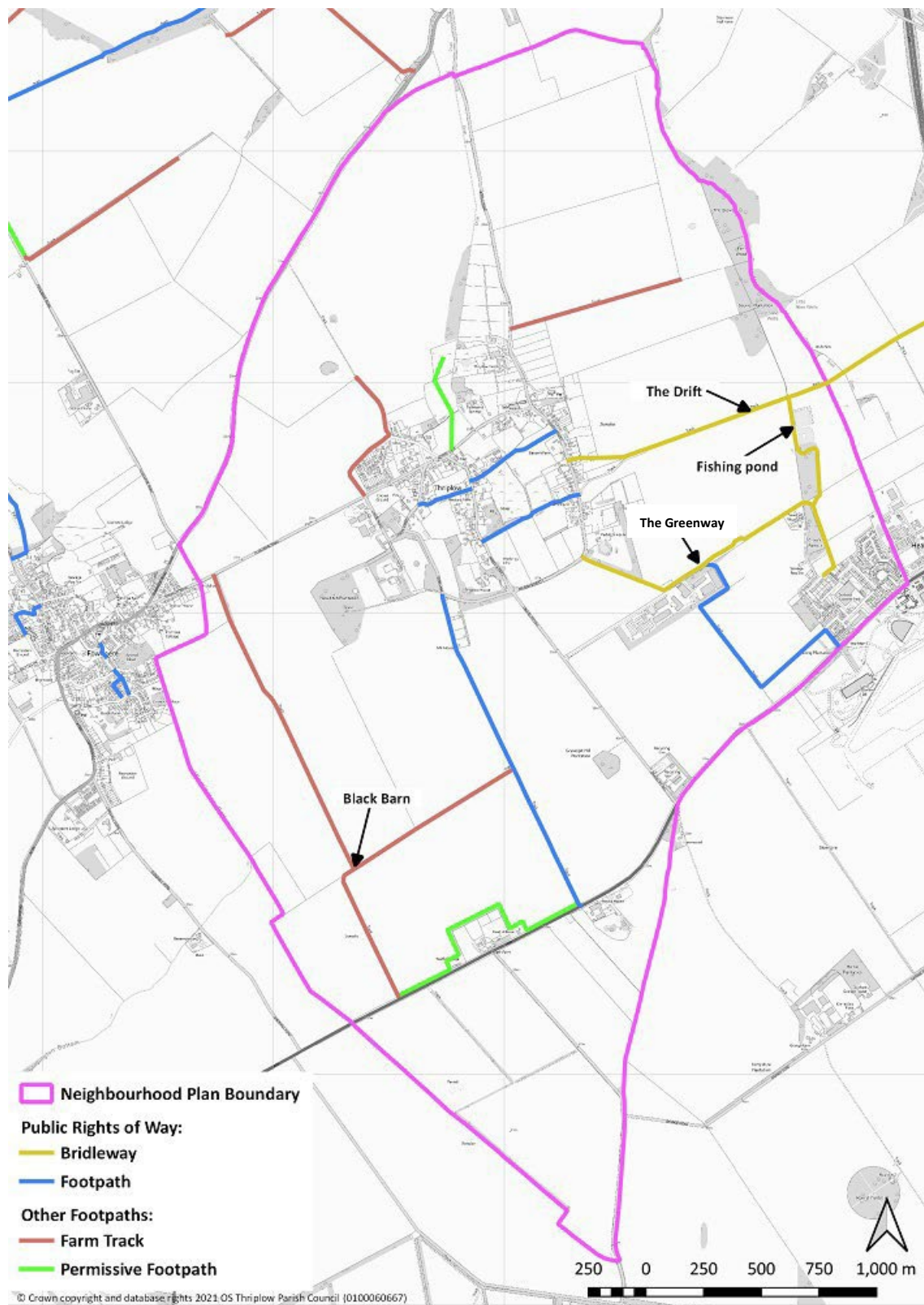
- 1) Development proposals should adopt a design-led approach to addressing the parking needs generated by the development.
- 2) Rear parking courtyards, will only be supported when the use of on-plot and on-street parking options are not practicable and evidence is submitted that the rear parking provision provides a convenient (easily accessed and exited), safe (with good surveillance) and attractive (incorporating landscaping) option for future occupiers.
- 3) Opportunities will also be sought from new development proposals to:
 - a) Improve existing pavements serving the development to make them more accessible for all users.
 - b) Alleviate existing congestion and on street parking issues particularly relating to the Thriplow primary school and in the parking issues in Heathfield.
 - c) Where necessary to achieve a good quality and accessible walking and cycling environment to meet the needs of the users of the development and where directly, fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development, s106 contributions towards the initiatives identified above will be sought.

THEME 2	Living village and sustainable development
Objective 11	The quality and quantity of our rural footpath network and interconnectivity with neighbouring settlements will be improved

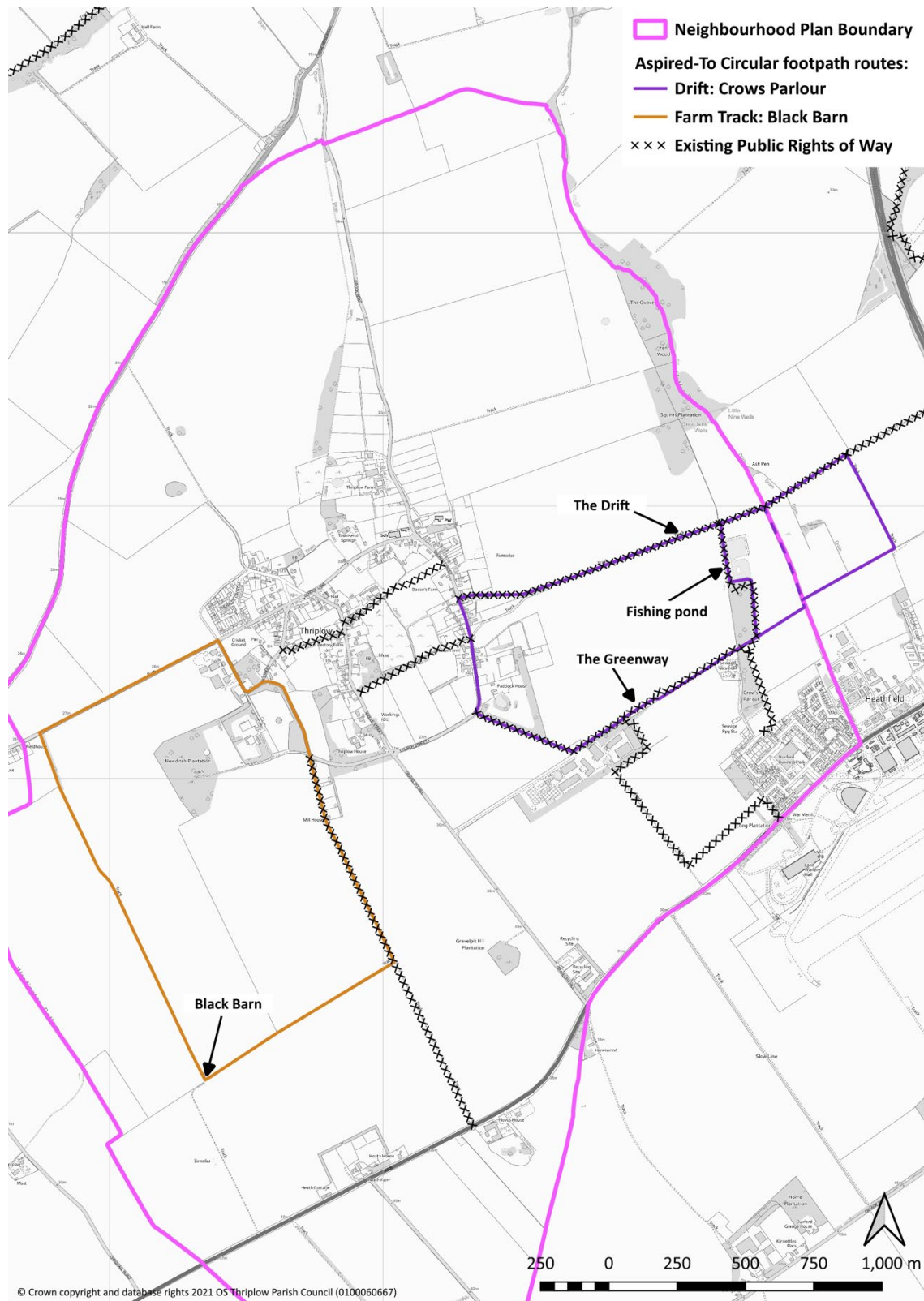
Policy THP 12 – Protecting and improving the rural footpath network and sustainable connections to neighbouring settlements.



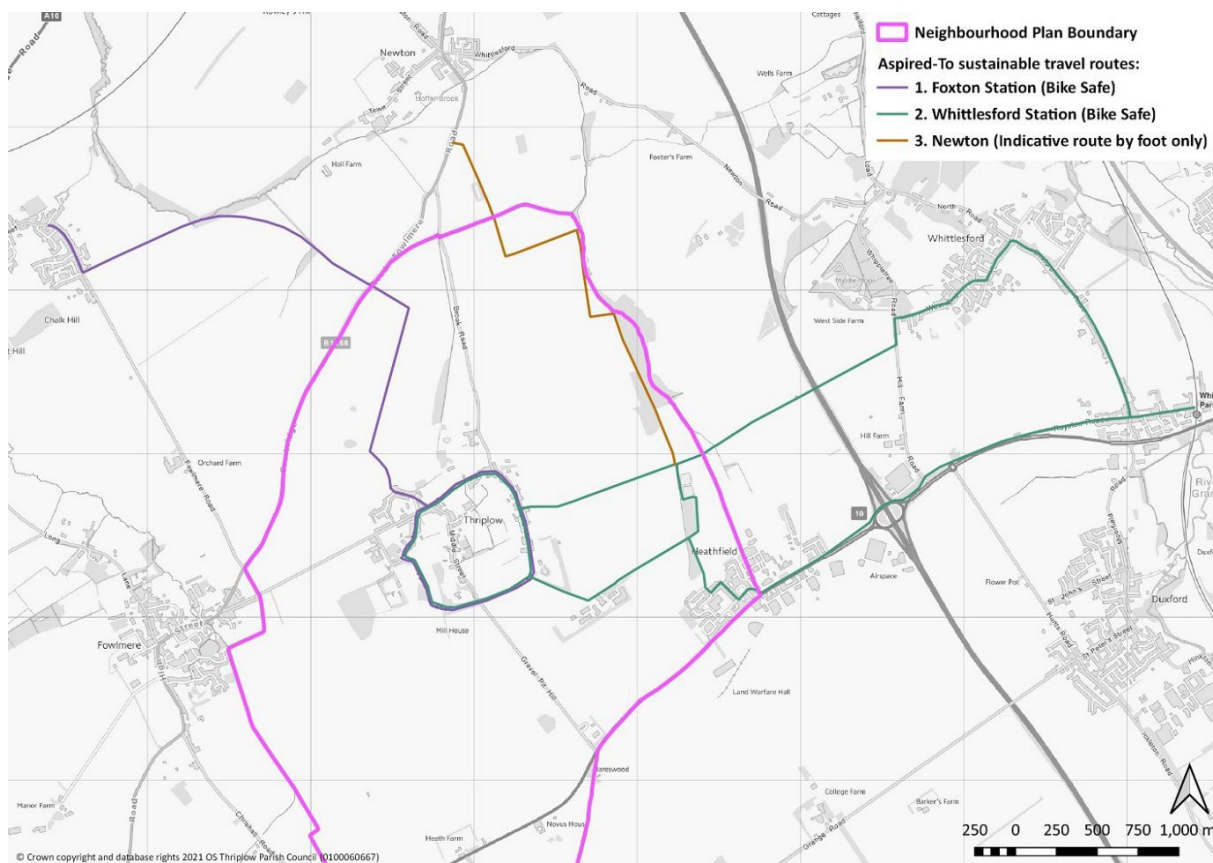
Map 21: Existing rural routes for non-motorised users in the parish. Focus on villages.



Map 22: Existing rural routes for non-motorised users. Parish-wide.



Map 23: Aspired-to circular routes.



Map 24: Aspired-to sustainable travel routes.

Context and rationale

Existing recreational walks and exercise

- 6.12. Compared to neighbouring parishes, there are far fewer possible walking routes in our parish. The existing routes are shown in Maps 21 and 22.
- 6.12.1. There are three possible circular routes One is in Russell Smith's land, going from the Drift to the fishing ponds and back via the sewage works and the industrial area on the concrete road (see Map 21). The other is a circular route to and from Heathfield, leaving Heathfield in a south-westerly direction, parallel with the A505 from Ringstone, before turning north to join up with a farm track, towards and around the KWS greenhouses and warehousing, then meeting the concrete path which can then be followed to return to Heathfield, from the north, at Kingsway. The third circular route is on Thriplow Farms going south of Farm Lane, across to the 'Black Barn' and then back to the Fowlmere Road. However, access is only possible via permissive routes (see Map 22)
- 6.12.2. The only woodland walked in by the public is that immediately north of Heathfield belonging to Russell Smith Farms, between the fishing pond and the Heathfield concrete path.
- 6.12.3. Within Thriplow village, there are 2 footpaths crossing east to west (see Map 21).

Existing active travel routes

- 6.12.4. There is an active travel route connecting Thriplow village with Heathfield, enabling children to take bikes to school (in Thriplow village) from Heathfield (see Maps 21 and 25). Moving in the direction from Thriplow to Heathfield, the route comprises firstly, the bridleway going from the south-east of Church St to the KWS /Smiths industrial area, then going north-east past the sewage works and joining up with a Smith's farm track going north-south from Heathfield past the fishing ponds between the Drift and Heathfield. This latter section is provided as a well footed concrete road width.
- 6.12.5. A further active travel route is via a public bridleway, referred to locally as the Drift (see Map 21). This goes from Church Street in an easterly direction towards Whittlesford. Part of it is low lying and liable to flooding, but there is a good bridge over the M11, enabling off-road cyclists to make their way to Whittlesford, as well as pedestrians. This is an existing gateway route to Whittlesford, which could be made part of a proper cycle network, were the two dips, which are liable to frequent flooding, to be improved (See Map 24).
- 6.12.6. There is an alternative which goes via the concrete path to Heathfield, then through the ramped hole in the wall from Woburn Place to Pepperslade. Once one has got through the ramp and doorway in the wall, the cyclist must use the dilapidated, overgrown footpath beside the A505 until reaching the cycle route , which crosses the M11 at the vehicle slip roads from and to the roundabout after which there is a sounder cycle path alongside and separate from the A505 which goes to Station Road. The slip roads and dilapidation on this route make it dangerous. This maintenance is not in our parish area. Responsibility lies with the Highways Authority, IWM and Whittlesford and Duxford Parishes.
- 6.12.7. There is no safe active travel route to Foxton from Thriplow. The access to Foxton station is only along roads with 60mph limit and blind summits, with no road markings. There are possible footpath routes, which could be adapted to suit cycle use, if permissive routes were re-opened.

Aspirations-to Improvements

- 6.12.8. The work undertaken as part of this NP has resulted in identifying an aspired-to improved network of recreational routes and active travel routes. The former will give parishioners improved options for recreational walks and exercise and the latter will improve walking and cycling accessibility to other villages and railway stations. Active travel routes are a necessary part of a sustainable future for the parish. The aspirations are shown on Maps 23 and 24 and are explained as follows:

Improving recreational access (see Map 23).

- a) Farm Track: Black Barn. We wish for the circular route to be secured in the future for residents. This route is currently dependent on sections which are permissive rather than part of the public rights of way network.
- b) Extension of the Drift circular route.

Improving active travel routes (see Map 24)

- a) Off road pedestrian access to Newton: Woodland north of Heathfield: The continuation of this woodland as a walk in the northerly direction towards Newton via Great Nine Wells. If the northern part of this woodland were to be publicly navigable, it would open up access to another farm track, which goes close to Newton, onto the B1368. At implementation stage, further engagement will be needed both with landowners and, with respect to Thriplow Meadows SSSI, with Natural England.
- b) Provision of safer and separate bike routes between Thriplow and Foxton for access to the railway station.
- c) Improvements to the bike access from Thriplow to Heathfield and Thriplow to Whittlesford, to reach the other railway network. This could partly be achieved if the flood issues were addressed along parts of this route.
- d) improvements throughout to ensure the network is good enough for disabled access and smooth enough for wheeled bikes.

Policy intent

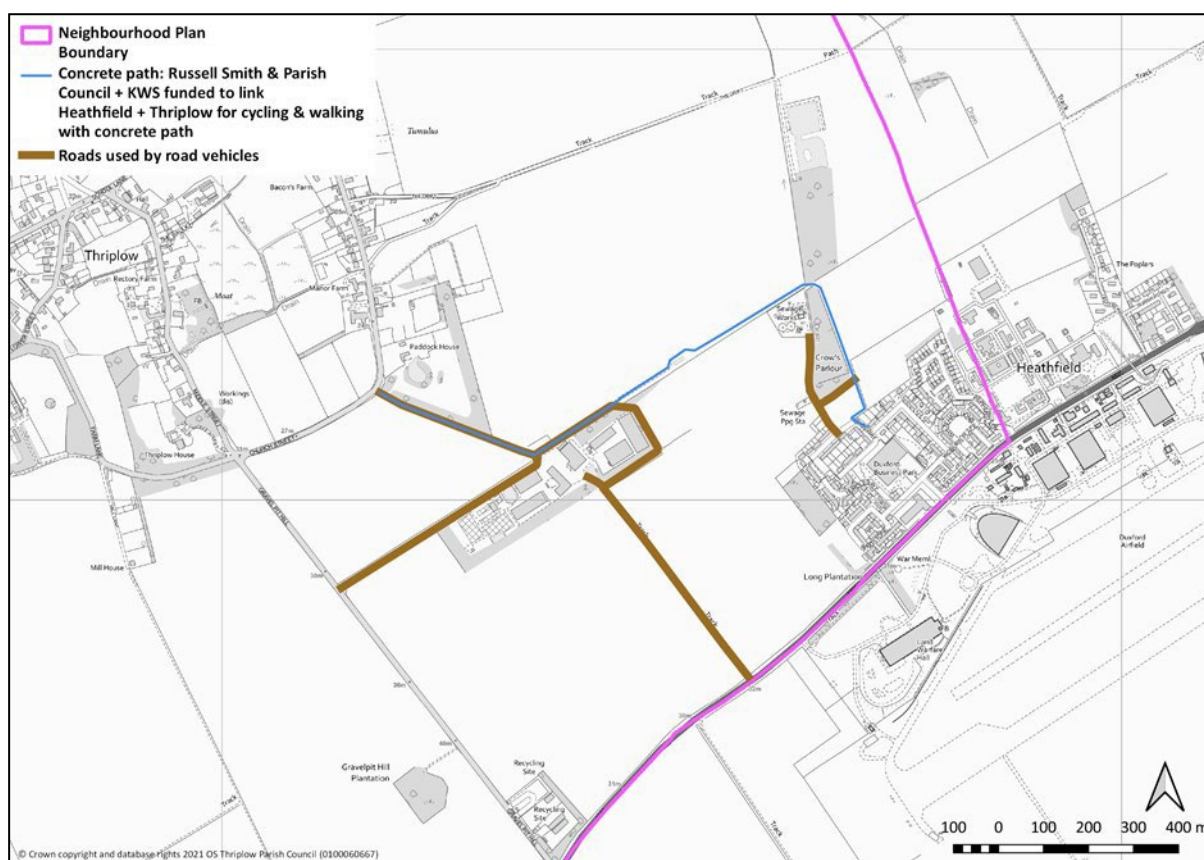
- 6.12.9. The intention of Policy THP 12 is to protect and improve routes for non-motorised users in the parish so that parishioners have increased options for both outdoor recreation purposes and for travelling to neighbouring settlements and linking up with the local railway network.

Policy THP 12 – Protecting and improving our rural routes for non-motorised users and creating sustainable connections to neighbouring settlements.

- 1) Development proposals should protect existing rural routes available to non-motorised users in the parish (as shown on Maps 21, 22 and 25).
- 2) Where necessary to make a development proposal acceptable, and where directly and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development, contributions towards improvements to existing networks (as shown on Maps 21,22) will be sought.
- 3) Wherever practicable, development proposal should take opportunities to improve the existing footpath, bridleway and cycling routes (as shown on Maps 23 and 24).

THEME 3	Social cohesion and parish links
Objective 12	There will be more cohesion between the two communities of Thriplow and Heathfield

Policy THP 13 – Development proposals resulting in better links between the Heathfield and Thriplow communities.



Map 25: Thriplow to Heathfield Sustainable Travel Route.

- 6.13. The NP seeks to encourage better connections between Heathfield and Thriplow. A key challenge is overcoming the difficulties created by having no direct vehicular link between the two settlements. There is a public footpath linking the two settlements. Recently, the footpath was re-laid as a concrete path, which has resulted in an easier and more pleasant access between the two settlements, in particular for cyclists. This has the important benefit of increasing access to the Thriplow based village services to Heathfield residents. Discussions do take place as to whether this path should be lit at night. There are different views on this, with energy conservation and night sky darkness going against the increased amenity that this would provide.
- 6.13.1. The Parish Council will continue to work with stakeholders including landowners in the area between the two settlements to explore further initiatives which would result in improved interconnectivity between the two settlements. This

could for instance include contributions towards the provision of improvement at the Pepperslade/Woburn Place link when development comes forward, which will help make Heathfield more accessible. Another initiative that has been identified as part of this NP is a parish wide aspiration for an accessible area of community woodland to be provided on the farmland that lies between Thriplow and Heathfield.

- 6.13.2. Development proposals which would lead to additional severance between the two communities would not be supported. This could be through the inappropriate expansion of the KWS site agricultural seed research centre (located south of Thriplow) or through diverting the A505 to the north of Heathfield. The latter is a proposal put forward by land promoters in the past although not taken forward as part of the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan.

Policy intent

- 6.13.3. Policy THP 13 is an aspirational policy, which welcomes future proposals that will lead to better links between the Heathfield and Thriplow communities.
- 6.13.4. Sub clause 2) has been added as a requirement from the HRA of the NP. In addition, proposals must comply with Policy THP 7: Promoting nature recovery by protecting existing sites and features, increasing parish biodiversity and delivering biodiversity net gain.



























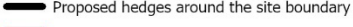
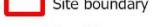
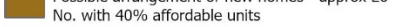
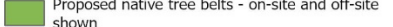
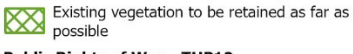

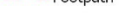
Policy THP 13 – Development proposals resulting in better links between the Heathfield and Thriplow communities

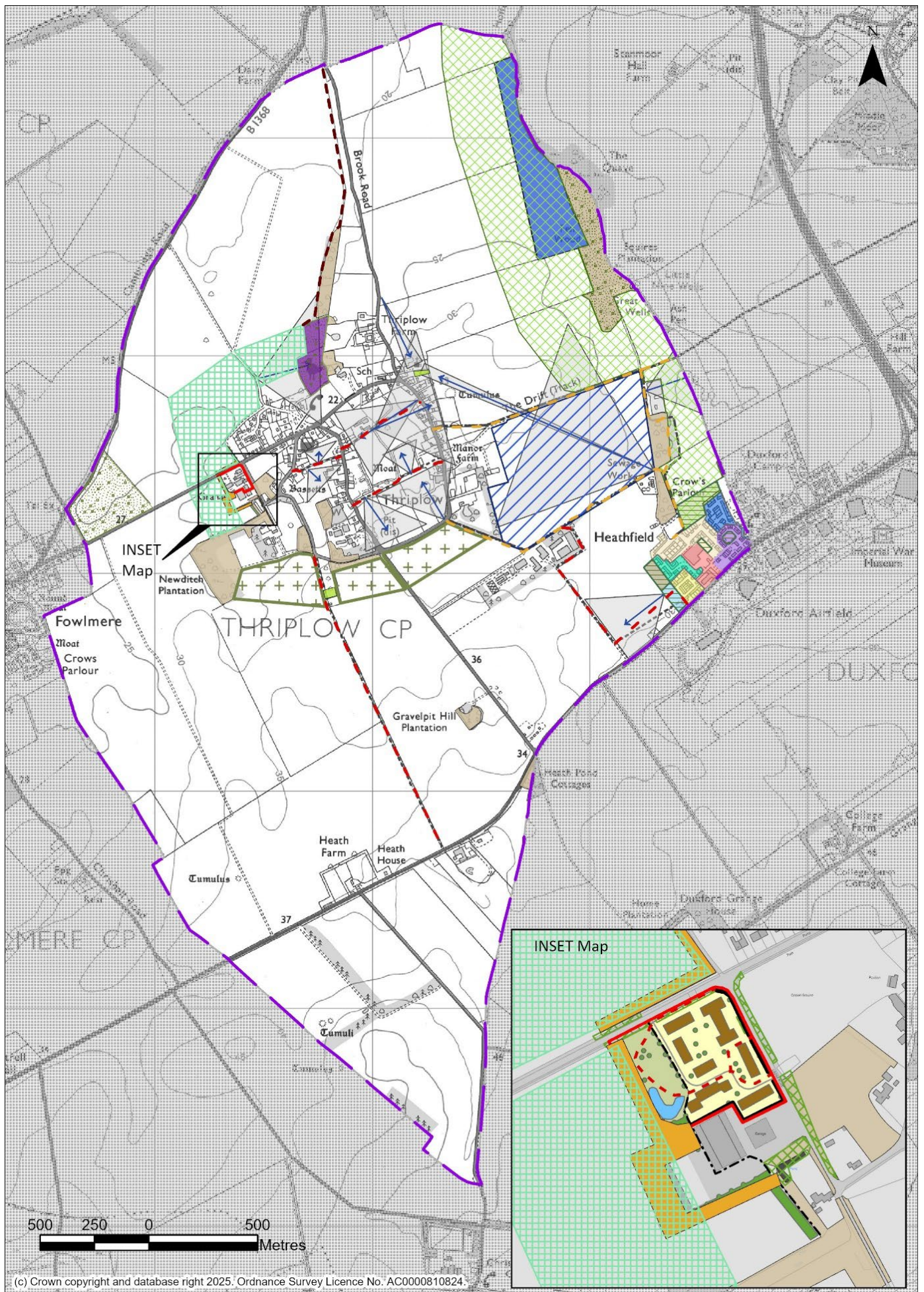
- 1) Development proposals which would facilitate opportunities for the Heathfield and Thriplow communities to come together will be supported. This support would extend to improved sustainable travel routes and the provision of a community meeting space or outdoor recreation area which would serve both communities.
- 2) Development proposals which would lead to additional severance between the two communities, including those which would adversely impact the existing sustainable travel routes between the two communities, will not be supported.
- 3) Significant impacts on hedgerows or any severance of bat flight lines must be avoided to protect foraging and commuting habitat for Barbastelle bats which could belong to the population protected by Eversden & Wimpole Woods SAC.

7. Polices Map

- 6.13.5. Map 26 shows site and spatially specific designations, proposed by the Thriplow and Heathfield Neighbourhood Plan, through policies contained in Chapter 6.
- 6.13.6. Thriplow and Heathfield-specific designations contained in the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018) must also be read alongside these maps. These include the extent of Green Belt (Map 5) and Thriplow and Heathfields 'Development Framework' (Maps 11 and 15). When the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan is adopted, the designations shown in Maps 5,11 and 15 could be superseded through updated Local Plan policies.

Key: Map 26- Overall Policy Map

 Neighbourhood Plan Boundary Local Character Areas - THP3  LCA 1 - Heathfield Open Space  LCA 2 - Kingsway  LCA 3 - Whitehall Gardens and Woburn Place  LCA 4 - Pepperslade  LCA 5 - Mixed use commercial  LCA 6 - Hurdles Way  LCA 7 - Ringstone  LCA 8 - Ringstone playing field and woodland Locally important village and parish wide views - THP5  Direction  Cone  Local Green Space - THP6	 Site of Special Scientific Interest - THP7 Habitat in Heathfield and Thriplow Parish 2021 - THP7  Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh  Deciduous woodland  Traditional orchard  Purple moor grass and rush pastures Opportunities to enhance existing ecological networks in the parish - THP7  Buffer brook with chalk grasslands  Native vegetation belt  Create new chalk grassland  Extend and buffer areas of existing deciduous woodland  Create additional and existing priority habitat  Create wood pasture with large open glades/spaces for chalk grassland	The Grainstore site - THP9  Vehicular access road  Proposed pedestrian public access links across the site  Cambridge Green Belt  Proposed hedges around the site boundary  Site boundary  Possible arrangement of new homes - approx 20 No. with 40% affordable units  Proposed native tree belts - on-site and off-site shown  Existing vegetation to be retained as far as possible Public Rights of Way - THP12  Bridleway  Footpath
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Map 26: Thriplow and Heathfield Neighbourhood Plan: Overall Policy Map

8. Other Community Initiatives

- 8.1 It should be noted that this chapter refers to community aspirations/initiatives and, as such, does not form part of the planning policies. Community engagement informed the vision which underpins this neighbourhood plan, repeated below:

Thriplow and Heathfield will grow sustainably to meet the regional planning policy goals whilst remaining a 'living' community providing a high quality of life and social cohesion for residents of all ages across the whole parish, respecting its rural roots and enhancing the natural environment.

- 8.2 Some of the building blocks to realise this vision are the planning policies in chapter 6. Planning policies have however limited functionality. They only apply when planning applications for development come forward in the parish. The Parish Council has therefore identified other initiatives which can be progressed outside the scope of the planning policies themselves. These are summarised in the Table on pages 32 to 33 and are discussed in more detail below.

Heathfield environment

- 8.3 **Community Initiative 1: Heathfield road adoption** The Parish Council will continue to work with stakeholders to press for all roads in Heathfield to be adopted by the county council.
- 8.4 **Community Initiative 2: Heathfield community centre** The Parish Council will explore options and ideas for the provision of a community centre serving the Heathfield community. For example, the Parish Council continues its dialogue with the new Duxford Business Centre in the hope of identifying opportunities for increased use of this facility by the community.
- 8.5 **Community Initiative 3: Heathfield design and management of green spaces** There are other incremental improvements which could be made with community involvement and cooperation between the Parish Council, the Heathfield Residents Association and other residents in the area. For example, the woodland immediately to the west of the estate comprises young trees and shrubs that are so thickly planted as to be almost unusable. With existing Section 106 money arising from development of the estate and community volunteers it would be possible to create a network of woodland paths and picnic benches that would make this a much more attractive and usable area. There are other ways in which community cooperation could enhance Heathfield including litter pickups, simple landscape planting and the provision of more benches and picnic areas. Alongside this neighbourhood plan the Parish Council wishes to build a shared consensus with residents and stakeholders of the Heathfield Community on opportunities to improve the Heathfield environment. A tool for doing this will be through the Heathfield Enhancement Strategy that has been developed as part of this plan.

Protecting and increasing biodiversity in the parish.

8.6 Community Initiative 4: Protecting and increasing biodiversity in the parish

- 1) To complement our planning policies we will work outside the planning system, with our residents (including community volunteer groups) and landowner community to seek the following:
 - a) the creation of new ponds and improved use of natural flood management techniques that slow the flow of floodwater (for example through leaky woody dams).
 - b) restoring the biodiversity of our waterways through increasing light levels along overgrown/shaded ditches, stabilising banks and planting native locally provenant aquatic plants.
 - c) revitalising our hedgerows through coppicing/laying and gapping up.
- 2) Planting new hedgerows where appropriate. Planting standard hedgerow trees at irregular spacing to provide the next generation of trees. Use locally provenant native hedge plant varieties such as hawthorn, blackthorn, maple, hornbeam, dog rose etc
 - a) the creation of new woodland (using the principles of Right Tree, Right Place – see glossary), additional biodiverse green space (flower rich areas with scrub/trees) particularly where it extends and links existing habitats.
 - b) enhanced protection of existing wildlife areas, for example, through supporting work in Thriplow Meadows with BCN Wildlife Trust
 - c) if we succeed in achieving our other objective of improving access to our woodlands (see Community Initiative 8 below), coppicing and maintenance could become voluntary activities carried out by the community.
 - d) organising regular litter picks and promoting zero tolerances to fly tipping/littering in the parish and beyond.
 - e) the planting of a traditional community orchard using local heritage varieties (using principles of Right Tree, Right Place).

Improved outdoor recreational facilities

- 8.7 Community Initiative 5: Improved outdoor recreation facilities** The fish pond and adjacent woodland that lie between the two communities offer opportunity for further development as recreational space. The Parish Council is ready to work with the landowner (Robert Smith Farms), the Royston and District Angling Club and local volunteers to enhance the area. A suggestion that a BMX bike track be included will be explored.
- 8.8** Separately, the Thriplow village cricket ground has been thought to be too small for the purposes of a successful cricket club. The club has successfully utilized neighbouring facilities, however, improvements to the Thriplow cricket ground could still be considered.

Improving rural routes for non-motorised users

8.9 Community Initiative 6: Improving our rural routes for non-motorised users.

The Parish Council will work with interested groups to improve and develop routes for sustainable travel on horseback, bicycle and foot to the nearby villages of Newton, Whittlesford, Fowlmere and Foxton (Map 21). Particular emphasis would be given to establishing good routes to the railway stations at Whittlesford and Foxton.

Closer cohesion between Heathfield and Thriplow

Community Initiative 7: The Parish Council will continue to work with stakeholders

including landowners in the area between the two settlements to explore further initiatives which would result in improved interconnectivity between the two. This could for instance include contributions towards the provision of an accessible area of community woodland and recreation space on the farmland that lies between Heathfield and Thriplow.

A safer, less congested parish

8.10 Community Initiative 8: reducing parish speed limits. The Parish Council will continue to campaign for a 20mph zone in Thriplow Village and in Heathfield. We will also continue to work towards achieving a safe junction at Gravel Pit Hill

8.11 Community Initiative 9: protecting Heathfield and Thriplow from HGV movements through the parish. The Parish Council will continue to respond to planning applications outside the plan area where there is a concern they will generate HGV movements through the village and parish

8.12 Community Initiative 10: addressing inappropriate parking in the parish. The Parish Council will continue to explore opportunities to address on street parking issues outside the planning application process.

Infrastructure Priorities

8.13 Community Initiative 11: securing infrastructure priorities in Thriplow and Heathfield. Financial contributions or direct provision of new infrastructure will be sought to secure infrastructure improvements made necessary by development proposals. This could include:

- improvements set out in the Heathfield Enhancement Strategy;
- delivering improved outdoor recreation facilities;
- biodiversity improvements and enhancements to ecological networks;
- improving existing pavements serving development to increase their accessibility for all users;
- measures that would help to alleviate existing congestion and on-street parking issues particularly relating to Thriplow primary school and Heathfield;
- improving the network of rural routes for non-motorised users; and
- other items of community infrastructure identified as being necessary during the Plan period.

9. Monitoring

- 9.1 Thriplow and Heathfield Parish Council has the responsibility for providing leadership for the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 9.2 The Parish Council will use the planning policies in the made Neighbourhood Plan as a basis for preparing consultation responses to the local planning authority in response to ongoing planning applications. Furthermore, the Parish Council will closely monitor planning decisions by the local planning authority to ensure the policies in the plan are adhered to.
- 9.3 In addition, the Parish Council will monitor:
- 1) the effectiveness of the planning policies themselves.
 - 2) the appropriateness of the NP vision, its objectives and planning policies with respect to changing priorities over the course of time.
- 9.4 To achieve the above, the Parish Council will monitor as follows:

NP monitoring indicator	When	Method
Monitoring planning applications and planning decisions		
1. Are planning officers at the local planning authority applying the NP policies as required by legislation?	When planning applications are being considered and decided by GCSP	PC to check officer reports and whether the NP policies are listed and referred to in officer reports and committee decisions.
2. Is the Parish Council using the planning policies when commenting on planning applications?	When the Parish Council responds to planning consultations by the local planning authority.	Checking PC responses to planning consultations.
Monitoring the effectiveness of the planning policies		
3. To what extent is development being approved or refused in a manner which departs from the policies in the NP	When planning applications are being considered and decided by GCSP	PC to check planning decisions
4. Are planning applicants using the NP policies as intended when they prepare their development proposals?	When Parish Council considers planning applications or are being consulted at the pre-application stage	Checking whether the planning application refers to the NP policies. At pre-application stage (where relevant) is the NP being referred to from outset by the applicant.

NP monitoring indicator	When	Method
5. Are the planning policies effective in implementing the NP vision and objectives	Annually	Preparing report for annual parish meeting
Monitoring the appropriateness of the NP vision, objectives and planning policies		
6. Is the NP vision and its supporting objectives still relevant	Annually	Preparing report for annual parish meeting

10. Glossary & References

References	Explanation
Greater Cambridge Chalk Streams Project Report (2020). Available at: https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/chalk-streams	A report commissioned by Cambridge City Council and Cambridge Water as an audit of chalk streams in the upper Cam catchment. Work was completed in 2020.
Heathfield Masterplan document (2022)	A report undertaken by AECOM in 2022, with the official title of Thriplow & Heathfield Neighbourhood Masterplan August 2020. The report is a study of Heathfield. It includes an analysis of character areas in the built-up part of Heathfield and provides a series of recommendations, in masterplan form, to improve the public realm and overall appearance of Heathfield.
Natural England (May 2020)	National habitat network user guidance v.2 (Natural England May 2020) available to view: https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/data.defra.gov.uk/Natural_England/Habitat_Species/Habitats/Habitat_Network_England_NE/Habitat_Networks_England_Version_2_Guidance.pdf
Thriplow & Heathfield Parish Character Assessment (2020)	A document, jointly undertaken by Thriplow Neighbourhood Plan group and Chartered Architect Lucy Batchelor-Wylam. The study has two key purposes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) to provide a framework for understanding the different patterns of landscape and settlement elements across the parish and their relative value and importance 2) to help understand different sensitivities along the village's fringes and open spaces and develop appropriate neighbourhood plan policies in response
Thriplow & Heathfield Site Selection: Landscape and visual Sensitivity Assessment 2020	A report of an assessment undertaken by landscape architect Lucy Batchelor-Wylam for the purpose of informing the sites put forward to the Parish Council in response to a call for sites in 2020
Local connection	An applicant will be considered to have a strong local connection to the Thriplow and Heathfield parish if they meet one of the following criteria: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The applicant has worked (paid employment) in the parish for the last 12 months for sixteen hours or more per week; or 2) The applicant has lived in the parish for at least 5 years out of the last 8 years; or 3) The applicant has family members who are resident in the parish. Family members are defined as parents,

References	Explanation
	<p>children or brothers or sisters who have been resident in the village for a period of 5 years or longer. Other close family ties will be considered in agreement with SCDC on a case by case basis; or</p> <p>4) There are special circumstances that SCDC considers give rise to a local connection to the parish, for example where the applicant's substantive role is as a carer to a person resident in the village.</p> <p><i>Source: Used by SCDC housing team – local connection criteria for rural exception sites.</i></p>
Right Tree, Right Place principle	The Right Tree, Right Place principle refers to the need to ensure there is enough space for a tree to reach maturity in terms of height, canopy spread and rooting area
Rural Exceptions Sites	Defined in NPPF 2023 as Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. A proportion of market homes may be allowed on the site at the local planning authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding