

Bromham Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group &  
Bromham Parish Council



**Referendum version**

**BROMHAM  
NEIGHBOURHOOD  
PLAN - 2030**

Bromham Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group & Bromham Parish Council  
Bromham Village Hall, Village Road, Bromham, MK43 8JP, Tel: 01234 828851,  
email: [NHP@bromhamparish.co.uk](mailto:NHP@bromhamparish.co.uk), [www.bromhamparish.co.uk](http://www.bromhamparish.co.uk)

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## **PART A - Introduction and Context**

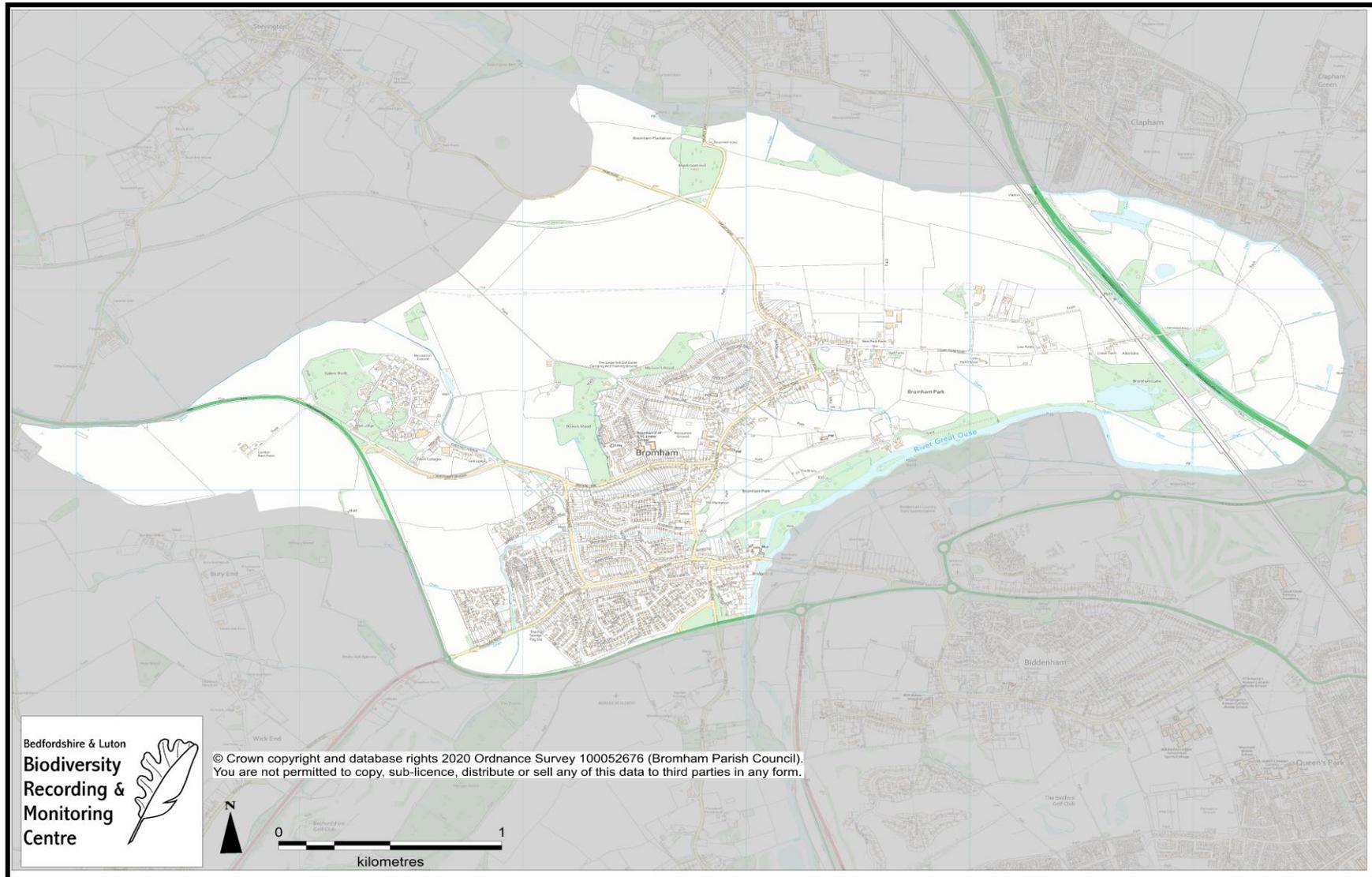
### **A.1 – INTRODUCTION**

- A.1.1 Bromham’s Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan) sets out a vision for Bromham in the period to 2030 and contains policies designed to achieve that vision. The Plan reflects the Government’s approach to planning as set out in the Localism Act 2011, which gives local people a stronger voice in what happens in their area, and the National Planning Policy Framework.
- A.1.2 The Plan was developed by a Steering Group comprising local people, led by Bromham Parish Council. The non-Parish Councillors on the Steering Group volunteered to assist in developing the plan in response to a request for volunteers published at the initial consultation event which launched the planning process in February 2015. The invitation was subsequently repeated in the June 2015 edition of the Bromham Broadsheet, which is delivered to every residential and non-residential property in the village. Since then, there has been extensive consultation with residents. The Plan was endorsed by Bromham Parish Council in December 2018: accordingly, all recommendations and views expressed are those of the Parish Council.
- A.1.3 The planning process provided residents with an opportunity to express views about where future development should be located within the village and to comment on a range of other aspects of village life. The resulting plan aims to ensure the future wellbeing of our community. However, the Plan must accord with the wider planning framework at both national and local level, and in particular must conform to Bedford Borough Council’s strategic planning priorities, as set out in Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030. Although the Borough Council’s Local Plan now covers the period to 2030 only, its original intention and early drafts of its plan related to the period to 2035. We also developed our plan to cover the period until 2035 specifically to accord with the Borough Council’s original and long-held intention. However, we accept that to comply with the local plan, the new dwellings allocated to Bromham will need to be in place by 2030 and it is with some reluctance that we agree that the plan should now cover the shorter period – to 2030.
- A.1.4 The Plan is divided into four main sections: Part A – which is this introductory section; Part B, which deals with the planning policies against which planning applications will need to be assessed; Part C, covering community issues and aspirations for the future; and Part D covering the implementation and monitoring of the plan.

### **A.2 - BROMHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA BOUNDARY**

- A.2.1 The civil parish of Bromham - see Map 1 - was formally designated a neighbourhood area under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 by Bedford Borough Council on 18 August 2014.

# Map 1 – Bromham Civil Parish



### **A.3 - HOW THE PLAN FITS WITH THE WIDER PLANNING SYSTEM**

- A.3.1 Although the Localism Act 2011 intends that local people have more say in decision-making relating to their area, there are other important requirements to which neighbourhood plans must adhere. At the national level, neighbourhood plans must take account of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and planning law. At the local level, the Plan must conform with Bedford Borough's current strategic priorities (See Para A.1.3 above) and ultimately with Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030, and together with the Local Plan will form part of the development plan for Bedford Borough when they are made and adopted.
- A.3.2 The emerging Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030 has identified Bromham as a key growth village which should accommodate a further 500 dwellings to reflect the village's current status as a Rural Key Service Centre (which means that it currently has a range of shops, a garage, library, GP surgeries and other facilities). Other Rural Key Service Centres, such as Clapham, Great Barford and Sharnbrook have also been required to accommodate circa. 500 new dwellings. Under the Localism Act 2011, a neighbourhood plan may allocate more land than is required to accommodate the number of dwellings specified in the local plan for the neighbourhood area, but it may not allocate less land than is required.
- A.3.3 The consultation process undertaken during the development of the Plan has given residents the opportunity to have a say about, amongst other things, where new housing should be located within the village. In the absence of such a plan, Bedford Borough Council would make that decision.

### **A.4 – CONSULTATION**

- A.4.1 Our Community Engagement Strategy, published in November 2014, is at Supporting Document 1 and is also available on Bromham Parish Council's website: <https://bromham.bedsparishes.gov.uk/a/8070292-8070325>
- A.4.2 Our vision and aims for the Plan derive wholly from residents' views as expressed through our consultation events and exercises. Bromham Parish Council launched its neighbourhood planning exercise on 20/21 February 2015 at a public event at Bromham Village Hall. The event was used to suggest, and invite residents' comments on, potential themes for the plan. These included housing, the environment, getting around the village, schooling and young people, village facilities and heritage sites. Over 350 people attended the event.
- A.4.3 In July 2015, a village questionnaire (See Supporting Document 2) and a housing needs survey (See Supporting Document 3) were circulated to all residential and non-residential properties in Bromham. The questionnaire elicited 593 responses, which provided the steering group with a clearer understanding of residents' views. The housing needs survey was conducted on our behalf by Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity and received 84 responses.
- A.4.4 The questionnaire findings were exhibited at a public event at Bromham Village Hall in April 2016. At the same event, there was also a detailed explanation of the proposed redevelopment of the Old Stable Yard at Hall Farm. In the questionnaire

document, we used the map of proposed sites provided by Bedford Borough Council, which showed the whole of Bromham Park Estate's landholding in Bromham rather than the limited area of land south of Lower Farm Road where development was proposed. This led to the misapprehension by many residents that there was a proposal to build in what is locally known as 'Bromham Park' – or 'the Park'. The more detailed explanation provided at the April 2016 event was designed to give residents a clearer understanding of what was actually proposed.

- A.4.5 The feedback we received at the event suggested that the explanation was successful in clarifying the location and extent of the proposed Old Stable Yard Development. However, we sought to test this view with the wider community by circulating the written material about Hall Farm used at the event with an 'Issues and Options' consultation (see below) and seeking views on it.
- A.4.6 The next limb of consultation was an event to engage the local business community with the emerging Neighbourhood Plan. This was held in September 2016.
- A.4.7 In late 2016 an Issues and Options Consultation (See Supporting Document 4) covering housing and education matters was circulated to all households. It elicited 484 responses and provided a clearer view about the preferred locations and types of future housing. The responses also suggested a clear preference that the school should remain centrally located within the village. Supporting Document 4 also contains the material circulated about extent of the Old Stable Yard at Hall Farm, which was circulated with the Issues and Options Consultation.
- A.4.8 On 2 and 3 March 2018 a public event was held at Bromham Village Hall which set out our emerging findings and invited comments. Our aim was to ensure that we were still on the right track. Although there were substantial snowfalls on the days leading up to and during the event, 278 people attended.
- A.4.9 During 2015, we also consulted the children at (then) Bromham Lower School, Lincroft Middle School and Sharnbrook Upper School, the main state schools attended by Bromham children.
- A.4.10 The sequence and nature of our consultation exercises, and summaries and analyses of responses, is set out at Supporting Document 5 and is also available on Bromham Parish Council's website - <https://bromham.bedsparishes.gov.uk/a/10942793-11645147>

## **A.5 - VISION AND AIMS**

- A.5.1 The comments and suggestions received at the February 2015 launch event enabled us to generate the Plan's vision and aims as set out below:

### **Vision and Aims**

#### **Vision**

Our vision is that Bromham should retain its identity and integrity as a rural village whose inhabitants enjoy its facilities safely, continue to have access to Bromham Park and its other green spaces, and derive value from Bromham Mill and other village facilities. Any new development in Bromham should be assimilated in a way that retains these characteristics while safeguarding the environment.

#### **Aims**

Our aims are -

##### 1. Identity and Integrity

to ensure that the village retains its broad shape and distinctive character and remains separate from, albeit linked with, Bedford and the surrounding villages;

##### 2. Safety

to ensure that the location and layout of any new development reflect the need to minimise the impact of the additional traffic generated, in terms of volume and speed, on the rural character and safety of the village;

##### 3. Bromham Park and other Green Spaces

to enable inhabitants to enjoy continued access to Bromham Park and other green spaces and footpaths;

##### 4. Bromham Mill

to enhance the value of Bromham Mill to the inhabitants of Bromham and other local people by increasing the number of events and activities it hosts and giving the site a more dynamic and central focus in village life.

- A.5.2 This vision remains central to the Plan and the aims have been among our principal drivers.

## **A.6 - THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

- A.6.1 The Plan's main objective is to allocate land for new housing, but it also covers village life more generally and looks at a range of issues that emerged in the consultation process as being likely to affect the future quality of life in Bromham.

These include -

- the type, tenure and style of new housing;

- transport and traffic issues – getting around safely both now and in a bigger, busier village in the future, with as much emphasis on pedestrians, cyclists and users of public transport as on vehicle users with a view to encouraging sustainability;
- ensuring there are adequate local services and facilities;
- the provision of sufficient schooling and facilities for young people;
- Retaining access to Bromham Park and preserving green spaces and ancient woodlands;
- the protection and regeneration of Bromham Mill; and
- ensuring that the environment of the village and its surroundings is protected and there are no negative likely significant effects relating to the Water Framework Directive or to European sites designated under European Directive 92/43/EEC by output from the River Great Ouse.

A.6.2 It is also important that the plan does not have a deleterious effect on the environment. Neighbourhood Plans may require a Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA), but only where there are potentially significant environmental effects. As the 'responsible body', the Parish Council completed an SEA screening report (see Supporting Document 6) recommending that an SEA was not required. This report was sent to Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency as the statutory consultation bodies. None of the bodies suggested that an SEA was required.

## **A.7 - ABOUT BROMHAM**

A.7.1 Bromham is a large rural village, within a civil parish covering an area of 820 hectares, approximately four miles northwest of Bedford. It sits largely on high ground overlooking the Great Ouse Valley.

### People

A.7.2 The latest population data come from the 2011 Census, which showed that Bromham had a population of 4,957, made up of 2,069 dwellings and 2,028 households. Home ownership, at 89%, was high compared with Bedford Borough's average of 67%: 4% of households rent from social landlords and 7% rent privately. Housing was predominantly detached (52%) or semi-detached (33%).

A.7.3 Around 39% of those employed were managers, directors or in professional occupations, which exceeded the average for Bedford Borough. Similarly, the proportion of adults with degree level qualifications - 37% - was also above the Borough average.

A.7.4 Multiple car ownership per household was much higher than for the Borough as a whole, with 41% having two cars and 14% with three cars or more. Only c. 9% of households had no car at all, compared with c. 20% across the Borough.

A.7.5 Most people travelled to work by car (78%) and c.13% commuted by train, bus, cycle or on foot. Approximately 8% of those who were employed worked from home.

A.7.6 Although these data are now over seven years old, there have not been changes in the village that would suggest the village's population characteristics have changed substantially.

#### Places

A.7.7 Bromham has a large number of heritage assets, including St Owen's Church, Bromham Hall, Bromham Mill, the Village Road site of the school, Bromham Bridge and a number of privately-owned listed buildings. In addition to the iconic green space of Bromham Park, the Green and Vicarage Green, the parish also has three fragments of ancient woodland - Salem Thrift, Molivers Wood and Bowels Wood - which form an important part of the pattern of green spaces that help to characterise the village. The Parish Council and Bromham Conservation Group work hard to protect these spaces, and the wildlife and flora they support, for future generations to enjoy.

A.7.8 There are two active church communities in the village: St Owen's Church located in Bromham Park and the Baptist Church on Village Road. The village currently also has a range of shops, public houses, a garage, library, and GP surgeries, giving it Rural Key Service Centre status within Bedford Borough. However, there are currently plans to relocate both GP surgeries in Biddenham, a proposal that Bromham Parish Council continues to oppose.

A.7.9 Bromham remains a popular village, with its close links to Bedford and Milton Keynes. It has easy access to a number of trunk roads and the motorway network, and also to London and elsewhere via the rail network from Bedford Railway Station.

### **A.8 - KEY ISSUES FOR THE FUTURE**

A.8.1 As discussed in Section A.5, (page 5) the views expressed by residents at the launch event, and subsequently, were central to defining the vision and aims from which a number of key issues emerged.

#### **Housing**

A.8.2 Residents' principal concern was the adverse impact that substantial new housing would have on traffic flows through the centre of the village and the main through-roads. Given that relatively few residents work within the village, there was a strong desire for new housing to be located where it would have good access to the A428 (Bromham Bypass).

A.8.3 Residents also wanted new housing that would enable both older residents to 'downsize' to accommodation more suited to their current needs, and 'affordable' housing for young people from Bromham households who want to remain within the village.

#### **Getting Around the Village**

A.8.4 Speeding, inconsiderate parking, bus services, and greater safety for pedestrians and cyclists were identified as residents' current concerns in getting around the village. Residents were concerned that these issues would be exacerbated by the traffic generated by new development. Since the opening of the Great Ouse Way

– the final segment of Bedford’s By-Pass - the Parish Council has received many representations about additional traffic increasing the difficulty, and consequent danger, of entering or exiting Bromham at the four junctions with the A428. We have also borne this in mind in our discussions with developers.

### **Access to Bromham Park**

A.8.5 It was clear from the launch event and questionnaire responses that residents place a very high value on access to what is known locally as Bromham Park, or simply ‘the Park’. It is a beautiful area of traditional parkland, containing St Owen’s Church, and is central to the identity of Bromham. Many people walk, or exercise dogs, in the Park, and its public footpaths help to link different parts of the village. The Park provides the wider setting for the Grade 1 listed St Owen’s Church and - albeit much less visibly - Grade II\* listed Bromham Hall.

A.8.6 However, it is important to remember that the Park is privately owned and forms one part of a larger agricultural enterprise owned by Bromham Park Estate. The family of the current owners of Bromham Park Estate bought the land that makes up the estate in three stages between the mid-1920s and mid-1930s. The final addition to the estate was what is known as ‘the Park’ and was purchased to prevent it being developed for housing. An agreement was made with the former Bedfordshire County Council that the Park – and only the Park - would not be developed for housing.

A.8.7 The current owners wish to retain the Park much as it is now, with wildlife conservation areas, and some agricultural use, but also maintaining continued public access via the network of existing footpaths.

A.8.8 At the northern boundary of the land owned by Bromham Park Estate (and to the immediate south of Lower Farm Road) is the Hall Farm site. This area is set away from ‘the Park’ and lies outside the agreement mentioned in para 8.7.6. Until recently, Hall Farm was used as a commercial livery but is now proposed by the owners as Old Stable Yard development. The land in question contains a farmhouse, stabling and other agricultural buildings, together with fields to the south and east and the site is considered suitable for helping to meet the housing requirement for Bromham, subject to the policies in Section B7.

### **The School**

A.8.9 Bromham Primary School plays a major role within the village community. There was a suggestion during the early stage of the neighbourhood plan process that an additional school, or school site, might be needed elsewhere in the village. We share the view of the school governors and both the current and previous Head Teachers that it is important for Bromham’s children – and for the cohesion of the village – that there should continue to be a single school within the village, preferably on the existing single campus. The school would then remain at the heart of our community.

### **Identity and Integrity**

A.8.10 Residents were very clear in their desire to maintain the identity and integrity of Bromham. There was concern that although the village needed to maintain its strong links with the town of Bedford, it should not be subsumed within Bedford

nor merged with surrounding villages. The river and the A428 provide some physical separation from Bedford, providing natural boundaries for the parish, but we have had in mind residents' concerns in considering some potential sites for new housing development.

### **Services and Facilities**

- A.8.11 The quality of local services is good for a village of Bromham's size but they will come under pressure with an increased population arising from the new development. Residents were concerned that services should keep pace with change in village size.
- A.8.12 Bromham has some sporting, leisure and wellbeing facilities and services but there will be a need for more and better facilities to accommodate the increase in population successfully.

### **The Future of Bromham Mill**

- A.8.13 Like its neighbour Bromham Park, Bromham Mill does much to help characterise Bromham. It is a historic building in a beautiful setting and residents share our view that, together with its surrounding green space, it could be much more extensively used than is currently the case, and could help to create a dynamic community hub.

## **PART B – Planning Policies**

### **B.1 – HOUSING – LOCATION**

- B.1.1 The requirement in the emerging Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030 that Bromham should accommodate 500 new homes in the period to 2030 is not negotiable. The issue to be resolved is where within the village the new homes should be located. In addressing this issue, we have taken account of residents' clearly expressed view that the location and layout of new development should be selected so as to minimise the impact of the associated additional traffic on the rural character of the village.
- B.1.2 The questionnaire findings clearly supported this aim: those sites in the west of the village with easy access to the A428 (Bromham Bypass) attracted most support, whereas sites to the north and east of the village attracted more opposition. Because of the configuration of Bromham's roads, most of the traffic from the latter sites would inevitably be channelled along Village Road and at least one of the other main through-roads before exiting the village.
- B.1.3 Although avoiding traffic blight is a major priority for residents, we have also taken account of both national and local planning policy. The National Planning Policy Framework, February 2019 version (NPPF) makes clear that encouraging the use of previously developed, or 'brownfield', sites, is one of the government's core land-use planning principles (NPPF 2019, Paras 117 and 118). Bedford Borough Council's existing strategic priorities and the emerging Local Plan 2030 also contain policies which seek to maximise the delivery of development through the reuse of suitably located previously-developed land. These were relevant considerations in the allocation of the Old Stable Yard Development at Hall Farm.
- B.1.4 We used Bedford Borough Council's site selection methodology to assess each site put forward for development within the Bromham Neighbourhood Area – see Supporting Document 7. This required consideration to be given to each site's suitability, availability and deliverability for development, as well as any known physical, access or environmental constraints. We also took account of Bedford Borough Council's Highway, Access and Transport Surveys covering the sites - See Supporting Document 8. Because we also intended that Bromham residents should have a strong voice in the selection of sites, we included the findings of the village consultation exercises in the assessment as well as introducing other local knowledge, such as the existence of ancient woodland near proposed sites. The assessment process identified more sites that were 'suitable' for development in planning terms than were needed to meet the requirement to accommodate 500 dwellings. The questionnaire findings were used to provide an additional filter to enable us to allocate only sufficient land to meet the requirement. A summary of the site assessments is at Supporting Document 9 and is also available on Bromham Parish Council's website <https://bromham.bedsparishes.gov.uk/a/8070292-13393594>.
- B.1.5 Taking these factors into account, our main policy objectives and policies for locating new housing are set about below.

### Policy Objectives relating to the Location of New Housing

1. To allocate sufficient sites to accommodate the 500 new homes required by Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030.
2. To ensure that, where possible, development sites are located close to the A428 (Bromham Bypass) to facilitate good access to it and so avoid unnecessary journeys on village through-roads.
3. To allocate brownfield sites, provided there are no countervailing planning, sustainability or highways issues.
4. To ensure that development sites are properly integrated into Bromham, by providing good connections for pedestrians and cyclists as well as motorists.
5. To ensure that development on allocated sites ensures that there are no impacts on designated wildlife sites and takes account of potential negative significant impacts relating to the Water Framework Directive or to European designated sites downstream on the River Great Ouse.

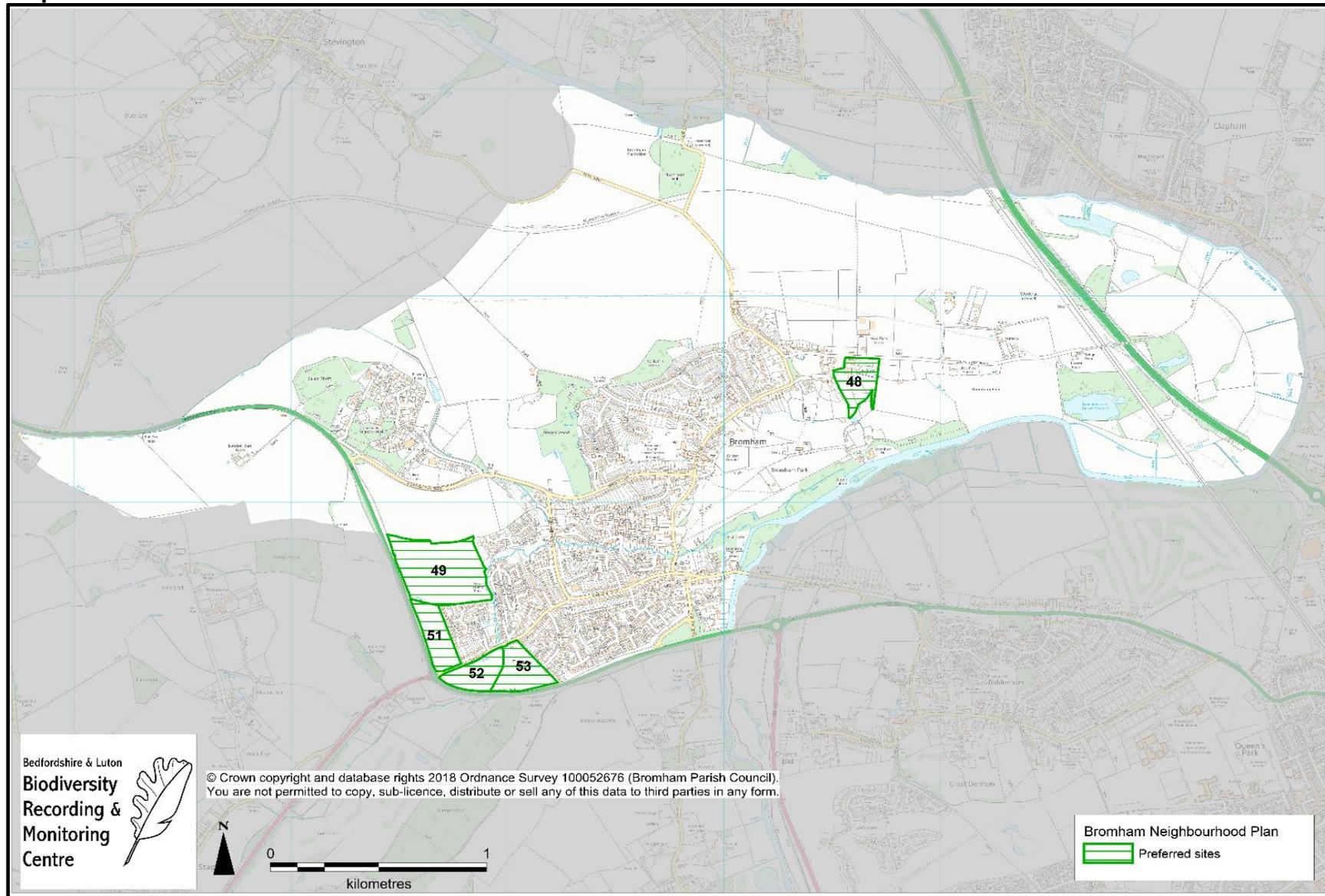
### Housing Allocations Policies

**HA1.** The sites set out below and shown on Map 2 are allocated for residential development. Any proposal for the development of an allocated site must meet the requirements of the relevant Policies of the Bedford Borough Council development plan before planning permission will be granted.

Site	Housing units
<b>Beauchamp Park</b> - Sites 49, 51 and 52*	a minimum of 390
The <b>Stagsden Rise</b> Development - Site 53*	a minimum of 80
<b>Old Stable Yard Development</b> at Hall Farm - Site 48*	A maximum of 30
<b>TOTAL ALLOCATION</b>	500

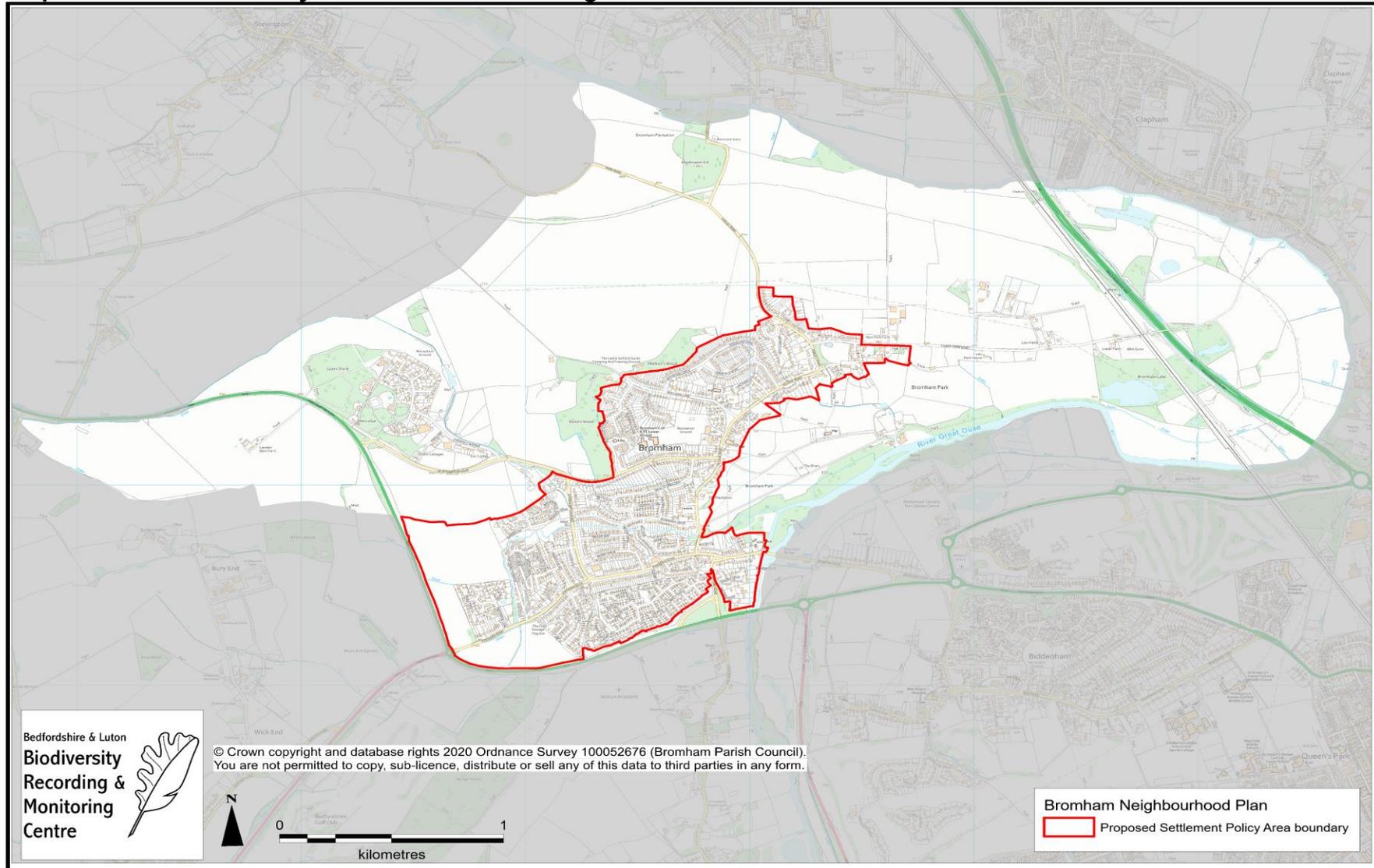
\*Site numbers from Bedford Borough Council's 2014 Call for Sites

## Map 2 – Locations of the Allocated Sites



B.1.6 These allocations would create the Settlement Policy Area for Bromham Neighbourhood Area as set out in Map 3 below:

**Map 3 – Settlement Policy Area for Bromham Neighbourhood Area**



- B.1.7 Beauchamp Park is an amalgamation of three sites put forward in 2014 that attracted strong support from residents, and clearly meets the objective of having immediate access to the A428 Bromham Bypass. Bedford Borough Council's highways and transport access assessments for each of Beauchamp Park's three constituent sites recommended that they should be taken forward for further assessment.
- B.1.8 The Stagsden Rise Development is also well placed for access to the A428 Bromham Bypass and was also recommended for further assessment by Bedford Borough Council's Highways Team. Although both of these developments are well placed for access to Bromham Bypass, their interfaces with Stagsden Road, and the already busy and challenging traffic island at the junction of Stagsden Road and the A428 Bromham Bypass will need to be carefully engineered to enable traffic to get in and out of the village safely, quickly and smoothly.
- B.1.9 The Old Stable Yard Development is different from the other two developments in that, although it would generate some additional traffic through the village, it is a partially brownfield site. Until 2016, the site had been used as a livery stable providing facilities for 20-30 horses: accordingly, we believe its development would comply with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and Bedford Borough Council's strategic priorities relating to maximising the use of previously-developed land. We also believe that the increase in traffic would be kept within reasonable bounds by placing an upper limit of 30 new homes on the site. The owners would also create a cycle and pedestrian path from the development into the village centre through Bromham Park Estate land. This would provide a safe, sustainable link to the village facilities for residents of, and visitors to, the development.

**HA2.** To ensure that there is proper integration with the existing village, proposals for new housing must ensure that there are safe, sustainable transport connections, both within the development site and with the remainder of the village and should give primacy to pedestrians, cyclists and, where appropriate, bus users.

Sustainable connections can be achieved by providing –

- short, direct pedestrian and cycling routes both within each development site, where appropriate, and to other parts of the village;
- good access to existing public transport. The Stagsden Rise Development is close to the existing bus route, and the aim will be to negotiate an additional stop within Beauchamp Park to the existing bus service, subject to discussions with local bus operators and service patterns at the time the development comes forward; and
- good interfaces between roads and pavements on the new developments and the village's existing road and pavement system.

- B.1.10 Further information about transport connections is set out in Section C.1 on Getting Around.

B.1.11 Developments will also need appropriate infrastructure for connections to existing utilities and services.

## **B.2 - AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

B.2.1 During our consultations, we sought residents' views about local needs for new housing, and the types of housing that would best meet these needs. Housing to enable young people to remain within the village, and to enable older residents to move to accommodation more suited to their current needs, featured strongly in responses. Starter, affordable and family homes, as well as retirement housing, received substantial support.

B.2.2 Bedford Borough's existing strategic priorities and the emerging Local Plan 2030 set out the requirement for affordable housing on individual sites. The emerging Local Plan 2030 requires that, subject to viability, at least 30% of the housing units in any new development site should be affordable housing, and that 78% of the affordable housing should be social or affordable rented properties, and the remaining properties should be intermediate tenures, such as shared ownership. The National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF 2019) defines affordable housing as 'housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market...'. (See NPPF 2019 - glossary.)

B.2.3 To establish genuine need, but to guarantee anonymity for the households that responded, we asked Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) to undertake a Housing Needs Survey on our behalf. The survey was designed to establish genuine housing need for households with a Bromham connection. It looked at the nature of respondents' connections with Bromham, their household composition, when they would need housing, the nature of their current housing, their preferred housing type, income and savings. There were 84 responses to the survey.

B.2.4 BRCC's report on the survey is at Supporting Document 10 and is also available on Bromham Parish Council's website <https://bromham.bedsparishes.gov.uk/a/8070292-11476917>. Its main recommendations were:

- (1) that 11 housing units built under a rural exception policy would meet 50% of the self-assessed need over the period 2015 -2020; and
- (2) up to 25 housing units available on the open market would meet a reasonable proportion of the need for two and three bedroomed bungalows and retirement properties built to 'Lifetime Homes' criteria, and 2 and three bedroomed family homes for existing owner occupier residents wishing to stay in the parish.

B.2.5 Rural Exception Schemes cover the building of units of affordable housing that remain in perpetuity for the use of the local community. However, subsequent changes mean that Rural Exception Sites are contrary to Bedford Borough Council's housing policy.

B.2.6 Although we are disappointed by this outcome, we believe that the requirement for each of the allocated development sites to contain 30% of affordable housing

in both Bedford Borough Council's existing strategic priorities and its emerging Local Plan will help people with a Bromham connection secure housing within the village.

- B.2.7 We also accepted the BRCC recommendation about retirement and family homes and received residents' support for it. The distribution of housing units that meet this objective are set out in the policies specific to individual sites.
- B.2.8 The housing units recommended in the BRCC survey report will be included in the minimum of 30% of new affordable housing units that must feature in all of the new development sites to accord with Bedford Borough Council's strategic priorities for dealing with affordable housing.

#### **Policy Objectives relating to Affordable Housing**

To secure the required proportion of affordable housing required by Bedford Borough Council policies in force at the time in each of the allocated development sites through a mix of sizes and tenures.

#### **Policies relating to Affordable Housing**

**AH1.** Subject to the planning and place-making objectives current when planning applications are made, the 25 units of two- and three-bedroom bungalows, retirement homes and family houses to be built to Lifetime Homes criteria as recommended in BRCC's report in the Housing Needs Survey (Supporting Document 10) shall be distributed proportionately among the new development sites. Each allocated site must, in any event, comply with the requirements of the Bedford Borough strategic policy relating to housing mix that are most relevant to the proposed number of housing units on the site.

### **B.3 - SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

- B.3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework requires that there should be a presumption in favour of new development that is sustainable in the sense of meeting the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs (See NPPF 2019 paras 7-11). The policy focus is on the economic, social and environmental needs of the local community.
- B.3.2 This policy area assumes that all efforts will be made to reduce dependency on high carbon fuels and so lead to an expectation of greater use of economic renewable energy systems and fewer car journeys, facilitated by improved pedestrian and cycling routes which make good connections with village facilities.
- B.3.3 The policies in the documents containing Bedford Borough Council's existing strategic priorities and the Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030 relating to Healthy Communities and Energy Efficiency set out the local requirement for complying with the NPPF presumption. We would expect all new developments in Bromham to comply with the Local Plan policies. As all three developments proposed in this plan would comprise more than 10 dwellings, each will be required to achieve a

19% reduction in carbon emissions below the relevant Building Regulation requirement.

- B.3.4 Each of the developments will need to take account of legislation relating to water, habitats and species as set out in the relevant policies in the Place Making chapter of the Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030.

#### **B.4 - SITE SPECIFIC POLICIES**

- B.4.1 This section sets out the policies to be adopted in relation to each of the allocated development sites.
- B.4.2 All of the developments will be expected to comply with the requirements of the Place Making section of the Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030. The particular policies relate to place-making, design quality and principles, design impacts, access impacts, disturbance and pollution impacts and infrastructure impacts.
- B.4.3 The Parish Council has established a small working group to liaise with the individual developers to be clear about requirements for the detailed design proposal, including transport and sustainability, access, new facilities and green spaces, water, and habitat and species regulation. The intention is that these design proposals will be agreed between the Parish Council and the developers prior to an application for outline or full planning permission being made.
- B.4.4 Developers of sites neighbouring watercourses or where surface water could enter the River Great Ouse will also be required to undertake a Habitat Regulations Assessment to ensure that the appropriate level of sustainable drainage systems are constructed to prevent pollution.

#### **B.5 – BEAUCHAMP PARK**

- B.5.1 This site comprises 19.17 hectares of land immediately east of the A428 Bromham Bypass and to the north and south of Stagsden Road. See Map 4. The eastern boundary of the site borders the Meadowfield development - built by the same developers and completed in 2006 - and the Partridge Lane development. The site is suitable for 390 residential units together with recreational and community facilities, and some informal green space.

## Map 4 – Location of Beauchamp Park



### **Site Context**

- B.5.2 In response to Bedford Borough Council's Call for Sites 2014, Beauchamp Park was presented as three sites – Sites 49, 51 and 52. Sites 51 and 52 have common ownership but Site 49 is separately owned, albeit the developers act for both owners. All of the land is currently in use for agricultural purposes.
- B.5.3 The southern-most site contains cropmarks suggesting the former presence of part of an Iron Age/Roman-British Rectilinear Enclosure. This is not a designated heritage asset (i.e. Scheduled Monument) and as such is not protected under the Ancient Monuments Act 1979. However, it is a non-designated heritage asset and so is covered under both national and local policy as a consideration in planning terms. The developers' discussions with Bedford Borough suggest that the presence of the archaeological remains would not prevent development of the site, subject to an appropriate scheme of mitigation being agreed.
- B.5.4 In the village questionnaire findings, Sites 43, 49, 51 and 52 all attracted substantial support. Site 43 is immediately north of Site 49. Sites 43, 49 and 51, taken together, could have accommodated all 500 dwellings, with Site 52 as a reserve site. However, there were other factors to take into account, such as Hall Farm Old Stable Yard Development's partially brownfield nature. There was also, at that point, concern in the Highway and Transport Access Survey of 2016 and 2017 that access from site 43 onto the Northampton Road was less than optimal, and of more concern was the reference to 'Significant traffic impacts on [the] village, especially at Northampton Road/Grange Lane and Northampton Road/A428 junctions if [there were] no access onto Stagsden Road...' See the entry for Site 43 in Supporting Document 8. Although traffic from site 43 could be directed through sites 49 and 51 to join Stagsden Road, it could create

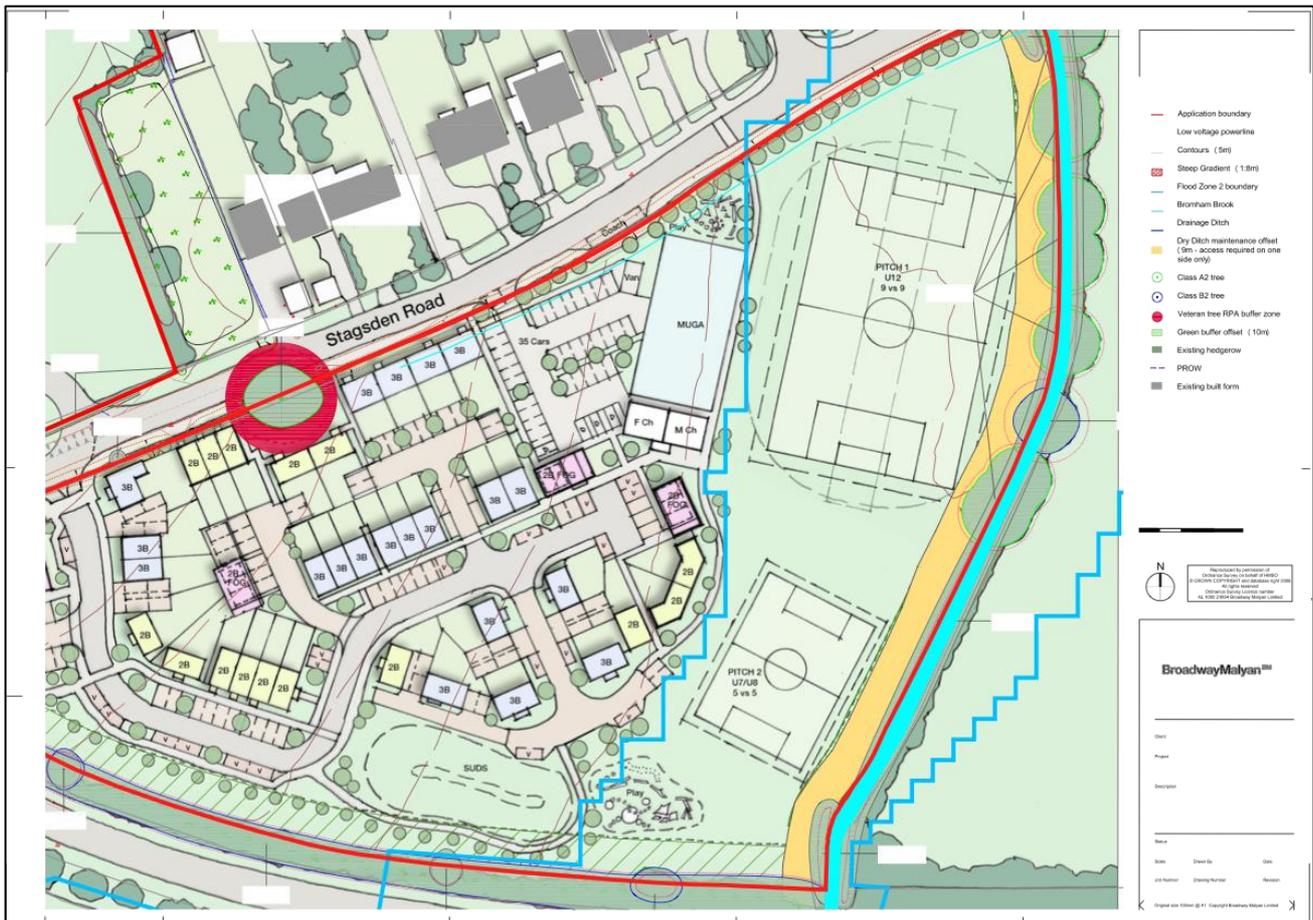
considerable traffic flows at peak hours within Beauchamp Park itself. By combining Sites 49, 51 and 52 as the main site, 390 dwellings could be accommodated, leaving Site 43 in agricultural use. We believe that to be a more efficient and effective proposal.

- B.5.5 The Beauchamp Park site is located on the south-western edge of the village with potential for a highways connection to the Stagsden Road for easy access to Bromham Bypass as well as to the village. There could also be some limited access to and from the village through the Meadowfield Development, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists. Accordingly, we believe the site could provide safe walking and cycling routes to the school and other village facilities and so promote more sustainable lifestyles, as should the fact that the village's only remaining bus service passes along Stagsden Road, between sites 51 and 52. The proximity of the site to Bromham Bypass would assist in meeting residents' aim of minimising traffic impact through the village.
- B.5.6 Some highways improvements and safety measures, including safe crossing points for pedestrians and cyclists, will be necessary to realise and emphasise the good access to the Bypass and to create sustainable, safe connectivity with the remainder of the village.
- B.5.7 The site is large enough to incorporate some green space, which could accommodate a Village Oval containing some sports pitches and straight running track, together with outdoor tennis and netball/basketball courts within a Multi-Use Games Area for community recreational use, as well as more informal green space.
- B.5.8 As the site abuts the A428 Bromham Bypass, some native tree planting along the western border would provide a buffer to traffic noise from the Bypass as well as providing wildlife habitats and space for recreational walking. We would in any event expect the sites to meet the requirements of the development plan policies relating to the protection and enhancement of existing key landscape features, and the provision of new landscaping where appropriate.
- B.5.9 There are some undulations in the site and Bromham Brook borders its eastern margin for a short length. However, the different levels of the land would present no obstacles to building, although Bromham Brook will require protection in relation to surface run-off. The site contains a small area of land in Flood Zone 2 in the eastern section of Site 49, and a larger area in Flood Zones 2 and 3 in Site 52. We considered this both in the site assessment process (see Supporting Document 9) and the flood-risk sequential test (Supporting Document 11). Only water-compatible development – open space, and an outdoor sports and recreation area - is planned for the land outside Flood Zone 1. A plan showing the indicative development area on the site is at Map 5 below. Given that the more extensive area of land outside of Flood Zone 1 is in Site 52, a larger scale plan of that site is at Map 6.

# Map 5 – Beauchamp Park - Indicative Development Area



## Map 6 – Site 52 - Indicative Plan of Development



- B.5.10 The adjacent Meadowfield Development was completed in 2002/2003 and purchasers of dwellings there were informed that the developers had an option to build on the land covered by the central and northern parts of this site.
- B.5.11 Taken together, Beauchamp Park and the Meadowfield Development, could generate sufficient demand to support a retail unit. There would also need to be sufficient commercial demand to provide such a service. Subject to that commercial demand existing, we would encourage the provision of a shop as part of the Beauchamp Park development. Such a shop could increase, and concentrate, parking in its vicinity and, in the event of a retail unit being agreed as part of the site, we would expect the developers to take that, and the impact on neighbours' amenity into account in the site design.
- B.5.12 Beauchamp Park will provide by far the largest share of additional traffic. Easy access to and from the site will depend on ease of access from Stagsden Road to the A428 via the traffic island at the junction of Stagsden Road and the A428 Bromham Bypass. That traffic island is already challenging for motorists seeking to exit Stagsden Road. Sightlines from the junction to the north are poor: it is difficult to see traffic approaching from the north, which creates avoidable danger. We believe those sightlines should be improved as part of the Beauchamp Park development and that the developers should work with the Highway Authority to

secure such improvements. Accordingly, we believe that improvements to the Stagsden Road/A428 traffic island should be a condition of planning permission.

<b>BP - Beauchamp Park – Development and Requirements Policy</b>	
BP.1.	Beauchamp Park amounting to 19.17ha is allocated to the development of a minimum of 390 residential dwellings and associated public open and recreational space within the site. Provision for the requirements listed within this Policy shall be included within a planning application for the development of the site. A Section 106 Agreement which includes the timescale for implementation of the provisions shall be concluded prior to the grant of any planning permission.
BP2.	Of the affordable housing units to be built within this site there shall be at least five 1- or 2-bedroom bungalows, and fourteen 2- or 3-bedroom houses required to meet the development's share of BRCC's recommendation relating to retirement properties and starter homes. The development shall also comply with the requirements for a site comprising this number of dwellings in the Bedford Borough policy relating to housing mix in force at the time.
BP3.	No dwellings on this development shall extend more than two stories from ground level.
BP4.	The sports and recreation element shall contain the Village Oval with dedicated space for cricket and shared space for rugby, two junior football pitches and an athletics track, together with Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) with tennis/netball/basketball courts to be included in this development. There shall be changing facilities and adequate parking space to serve these facilities. The land and facilities are to be owned and managed by the Parish Council, or will be managed on the Parish Council's behalf.
BP5.	In addition to open spaces for recreational purposes, there shall also be some green spaces for wildlife - to be combined in part with native tree planting on the western border of the site, which would also act as a sound buffer to mitigate noise from Bromham Bypass.
BP6.	The site must comply with development plan requirements relating to flood risk and sustainable drainage systems. Natural England and the Environment Agency must be satisfied that sites designated under European Directive 92/43/EEC will not be adversely affected.
BP7.	An assessment of commercial demand for a retail unit to serve the new neighbourhood shall be submitted to the local planning authority as part of the application for detailed planning permission of the development. The new unit to be located within Beauchamp Park with the potential impact on parking, traffic movements, site layout and residential amenity to be considered in the siting of such a unit.
BP8.	Sightlines to the north from the junction at the Stagsden Road/A428 traffic island shall be improved as part of this development in accordance with the requirements of the Highway Authority.

BP9. Planning permission for the site shall be subject to a planning condition requiring a programme of archaeological work. The archaeological work will include evaluation and mitigation stages to be undertaken in accordance with advice obtained from Bedford Borough Council Historic Environment Team.

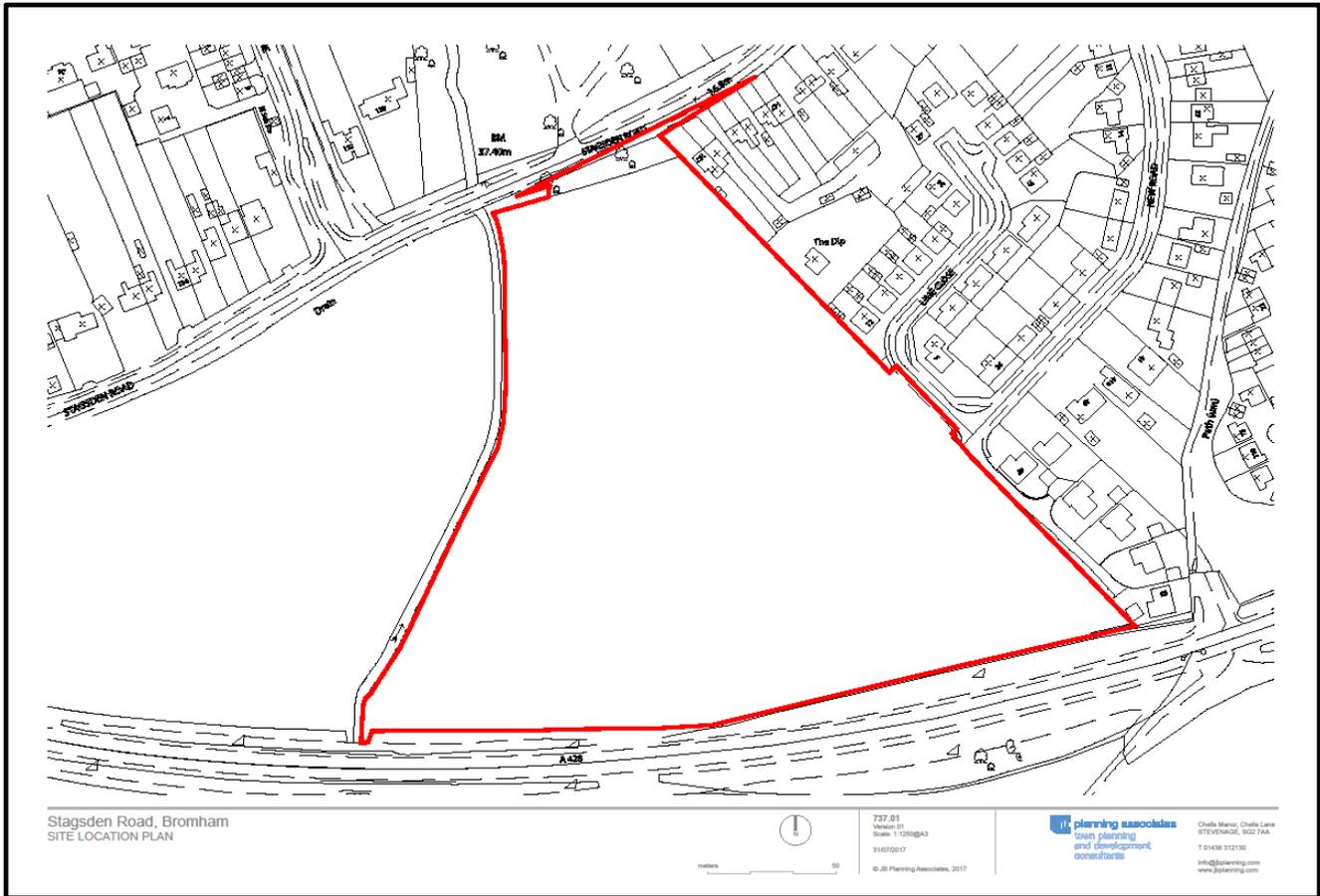
BP10. The following design principles shall be reflected in proposals for this site –

- The overall approach to built form, street layout and landscape and dwelling density shall aim to minimise the visual impact of the development and integrate it sensitively with the surrounding area.
- The developers shall incorporate effective renewable and low-energy solutions within the new development to help offset additional carbon usage associated with the site.
- Appropriate highway interfaces, traffic-calming and pedestrian and cyclist safety measures shall be provided to discourage the passage of vehicular traffic through the scheme from Peacock Road and Barker Drive and to further reduce the impact of the increased traffic associated with the development in accordance with the Highway Authority Design Guidance.
- Subject to agreement with the Highway Authority measures to increase pedestrian and cyclist safety should include the provision of a safe pedestrian and cycle crossing of Stagsden Road between the northern and southern segments of Beauchamp Park to provide access to the Village Oval and other recreational facilities.
- Garage size and off-street parking shall comply with Highways Authority/Local Authority policies in relation to these matters that are current at the time of construction.
- A new play area shall be provided to provide for a range of age groups together with an equipped playground to be provided on the western side of the development. There are two playgrounds on the Meadowfield Development that could cater for some new residents on the eastern side of the new development.

## **B.6 – THE STAGSDEN RISE DEVELOPMENT**

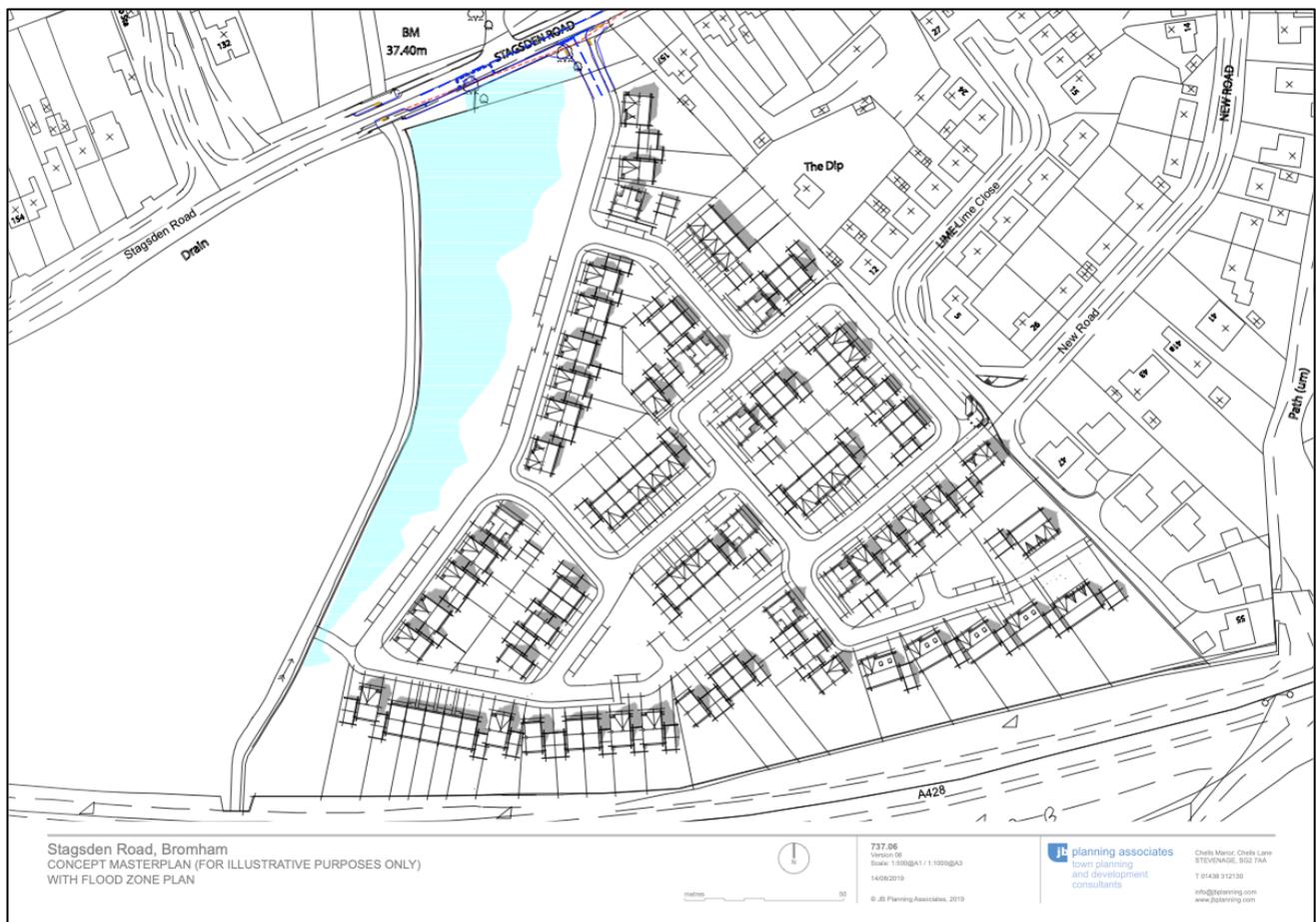
B.6.1 This site comprises 4.15ha of land between Stagsden Road, Lime Close and the A428 Bromham Bypass. See Map 7. Its western border is formed by Bromham Brook. It is suitable for 80 dwellings. The site was popular with questionnaire respondents. Planning consent for this site was granted in October 2019.

## Map 7 – Location of Stagsden Rise



B.6.2 This site is in single ownership and is currently used as agricultural land. The land rises sharply from Stagsden Road and Bromham Brook to where the site borders the A428 Bromham Bypass but should present no construction problems. The area around Bromham Brook is within the flood plain but should be designated as public open space thus providing a green edge to the western border of the development. We considered flood risk in relation to this site in both the site assessment process (see Supporting Document 9) and in the flood-risk sequential test (see Supporting Document 11). No development is planned in the areas of the site that fall outside Flood Zone 1 as shown in the indicative development area plan of the site at Map 8 below. We would also expect the developers to comply with local plan requirements relating to the protection and enhancement of existing key landscape features, and the provision of new landscaping, where appropriate.

## Map 8 – Stagsden Rise – Indicative Development Area



- B.6.3 This site also contains a site of historic interest in that Ordnance Survey maps from the 1880s and 1901 show quarry and lime kiln in the area, albeit much of the area of interest is now under housing to the east of the proposed development. The developers of the site have undertaken an archaeological survey of the site in accordance with a programme of works approved by Bedford Borough Council's archaeologists (See Supporting Document 12). No significant archaeology was revealed.
- B.6.4 The site offers good pedestrian and cycling access to existing village facilities and lies immediately adjacent to the only remaining regular bus service: accordingly, we believe it will help to promote sustainable travel. Its location on Stagsden Road also offers good access to Bromham Bypass for those residents whose destination is not within Bromham itself.
- B.6.5 We are concerned that every effort is made to minimise the traffic impact this development would have on residents in New Road and Lime Close. The developers themselves have proposed that there should be no regular direct vehicular access to the site from New Road or Lime Close, albeit there should be scope for access for emergency services vehicles. We also believe that development of the site should be possible without construction traffic using New Road and/or Lime Close.

## SR - Stagsden Rise Development – Development and Requirements Policy

SR1. Stagsden Rise, amounting to 4.15 hectares of land, is allocated to the development of a minimum of 80 residential dwellings and public open space. Provision for the requirements listed within this Policy shall be included within the planning application for the development of the site. A Section 106 Agreement which includes the timescale for implementation of the provisions shall be reached prior to the grant of any planning permission.

SR2. Off the 30% affordable housing units to be built within this site, at least three 1- or 2-bedroom bungalows and two 2- or 3-bedroom houses are required to meet the development's share of BRCC recommendation relating to retirement properties and starter homes. The development shall also comply with the requirements for a site comprising this number of dwellings in the Bedford Borough Council's policy relating to housing mix in force at the time.

SR3. No dwellings on this development shall extend more than two stories from ground level.

SR4. New public green open space shall be created on the development in accordance with Policy AD28 of Bedford Borough Council's Allocations and Designations Local Plan. The green space shall contain a play area covering a range of age groups.

SR5. The site must comply with development plan requirements relating to flood risk and sustainable drainage systems. Natural England and the Environment Agency must be satisfied that sites designated under European Directive 92/43/EEC will not be adversely affected.

SR6. Subject to agreement with the Highways Authority, a safe crossing point for pedestrians and cyclists shall be provided across Stagsden Road to facilitate safe access to and from the existing bus stop on the north side of Stagsden Road.

SR7. There shall be no regular vehicular access to this development from New Road or Lime Close but there shall be scope for access for emergency services vehicles.

SR8. Construction traffic associated with this site shall be prohibited from New Road and Lime Close.

SR9. The following design principles shall be reflected in proposals for this site –

- The overall approach to built form, street layout and landscape and dwelling density shall aim to minimise the visual impact of the development and integrate it sensitively with the surrounding area.
- The developers shall incorporate effective renewable and low-energy solutions within the new development to help offset additional carbon usage associated with the site.
- Appropriate highway interfaces, traffic-calming and pedestrian and cyclist safety measures shall be provided to further reduce the impact of the increased

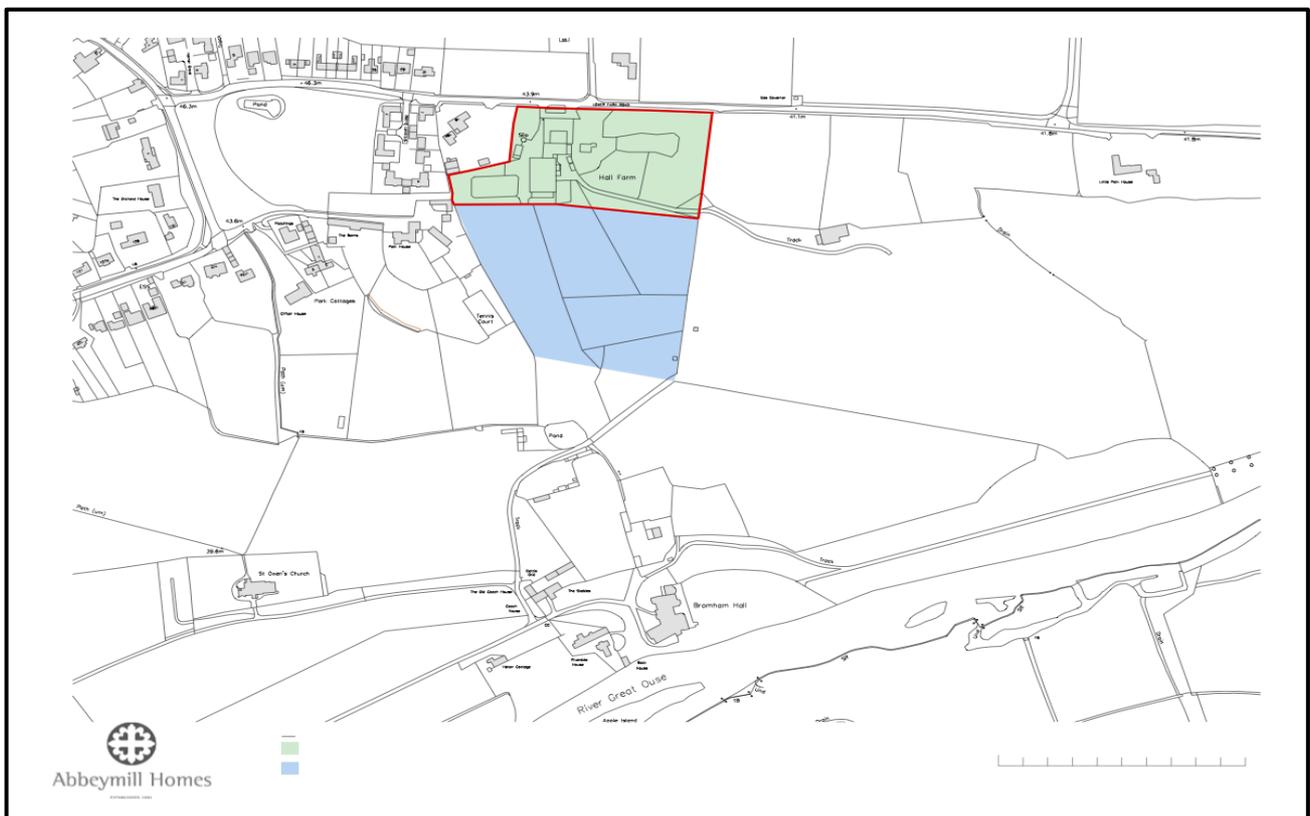
traffic associated with the development in accordance with the Highway Authority Design Guidance.

- Garage size and off-street parking shall comply with Highways Authority/Local Authority policies in relation to these matters that are current at the time of construction.
- An equipped playground shall be provided within the green space on the western edge of the development.

## **B.7 - DEVELOPMENT SITE 3 – OLD STABLE YARD DEVELOPMENT**

B.7.1 This site comprises circa 1.6 hectares of land immediately south of Lower Farm Road (see the area in green in Map 9). Given concerns about additional traffic generated on village through-roads, and the nature of the junction between Lower Farm Road and Oakley Road, (while also taking into account the traffic previously generated by the commercial livery business) we have placed a maximum of 30 dwellings on this site.

### **Map 9 – Location of Old Stable Yard Development**



### **Site Context**

B.7.2 The allocation of this site and the desire of residents to have continued access to Bromham Park is dealt with in sections A.4, A.8.5-8 and in most detail at para B.1.8. The site, which is owned by Bromham Park Estate, currently accommodates a farmhouse, garden and paddocks and a range of other farm

buildings including stabling and hard-standing. Until 2016, it was extensively used as a commercial livery stable with exercise areas to the south.

- B.7.3 Encouraging the use of previously developed land is one of the core principles of the Government's planning policy, as set out in paragraph 117 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019. Bedford Borough's existing strategic priorities and the emerging Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030 also seek to maximise the delivery of development through the reuse of suitably located land that has been previously developed.
- B.7.4 Allocating this site for development complies with this policy but we are keen to ensure that any development does not harm Bromham Park's status as an iconic green space. The site also needs to meet the same requirements of suitability, availability and deliverability as other sites. We believe it does.
- B.7.5 The site is wholly within Flood Zone 1 and is mostly flat but with suitable landscaping should not impact substantially on the visual quality of Lower Farm Road. We would in any event expect the developers to comply with development plan policies relating to the protection and enhancement of existing key landscape features, and the provision of new landscaping where appropriate.
- B.7.6 Although the site would generate some additional traffic though the centre of the village, the owners would also create a cycle and pedestrian path from the development into the village centre through Bromham Park Estate land. This would provide a safe link to the village facilities for residents of the development and so encourage sustainable travel.
- B.7.7 The site is located in an important historic environment, including nearby designated and non-designated heritage assets. Consequently, Bromham Park Estate commissioned a Preliminary Setting Assessment, Archaeological Note and Landscape Note to assess the potential impact of the development on the local historic environment (See Supporting Document 13). The Preliminary Setting Assessment concludes that there is scope for housing development in this area which would not harm the setting or significance of any designated heritage assets and have minimal impact on the significance of Bromham Park as a non-designated heritage asset. The Archaeology Note concludes that non-intrusive investigations, and possibly trial trenching, would be required in the preparation of a future planning application, which would inform the layout and extent of the development. Finally, the landscape Note concludes that the site is considered to be visually well contained and there is no direct inter-visibility between Bromham Hall and the site, and that views from St Owen's Church and churchyard are restricted by the existing vegetation and topography of the intervening landscapes. We have considered these reports carefully and believe they provide an evidence base for the neighbourhood plan but would expect the owner/developer to work with Bedford Borough Council on any evaluation and mitigation plan considered necessary. The supporting document referred to above has been discussed with Bedford Borough Council and the Council's comments are reflected in Policy OS7 below.

## **OS - Old Stable Yard Development – Development and Requirements Policy**

- OS1. Old Stable Yard, at Hall Farm, amounting to 1.6 hectares of land, is allocated to the development of a maximum of 30 residential dwellings and public open space.
- OS2. The development shall also include at least three bungalows and three 2 or 3-bedroom houses to meet the development's share of the requirement for affordable housing, and BRCC's recommendation relating to retirement properties and starter homes in the sense of being affordable by average first-time buyers. The development shall also comply with the requirements for a site comprising this number of dwellings in the Bedford Borough Council policy relating to housing mix.
- OS3. No dwellings on this development shall extend more than two stories from ground level.
- OS4. A permissive pedestrian and cycle track for residents and visitors shall be constructed through Bromham Park Estate land to provide a sustainable and safe link between Old Stable Yard and village facilities. A Section 106 Agreement shall be completed between the local planning authority and the landowner of Bromham Park Estate to provide for the design, provision and future maintenance of the pedestrian and cycle track prior to the grant of planning permission for the residential development of Old Stable Yard. The track shall be completed and open for use prior to the occupation of the first new dwelling.
- OS5. New public green open space shall be created on the development in accordance with Policy AD28 of Bedford Borough Council's Allocations and Designations Local Plan. Provision of public green open space shall be included within the planning application for the development of the site. A Section 106 Agreement which includes the timescale for provision of the public green open space shall be reached prior to the grant of any planning permission.
- OS6. The site must comply with development plan requirements relating to flood risk and sustainable drainage systems. Natural England and the Environment Agency must be satisfied that sites designated under European Directive 92/43/EEC will not be adversely affected.
- OS7. Given that the site is located in an area with high archaeological and built heritage interest the developer must work in conjunction with Bedford Borough Historic Environment Team to comply with the Bedford Borough Local Plan strategic policy relating to the historic environment and heritage assets and any relevant legislation. In particular, any planning application relating to this site shall be accompanied by –
- a detailed Heritage Statement describing the significance of nearby listed buildings, the contribution that 'setting' makes to their significance, the impact that the development would have on the listed buildings, and any measures proposed to mitigate the impact;
  - a detailed earthworks survey, together with the results of an archaeological evaluation, the scope of which shall be agreed with Bedford Borough Council; and

- further details of the ‘ecological enhancement area’ proposed immediately south of the site and whether it would involve works that would impact on earthworks and below-ground remains.

OS8. The following design principles shall be reflected in proposals for this site –

- The overall approach to built form, street layout and landscape and dwelling density shall aim to minimise the visual impact of the development and integrate it sensitively with the surrounding area.
- The developers shall incorporate effective renewable and low energy solutions within the new development to help offset additional carbon usage associated with the site.
- Appropriate highway interfaces, traffic calming and pedestrian and cyclist safety measures shall be provided to further reduce the impact of the increased traffic associated with the development in accordance with the Highway Authority Design Guidance.
- Garage size and off-street parking shall comply with Highways Authority/Local Authority policies in relation to these matters that are current at the time of construction.

## **B.8 - PHASING OF DEVELOPMENT**

B.8.1 Although neither Bedford Borough Council nor Bromham Parish Council can control when planning applications are made, the Parish Council is concerned that everything possible is done to minimise development-related disruption in the village, particularly in the south-west of the village where the majority of new development is proposed.

## **B.9 - INTEGRATING WINDFALL SITES**

B.9.1 Windfall development, including ‘back-land’ development (where a number of dwellings are built behind existing dwellings) and tandem development (where one dwelling is built behind another in an existing single plot), is defined as residential development on land not originally allocated for development. We accept that there may be some applications for ‘windfall’ developments within the defined Settlement Policy Area (the area within the village within which development would be permissible) over the period of this plan in that small parcels of land with safe, direct access to the existing highways network may become available for development. We would expect such sites to contain only a small number of dwellings, but each case should be considered on its merits.

### **Policy Objective for Windfall Sites**

To develop windfall sites within the Settlement Policy Area, where they provide efficient and effective use of available land.

## **Policies for Windfall Sites**

**HA3** Applications for windfall developments will be supported where they do not have a detrimental effect on the character of the area in which the site is situated and are within the Settlement Policy Area.

Windfall sites shall have safe, direct access to the existing highway and not result in loss of amenity (as defined in planning guidelines current at the time of the application) to neighbouring properties.

Windfall developments will need to be integrated into the existing village in the same way as the allocated development sites, by having good, safe connections for pedestrians and cyclists, as well as motorists.

**HA4** Any proposed windfall site must comply with development plan requirements relating to flood risk and sustainable drainage systems. Natural England and the Environment Agency must be satisfied that sites designated under European Directive 92/43/EEC will not be adversely affected.

## **B.10. - COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE**

- B.10.1 Additional housing inevitably increases the demands on services and facilities as well as on public utilities, including broadband, and highways. It is essential that developers contribute financially or practically to the provision of these services to ensure that the new developments are sustainable. Both existing strategic priorities and the emerging Bedford Borough Plan 2030 set out parameters for the provision of this infrastructure. Developers will be required to contribute to Bedford Borough Council's Community Infrastructure Levy, which spreads the cost of funding the provision of local infrastructure such as educational and other social provision across a range of developers.
- B.10.2 We also expect developers to make financial contributions to some more community-based assets. These are listed within the site specific policies to ensure that they are incorporated within future planning applications for the allocated sites. They contribute to the achievement of the following objective.

### **Policy Objectives for Community Infrastructure**

Developers of the allocated sites should contribute to the enhancement and improvement of facilities and services within Bromham, both on their own developments and more generally within the village.

## **B.11 – EDUCATION PROVISION**

- B.11.1 Since beginning the neighbourhood planning process in 2014, we have been keenly aware of the central role that the school plays within the community. We and the school management team believe that the school should be at the heart of our community. Accordingly, we have had a continuing dialogue with the school

governors and both the current and previous Head Teachers about the school and the future.

- B.11.2 Bedford Borough Council's Education Department has also said that it prefers to support and expand successful, popular local schools when additional places are needed. Bromham Primary School certainly meets these criteria.
- B.11.3 The school currently has two sites; the Grange Lane Site and the Village Road site, albeit they are located within what is effectively a single, traffic-free 'campus' either side of Bromham Playing Field, which is owned by Bromham Parish Council.
- B.11.4 The addition of 500 houses will inevitably bring a substantial influx of school-age children to the village. We were also conscious that the school is in the process of changing its status from a Lower School to a Primary School, requiring two additional classrooms for each form of entry<sup>1</sup>, as well as increasing from two to three forms of entry. This means that as well as extending the age-range of the children it teaches, by converting from Lower School to Primary School status, the school is also increasing the number of children it teaches by extending from a two-form entry to a three-form entry school.
- B.11.5 Bedford Borough Council advised us in 2016 that an additional 500 homes in the village would require an additional form of entry, requiring seven additional classrooms for a Primary School.
- B.11.6 In our Housing and Education Issues and Options Paper circulated in 2016 (Supporting Document 4), we consulted on the two options for the school that we believed would meet the requirement. The first was for Bromham Primary School to upgrade to a three-form-entry school, preferably on the existing campus. This required an additional 11 classrooms as described above.
- B.11.7 The other option was for a new two-form entry school to be built elsewhere in the village. This would require at least two hectares of greenfield land to be developed as a school site.
- B.11.8 We supported the extension of the existing school, as being in the best interests of children – and the wider community - as did a large majority of respondents to the Issues and Options paper (See Supporting Document 5, Section 4, Q9).
- B.11.9 To some extent, the pace of change has overtaken us. The Kingfisher Building - as the extension on the existing Primary School site in Grange Lane is known - was formally opened by Bedford Borough's Mayor, Dave Hodgson on 30 November 2017. This will enable the school's conversion to three-form entry primary school status.
- B.11.10 The Education Team at Bedford Borough Council have informed us that the Kingfisher Building is needed to accommodate the predicted increase in school-

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<sup>1</sup> A single-form-entry school means there is one 'form' (of c.30 pupils) in each school year – a two-form entry school has two forms of c.30 children in each school year and a three-form-entry means there are three forms of c.30 children in each school year etc.

age children in the village and surrounding area, before the additional 500 houses come into consideration. Accordingly, a fourth form of entry will be required to accommodate the Primary-School-age children associated with the new development.

- B.11.11 We, the school, and Bedford Borough Council’s Education Department continue to believe that any new building work necessary to create a four-form entry school should be contained within the school’s existing Grange Lane site. We are exploring with the Education Department whether the Kingfisher Building could be extended upwards to accommodate the additional classrooms rather than extending the footprint of the school. However, the increased number of children will require additional land to be available for sport and other recreational activities. If that proves to be the case the Parish Council would for an appropriate financial consideration be prepared to enter into a lease or similar agreement to allow the school to use some of the existing village playing field, while preserving a football pitch for use by local football clubs in another part of the playing field. The school already uses part of the village playing field for some sports activities.
- B.11.12 The developers of Beauchamp Park will provide other football pitches suitable for use by local football clubs, as well as other recreational space within the ‘Village Oval’ planned for that development. In those circumstances, there would be an overall net gain in recreation space within the village, and local football clubs will not be disadvantaged by the proposals relating to the existing playing field. We would also aim to ensure that the current village playing field could continue to be used for Bromham Show, the village’s major community event.
- B.11.13 We recognise that the expansion of the school could exacerbate the current peak-time traffic problems in Grange Lane at school drop-off and pick-up times, but have set out in the policies below some potential mitigation measures. We also believe that the creation of safe pedestrian and cycling routes from each of the allocated sites to the village centre will also help to ameliorate the effect on Grange Lane.
- B.11.14 In accordance with para 2B.4 of Bedford Borough Council’s ‘Planning Obligations, Supplementary Planning Document’ the cost of this development would be met from Bedford Borough Council’s Community Infrastructure Levy, to which the developers of all three areas of allocated land will contribute. We will also pursue with the developers whether they could contribute to traffic improvement and other improvement practical measures associated with the school project.

**Policy Objective relating to Educational Provision**

To retain a single school within the village based around the current Grange Lane/Village road ‘campus’

**Policies relating to Educational Provision**

**EP1** – The parish council supports the development of Bromham Primary School on the existing campus to ensure that there is sufficient classroom space and other facilities to accommodate the expected growth in pupils from the new developments. Any proposals to develop the school site should consider design, massing, scale, transport and residential and local amenity impacts. The council will maintain its current dialogue with Bedford

Borough Council's Education Department and the governors and Head Teacher of the school throughout the period of the plan to facilitate these considerations.

**EP2** – Subject to a fourth form of entry at the school being required to meet local need, the Parish Council will work with Bedford Borough Council's Education Department, School Governors and Head Teacher to facilitate meeting any requirement for the provision of additional playing-field capacity subject to an appropriate financial consideration.

**EP3** - Further school facilities could exacerbate the peak-time traffic problems associated with the current school site, but careful site design, further initiatives to increase walking and cycling to school, improved traffic management around the site, and a primary focus on children from Bromham and Stagsden should be deployed so as to mitigate the increase in traffic to a substantial extent.

**EP4** - More use could be made of the Village Hall area as a drop-off and pick-up point to relieve the pressure on the Grange Lane entrance to the school. The potential for widening the entrance to the Village Hall car park to help the flow of traffic in and out of that area should be explored. Another potential solution would be the installation of traffic lights at the junction of the Village Hall car park entrance road and Village Road which would operate solely at the peak school drop-off and pick-up times. The latter proposal might have a wider benefit by inhibiting speeding in Village Road at peak times. These options will be pursued with Bedford Borough Council.

## **PART C – Community Issues and Aspirations**

Some of the issues covered by the Plan are not planning issues in the sense of relating specifically to new housing and the related infrastructure. These issues relate more to aspirations to improve the general quality of life and wellbeing within the village, such as how easy it is to get around the village, its services and facilities, including those for children and young people. As such, planning permission for the developments discussed in Part B is not contingent on the aspirations set out in this part (Part C) being met and need not be taken into account by Bedford Borough Council when determining planning applications.

### **C.1 - GETTING AROUND**

C.1.1 As part of our consultation exercise, we asked residents to comment on getting around the village, both at present and in terms of any additional problems they expect to arise from the new development. The themes covered in the consultation were speeding, pedestrian and cyclist safety, inconsiderate parking and bus services.

#### **Getting Around and the New Developments**

C.1.2 The issues for getting around that relate solely to new housing development are dealt with in more detail in Section B.1 and focus on ensuring the locations of new development provide good access to Bromham Bypass and also secure improvements in walking and cycling infrastructure in the village, which should avoid exacerbating existing access and safety concerns as well as promoting sustainability.

C.1.3 We are working with the developers of the three allocated sites to secure safe routes to village facilities for pedestrians and cyclists so as to deliver the sustainability of their sites.

#### **Getting Around at Present**

C.1.4 In terms of current issues, responses to the Questionnaire focused on parking on grass verges and pavements, speeding, cyclist and pedestrian safety, and the frequency, extent and destinations of bus services, the only form of public transport to which Bromham has immediate access. The findings relating to these questions are summarised in Supporting Document 5 and are on Bromham Parish Council's website – <https://bromham.bedsparishes.gov.uk/a/10942793-11645147>, but the data generated have been used to develop a strategy to help people and traffic get around the village safely. We are still discussing the strategy with Bedford Borough Council but our objectives and policies are set out below.

<b>Policy Objectives relating to Getting Around the Village</b>
1. To enhance safety measures for pedestrians and cyclists.
2. To encourage better compliance with speed limits in the village.

### 3. To discourage inconsiderate parking.

C.1.5 There are clear links between motorists speeding and the safety of pedestrians and cyclists. If speeding were reduced, pedestrian and cyclist safety would immediately be improved, which would also help to promote sustainable travel in the village. Accordingly, in terms of developing policies, we considered these two objectives together.

#### Speeding

C.1.6 In developing our strategy, we considered average speed cameras, physical traffic calming measures (such as road humps, speed cushions etc.) vehicle activated signs, and village entrance gates. Any strategy needs to be realistic in financial terms as well as practically and technically feasible. The cost of average speed cameras and physical traffic calming measures makes them prohibitive in anything but the long term, unless Bedford Borough Council meets some of the cost: accordingly, we propose to focus on vehicle-activated signs and improving the impact of village gateways to make it clear to motorists that they are entering a village where speed limits apply. We believe that much speeding is inadvertent and that providing drivers with reminders of the speed they are travelling will help reduce speeding overall.

### **GA1 – Policy to Discourage Speeding**

As funding becomes available, Bromham Parish Council will purchase portable vehicle activated signs that indicate vehicle speed. These signs will be located on permanent posts at various points in the village, based on technical advice from Bedford Borough Council. The signs will be moved between the various posts from time to time to avoid them becoming 'routine'.

#### Pedestrian Safety

C.1.7 In considering pedestrian safety, we were particularly concerned about children on their way to and from school or school bus pick-up and drop-off points. If safe footways, cycle-paths and crossing points are available it should encourage more use of them by parents and children. There have been protracted discussions about improving children's safety as well as minimising disruptions for residents in Grange Lane near the main entrance to the school. This is a matter between the school authorities and Bedford Borough Council, but we certainly support any proposals that effectively achieve those aims.

C.1.8 There are currently pedestrian crossings near the school entrance in Village Road and in Stagsden Road near the Quenby Way junction. Like average speed cameras, pedestrian crossings would be prohibitively expensive for the Parish Council to install and maintain. We believe pedestrian refuges offer increased safety to pedestrians, including parents with small children and unaccompanied older children, as well as having an inhibitory effect on speeding. A pedestrian refuge, or refuge island, is an island between two lanes of traffic moving in opposite directions, which helps pedestrians to cross a road in stages. There are currently pedestrian refuges in Bridge End, Stagsden Road and Northampton Road.

- C.1.9 We recognise that pedestrian refuges may present difficulties for drivers of buses and large agricultural vehicles and have sought advice from Bedford Borough Council on these and other technical matters. The Parish Council will work with Bedford Borough Council to identify suitable locations for pedestrian refuges, or other more suitable crossing types. Subject to the outcome of these discussions we propose the following policy on pedestrian safety.

### **GA2 – Policy on enhancing pedestrian safety**

Subject to funding becoming available, the Parish Council will support the installation of pedestrian refuges in areas of the village agreed with Bedford Borough Council.

- C.1.10 The cost of pedestrian refuges means that it is likely that they would be introduced on a piecemeal basis.

#### *Cyclist Safety*

- C.1.11 We are working with Bedford Borough Council to enhance cyclist safety through the introduction of cycle lanes on Stagsden Road. If they prove effective in increasing cycle use, and so enhance sustainability, we will consider the suitability of other roads in the village for incorporating cycle lanes.

### **GA3 – Policy on enhancing cyclist safety**

Cycle lanes will be installed in both directions on Stagsden Road on a trial basis. If they are utilised and effective they will be made permanent, and consideration will be given to introducing cycle lanes on other roads in the village where they may be effective in improving safe cycling to and from Bromham village.

#### *Inconsiderate Parking*

- C.1.12 The questionnaire elicited substantial concern about parking on pavements and grass verges. In winter and during wet weather, parking on grass verges can make them dangerous and unsightly, and more difficult to maintain. Stagsden Road, Woodland Drive and Grange Lane appear to have been the main problem areas in the past.
- C.1.13 The solution to such parking is often the creation of a zone in which parking on pavements and verges is prohibited, with fines imposed for non-compliance. Street signs denote the beginning and end of such zones and, where the zone covers a long distance, there would be reminder signs. Such a zone is now in place in Grange Lane as part of the arrangements relating to the school.
- C.1.14 We are reluctant to introduce more, possibly unnecessary, street signs in Bromham for a problem that appears to vary in location and intensity over time. It is not clear at present that there is a substantial and ongoing problem in the other two locations mentioned above, or anywhere else in the village. However, the Parish Council has an open mind on the subject and, if residents in particular

streets believe there is a substantial problem, would assess the problem and consider introducing a prohibited parking zone.

### Bus Services

- C.1.15 Questionnaire responses suggested that more frequent services would result in greater bus use. However, since the questionnaire was concluded Milton Keynes Council has withdrawn funding for the '40' bus service because of lack of use, leaving the '41' service between Bedford and Northampton or Stagsden as the only regular service through the village.
- C.1.16 The questionnaire also suggested considerable support for routing the X5 Oxford/Cambridge service through the village, as well as for new services to destinations other than Bedford. Kempston was the most popular potential destination.
- C.1.17 The Parish Council has subsequently had discussions with representatives of Bedford Borough Council and Stagecoach about maintaining existing bus services and rerouting the X5 through the village. The cost of subsidising even the '41' Service, which remains relatively lightly used, means that it is under threat of being further curtailed. There was some optimism that Stagecoach may agree to the X5 Service stopping additionally somewhere on the A428 between Bromham and Biddenham but, after consideration, Stagecoach concluded that there is no suitable stopping place in that area.
- C.1.18 Given the limited use of the current '41' service, and the current economic climate, we take the view that now is not the right time to seek a direct bus service to Kempston.
- C.1.19 In any event, although we recognise buses' crucial contribution to more sustainable living and would like to see the current service more heavily used to help safeguard its future, Bromham Parish Council has no specific powers in relation to bus services, which ultimately are a matter for private sector providers. Accordingly, we have provided the data the questionnaire generated about bus services to Stagecoach as the service providers, and to Bedford Borough Council, which subsidises some rural bus routes.

## **C.2 - VILLAGE FACILITIES**

- C.2.1 We considered three types of facility during our consultation exercises: **cultural and amenity services** such as the churches and the library; **commercial and professional services**, such as shops and GP surgeries; and **sport, leisure and recreational services**. This section deals with the first two categories; leisure and wellbeing are covered in Section C.3 and facilities specific to children and young people in Section C.4.
- C.2.2 The village already has a range of facilities, which is why it is designated a Rural Key Service Centre by Bedford Borough Council. Some of these facilities could absorb some or all of the additional demand generated by the new developments but others may need to expand, and in some cases new facilities may be required.

### Cultural and Amenity Services

- C.2.3 Bromham has two active and thriving church communities in St Owen's Church of England and Bromham Baptist Churches. We are sure that both would welcome additional church members from the new developments.
- C.2.4 In response to the questionnaire, residents were strongly convinced of the importance of Bromham Library and supported the idea of longer library opening hours. Subsequently, Bedford Borough Council conducted a consultation on the future of all its library services, including Bromham Library. The outcome of that consultation was that Bromham Library continues to operate, and has longer opening hours, albeit it is unstaffed for a number of hours each day. Accordingly, users need an electronic access card to gain entry to the library when it is unstaffed.
- C.2.5 Given the current position on public finances, this is a better outcome than many feared, and we are grateful to Bedford Borough Council that we still have a thriving library as a village asset. We urge residents to use it.
- C.2.6 Similarly, the Village Hall attracted considerable support from residents and a substantial number wanted to see it more intensively used. Given the current level of use of the village hall, and the constraints on its greater use because of potential noise and nuisance disturbance given its proximity to houses, making ends meet is a constant issue.
- C.2.7 During the neighbourhood planning process, a suggestion was made that it may be more effective to create a Leisure and Amenity Centre in the Beauchamp Park development adjacent to the area earmarked for sports pitches and courts. We believed that would also have the benefit of distributing village amenities more widely around the village. It would also have freed up the current site for use by the school if more land or buildings were needed for the school.
- C.2.8 We proposed this idea at the public consultation event at the Village Hall in March 2018. The comments we received about the proposal from a broad spread of post codes within the village made very clear that people value the village hall in its current location. Accordingly, we accepted the views of residents and withdrew the proposal. Any building adjacent to the green space on Beauchamp Park will be facilities for the sporting pitches and courts located there rather than the Leisure and Amenity Centre that was proposed.
- C.2.9 We have described in section B11( see paras B.11.11-14 on page 26 and 27) that we may make available a section of the playing field land behind the Village Hall for the school's use (as a playing field) if that is absolutely necessary to enable the school to expand. However, we would hope to keep the amount of land transferred for this use to an absolute minimum so as to retain as much of the playing fields as possible for public use.

## Policy Objectives relating to Cultural and Public Services

1. To ensure that Bromham continues to have an appropriate range of cultural and amenity services.

## Cultural and Amenity Service Policies

**VF1** – To continue to support Bromham Library’s existence as a lively and well-used local asset and resource.

### Commercial and Professional Services

- C.2.10 The village currently has a small supermarket, two general/convenience stores, a pharmacy, a petrol station that encompasses a car sales showroom and further convenience shop, two public houses and a fish and chip shop as well as two GP surgeries and an osteopaths’ clinic. Although in many cases, these services could accommodate much of the additional demand from the new developments, the current parking provision for these facilities would come under additional stress.
- C.2.11 Parking at the shopping centre at Avoca House in Molivers Lane and Bugden’s supermarket can be difficult during peak times. Although our plan aims to enhance sustainability by encouraging people to walk and cycle more within the village through improved safety for pedestrians and cyclists, we accept that, for many, using a car is essential. At the same time, given the extent of building around where they are located, it is simply not realistic to assume that new parking areas convenient for these shops can be found.
- C.2.12 To try to address some of this pressure, subject to there being clear commercial demand, we will encourage the provision of a shop unit as part of the Beauchamp Park development if commercial demand can be demonstrated.
- C.2.13 During the development of the plan we took the view that Bromham was relatively well served for GP’s surgeries. There is a purpose-built medical centre with good facilities behind Avoca House in the centre of the village, with some dedicated parking space. There is also a GP practice on the upper floor of Avoca House. We contacted both practices and took the view that a substantial proportion of the additional demand for day-to-day medical services generated by new development could have been accommodated within these existing practices. The building behind Avoca House is only used on a part-time basis and the practice located within Avoca House had, at that stage, recently acquired alternative accommodation in the village to avoid elderly patients having to climb stairs in Avoca House. Many Bromham residents currently walk to these village-centre practices.
- C.2.14 In February 2019, Bedford Clinical Commissioning Group consulted on a new purpose-built medical facility to accommodate the work of the two existing Bromham branch surgeries, but located in Biddenham, adjacent to Great Ouse Way. There is currently no safe pedestrian or cycle route from Bromham to the proposed medical centre because the only feasible route would require pedestrians and cyclists to cross Bromham Bridge, which has a narrow single

carriage way without footways. It would not be a safe route for either category. Accordingly, users of the centre would, in reality, drive to the new centre, or catch a bus, albeit the return bus journey would require users to cross the busy Bromham Road – not easy for elderly people.

C.2.15 Planning consent was granted for the new medical centre in December 2019. Although, the Parish Council does not object in any way to its neighbours in Biddenham benefiting from new facilities, it continues to have grave doubts about all GP facilities being moved out of Bromham. Bromham has an older than average population and, together with the recent decision by the British Medical Association to seek the removal of home visits from GP contracts, the decision to move all GP services out of Bromham effectively forces people to drive to their GPs. This seems to us a somewhat blinkered approach given the clearly worsening climate crisis. The Parish Council continues to believe that there should be a GP and nurse presence within the village utilising either the existing medical facility behind Avoca House or space within the building associated with the Multi-Use games area in Beauchamp Park (See para B.5.7). Such a course would have the double benefit of being sustainable as well as retaining a service in the village that helps to create a sense of community.

#### Other Commercial Facilities

C.2.16 As part of the consultation exercise, we asked residents what additional commercial and professional facilities of this kind could make an important contribution to the village. The complete findings are at Supporting Document 5 and on the Bromham Parish Council website: <https://bromham.bedsparishes.gov.uk/a/10082578-10082733> - but bakers', butchers' and greengrocers' shops attracted some support (although the range of goods these shops would sell are currently available at some or all of the existing shops in the village). As with a new shop unit, any decision to provide a new commercial service in the village is a matter for the private sector, but the data on the website provide some indication of potential demand.

C.2.17 Both existing strategic priorities and the Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030 contain a policy relating to proposals for new shops within local centres, such as Bromham, where there is a need. Bromham Parish Council supports these policies.

### **C.3 - LEISURE AND WELLBEING**

<b>Policy Objective for Leisure and Wellbeing</b>
To enhance the range and volume of sporting and recreational facilities available to residents.

C.3.1 In terms of new and additional leisure and recreational facilities, the questionnaire findings suggested that tennis courts would be the most popular additional facilities for the village, but there was also some support for a cricket club, swimming pool and gym.

- C.3.2 We are conscious that interest in different sports waxes and wanes over time; accordingly, we are keen to provide facilities for a broad range of sports, both for adults and children. One suggestion made to us is that a village ‘Oval’, or Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) should be created. See Section B.5. The Oval would be a green space large enough to incorporate a small cricket pitch in the summer and football and or rugby pitches in the winter depending on demand. It would also provide a grassed area for joggers, walkers and people doing outdoor fitness training. We also plan to introduce tennis courts and space for netball and basketball courts close to, but not in, the Oval. We hope to provide changing facilities in the recreation area for organised activities.
- C.3.3 Although the Oval, and courts would be managed on a day-to-day basis by a service provider, and would be available for public use and, in some cases, for hire, the organisation of sporting activities such as sports clubs or matches will be for private individuals and organisations.

#### **C.4 – FACILITIES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

##### **Objective relating to facilities for children and young people**

To increase the range of sporting and recreational facilities within the village for children and young people, and to maintain them to a good standard.

- C.4.1 Facilities for children and young people is another theme we have pursued since beginning the neighbourhood planning process. We asked for ideas in this area at the launch event and in the questionnaire. We received some good responses which are in Supporting Document 5 and on the Bromham Parish Council website <https://bromham.bedsparishes.gov.uk/a/10082578-10082733> – although we are not sure that all the ideas came from young people! To address that uncertainty, we consulted children directly through Bromham Lower School, and Lincroft and Sharnbrook schools, albeit only pupils from Bromham Lower School responded in sufficient numbers to gather formally as data.
- C.4.2 The children were asked what they liked about living in Bromham and what they would like to keep as it is, and what is missing at present that would make it a better place. We got some really interesting responses. These are summarised in Supporting Document 5 and on the Bromham Parish Council website <https://bromham.bedsparishes.gov.uk/a/8070292-12794937>.
- C.4.3 All of the sources of data we received suggested the need for more play areas covering different age ranges and incorporating skateboard and mountain biking facilities, and an independent youth club. There was also support for tennis courts and a cricket club. The Oval discussed in Section B.5 would provide facilities for children and young people as well as adults.
- C.4.4 We have discussed play areas with individual developers and hope that we have got the provision right, both in terms of equipment and facilities and the age ranges covered by each.

- C.4.5 The Village Oval, and tennis and netball courts will also improve facilities for children and young people. See Section B.5.

## **C.5 - EMPLOYMENT AND BUSINESS**

- C.5.1 Bedford Borough Council did not ask Bromham to allocate land for industrial or commercial purposes, and large-scale development of that kind would not fit well with the rural character of the village. A substantial majority of questionnaire respondents considered that the proximity of Bedford and Milton Keynes, both relatively large employment centres, meant that providing new employment opportunities in the village was not essential. However, there was support for small-scale opportunities for business start-ups and jobs at Bromham Mill. This is considered in Section C.7 below.

## **C.6 THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT**

- C.6.1 Like many rural parishes, Bromham has a significant number of historic assets. Bedford Borough Council's Historic Environment Record contains records for over 130 historic assets in Bromham, including 28 listed buildings, 43 other buildings, 63 monuments, including one scheduled monument – Bromham Bridge – and two landscape reports. (See the short glossary at para C.6.8 below.) Bromham Park also contains the Grade 1 listed St Owen's Church and Grade II\* listed Bromham Hall, both of which are described by Historic England as 'highly significant.' Para 85 of the National Planning Policy Framework suggests neighbourhood plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. The Parish Council's strategy is to ensure that those heritage assets that contribute most to the distinctive character of Bromham are maintained in a way that reflects their listing status. It would then ensure that any planning applications in the vicinity of these sites would take these assets status and environment into account. The Parish Council is not sufficiently resourced to support a more detailed strategy than this.
- C.6.2 The most obvious of these historic assets are the listed buildings, which include St Owen's Church, Bromham Mill, and the Village Road site of the Primary School. Bromham Hall within Bromham Park is also a very important heritage asset, but its secluded nature means it is difficult to see the building from any publicly accessible land and so it has less historic resonance with residents. There are also a number of private houses in Village Road and around the Green, and in Stagsden Road and Thistly Green which are also listed. Bromham Mill is one of the most iconic of these buildings and we are keen to see it much more intensively used for the benefit of the community. Our aspirations for Bromham Mill are dealt with separately in Section C7 below.
- C.6.3 The 'buildings' category includes houses that aren't formally listed. These also include a number of private houses, largely concentrated in the same areas as the listed buildings, but there are also a number associated with the Northampton Road between Grange Lane and the junction with the A428.
- C.6.4 The monuments are often more difficult to see, but the village's only scheduled monument is Bromham Bridge, is very visible, and is an historic asset we share with the parish of Biddenham. The section of the bridge from Bromham Mill to the

riverbank on the south-eastern side of the river is in Bromham, and the section of the bridge south-east of the riverbank is in Biddenham.

- C.6.5 Many of the other monuments can only be detected by cropmarks visible from aerial photographs or LIDAR imagery, which uses pulsed laser technology to build up a 3D digital representation of the target area. But Bromham has evidence of a range of such monuments encompassing probable medieval boundary ditches, Iron Age/Romano-British Enclosure Cropmarks, an Iron Age hut, a Village Pump, Lime Kilns, quarries, and a variety of earthworks.
- C.6.6 We have considered the location of these historic assets in assessing potential development sites and believe that they would not be detrimentally affected, or that any potential impact could be effectively mitigated. The records we considered in coming to that view are at Supporting Document 14. Both existing strategic priorities and the Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030 contain a strategic policy that sets out Bedford Borough's approach to the historic environment in considering planning applications and we expect all of the allocated developments to meet the requirements of that policy
- C.6.7 As many of the listed buildings and other buildings are privately owned, and many of the monuments are located on private land we do not believe that it is appropriate for Bromham Parish Council to have separate policy objectives from those of Bedford Borough Council, which we support.
- C.6.8 Some of the important heritage terms relevant to this plan are set out in the short glossary below.

The Historic England Listing System, which relates mostly to buildings includes –  
Grade 1 – buildings of exceptional interest  
Grade II\* – particularly important buildings of more than special interest  
Grade II – buildings that are of special interest, warranting every effort to preserve them.  
Scheduled monument – a nationally important archaeological site or historic building given protection from unauthorised change.  
A monument can be described as usually a three-dimensional structure which has become relevant to a social group as part of their remembrance of historical times or cultural heritage, due to its artistic, historical, political technical or architectural importance.

## **C.7 - BROMHAM MILL**

- C.7.1 Bromham Mill is currently owned and run by Bedford Borough Council. The first recorded mention of a water mill on the current Bromham Mill site was in 1622, although the current building is of a much later date. In addition to their heritage value, both the Mill buildings and the site are clearly important to residents as a place for walking, picnicking and occasionally gathering together for public events. However, until recently it was unused for much of the year and often cut a forlorn figure on a site that should be a vibrant and dynamic entrance to the village.
- C.7.2 We share the view of residents that the Mill should be more intensively used. Since 2017 we have had an arrangement with Bedford Borough Council which allows us to open the café at the Mill seven days a week throughout the year rather than the previous week-end, spring and summer-based opening regime. We have

also tried to step up the number events in the building or the grounds. These include children's events at Christmas and Easter, as well as the Duck Race every other May and Millfest in September. The aim was to complement the largest and most popular event, Apple Day which Bedford Borough currently organises in October each year.

C.7.3 But sharing a café – and, more importantly, sharing in the running of a site - is not easy, for all kinds of practical reasons.

C.7.4 Since June 2017, the Parish Council has been in discussion with Bedford Borough Council about handing over the day-to-day management of the Bromham Mill site to Bromham Mill Trust, a charitable organisation established by the Parish Council but with trustees from other local groups with an interest in the Mill. The Trust's sole focus would be the Mill and the additional amenity it could provide.

C.7.5 We believe a charitable trust would be better placed to attract funding and sponsorship to make the Mill a dynamic community hub. By this we mean it would be open every day with a café, offices/studios for small local businesses and organisations, space for local artists and musicians to showcase their work and where voluntary sector services could be explained. We believe that much could also be made of the Mill outbuildings if they were sensitively refurbished, and also that much more could be done to make the Mill as a popular centre for walkers, cyclists and river users.

C.7.6 In the outline business plan submitted to Bedford Borough Council we said – 'Our objectives are:

- To utilise the assets more intensively and so provide substantially increased amenity value and benefit to the local community.
- To develop the mill as a dynamic community hub through greater use of the buildings and land for events and activities, using the buildings for small community-based businesses and local groups, and ensuring that the café is open every day so that it becomes a meeting place for friends, walkers, cyclists and river-users. Relocating the parish office to the site would also add to the Mill's central role within the community.

C.7.7 The key outcomes would be:

- Greater value from the Mill as a heritage site, visitor attraction, nature reserve and open space in rural Bedfordshire
- Greater use of the Mill and its surroundings for education, recreation and social activities
- Increased involvement and satisfaction of the local community.

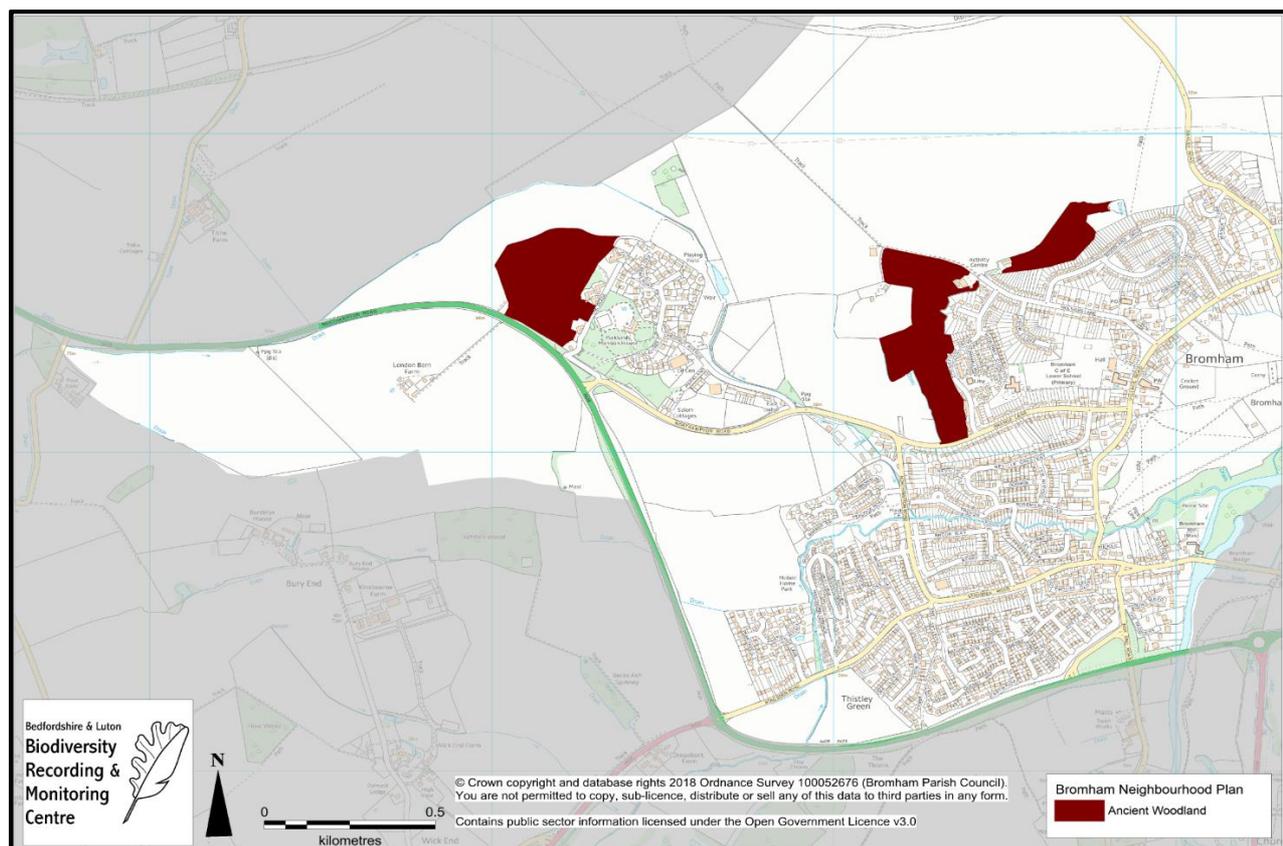
C.7.8 Discussions about Bromham Mill Trust leasing the site are continuing.

## **C.8 – ENVIRONMENT**

C.8.1 Bromham is still a rural village, rich in green spaces, surrounded by farmland and the river with its water meadows. It is clear from our consultation exercise that these green spaces are important to residents.

- C.8.2 Particularly important is Bromham Park which, although privately owned, is accessible via public footpaths, providing a tranquil rural setting and green open space for the public to enjoy.
- C.8.3 Other places within the village are also important to residents. The green space around Bromham Mill, Bromham Nature Reserve, the farmland, water meadows, footpaths and bridleways all contribute to the character and ambience of Bromham.
- C.8.4 The village also has some hidden gems. Salem Thrift, Bowels Wood and Molivers Wood (See Map 10) are all examples of the remnants of ancient woodland. Salem Thrift has been in existence since at least 1300AD. It is owned and managed by Bromham Parish Council. Bowel's Wood appears on a map dated 1798, and Molivers Wood (once 'Maulwers' Wood) is referred to in a document dated 1651. Both of these sites are in private ownership but each of them makes an important contribution to Bromham's heritage and we are keen to see them preserved as living ecosystems and not detrimentally affected by new development. We commissioned ecological studies of Salem Thrift and Molivers Wood: the report on the studies is attached at Supporting Document 15 and are available on Bromham Parish Council's website: <https://bromham.bedsparishes.gov.uk/a/8070292-12794939>

### **Map 10 – Location of Salem Thrift, Bowels Wood and Molivers Wood Ancient Woodland**



- C.8.5 Given this green heritage, we also want to make a reality of residents' strong desire for new green spaces within the new developments.

Objectives
1. To help to protect and preserve existing green spaces and to maintain access to them at least at the current level.
2. To secure green open spaces within the new developments for both public enjoyment and for wildlife.

C.8.6 Bromham Park is something of a special case because of its iconic status, its popularity with residents, and because it provides access to the church. We are mindful that the Park is privately owned and functions as part of a wider agricultural enterprise. We have had constructive discussions with the owners of Bromham Park Estate, who wish to maintain the Park to a good standard with a mixture of agricultural use and conservation areas while also continuing to allow public access to the area through the current network of footpaths. The Park’s current owners are content to renew the agreement with the local authority to maintain the Park as a private open space.

C.8.7 Another major environmental feature in the village is Bromham Brook (more formally known as the River Stag), which has in the past flooded a number of times within the residential area of the village. Both the Beauchamp Park and Stagsden Rise Developments border on the Brook at various points. We have considered this as part of the flood-risk sequential test (See supporting document 11), and we expect these developments to comply with development plan policies which deal with flood risk.

C.8.8 The water quality in Bromham Brook will need to be protected from surface water run-off from these developments, including car parking, by an adequate sustainable drainage system. This will ensure the protection of wildlife in and around Bromham Brook. Natural England and the Environment Agency must be satisfied following consultation that sites designated under European Directive 92/44/EEC will not be affected downstream on the River Great Ouse. The advice of an ecologist was sought during the development of the plan to ensure that the relevant habitats regulations would not be breached by any of the proposals in this plan. The ecologist’s report is at Supporting Document 16.

<b>GE1.</b> The Parish Council will continue to work with the owners of Bromham Park Estate to secure at least the current level of access for the public.
<b>GE2.</b> Work will continue with the local highways authority to maintain existing public footpaths, permissive paths and bridleways.
<b>GE3.</b> Village greens and other public green spaces will continue to be maintained to a good standard, and, where necessary, liaison with owners of other green spaces will continue so as to maintain access to sites.

## **PART D - IMPLEMENTING AND MONITORING THE PLAN**

- D.1 Bedford Borough Council will be responsible for the implementation of the policies in Part B, the Planning Policies section of this plan, through the assessment of planning applications.
- D.2 Bromham Parish Council will be responsible for the policies in the Community Aspirations section and for monitoring performance against the whole plan.
- D.3 Each Annual Parish Meeting after the plan is adopted should receive a short but detailed report on implementation in the preceding 12 months from the Parish Council. The format of these reports will be a matter for the Chair of the Parish Meeting to determine.
- D.4 There should also be regular updates about progress on the Parish Council website and in the parish magazine.
- D.5 There should be a more thorough review of progress 5, 10 and 15 years into the implementation of the plan, which should be presented to the relevant Parish Meeting.

## **PARISH COUNCIL PRIORITIES FOR THE USE OF COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)**

- D.6 Although subject to change if circumstances require, the Parish Council's priorities for CIL money arising from the developments would be –
  - (a) contributions to improvements in any or all of the four junctions between village roads and the A428, albeit the most used junction, near the Bromham Road, Ouse Valley Way roundabout, actually lies within Biddenham Parish. This should help address the current delays, and consequent danger, of leaving and entering the village from the A428; and
  - (b) contributing to a safe pedestrian/cycle bridge across the River Great Ouse to create a safe and sustainable route between Bromham and Bedford. Although such a bridge alongside or parallel with the existing Bromham Bridge appears to be the best option, the Parish Council would consider and feasible alternative options.

## Supporting Documents

Supporting Document 1	Community Engagement Strategy
Supporting Document 2	Village Questionnaire 2015
Supporting Document 3	Housing Needs Survey
Supporting Document 4	Issues and Options Paper on Housing and Education and explanatory material relating to Old Stable Yard Development
Supporting Document 5	Consultation Exercises - Summary of Findings
Supporting Document 6	Strategic Environmental Assessment screening report.
Supporting Document 7	Bedford Borough Council's Site Assessment and Selection Methodology
Supporting Document 8	Bedford Borough Council's Highway, Access and Transport Surveys of Bromham Sites
Supporting Document 9	Summary of Site Assessments
Supporting Document 10	Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity - Housing Needs Survey Report
Supporting Document 11	Flood-Risk Sequential Test – Bromham Neighbourhood Area
Supporting Document 12	CFA Archaeology – Archaeological Survey Land off Stagsden Road
Supporting Document 13	Landscape Collective – Advice Note on Landscape, Heritage and Archaeology.
Supporting Document 14	Bedford Borough Council Historic Environment Record relating to Bromham (with kind permission of Bedford Borough Council)
Supporting Document 15	Ecological Survey of Salem Thrift and Molivers Wood
Supporting Document 16	Habitat Regulations Assessment

## Bromham Neighbourhood Plan Group

c/o Bromham Parish Council  
Bromham Village Hall  
Village Road  
Bromham  
Bedford  
MK43 8JP

Tel: 01234 828851

[www.bromhamparish.co.uk](http://www.bromhamparish.co.uk)