

# THRILOW AND HEATHFIELD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2023 TO 2041



## **The Thriplow & Heathfield Neighbourhood Plan Vision**

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

### **THEME 1. PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND THE CHARACTER OF THE PARISH**

**Objective 1: The character and quality of the built environment and landscape in Heathfield will be protected and improved.**

**Objective 2: The existing built environment and landscape character of Thriplow village will be protected and enhanced.**

**Objective 3: New development will be sensitive to our rural environment and reflect our rural roots**

**Objective 4: Recognise and protect accordingly all valued open spaces in the parish**

**Objective 5: Seek to reverse the decline of the natural environment in the parish by protecting and increasing biodiversity**

### **THEME 2. LIVING VILLAGE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

**Objective 6: We will continue to be a living community, which sustains the primary school, shop and facilities**

**Objective 7: There will be limited small scale additional housing development, focused in Thriplow near to existing shops and services**

**Objective 8: All development to use sustainable building materials and consider energy efficiency**

**Objective 9: Plan for improved outdoor recreational facilities in the parish**

**Objective 10: A safer less congested parish**

**Objective 11: The quality and quantity of our rural footpath network and interconnectivity with neighbouring settlements will be improved.**

### **THEME 3: SOCIAL COHESION AND PARISH LINKS**

**Objective 12: There will be more cohesion between the two communities of Thriplow and Heathfield**

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# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document is the draft Neighbourhood Plan (NP) for the Thriplow and Heathfield plan area over the period 2021 to 2041. The purpose of the NP is to set a framework for future development in the plan area. Once made, the NP will carry the same legal weight as the adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan. The planners must follow what is in the NP when making decisions about planning applications in the area.
- 1.2 The Thriplow and Heathfield NP group, working on behalf of the Parish Council, have listened to parishioners and have drafted this Neighbourhood Plan, which covers the entirety of the parish. Chapter 3 of this plan provides a brief overview of the consultation that has taken place to date. All consultation activity will be reported in detail in a Consultation Statement which will accompany this plan once it is complete.
- 1.3 The work on the NP has been led by the NP steering group, which was set up in 2017. This comprises local people, a mixture of residents and parish councillors. Members have different skills to bring to the group, from marketing and surveying for developers, to architecture, to representatives from Natural England.
- 1.4 Funding has been obtained for Cambridgeshire ACRE to be engaged in advising and guiding the process, from the planning perspective. A questionnaire was sent out in July 2018. A demographic and socio-economic report and a Housing Needs survey were also carried out in early 2019 by Cambridgeshire ACRE. Since then Rachel Hogger from Cambs ACRE has been commissioned by the Parish Council, to assist the NP group with plan preparation work.
- 1.5 The Parish Council has also engaged a landscape architect, Lucy Batchelor-Wylam, to conduct a Landscape Character Appraisal of the parish and to assess the landscape and visual sensitivity of potential development sites in the parish. In addition, the landscape architect has provided advice on how the grainstore site could come forward in a way which contributes positively to the character of Thriplow at this key village gateway site.
- 1.6 To inform the NP, a Masterplan document covering the built-up area of Heathfield was prepared by AECOM in 2022. This work was commissioned by Locality, on the behalf of the Parish Council

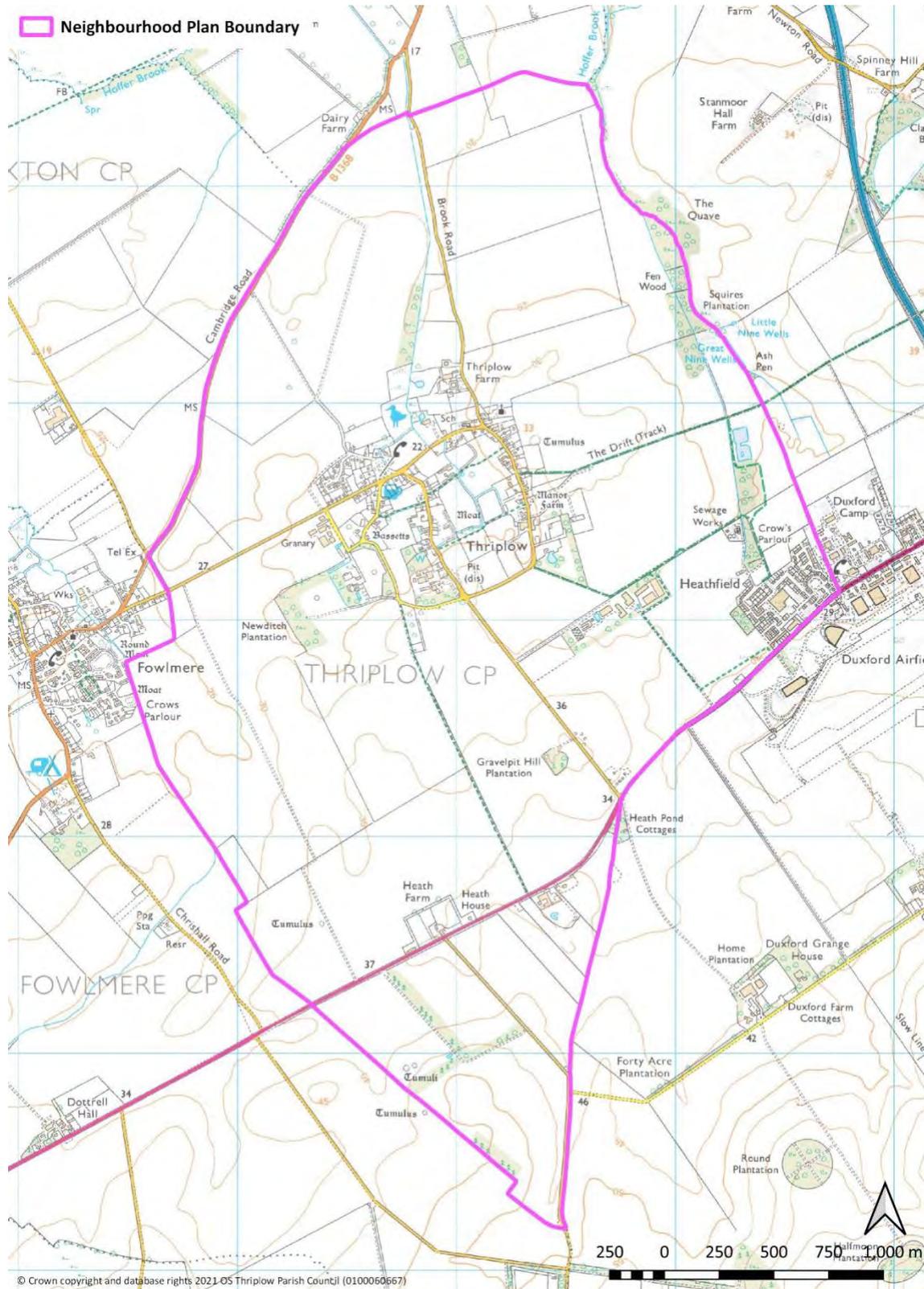
## **Status of this document**

- 1.7 This document is the pre-submission version of the NP. The pre-submission plan will be subject to a six-week public consultation period with our residents, our local stakeholders (including community organisations, landowners and developers) and other statutory consultees. We will look at all responses received and consider how we need to amend the NP before the next stage which will be submission of the NP to SCDC who will then organise a six week public

consultation period (when you will be given a further opportunity to make representations) followed by an independent examination. Subject to a successful examination, the NP will then go back to the parishioners of the parish for a final vote via referendum.

**The Plan Area**

1.8 The NP area is shown in Map 1.



**Map 1: The Neighbourhood Plan Area**

## 2. The Neighbourhood Area

### Location

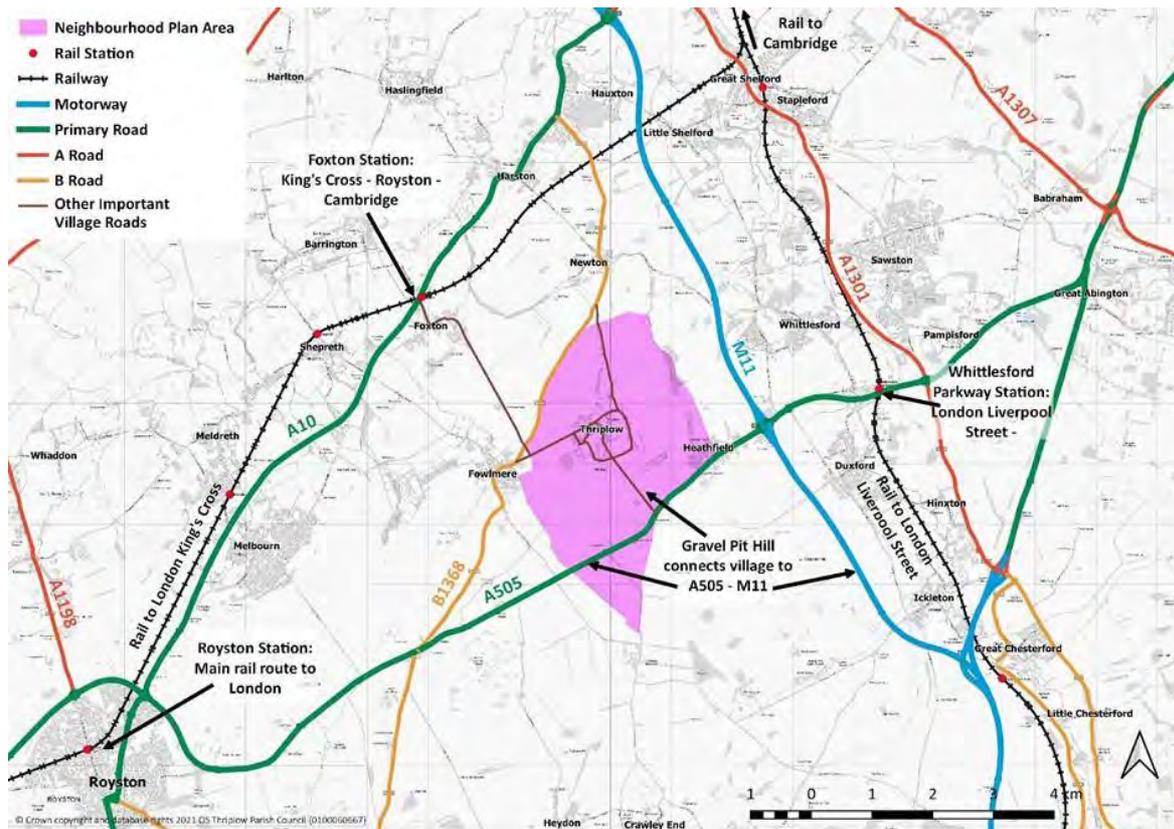
- 2.1 The Parish of Thriplow and Heathfield consists of two main separate settlements, firstly the village of Thriplow, which can trace its origins back to prehistoric times and secondly the settlement at Heathfield, which was originally the married quarters serving RAF Duxford. Heathfield lies to the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

### Road Access

- 2.2 The parish is located in South Cambridgeshire District. It is 10 km north-east of Royston and 11 km south-west of Cambridge. It is very close to the A505 and the M11 junction.
- 2.3 Heathfield is located off the A505 and has vehicular access to the village only via the A505. Thriplow village is a much older settlement and has three access routes in different directions. Its oldest access is two ways to the B1368, which is an old coaching route from Cambridge to London, before the A10 and, then later still, the M11 were built. It connects to both Newton and Fowlmere. It also connects to the A505 via Gravel Pit Hill.

### Other access

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



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

## Landscape and geology

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

### A brief history of Thriplow village and an overview of its character today

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

2.7 The parish has continued, since medieval times, to be important for arable farming, and the fertile soils here were cultivated on a three-course rotation in open field systems around the village until the Inclosure award in 1846. The scattered cottages along the lanes would have been added over the centuries to serve as accommodation for farm workers and together with the farm houses

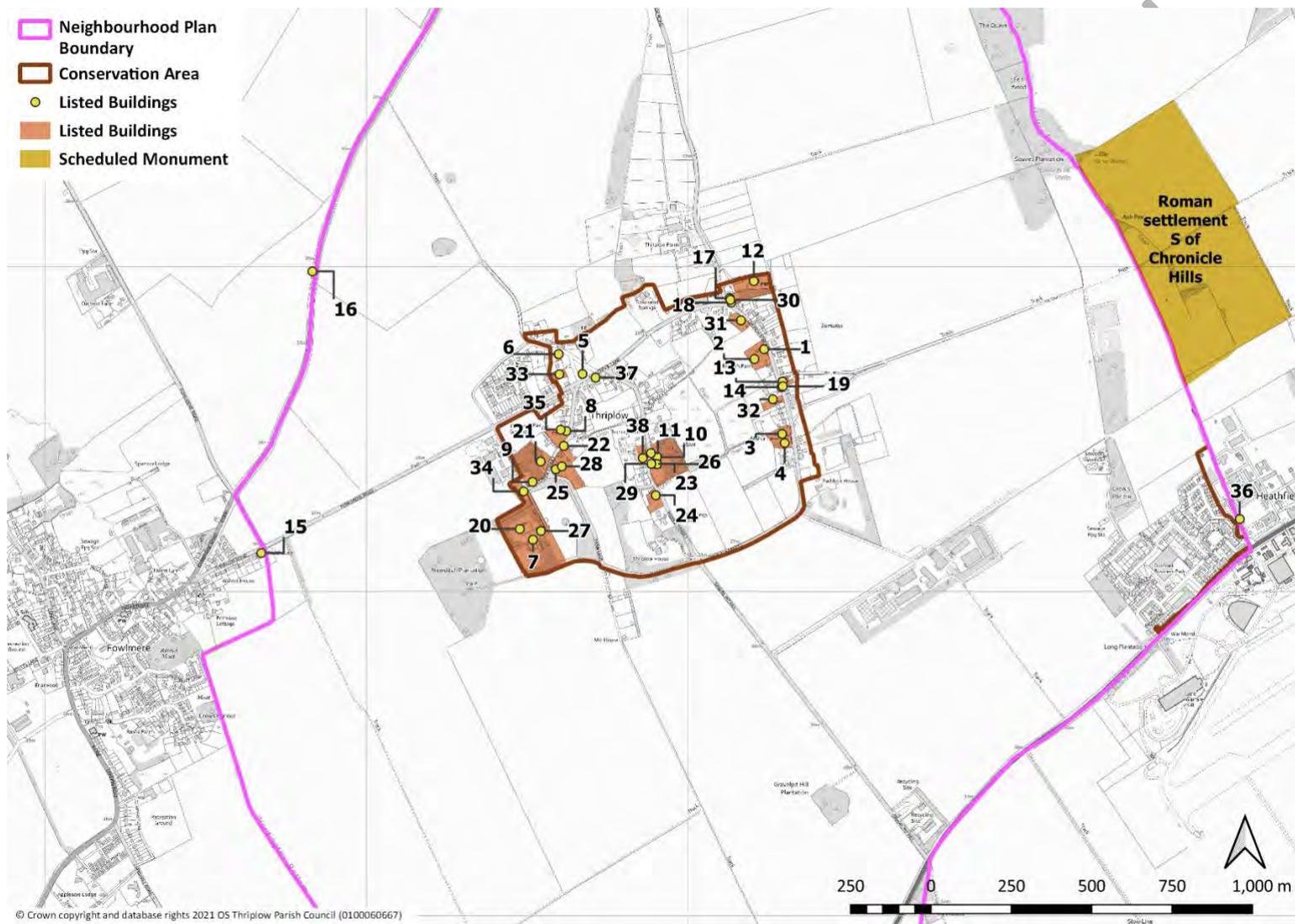
contribute notably to the character of the village. A number of timber-framed houses survive, including Gowards, a late medieval house altered in the early 17th century, Bassets or Bury Farm, a two-storeyed timber-framed and jettied house built in the second quarter of the 16th century, with a two-gabled extension added to the south in the 1560s, and Cochranes, a 17th-century farmhouse much altered in the 19th century.

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



Listed buildings in Maps 3 and 4

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



Map 4: Heritage assets in the parish and beyond

## **A brief history of Heathfield and an overview of its character today**

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



## Community

- 2.12 There is a great community spirit in Thriplow village, which has been able to maintain the essential elements of a village.
- 2.13 The Parish Council is an active council involving itself in all of the normal activities of a parish council including consultation with the District Council on planning matters. It was a Parish Council initiative to prepare a NP for the whole parish. The parish has always been active, ensuring there is a school, a pub, the church and the village shop, all kept going through difficult times, in the village of Thriplow.
- 2.14 This has been helped by the annual fundraising activities of Daffodil Weekend. This initially began in 1967 in order to repair the church. Due to its success, it was repeated the following year. Residents decided to raise funds by opening their gardens and making cups of tea for their visitors. The fete very soon grew into Daffodil Weekend - an event held in springtime and with upwards of 5000 visitors from all over the country over the weekend. This has continued and expanded ever since, to become a major focus for voluntary effort in the village, and a major source of income for nominated projects within the village, as well as raising funds for an annually nominated charity. In 2011 the Committee received The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service (the equivalent of an MBE for charities). The pandemic has stopped it now for 2 years running.
- 2.15 The church has a relatively small congregation, though it is an active one, and is well maintained.
- 2.16 The primary school has expanded considerably over the past few decades and is incredibly popular. As well as pupils from Thriplow village and Heathfield, it also attracts pupils from many surrounding villages.
- 2.17 In the 1990's the village determined that a new village hall was needed and, under the Parish Council's auspices, a "New village hall committee" was formed. After much fund raising and grants from the National Lottery and the District Council the money was raised. 1999 saw the old hall demolished and a new village hall was built which was officially opened on the first day of the new millennium.
- 2.18 On 1<sup>st</sup> July 2007, the shop in Thriplow became the first community-run shop in South Cambridgeshire. Unfortunately, the post office was closed in 2009, however the shop has flourished with both paid staff and volunteers from the community combining to make it such a success. The shop also attracts customers from other villages who have no shop of their own.
- 2.19 Similarly, the Green Man, now a community pub, is owned by a large number of the local population and let commercially to tenants as a pub and restaurant.

- 2.20 Heathfield overall has lacked a united community, partly because of the physical divisions between Pepperslade, which has its own separate approach road off the A505, and the rest of the housing to the south.
- 2.21 However, in recent years the Heathfest has been taking place annually with good support and funds have been raised to build a children's playground.

### **Population and Demographics**

- 2.22 A demographic and socio-economic report (the DSE review 2019) was prepared by Cambridgeshire ACRE in 2019 to support the NP and is available to view at <https://www.thriplowheathfieldnp.org/>. This reports that the latest estimate of population in the parish was 1,150. About 60 per cent live in Heathfield.
- 2.23 There are significant differences between the demographic profiles of Thriplow village and Heathfield. Thriplow has an older age profile. One in five households is comprised entirely of people aged over 65. As a consequence, health issues are more significant in the village. One in four households in Heathfield is a single people household aged under 65. Heathfield also has a higher proportion of households with children.
- 2.24 There is little deprivation in Thriplow. The parish scores well on indicators addressing income, employment, education, health and crime. However, access to services is an issue particularly for Heathfield. This is discussed further in Chapter 4.

### **Dwelling Stock**

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

### **Tenure**

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

### **Affordable Housing**

- 2.29 In 2017, the parish had 40 (8% of total housing stock) affordable dwelling units. These are socially rented and all in Thriplow village. The focus on bungalows and larger houses means it is generally inaccessible to younger, newly forming households. There are no affordable housing units in Heathfield.
- 2.30 A Housing Needs Survey (HNS) was undertaken in Thriplow in September 2018. This identified 22 households in need of affordable housing with a local connection to Thriplow parish. The need was predominantly for smaller homes (for 6 x 1 bed, 9 x 2 bed, 5 x 3 bed, 2 x 4 bed plus) although only three of the households would potentially be eligible for a bungalow. This need was identified through both the housing register (fourteen) and the survey process (8 additional units once duplicates from the housing register discounted). Most of the households identified through the survey were either living at homes with their parents or in private rented accommodation (in the parish). Most households identified through the housing register do not currently live in the parish and are headed by a person under the age of 40.
- 2.31 The latest housing register data suggests there has been little change. As at April 2022, the number of households on the Housing Register with a local connection to Thriplow was 12.

### **Employment**

- 2.32 Unemployment is low in the parish. However, economic activity rates do vary. In Heathfield 90.7 per cent of people aged 16-74 are economically active. This falls to 68.0 per cent in Thriplow village. The South Cambridgeshire average is 76.2 per cent.
- 2.33 The 2019 DSE report found that many employed residents in the parish work locally. Forty-five per cent work within South Cambridgeshire. This includes 13 per cent who work from home. A further 24 per cent work in Cambridge. There are relatively small proportions (five per cent or less) of employed residents commuting to London, Essex, Hertfordshire and Suffolk.
- 2.34 A general picture can be drawn from local knowledge. Agriculture is still an important part of the local economy. There were over 50 people employed in the sector in 2011<sup>1</sup>. However, to this must be added KWS, a seed specialist company employing a significant number of people in highly skilled roles. There are now also factory workers coming to the Savoursmiths site next to KWS.
- 2.35 Thriplow primary school is also likely to be one of the larger employers in the parish. Other employers include those at Nivtar Distribution in Heathfield, the sewage treatment works between the villages, a recycling centre adjoining the A505, Revivals Car Repairs at the Grainstore site, the swimming pool at

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<sup>1</sup> See Demographic and Socio-Economic Report for the Parish, Cambridgeshire ACRE 2019

Thriplow Heath and Clarion UK Translation Services. There is also the Cambridge County Council's recycling centre and Charlton's Recycled Parts adjacent to the recycling centre on Gravel Pit Hill, with the Thriplow Group, a road maintenance contractor in between. In total, these businesses provide limited employment opportunities for local people and the majority will need to travel a little further afield to find suitable work.

### 3. The Consultation Process

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

#### **Neighbourhood Plan Engagement Feedback**

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

## 4. Key Issues

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

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

### Strengths

#### **Heathfield:**

- proximity to Cambridge and M11
- access to green spaces
- good recreation grounds

#### **Thriplow:**

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

#### **A rural parish**

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

#### **Strong Community Spirit**

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

#### **Access to Amenities**

- Thriplow: good amenities (Village hall, pub, shop, school, cricket ground, church, playground)
- Both: rural paths and bridleways

#### **Conveniently located**

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

### Weaknesses

#### **Heathfield**

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

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

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

#### **Access to Amenities**

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

#### **Cost of Housing and low stock of affordable dwellings**

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

#### **Transport and Getting Around: Heathfield**

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

#### **Transport and Getting Around Thriplow**

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

## Opportunities

### **Environment**

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

### **Community Amenities for Heathfield**

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

### **Getting around the parish**

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

### **Getting around Heathfield**

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

### **Getting around Thriplow**

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

### **Increase affordable housing**

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

## Threats

### **Uncertainty regarding future strategic transport infrastructure**

Possibility of dual carriageway for A505 going between Heathfield and Thriplow village

### **Increased segregation between two villages**

### **Increasing conflict of land uses at Heathfield**

**Flooding threats in some areas:** Poor drainage mainly affects foot and cycle paths, though roads also do not drain away easily

### **Increasing isolation and car dependency at Heathfield and Thriplow**

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

### **Loss of working agricultural community through change of land use**

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

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

### **If Green belt policy were to change there would be a threat of urbanisation**

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

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

**Table 1: Seven key issues in the parish**

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

##### **Current**

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

##### **Distinctly different demographics**

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

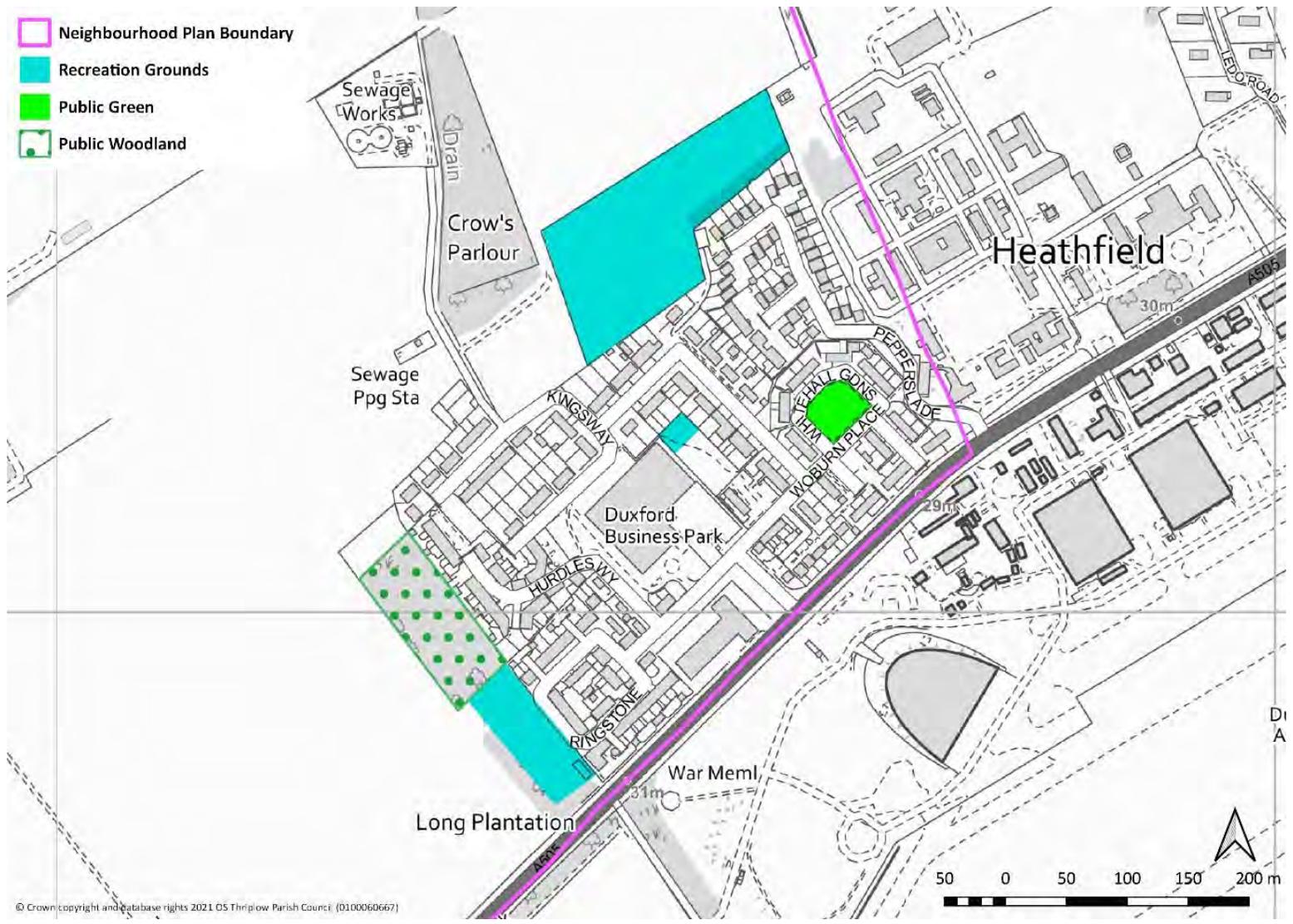
#### **4.5 Issue 2: Access to amenities**

4.5.1 A visual illustration of amenities, open spaces and woodland is provided through Maps 6 and 7. Heathfield residents have a large open space and a relatively new

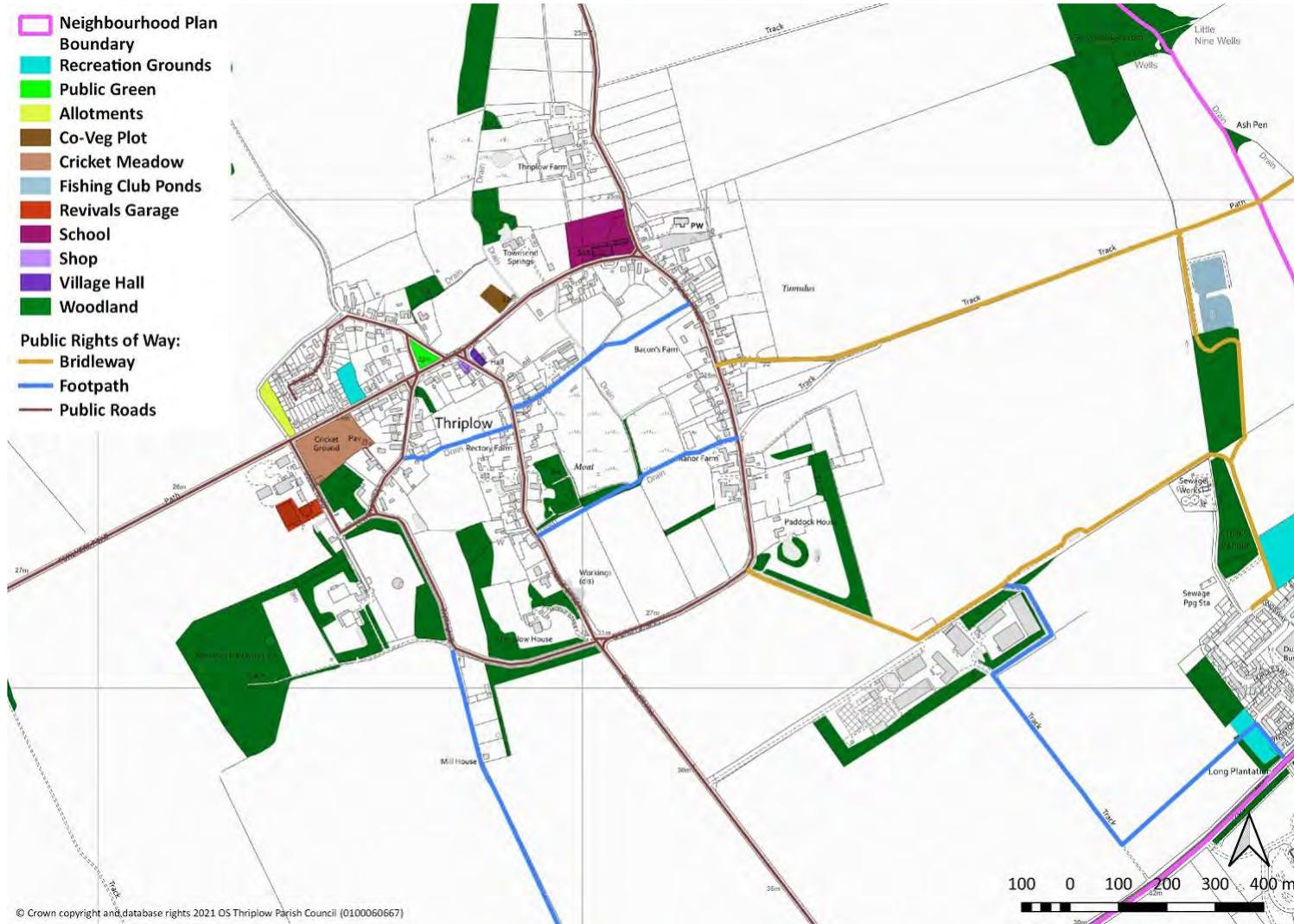
children's playground. All other amenities including the shop, pub, school, church and cricket ground are located in Thriplow.

### **Heathfield**

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



**Map 6:** Outdoor recreation areas in Heathfield



**Map 7: Community and outdoor recreation facilities in Thriplow village**

## **4.6 Issue 3: Transport and Connectivity.**

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

### **Cycling**

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

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

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

### **Pedestrian/cycle access between Thriplow and Heathfield**

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

### **Heathfield- specific connectivity issues**

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

access on and off the estate and the current layout is widely regarded as a safety hazard.

#### **Thriplow-specific connectivity issues**

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

#### **Speeding through traffic (Thriplow):**

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

#### **Congested School Drop off and car parking generally (Thriplow)**

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

#### **Dangerous access from A505**

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

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

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

### **The Future Threat**

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

### **4.7 Issue 4: Heathfield specific environmental challenges**

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

### **4.8 Issue 5: Thriplow – protecting our village character.**

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

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

- 4.9.1 The low number of affordable and the low number of desirable smaller homes in the parish are the issues. Thriplow village lacks smaller homes for younger families or single people and for the elderly. The housing in Thriplow village is

very expensive and unaffordable to most. Whilst there is no affordable housing in Heathfield (it is all in Thriplow), the market housing in Heathfield is available at a lower cost. However, both this NP and the Local Plan establishes that Heathfield is not a sustainable location for the focus of additional housing growth.

- 4.9.2 The stock of affordable housing has declined in rural communities in recent years relative to urban areas. Rural communities have been more vulnerable to losses through Right to Buy. Also, difficulties in building new affordable homes in rural communities has been exacerbated by government guidance which has removed the requirement to provide any affordable housing on schemes of 10 dwellings or less.

#### **Housing mix**

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

#### **4.10 Issue 6: Biodiversity**

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

#### **Woodland areas in the parish**

- 4.10.3 Areas of woodland in the parish are shown on Maps 6 and 7. The largest area of woodland in the parish is north east: Squires Plantation goes south of the fishing

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

pond to the north of Heathfield. Fen Wood is a broadleaved, mix and yew woodland. Due to its ecological value, it is nationally designated as the Thriplow Peat Holes SSSI. The designated SSSI crosses over into the Whittlesford Parish. See Map 17 to see the extent of the SSSI.

- 4.10.4 The second largest area of woodland in the parish is south west of Thriplow village in the western part of the Bury estate in the south west of the village, Newditch plantation.
- 4.10.5 A small woodland also exists south of the cricket field, on Lodge Road which is also in private ownership and not publicly accessible. It is already protected as a Protected Village Amenity Area (PVAA) in the 2018 South Cambridgeshire Local Plan, though it is privately owned.
- 4.10.6 There are also woodland verges along parts of Lodge Road and Middle St at the south of the village, which extends to the PVAA behind the cricket meadow.
- 4.10.7 There are other clusters of trees in private ownership, notably those on both sides of School Lane.

## 5. Vision and Objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan

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

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

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

### **THEME 1. PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND THE CHARACTER OF THE PARISH**

**Objective 1: The character and quality of the built environment and landscape character in Heathfield will be protected and improved.**

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

**Objective 2: The existing built environment and landscape character of Thriplow village will be protected and enhanced.**

- 5.6 In the village, roots are based in agriculture and the church. The agricultural heritage gives us the fragile infrastructure of single track roads, lack of footpaths and low level of street lighting. These give the village its real limits but also provide its rural identity. These rural roots are to be preserved. The surrounding farms will remain a part of parish life. Grazing land for sheep, cattle and pigs as well as larger crop fields outside of the village is the local character.

- 5.7 The Thriplow and Heathfield Landscape Character Assessment (2020) provides further useful context to the special built environment and landscape features to be preserved.

**Objective 3: New development will be sensitive to our rural environment and reflect our rural roots**

- 5.8 This objective is closely linked to Objective 1 and 2 but applies parish wide rather than focusing on either settlement.
- 5.9 Key characteristics for preservation and enhancement are the open views to pasture and to crop fields, both within Thriplow village as well as looking outwards from its roads and path. Within the settlement of Heathfield, there are few opportunities for rural views owing to enclosure by trees along its boundaries but also due to the residential buildings themselves being inward looking, almost obstructing opportunities for outward views. The public rights of way network gives Heathfield residents good access to the open countryside to the north and community engagement work with Heathfield residents shows that this is key positive aspect of living in the area<sup>3</sup>. This plan seeks to preserve and enhance this.
- 5.10 The countryside surrounding our settlements is designated as Green Belt, which means it is afforded considerable protection against inappropriate development. Nevertheless, we recognise that the varied rural activities in our parish, whilst valued has the potential to damage tranquillity and the rural environment if it is not sensitively managed.

**Objective 4: Recognise and protect accordingly all valued open spaces in the parish**

- 5.11 Through the NP we wish to afford the same protection to valued open spaces in Heathfield as the Local Plan currently does to open space in Thriplow.

**Objective 5: Seek to reverse the decline of the natural environment in the parish by protecting and increasing biodiversity in the parish**

- 5.12 When new development comes forward, the natural environment should be protected, and available opportunities should be taken to improve overall biodiversity in the parish.
- 5.13 Protection of our natural environment will include preventing development proposals in our rural economy where they contribute to unacceptable risk of soil or water pollution in our parish.
- 5.14 We will require development proposals to deliver net gains in biodiversity which could include the creation of new woodland in areas where this would extend or link well with existing habitats in the parish.

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<sup>3</sup>See report of Oct. and Nov 2021 community engagement.

- 5.15 To complement our planning policies we will work outside the planning system, with our residents and landowner community. Please see Chapter 7 for further detail.

## THEME 2. LIVING VILLAGE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- 5.16 The second most popular issues from our February consultation were concerned with making the parish a living village and sustainable settlement.

### **Objective 6: We will continue to be a living community, which sustains the primary school, shop and facilities**

- 5.17 We need to ensure we continue to keep and develop amenities here, while not sacrificing the rural feel. The shop, pub, school, church and sports facilities are key facilities, essential to the well-being of the community. But, they are not always financially viable and, as detailed in Chapter 2 have sometimes required community input to keep them going.
- 5.18 The village community has been proactive in carrying this out through charitable help and Daffodil Weekend support. The more families and businesses are based in the parish, the more they will support local amenities. And the more self-supporting they will become. This means allowing appropriate family housing to be developed.
- 5.19 Any new amenities will be prioritised to go to Heathfield, since it does not have its fair share of amenities, compared to its population.

### **Objective 7: There will be limited small scale additional housing development focused in Thriplow near to existing shops and services**

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

### **OBJECTIVE 8: All development to use sustainable building materials and consider energy efficiency**

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

## **OBJECTIVE 9: Plan for improved outdoor recreational facilities in the parish**

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

## **OBJECTIVE 10: A safer less congested parish**

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

## **OBJECTIVE 11: The quality and quantity of our rural footpath network and interconnectivity with neighbouring settlements will be improved through provision of active travel routes**

- 5.26 There is scope to improve:
- walking and cycling routes between neighbouring villages Thriplow, Heathfield, Fowlmere and Newton
  - access to circular walking routes and to some of the parish woodlands.
- 5.27 We wish to maintain existing provision and take opportunities to provide both better access to the countryside and our woodland and provide better pedestrian and cycle access to our neighbouring settlements.

## THEME 3: SOCIAL COHESION AND PARISH LINKS

### OBJECTIVE 12: There will be more cohesion between the two communities of Thriplow and Heathfield

5.28 What we mean by this is:

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

### How these objectives are delivered through this plan

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

**TABLE SHOWING HOW NP OBJECTIVES ARE DELIVERED THROUGH THE PLANNING POLICIES AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES**

**Theme 1: Protecting and enhancing the natural environment and the character of the parish**

NP Objective	Planning Policy (Chapter 6)	Community Initiative
1: The character and quality of the built environment and landscape in Heathfield will be protected and improved.	Policy THP1 – Improving the character and quality of Heathfield  Policy THP2 – Provision of additional amenities in Heathfield  See also TH5 – Parish-wide Locally Valued views	1, 2 and 3.
2: The existing village built environment and landscape character of Thriplow village will be protected and enhanced.	Policy THP 3 - Protecting and Enhancing Village Character in Thriplow  Policy THP 4 – Important Countryside Frontages in Thriplow village  See also TH5 – Parish-wide locally valued views	
3. New development will be sensitive to our rural environment and reflect our rural roots	Policy TH5 – Parish-wide Locally valued views  Policy TH6 – Supporting the rural economy	
4: Recognise and protect accordingly all valued open spaces in the parish	Policy THP 7 – Heathfield Local Green Spaces	3, 4, 5

<b>NP Objective</b>	<b>Planning Policy (Chapter 6)</b>	<b>Community Initiative</b>
5: Seek to reverse the decline of the natural environment in the parish by protecting and increasing biodiversity	<p>Policy THP 8 Promoting nature recovery by protecting existing sites and features, increasing parish biodiversity and delivering biodiversity net gains</p> <p>THP 9 – Protecting and enhancing the parish tributary feeding the Hoffer Brook.</p>	4

## **Theme 2: Living village and sustainable development**

<b>NP Objective</b>	<b>Planning Policy (Chapter 6)</b>	<b>Community Initiative</b>
6: We will continue to be a living community, which sustains the primary school, shop and facilities	<p>Policy THP 10 – The Grainstore site</p> <p>Policy THP 11– Rural exception sites in Thriplow</p>	2
7: There will be limited small scale additional housing development focused in Thriplow near to existing shops and services	<p>Policy THP 10 – The Grainstore site</p> <p>Policy THP 11– Rural exception sites in Thriplow</p>	
8. All development to use sustainable building materials and consider energy efficiency	Policy THP 10 – The Grainstore site	
9. Plan for improved outdoor recreational facilities in the parish	Policy THP 14 - Development proposals resulting in better links between the Heathfield and Thriplow communities	5, 6 and 7

<b>NP Objective</b>	<b>Planning Policy (Chapter 6)</b>	<b>Community Initiative</b>
10. A safer, less congested village	Policy THP 12 – Improving parking provision and improving road safety in Thriplow and Heathfield	8
11. The quality and quantity of our rural footpath network and interconnectivity with neighbouring settlements will be improved.	Policy THP 13 - Protecting and improving the rural footpath network and sustainable connections to neighbouring settlements	6

### **Theme 3: Social Cohesion and Parish Links**

<b>NP Objective</b>	<b>Planning Policy (Chapter 6)</b>	<b>Community Initiative</b>
12. There will be more cohesion between the two communities of Thriplow and Heathfield	Policy THP 14 – Development proposals resulting in better links between the Heathfield and Thriplow communities.	7

## 6. Planning Policies

- 6.1. This chapter contains the planning policies. These planning policies will provide the basis for the determination of planning applications involving land that falls in the Thriplow and Heathfield NP area.

### THEME 1: PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND THE CHARACTER OF THE PARISH

**Objective 1: The character and quality of the built environment and landscape character in Heathfield will be improved.**

#### **Policy THP 1 – Improving the character and quality of Heathfield**

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

has direct implications for connectivity and there are different management regimes in place for different roads. The roads in Kingsway and Woburn Place/Whitehall Gardens are unadopted and managed by the Heathfield Residents Association. The roads in Hurdles Way are adopted but the common areas and car parking are managed by a private company. The roads in Ringstone and Pepperslade, however, are adopted and managed by the highways authority.



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

**Heathfield issue number 1:** Poor street scene environment at the main approach to Heathfield, via Heathfield Way

- 6.1.6. The main approach to Heathfield, via Heathfield Way is visually dominated by highways infrastructure and commercial uses, comprising the car sales company, accessed directly off the A505 and Duxford Business Park, located off Hurdles Way. These uses obscure the identity of Heathfield, as the most populated residential area in the parish, and contribute to a confused arrival experience.
- 6.1.7. The Duxford Business Park is occupied by Nivtar Distribution (see Figure 2) who operate a factory and storage, packing and distribution facility. The building, sometimes referred to as Heathfield House was originally built as the Sergeants Mess.
- 6.1.8. Landscaping is poor, almost absent, in this area. Boundary treatment to residential properties, (completed relatively recently at Woburn Place), alongside the eastern edge of Heathfield Way has been particularly unsympathetic, comprising a blank frontage of high close-boarded wooden fences and a narrow strip of verge (see Figure 2).
- 6.1.9. The overall effect is a harsh unwelcoming entrance to the estate. Green landscaping is limited to grassed areas, some trees and hedgerows along the A505 and residential gardens. This limited landscaping, together with the commercial uses results in poor visual and noise screening from the A505.



**Figure 2.** View of A505 and American Air museum beyond on leaving the Heathfield area, the only access route for Heathfield, Ringstone and Hurdles Way.

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

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

**Heathfield issue number 3: The A505 footpath**

- 6.1.12. There is a footpath running parallel to the A505 on the northern side. It is poorly maintained and overgrown. It also comes to an abrupt end beyond the first farm track/access to KWS to the west of the settlement, although at this point, there is a route which heads north towards the KWS site.

**Issue number 4: Pepperslade and Woburn Place pedestrian link**

- 6.1.13. Pepperslade, has its own access from the A505. The road winds around the residential areas of the rest of Heathfield to the west and reaches another cul-de-sac estate.
- 6.1.14. There is a physical link between Pepperslade and Woburn Place, provided by an uninviting gap in a brick wall that has ramped access on the western side. See Figure 3. Whilst the access is important and functional to users, visually it is not

welcoming. Due to the wall, it is difficult to see oncoming users and surveillance on the Pepperslade side is poor.



**Figure 3:** Ramp and doorway between Heathfield and Pepperslade is difficult for cyclists and provides no vehicle access

**Heathfield issue number 5:** Parking at Whitehall Gardens

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

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

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

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

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

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

6.1.18. With the exception of Whitehall Gardens and the children's play area, the open amenity areas are all on the edge of the settlement boundaries. This affords those residential areas on the edge of the settlement outwards views into open countryside. However, due to the density and layout of the residential areas few other residential areas enjoy these views. Furthermore, the amenity value here is reduced through parking (see Issue number 9).

6.1.19. The woodland, to the west of Hurdles Way and Ringstone, has no footpath access, thereby limiting its amenity value considerably.

**Heathfield issue number 9: Ringstone and Hurdles Way**

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

**Heathfield issue number 10: Lack of amenity facilities**

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

**Heathfield issue number 11: General lack of landscaping**

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

**Heathfield Analysis Map**

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

**Heathfield Enhancement Strategy**

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

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

- a) Lobby with council for adopting of roads in HRA space. Seek understanding of how residents pay twice by paying council tax while not getting any cover and paying into separate private organisation to maintain areas.
- b) Agree with Hurdles Way management company to unify design of open spaces between Hurdles Way and Kingsway.
- c) Explore fund raising possibilities such as Lottery funding for improving communities.
- d) Use section 106 funds and other locally available funding (e.g. CIL monies), to foster pride and sense of possibility to improve area. Use for landscaping

first Ringstone and Hurdles Way, seeking improvements to car parking with improvements to landscaping and circulation, then set as model for all other areas.

- e) Seek funding for opening emergency routes from Highways
- f) Provide new signage throughout, to unify sense of place within area.

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

- a) Provide architectural signage arch/ feature, near to main entrance to provide sense of arrival and identity. Any additional signage or street furniture should use consistent language and design.
- b) Flank with sentinel tree planting to enhance vista.
- c) Provide evergreen low maintenance hedging, such as yew, along both sides of approach, to screen commercial use on left and close boarded fence on right.
- d) Shared surface / rumble strip finish at entrance and roundabout (as figure 118) to calm traffic and humanize.

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

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

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

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

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

- a) Dedicate areas for residential and visitor parking, avoiding, large numbers of vehicles together. Use landscaping to reduce visual dominance of parked cars and increase sense of the green space. Provide dedicated car free edges which can also provide pedestrian friendly routes to central green space.
- b) Reprioritise the street scape from vehicular use to pedestrian and sustainable travel modes with change of surface material, signage, level changes and a one way system for vehicles.

- c) Maximise the biodiversity value of the green spaces with native trees, informal planting and species-rich wildflower meadows within this Local Character Area and provide good passive surveillance to offer the opportunity for safe play spaces for younger children.
- 6.1.30. Measures for managing connectivity issues arising from the cul-de-sac nature of the settlement (**addressing issue number 6**)
- a) Activate western green spaces between Kingsway and Hurdles Way with visually open boundary treatments such as a low hedges, clear access points and a defined footpath to create an inviting recreational area and improved connectivity.
  - b) Provide an emergency access only route through green space, adjacent to Duxford Business Park, to Hurdles Way deterring a potential circular ‘rat run’ for other vehicular traffic.
- 6.1.31. Measures to address Kingsway related issues (**addressing issue number 7**)
- a) Include additional sympathetic traffic calming measures to increase road user awareness for children entering the HeART play space and create a more welcoming eastern approach for users of the play area.
  - b) Plant trees to create defined parking bays as well as enhancing green corridors connecting to the surrounding countryside.
  - c) Visually open-up access points and signpost to Heathfield Open Space and HeART play space to raise community awareness and increase use.
  - d) Use incidental green space to create a network of ‘pocket parks’, each with its own character and theme.
- 6.1.32. Improving the utility and amenity value of open space (**addressing issue number 8**)
- a) Open up gap in boundary vegetation at public footpath entry from west to frame views into and out of settlement and create an enhanced sense of arrival.
  - b) Provide meandering access routes with areas of open glades within woodland for ‘nature trail’ experience for local residents.
  - c) Central area of mown amenity grass retained for informal ‘kick-about’ and other sports. Other areas could be maintained as wildflower meadow with informally mown footpaths. This could include log piles, hibernacula, bee hotels and other wildlife habitat features with information boards to increase biodiversity within the woodland area and engage community.
- 6.1.33. Addressing parking issues at Ringstone and Hurdles Way (**addressing issue number 9**)

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

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

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

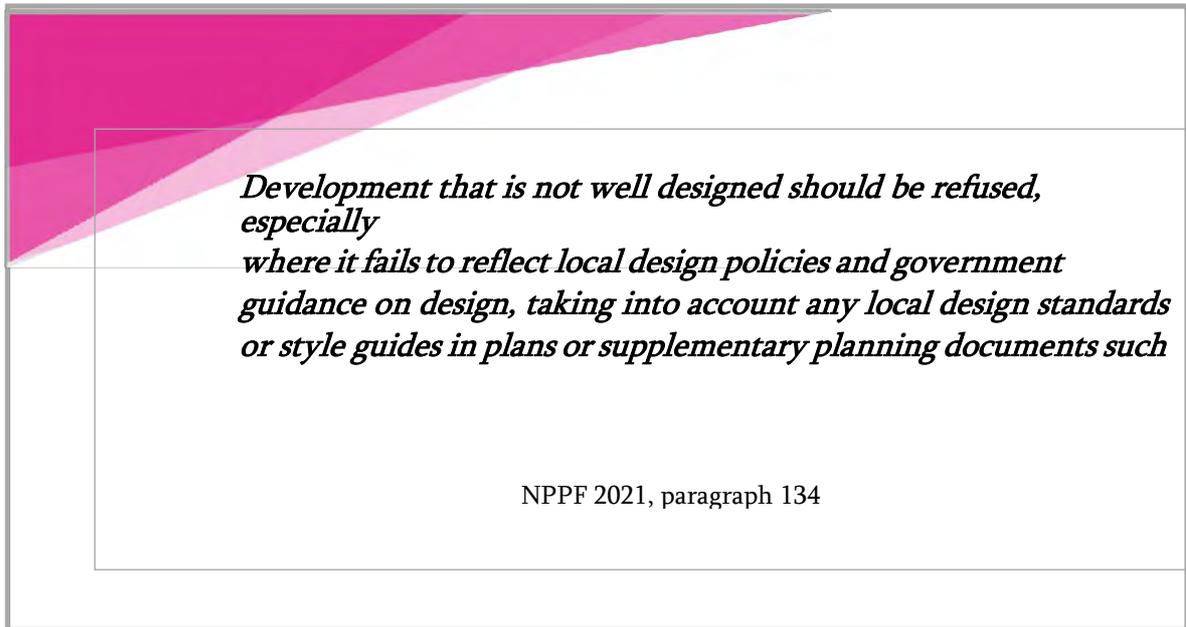
**6.1.35. Addressing general lack of landscaping (addressing issue number 11)**

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



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

NPPF 2021, paragraph 125



Policy intent:

- 6.1.36. It is estimated that 60 per cent of the parish’s population lives in Heathfield<sup>4</sup>,- Despite this, the settlement of Heathfield is not identified in this plan or the Local Plan as being an appropriate location for additional housing. This is because access to amenities, shops and services is lacking at Heathfield, as well as being surrounded by green belt. In addition, there are considerable noise and air pollution impacts from local main highways which affect residential amenity on the estate.
- 6.1.37. However, this does not mean that planning applications will not come forward, for example householder planning applications for minor development. In addition, proposals at the strategic level which impact on the parish cannot be ruled out. For example, in response to the “Call for sites” exercise, undertaken by South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC), together with Cambridge City Council for the Greater Cambridge Local Plan, four sites were submitted as being potentially available for development covering all of the open (and currently designated as green belt) land between Heathfield and Thriplow. The area is referred to land to north of the A505 – Duxford. Whilst this development has been ruled out in the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan, it is an example of what has been considered in this area in the past.
- 6.1.38. The purpose of Policy THP 1 is to ensure that any new development within Heathfield meets high design standards and to ensure that the existing challenges

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<sup>4</sup> See DSE Review 2019.

at Heathfield are not used as an excuse for poor standards of design in any future development. The policy also requires proposals to implement available opportunities for improving the overall character, quality and cohesiveness of Heathfield. This will apply on a proportionate basis and minor householder application schemes which otherwise are policy compliant will not be expected to contribute.

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

### **Policy THP 1 –Improving the character and quality of Heathfield**

All development schemes will be expected to achieve high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and building.

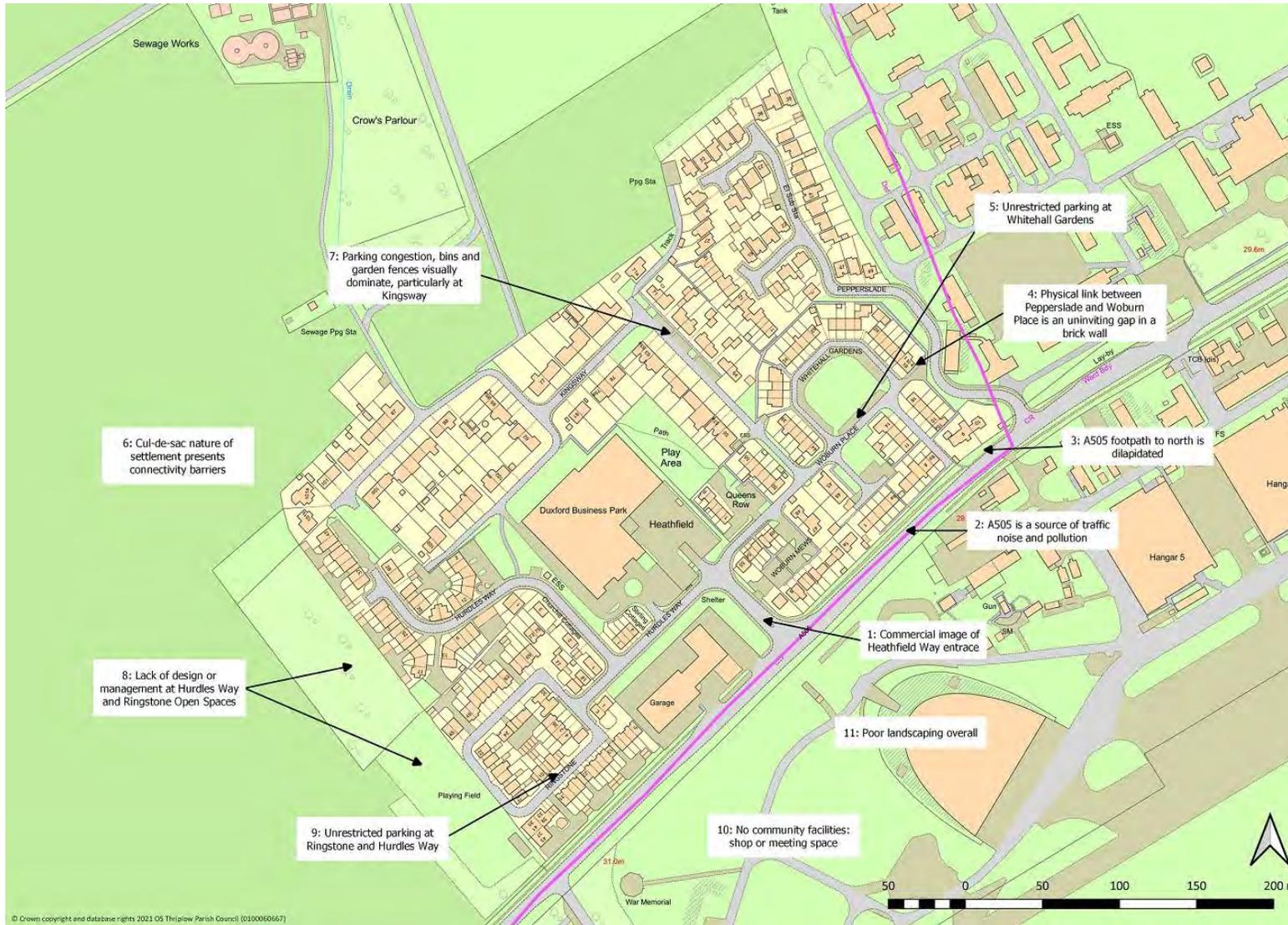
This means:

- a) Taking a design-led approach to addressing the parking needs generated by a development in line with Policy THP 12 in this plan
- b) Retaining existing landscape features that have amenity or ecological value and taking opportunities to incorporate new landscape features such as trees and hedgerows, particularly where this will have public amenity value.
- c) Ensuring there is a high quality of architectural design and landscaping on any frontage to a public space, including residential streets and open spaces.

Existing challenges relating to design, landscaping and layout at the Heathfield estate will not be accepted as an excuse for poor standards of design in any future development.

All development proposals which come forward in Heathfield or which otherwise impact on the residential areas in Heathfield will be expected to use available opportunities for improving the character, quality and cohesiveness of the area and the way it functions. This could include implementing the environmental, landscape and public realm improvements identified on Map 9, The Heathfield Enhancement Strategy as far as they are applicable to the proposal. Expectations will be commensurate with the scale of the proposed development.

Where necessary to deliver sustainable development and where directly, fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development, off-site contributions will be secured to achieve improvements set out in the Heathfield Enhancement Strategy.



Map 8: Heathfield issues



Map 9: Heathfield enhancement strategy

## **Policy THP 2 – Provision of additional amenities in Heathfield**

- 6.2. Whilst Heathfield residents have good access to outdoor amenity space, there is no access to amenities such as a shop or a community space. This is a significant issue especially considering that 60 % of the population lives in Heathfield and there is poor connectivity to the amenities in Thriplow.
- 6.2.1. This plan does not support additional residential development in Heathfield other than sensitively designed infill development that is allowed under the Local Plan. This plan would however welcome proposals which would deliver improvements in facilities and amenities in the area.
- 6.2.2. There is a clear grassed area to the west (north of Heathfield), which has been suggested by the local farm owner to be a possible development site. The site assessment undertaken as part of this plan found that the site would be unsuitable for residential development. However, subject to a proposal being compatible with the green belt designation, this site could be used as a village hall and/or sports pavilion.
- 6.2.3. The Duxford Business Park is a commercial building with its own off-street parking, located in the middle of Heathfield. It currently provides business units and is considered to be in a good location for providing amenity space for community purposes. Space is limited so suitable uses would be limited to a small shop or small community meeting space.

### Policy intent

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

## **Policy THP 2 – Provision of additional amenities in Heathfield**

**Development proposals for a new community meeting space or community facility to serve the Heathfield community including a shop or small community meeting space will be strongly supported.**

**The provision of community meeting space facilities will be particularly welcomed as part of development proposals coming forward on the Duxford Business Park site (as shown on Map 10).**



Map 10: Duxford Business Centre

**Objective 2: The existing built environment and landscape character of Thriplow village will be protected and enhanced.**

**Policy THP 3 – Protecting and enhancing village character in Thriplow**

Context and rationale:

- 6.3. Thriplow village is very much characterised by the open land, largely farmland, that surrounds it. Thriplow Farm, Dellers Farm and Smiths Farm frame the entire village. The village roads, Church Street, Farm Lane, Lower Street and School Lane/Fowlmere Road form a circular pattern of linear residential development with farmland and other open green space remaining in the centre. Middle Street cuts through the middle of this circle from north to south, again with a linear development pattern.
- 6.3.1. The north west corner of Thriplow village departs from the character of the older parts of the village (south of Fowlmere Road). This is an area of twentieth century housing comprising planned estates of local authority housing.
- 6.3.2. There is a well-established and well-used network of public rights of way criss crossing Thriplow village. For example, public footpaths run in an east west direction providing attractive pedestrian routes from Lower Street, Narrow Lane through to Middle Street, the Baulk and then the View on to Church Street. Along these rural routes, walkers enjoy the views and setting provided by grazed meadows and attractive farmland.



**Figure 5:** Farmed grazing land viewed from the narrow lane



**Figure 4:** Public footpath looking west towards Middle Street from Church Street, the View

- 6.3.3. The tapestry of rural spaces between the buildings which make up Thriplow village is a distinctive characteristic of the village. It is a precious and valued attribute.
- 6.3.4. As can be seen from Map 11, the vast majority of Thriplow village falls in the Thriplow conservation area. The only areas that do not are the twentieth century development along Foreman's Road and Sherald's Croft Lane, semi-detached properties along Fowlmere Road and the grainstore site on Lodge Road.
- 6.3.5. A Landscape Character Assessment was undertaken for the parish in 2020. This identifies six different areas in and around Thriplow village as follows: TP1 – Church Street, TP2 – Brook Road and School Lane, TP3 – Middle Street and Farm Lane, TP4 – The Green, TP5 – Sheralds Croft Lane & Fowlmere Road and TP6 – Lodge Road and Lower Street. Appendix 1 to this document provides, at Maps 1 and 2, the boundaries for each Local Character Area. It also includes a character appraisal of each of the Local Character Areas including a) Location and description b) Settlement pattern and character of built form c) Open spaces and interactions with settlement d) Aspects of value (Heritage and Access) and e) Perceptual and visual experience – important views.
- 6.3.6. Only landscape character area TP5 (Sheralds Croft Lane and Fowlmere Road) falls outside of the Thriplow conservation area.
- 6.3.7. In character area 1 the LCA finds that *twentieth century additions to the housing stock have been reasonably well absorbed into the historic pattern, disrupting it by sometimes sitting behind the primary building line, and their presence only highlighted by modern materials on access points or curtilages.*
- 6.3.8. In character area 2, the LCA finds that *Pigeon's Close is a small low density late twentieth housing estate set within maturing trees that is relatively unobtrusive.*
- 6.3.9. In addition to the conservation area status, there are several other site-specific policy designations (shown on Map 11), which the Local Plan applies to Thriplow village:
- i. Policy NH/11: *Protected Village Amenity Areas* identifies Protected Village Amenity Areas.
  - ii. Policy NH/12: *Local Green Space* defines spaces in Thriplow as local green space sites.
  - iii. NH/13: *Important Countryside Frontage* defines sites as having important countryside frontages. Important countryside frontages are shown on Map 11 at School Lane, Church Street and Middle Street.

- 6.3.10. The site-specific policies described above, together with the green belt status of the open land enveloping Thriplow village help to ensure that the local character is protected or enhanced when development proposals come forward.
- 6.3.11. In addition, because of the conservation area status of Thriplow village and the listed building status of a number of buildings in Thriplow village, Policy NH/14: *Heritage Assets* in the Local Plan will be highly relevant. Heritage assets include listed buildings, conservation areas and non-designated heritage assets.
- 6.3.12. It is considered that existing planning policies in the Local Plan provide an appropriate and good framework to ensure that planning decisions result in the protection or enhancement of the distinguishing features in Thriplow village. This is evidenced through the observations of modern development in the Thriplow Landscape Character Assessment (2020) prepared by Lucy Batchelor-Wylam.
- 6.3.13. In the context of Thriplow village, and as noted in the landscape character assessment the open land that remains in the village is a key distinguishing feature. The open spaces which currently separate out clusters of built form are also very much part of the historic character of the village.

Policy intent:

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



### **Policy THP 3 – Protecting and enhancing village character in Thriplow**

1. All development schemes will be expected to achieve high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and building.
2. To be supported, all development proposals in Thriplow village must contribute positively to the existing characteristics including the tapestry of rural spaces that exists between the Thriplow village built environment. This means:
  - a) careful and well thought-through landscaping that takes into account the characteristics in the Local Character Area (defined and described in Appendix 1) in which it is located;
  - b) ensuring the scheme assimilates comfortably within its existing site context, blends into the existing wider rural setting and is not visually intrusive from the highway or other public places (including public rights of way);
  - c) built form and layout (including densities, scale and mass) is appropriate given the existing site context as well as the built form and layout on neighbouring sites;
  - d) retaining a close relationship between the built form and the surrounding open space and countryside (for example by allowing views of surrounding open space and countryside to penetrate through a scheme) and
  - e) ensuring the significance of heritage assets and their setting (including listed buildings, non-designated heritage assets and the conservation area itself) are conserved or enhanced as a result of new development.

## Policy THP 4 - Important Countryside Frontages in Thriplow village

- 6.4. As noted earlier in this plan, there are three areas in Thriplow village which have been identified in the 2018 Local Plan as being Important Countryside Frontage, via Policy NH/13: Important Countryside Frontage.
- 6.4.1. This NP has identified additional frontages that meet the criteria for Important Countryside Frontage designation. These are shown on Map 12.

“The View” ICF: this ICF follows the route of public footpath number 234/3, referred to locally as the View. This is a well-trodden path used to access one part of the village, in Middle Street, from the other, in Church Street. The entrance to the footpath off Middle Street is along the village edge, just south of the Manor House and the exit onto Church Street alongside Manor Farmhouse. To the north, this route fronts onto horse paddocks. The outlook to the south is of open countryside that sweeps into part of the village.

“The Baulk” ICF: this ICF follows the route of public footpath number 234/2, referred to locally as the Baulk, which runs further north from path 234/3 and parallel to it. The entrance to the footpath off Middle Street is between residential curtilages and the path exits behind the buildings of Bacon’s Farm, opposite a row of bungalows onto Church Street. There are open outlooks to both the north and the south along the footpath. The frontages marked on the map functions as a rural gap with strong countryside character between three parts of the village, Bacon’s Farm to the east, Middle Street to the west and School Lane to the north.

“Narrow Lane” ICF: this ICF follows the route of public footpath number 234/1. This is a well trodden path used for accessing one part of the village, at Lower Street, from the other, at Middle Street. The entrance to the footpath on Lower Street is framed by village dwellings and the exit onto Middle Street likewise. There are open outlooks to the north and south along this short stretch of footpath between these parts of the village. The frontage marked on the map functions as a rural gap with strong countryside character between three different parts of the village, Bacon’s Farm to the east, Middle Street to the west and School Lane to the north.

“Sheralds Croft/Foremans Road” ICF: this is the frontage along the farm track where Foremans Road meets Sheralds Croft in the north western part of the settlement edge. Here the open countryside sweeps into the northern part of the village.

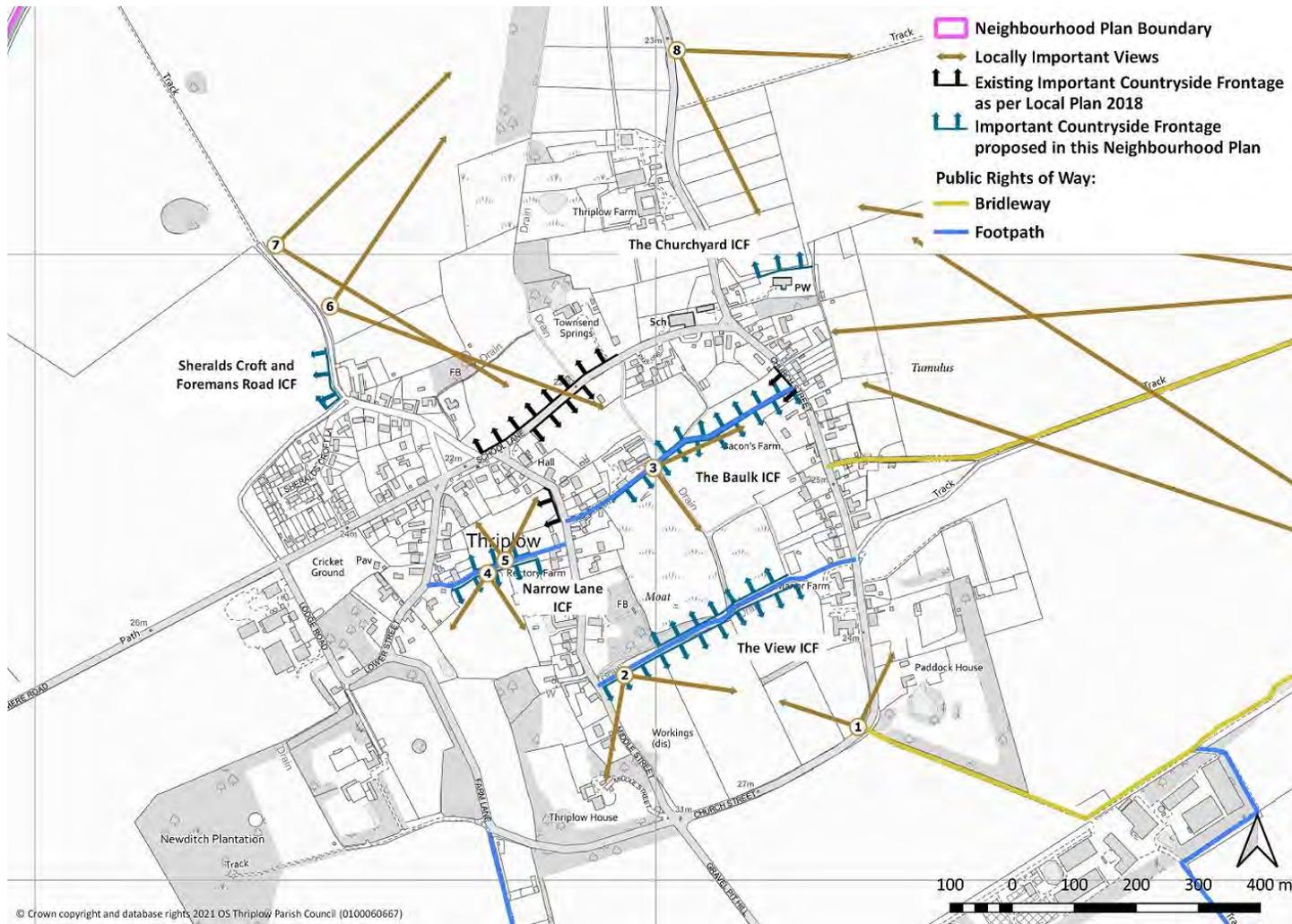
“The Churchyard” ICF: this is the frontage looking north from the churchyard. Within the setting of the Grade II\* listed church, the land has a strong countryside character and sweeps into this northern edge of Thriplow village.

Policy intent

6.4.2. The intent of Policy THP 4 is to apply the Local Plan important countryside frontage designation to the frontages market on Policy Map 12

**Policy THP 4 – Important Countryside Frontages in Thriplow village**

1. The frontages shown on Policy Map 12, and listed below, are designated as Important Countryside Frontages as defined in the 2018 Local Plan.
  - a) The View” Important Countryside Frontage
  - b) “The Baulk” Important Countryside Frontage
  - c) “Narrow Lane” Important Countryside Frontage
  - d) “Sheralds Croft and Foremans Road” Important Countryside Frontage
  - e) “Churchyard” Important Countryside Frontage
  
2. Planning permission will be refused where a development proposal compromises any of the following purposes of the frontages:
  - a) Penetrates or sweeps into the built-up area providing a significant connection between the street scene and the surrounding rural area;  
or
  - b) Provides an important rural break between two nearby but detached parts of the development framework.



**Map 12: Thriplow Important Countryside Frontages (locally important views - see Policy TH5 - are also shown to illustrate how they interrelate)**

**Objective 3: New development will be sensitive to our rural environment and reflect our rural roots**

**Policy THP 5 - Parish-wide locally valued views.**

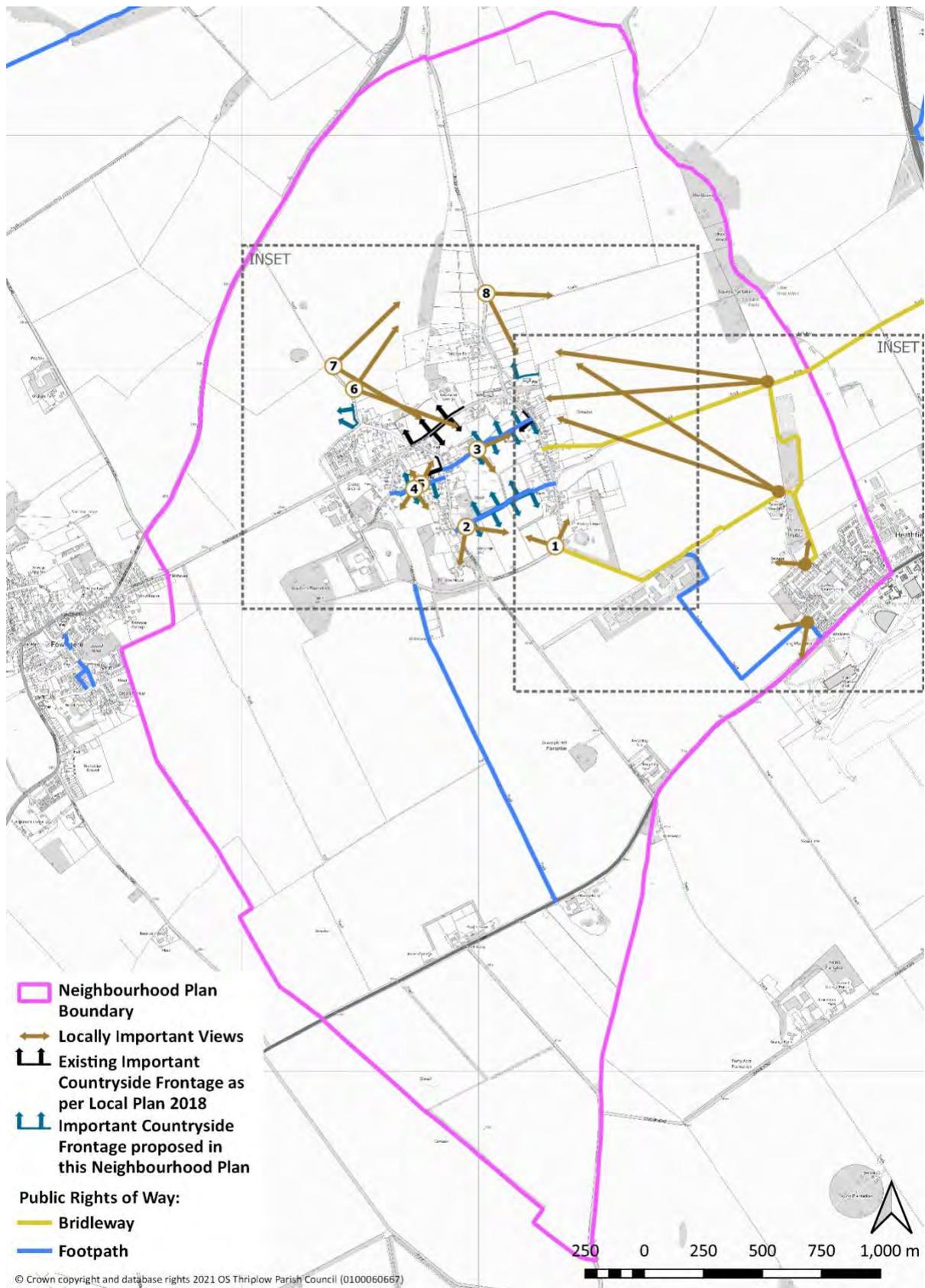
- 6.5. Chapter 5 highlights the importance of preserving and enhancing valued views of the open countryside found within the village of Thriplow, on the edges of the Thriplow village, on the edges of the settlement of Heathfield and from the popular network of public rights of way.
- 6.5.1. A views assessment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

Policy intent

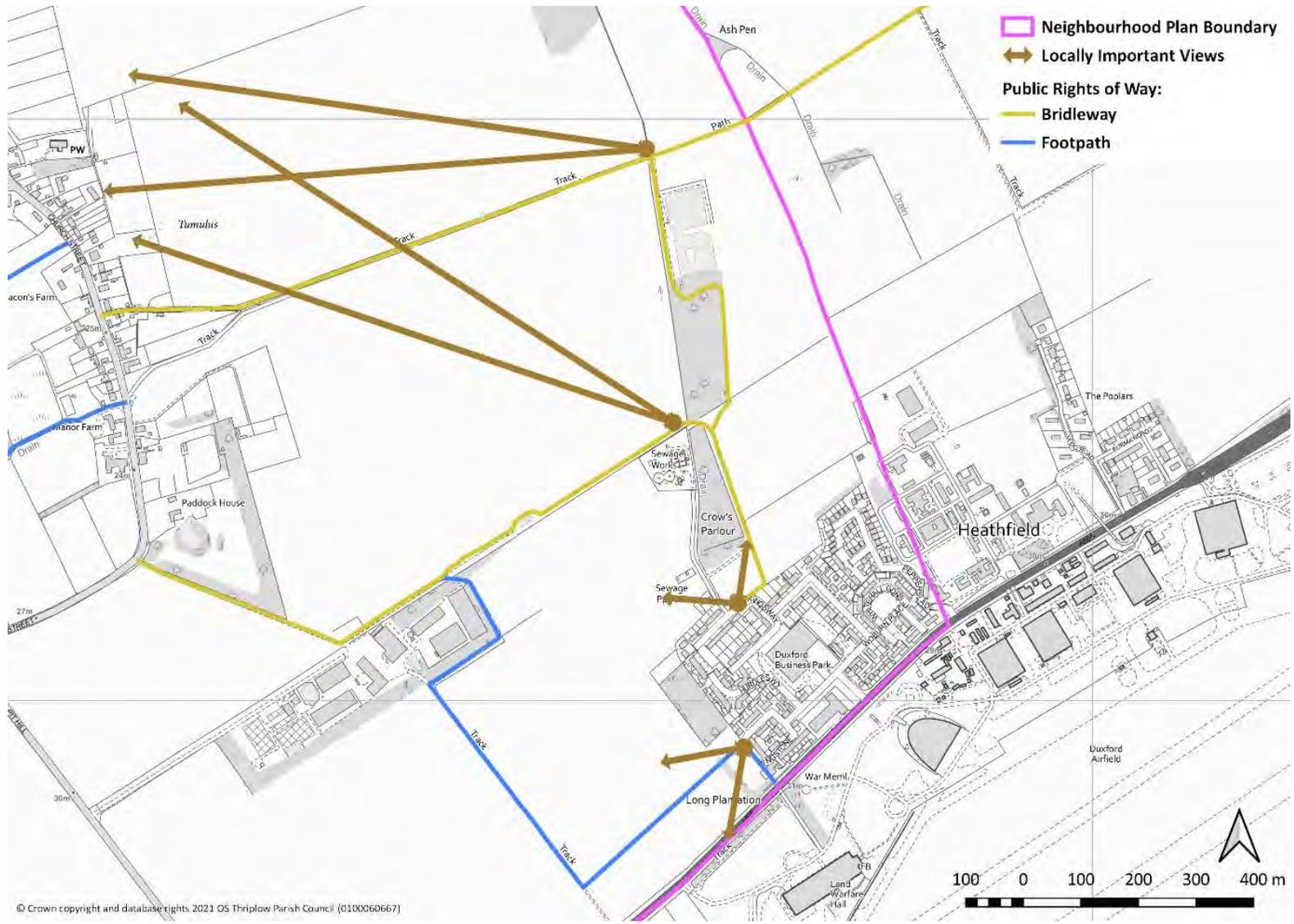
- 6.5.3. To recognise, preserve and enhance locally valued views

**Policy THP 5: Locally valued views**

**New development proposals will not be supported if they adversely impact on the locally important views identified on Policy Maps 12, 13 and 14.**



Map 13: Parish-wide important views



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

## Policy THP 6 – Supporting the rural economy

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

### Policy intent

- 6.6.2. The intent of this policy is to recognise the importance of the rural economy in the parish whilst also requiring development proposals are always sympathetic to the parish’s rural roots and landscape setting and do not adversely impact residential amenity of parishioners.
- 6.6.3. Sub-paragraph e) has been added to the policy in response to the HRA undertaking for this plan. In addition to the requirements set out here, proposals must also comply with other policies in the development plan, including Policy THP 8: *Promoting nature recovery by protecting existing sites and features, increasing biodiversity and delivering biodiversity net gain.*

### **Policy THP 6 – Supporting the rural economy**

Development proposals which support existing agricultural and other land-based rural businesses in the parish will be permitted subject to the proposal:

- a) Being of a scale appropriate to its rural location
- b) Not damaging the residential environment or have an unacceptable impact on the roads in the parish
- c) Not adversely impacting rural character and tranquility in the parish through inappropriate urbanisation, noise or light pollution; and
- d) Maintaining or enhancing the local character and prevailing openness of the landscape, as described in the Thriplow and Heathfield Landscape Character Assessment.
- e) Avoiding significant impact on hedgerows or any severance of bat flight lines to protect foraging and commuting habitat for Barbastelle bats which could belong to the population protected by Eversden & Wimpole Woods SAC.

**Objective 4: Recognise and protect accordingly all valued open spaces in the parish. Policy THP 7 – Heathfield Local Green Spaces**

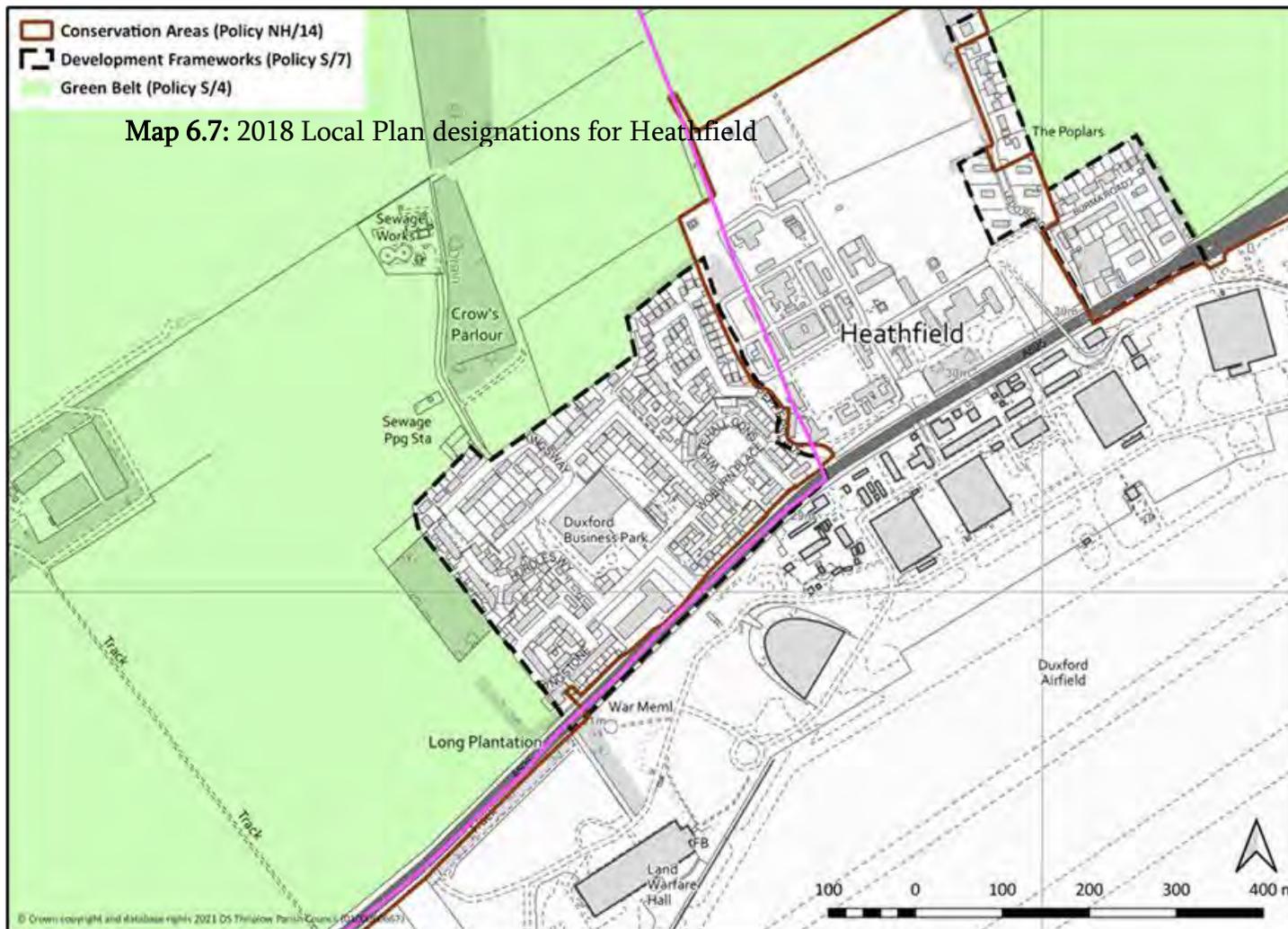
6.7. Heathfield currently enjoys the following open space facilities:

- Playing field to the west of flats at Hurdles Way and Ringstone
- Whitehall gardens green amenity area
- A play space located behind residential properties at Kingsway
- A large recreation area, Heathfield Park, on the northern edge in the green belt.

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

Policy intent:

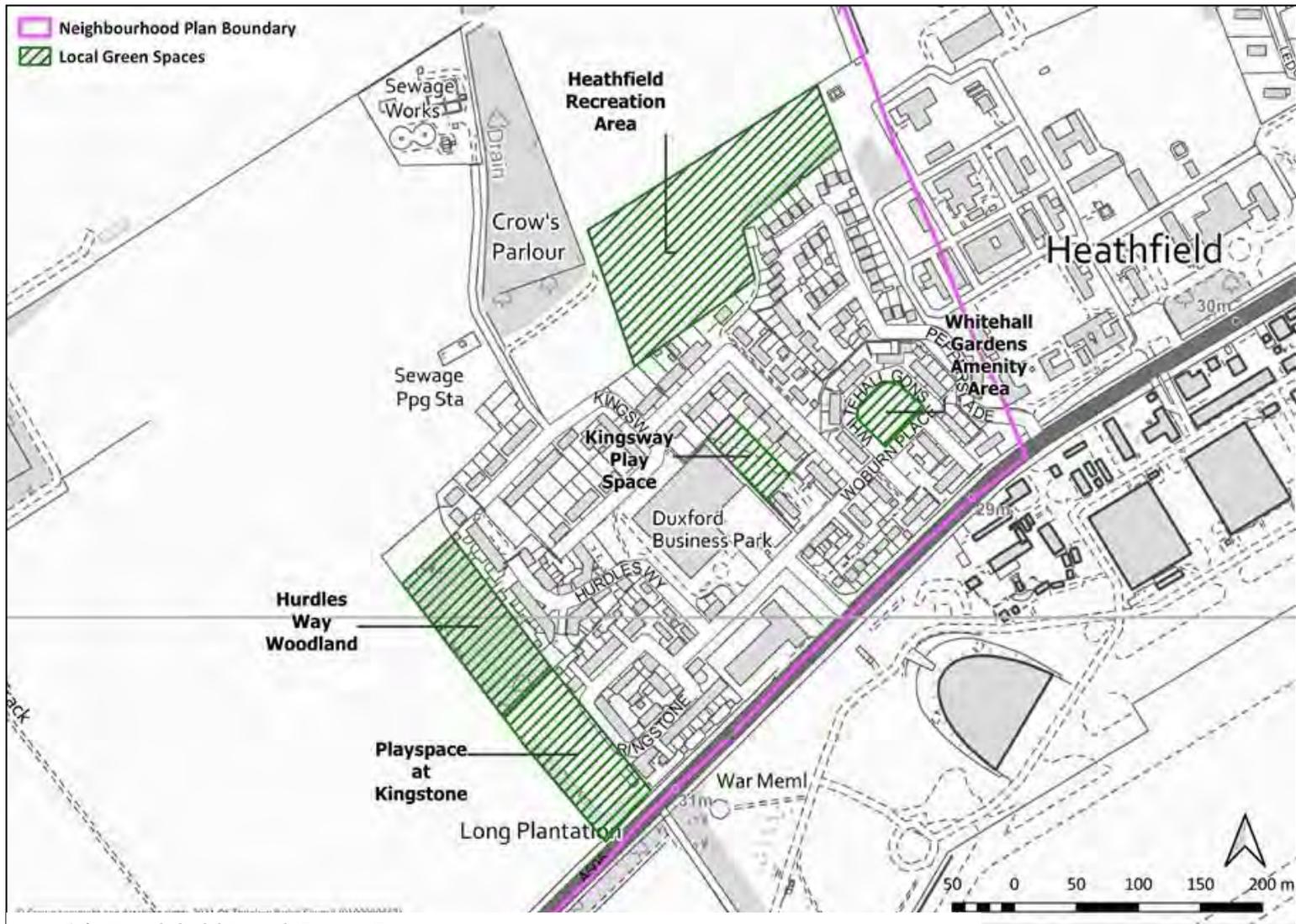
6.7.2. The intention of Policy THP 7 is to give the same land use protection to the open spaces in Heathfield as the open spaces in Thriplow



**Map 15: 2018 Local Plan designations for Heathfield**

### **Policy THP 7 – Heathfield Local Green spaces**

1. The following sites as shown on Policy Map 16 are designated as Local Green Spaces
  - a) Heathfield recreation area
  - b) Kingsway play space
  - c) Whitehall Gardens Amenity Area
  - d) Play space at Ringstone
2. Development on these sites will not be acceptable other than in very special circumstances in line with national policy, or where it will enhance the function of the space (e.g. play or gym equipment on the recreation areas) without compromising the primary function of the space as a Local Green Space.



Map 16: Heathfield Local Green Spaces

**Objective 5: Seek to reverse biodiversity decline by protecting and increasing biodiversity in the parish.**

**Policy THP 8: Promoting nature recovery by protecting existing sites and features, increasing parish biodiversity and delivering biodiversity net gain**

Context and rationale

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

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

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

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

6.8.3. In addition to the SSSIs, and according to [magic.gov.uk](http://magic.gov.uk), the parish includes the following additional priority habitats – see Map 17.

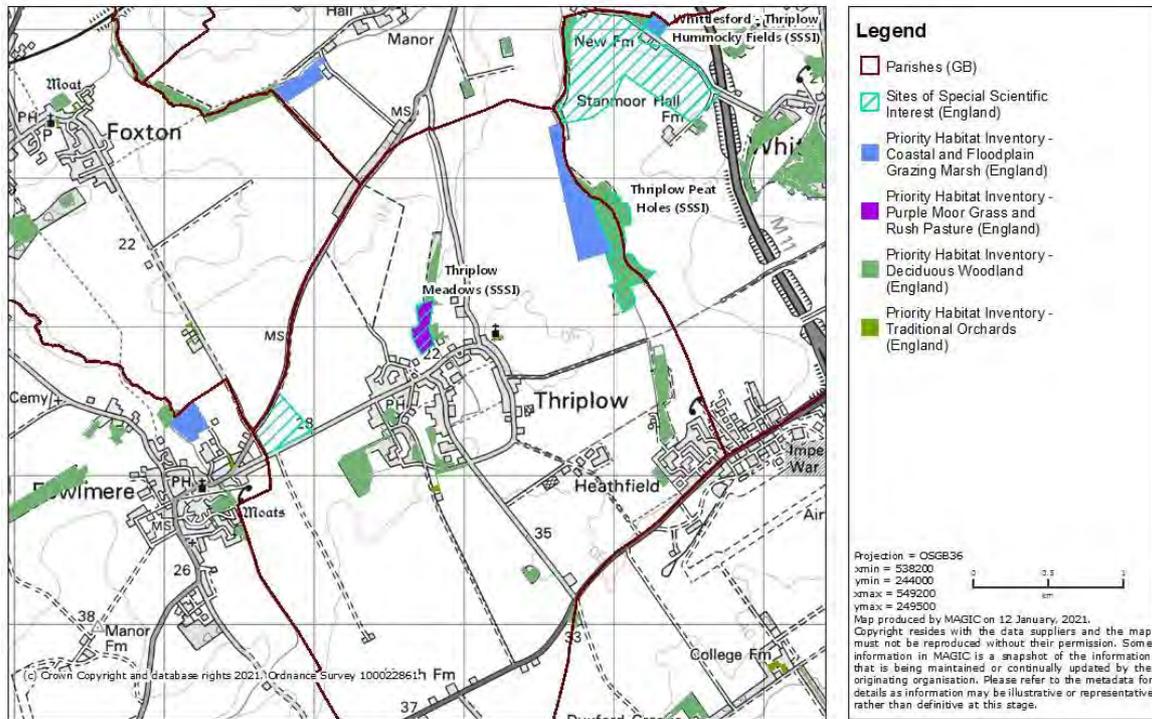
- Purple moor grass and rush pasture
- Floodplain grazing marsh
- Areas of deciduous woodland
- Traditional orchards

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

6.8.4. Natural Cambridgeshire, the Local Nature Partnership for the whole of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough provides strategic leadership for the recovery of nature under their Doubling Nature vision. This vision seeks to increase the amount of land managed for nature from 8% to 16% by 2050 and part of that strategy is to secure high quality 'green' (use of green elements, such as trees, forests, fields and parks) and 'blue' (use of blue elements, such as rivers, canals, ponds, wetlands, floodplains, water treatment facilities) infrastructure within new residential or commercial developments.

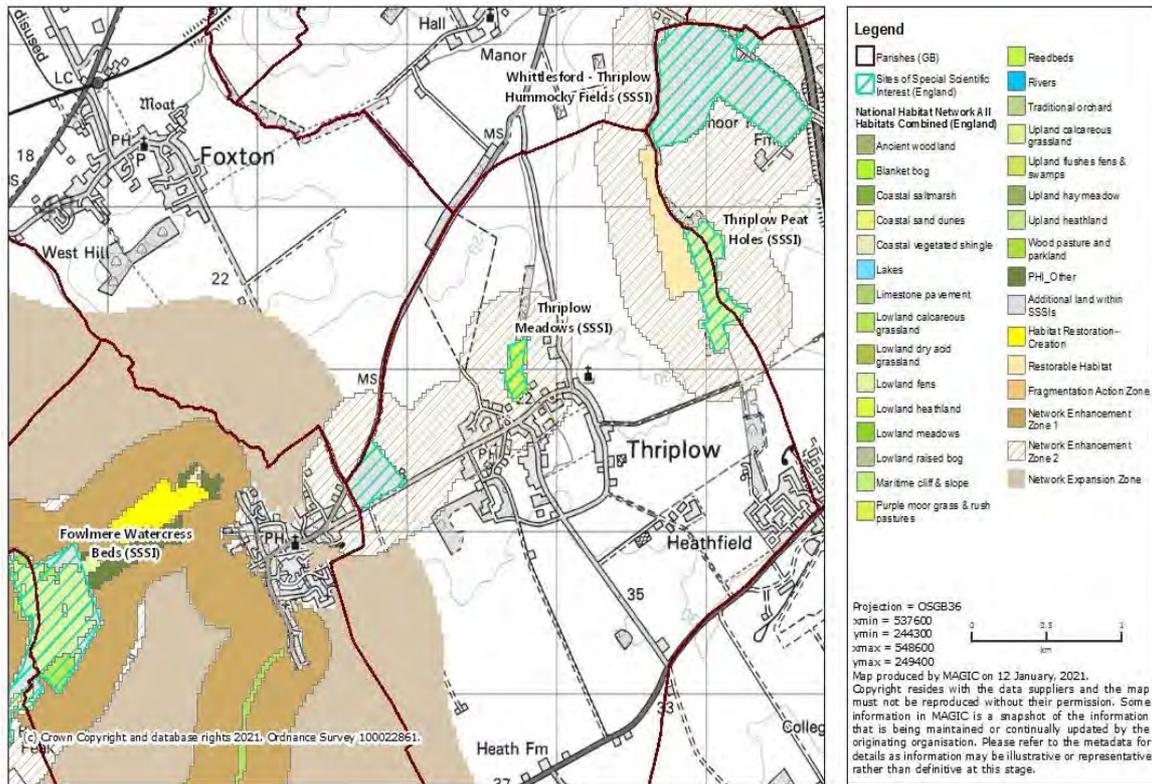
- 6.8.5. Green Infrastructure and resilient ecological networks play an important role in aiding climate change adaptation. Nature-based solutions such as tree planting are key but should follow Right Tree, Right Place principles - the need to increase tree cover whilst protecting what is special and valued in the landscape and keeping the environmental benefits already being delivered; for example, not planting trees on chalk grassland, areas of peat or underlying archaeology but focussing on areas which would benefit additional tree planting such as growing existing woodlands or tree planting in hedges.
- 6.8.6. Magic Map ([magic.defra.gov.uk](https://magic.defra.gov.uk)) identifies areas highlighted by Natural England (2020) as being part of a national habitat network (see Map 18). The habitat network maps are intended to be used to help identify areas for future habitat creation and restoration at a landscape scale but need to be considered alongside other local datasets and knowledge (Natural England 2020). Network enhancement zone 2 is defined by Natural England *as land connecting existing patches of primary and associated habitats which is less likely to be suitable for creation of the primary habitat. Action in this zone that improves the biodiversity value through land management changes and/or green infrastructure provision can be targeted here* (ibid.) See <https://data.gov.uk/dataset/0ef2ed26-2f04-4e0f-9493-ffbdbfaeb159/habitat-networks-england> for more detail on this. Map 18 shows those areas which are relevant to this NP, identified as network enhancement zone 2. These are two areas of land surrounding and in between the Whittlesford/Thriplow Hummocky Fields. Thriplow Meadows and Thriplow Peat Holes SSSIs.

# MAGiC ity habitats in Heathfield and Thriplow parish 2021



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

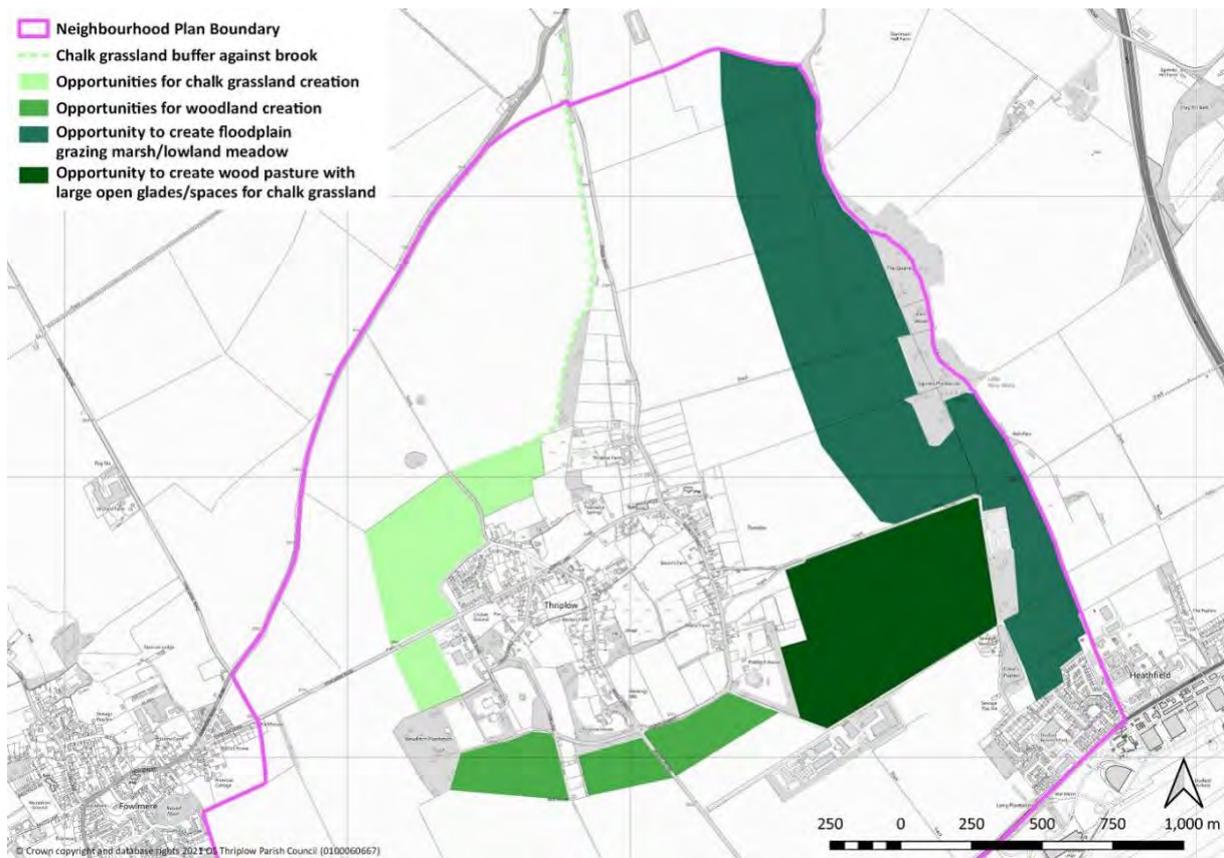
## MAGiC National Habitat Network in the parish 2021



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

6.8.7. In addition to the maps available from MAGIC, the NP group have prepared a further map, which identifies areas of important habitat, alongside areas where there are opportunities to provide improvements in parish biodiversity. This map complements and extends habitat network enhancement zones shown on Map 18 using local knowledge and green and blue infrastructure principles. The creation of better linked habitat network by conserving, creating and/or enlarging existing habitats can also help with adaptation to climate change. Opportunities which enable sequestration of carbon should also be prioritized.

6.8.8. These are shown below in Map 19.



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

6.8.9. Policy THP 8 requires all proposals to exploit available opportunities to improve biodiversity. Such opportunities will vary, depending on the location, type or scale of a scheme. For small schemes, measures could be limited to providing features in the design of new buildings (a green or biodiverse roof or integrating bird box features targeted at specific species) whereas larger schemes may present opportunities to create new habitats such as woodland, particularly where these would bring benefits to existing habitats nearby – see opportunities identified on Maps 18 and 19.

#### The mitigation hierarchy

6.8.10. Policy THP 8 expects development proposals to have applied the mitigation hierarchy in the planning of a scheme. The term ‘mitigation hierarchy’ refers to the requirements set out in paragraph 180 of the NPPF 2021 whereby if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort compensated for, then planning permission should be refused.

#### Delivering Biodiversity Net Gain

6.8.11. Policy THP 8 requires proposals to deliver measurable Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). The Environment Act has mandated that minimum measurable Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) for all developments. This requires that the

biodiversity value of the development exceeds the pre-development biodiversity value of the site by a minimum of 10%. Biodiversity value is measured using a metric produced by DEFRA and the baseline value is calculated from the condition of the site before any intervention has occurred.

- 6.8.12. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is an approach to development, and/or land management, which aims to leave the natural environment in a measurable better state and is a key policy requirement of the Environment Act. The NP should show a clear commitment to delivering high quality BNG within Cambridgeshire. Local Planning Authorities should seek a minimum of 10% net gain but may set a more ambitious BNG target for their county. Any target should be achievable and evidence based.

#### Policy intent (Policy THP 8)

- 6.8.13. The intent of Policy THP 8 is firstly to identify parish-specific sites and features, which must be taken account of when development proposals come forward.
- 6.8.14. Secondly, the intent is to ensure the mitigation hierarchy is applied in the decision-making process.
- 6.8.15. The intent of Policy THP 8 is also to highlight local opportunities to deliver biodiversity improvements in the parish and provide a guide as to how sites could potentially achieve Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). This policy will be applicable to proposals coming forward in all parts of the parish.
- 6.8.16. With respect to delivering BNG, in its Biodiversity SPD, SCDC/Greater Cambridge Strategic Planning seeks a 20% level of BNG above pre-development baseline conditions.
- 6.8.17. For developments larger than 9 dwellings or 0.5 hectares, developers are expected to use the Defra Biodiversity Metric 3.0, or its successor for calculating the pre-development baseline and demonstrating a post development baseline.
- 6.8.18. For minor developments (fewer than 10 residential units or an area of less than 0.5 hectares) and householder applications, the Defra “small sites” biodiversity metric should be used
- 6.8.19. Policy THP 8 complements adopted Local Plan policy NH/4: *Biodiversity* Biodiversity and the guidance set out in the Greater Cambridge Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document 2022. With respect to the latter, this includes Biodiversity Issue B5 – *Biodiversity provision in the design of new buildings and open spaces*, Biodiversity Issue B6 – *Provision of biodiverse and living roofs* and Biodiversity Issue B7 – *Biodiversity Net Gain*

**Policy THP 8 – Promoting nature recovery by protecting existing sites and features, increasing parish biodiversity and delivering biodiversity net gain**

1. Development close to or involving a site or feature of biodiversity value, must take full account of that value. This includes:

**Sites:**

- a) The designated Sites of Importance for Special Scientific Interest (see Map 17)
  - b) Areas of Priority Habitat, including purple moor grass and rush pasture, floodplain grazing marsh, areas of deciduous woodland and traditional orchards (see Map 18)
  - c) Sites identified locally as being important for biodiversity, including the tributary feeding the Hoffer Brook.
2. For all development proposals, the hierarchy of mitigation should be embedded into the design of the development with the following steps implemented in order:
    - a) Firstly, avoid impacts. This means retaining habitats of value for enhancement and management and retaining species in situ.
    - b) Secondly, mitigate impacts where these have been found to be unavoidable. Through replacement of lost protected and priority habitats and accommodating displaced species in the site boundary
    - c) Thirdly, compensate if mitigation measures are insufficient.

Continued on next page

### Policy continued

3. All proposals will be expected to demonstrate how available opportunities have been taken to deliver green or blue infrastructure that enhances and links existing sites and features of biodiversity value and the wildlife that depends on them. In doing so regard should be had to the opportunities identified on Map 19.
4. When delivering biodiversity net gain as part of meeting the Local Plan policy requirements set out in Policy NH/4: Biodiversity, the following priorities for biodiversity improvements in the parish should be considered:
  - a) Opportunities to grow and link existing ecological networks in the parish as shown on Policy Map 19 following the Lawton principle of “bigger, better, more joined up”.
  - b) Planting trees or areas of new woodland/wood pasture following right tree, right place principles (increasing tree cover whilst protecting what is special and valued in the landscape and keeping the environmental benefits already being delivered); creating new biodiverse green space such as chalk grassland in locations which will provide new habitat in close proximity to existing sites and increase or enhance existing ecological networks in the parish; creating or restoring new ponds or other water features which will help build on existing blue infrastructure.
  - c) Restoring existing hedges through coppicing/layering and gapping up and planting new hedgerows where appropriate.
  - d) Improvements to the Hoffer Brook tributary, see priorities in Policy THP 9.

Where necessary to protect and enhance biodiversity in the parish, to mitigate the impact of proposed development (including the activities of the occupants), and where directly, fairly or reasonably related in scale and kind to the development, contributions towards these initiatives will be sought.

## Policy THP 9 – Protecting and enhancing the parish tributary feeding the Hoffer Brook

### Context and rationale

- 6.9. The parish contains a tributary which feeds into the Hoffer Brook. The Hoffer Brook is approximately 8km in length and rises from the chalk aquifer near Thriplow village. A 2014 report completed by Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northants (BCN) Wildlife Trust considered that the Hoffer Brook should be considered a degraded chalk stream.

<https://www.wildlifebcn.org/sites/default/files/2018-05/hofferbrookreport.pdf>

Chalk streams are a habitat of national significance with 85% of global chalk streams found in the UK. An audit of chalk streams in the Upper Cam Catchment was commissioned by Cambridgeshire City Council and Cambridge Water in 2020. The parish falls within a medium and high risk area of water quality. As such, it is important that existing watercourses in the parish are not exposed to agricultural run-off or run-off from road surfaces as a result of new development proposals being permitted and coming forward. Some restoration works has been completed along the Brook. Guidance should be sought from the Environment Agency, South Cambridgeshire District Council and the BCN Wildlife Trust should any further works along the Hoffer brook be undertaken.



**Figure 6:** Hoffer Brook Chalk Stream as mapped in Greater Cambridge Chalk Streams Project Report, 2020

### Policy intent

- 6.9.1. The intent of policy THP 9 is to ensure the protection of the Hoffer Brook is considered a priority in the consideration of new development proposals in the parish and opportunities for funding.

### **Policy THP 9 – Protecting and enhancing the parish tributary feeding the Hoffer Brook**

1. To be supported, development proposals must demonstrate that neither the Hoffer Brook nor the parish waterways feeding into the Hoffer Brook will be harmed as a result of run-off from the proposed development.
2. All proposals will be expected to incorporate sustainable drainage measures as a way of both managing surface water flood risk and protecting water quality in the parish, with reference to SPD Biodiversity Issue B6 – Sustainable Drainage Systems.
3. The following initiatives are considered examples of work that may be required for the Hoffer Brook/tributaries of the Hoffer Brook and may be sought, where necessary to deliver sustainable development and where directly, fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to a proposed development; or as part of delivering biodiversity net gain under Policy THP 8. Works should be informed by an updated plan.:
  - a) Sensitive de-silt – to remove some of the deep silt, which has accumulated over decades without management so that some areas can remain scoured clean.
  - b) Add gravel to unrestored sections of the lower reaches, where there is a suitable hard bed. Regrade banks to create a more natural bank profile if required.
  - c) Move augmentation point on Thriplow Meadows so that water flows over the land rather than by-passing it (SSSI consent will be required for this).
  - d) Replant if lost or continued management to pollard willows along watercourses
  - e) Sensitive tree/scrub removal to allow daylight to reach the watercourses.

## THEME 2 – A LIVING VILLAGE AND SUSTAINABLE SETTLEMENT

**Objective 6: We will continue to be a ‘living’ community which sustains the Thriplow village primary school, shop and facilities;**

**Objective 7: Any additional housing development will be focused in Thriplow near to existing shops and services, for reasons of sustainability.**

**Objective 8: All development is to use sustainable building materials and to consider and have high standards of energy efficiency. The concept of zero carbon in building is to be aspired to.**

Background context:

Context and rationale:

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

green belt designation has the effect of constraining development to the north and west of Heathfield.

- 6.10.6. Policy S/10 of the Local plan identifies Thriplow as a group village. This is one place higher in the district-wide settlement hierarchy than Heathfield. This position reflects the better provision of village services in Thriplow when compared to Heathfield including the primary school, the village shop, village pub, village hall and recreation areas. The Local Plan allows schemes of up to 8 dwellings in the development framework. This development framework is shown on Map 11. Exceptionally development may be permitted for up to 15 dwellings where this would make best use of a single brownfield site.
- 6.10.7. Thriplow village is fully enveloped by green belt land in all directions. This effectively constrains the extent to which Thriplow can grow.
- 6.10.8. Sites for residential development have been allocated across the district to ensure that sufficient land is brought forward to meet the identified need for housing in the district. There are no housing allocations identified in Thriplow or Heathfield.
- 6.10.9. However, under the new provision of NPPF (paragraph 66), SCDC have provided an indicative housing figure of 8 additional dwellings to be planned for as part of the NP. SCDC confirm that this figure provides the indicative housing number for the neighbourhood area until the issue is considered in the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan.
- 6.10.10. Importantly, this NP covers the period 2021 to 2041.
- 6.10.11. The NP also recognises Policy S/7 of the Local Plan. This allows for the NP to make additional allocations outside the development framework. Specifically, policy S/7 states: '*Outside development frameworks, only allocations within Neighbourhood Plans that have come into force and development for agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor recreation and other uses which need to be located in the countryside or where supported by other policies in this plan will be permitted.*'
- 6.10.12. The NP supports the overall approach taken in the Local Plan where any growth will be focused in Thriplow village rather than in Heathfield. The NP also aspires for Thriplow to be a 'living' community which sustains the Thriplow village primary school, shop and village services.

#### **Policy THP 10 – Grainstore site allocation.**

- 6.10.13. All potentially available sites have been considered in the process of identifying the grainstore site for development. A parish-wide call for sites was undertaken in 2020 to assist with this. A total of five sites were identified, four in Thriplow and one in Heathfield. All five sites were assessed using the same set of criteria

and the results were shared with land promoters and published on the NP website. The work is available to view <https://www.thriplowheathfieldnp.org/jan-2021-draft-site-assessments.html>.

- 6.10.14. As an outcome of this process, the grainstore site presented the best opportunity for sustainable development in the parish.
- 6.10.15. The grainstore site is on the western edge of Thriplow village on Fowlmere Road. It comprises a range of farm buildings, sheds, storage, silos and associated structures and hardstanding. This site is well related to Thriplow village with good access to existing village facilities (including primary school, allotments, cricket ground, playground, village green, village hall, village shops and bus stop). The vehicle repair shop, located outside the site to the south, is a successful and valued local business.

Explanation of site allocation criteria

### **Affordable housing**

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

### **Lodge Road**

- 6.10.18. The NP group engaged residents in November and December 2021 about the principle of development on the grain store site. Of the 114 people who responded, 66 per cent supported the principle of residential development on this site. Many residents did however raise concern with regards to village traffic and the impact that this site would have on village traffic. Specifically, residents are concerned about the impact development would have on Lodge Road which has the character of a narrow country lane.
- 6.10.19. The provision of a landscaped buffer along Lodge Road as part of the development scheme will help protect the rural character of the lane although to

ensure good permeability it is also vital a pedestrian route is provided off both Lodge Road and Fowlmere Road.

6.10.20. The NP therefore requires that vehicular access is provided off Fowlmere Road rather than off Lodge Road. This site is a safe option due to the location of the site at the village gateway where traffic is moving at a slower pace.

6.10.21. Liaison has taken place with highways in the development of this site allocation policy.

### Landscaping

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

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

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

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

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

<b>Physical and natural landscape factors</b>
<p><b>Low Sensitivity.</b> This brownfield Site itself has few natural features and consists of agricultural scale buildings and hardstandings. Its roadside boundaries are vegetated and the trees have value in helping assimilate the bulky buildings within the skyline. Flat, open countryside to the west. A continuous hedge with trees lines Fowlmere Rd and trees have been planted in the verge along Lodge Lane.</p> <p>Good scope to retain all trees. There is a pond and copse just beyond the southern boundary which contain the Site to the south. The Site is flat and makes no notable contribution to character in terms of topography</p>
<b>Historic and cultural landscape</b>
<p><b>Medium Sensitivity.</b> There are no heritage features on the site, but its east boundary adjoins the Conservation Area and views in to the Site are possible from it. There are also a number of Listed Buildings within 250m although none with direct views onto the Site. Confers understanding of the historic agricultural role of the village.</p>

<b>Relationship to settlement/settlement form and edge.</b>
<b>Low Sensitivity.</b> Site sits prominently along the west side of the village forming a strong edge. The buildings provide containment to the village after the openness of the cricket pitch. It provides a strong contrast in terms of scale of its built form compared to the residential land close by. Development here would not constitute an incursion into the countryside and could represent an enhancement opportunity.
<b>Visual sensitivity factors – Views</b>
<b>High Sensitivity.</b> Built form is visually prominent in views from the east and west. It contains and blocks views outward from the village, from points within the Conservation Area. It has a strong backdrop function to views over the cricket pitch. Current positive or scenic value is low however, although some visual interest from the colourful agricultural structures on site. Opportunity to allow some longer views through to the west in future site design.
<b>Perceptual aspects</b>
<b>Low Sensitivity.</b> Site alongside main road so subject to regular road noise. Sense of activity on the farmyard as well as from garage operations in one of the buildings.

**Biodiversity**

6.10.24. The site falls within a habitat network enhancement zone 2 (see Map 18). This is due its proximity to Thriplow Meadows SSSI. Such areas are defined by Natural England as land within close proximity to the existing habitat component that are unlikely to be suitable for habitat re-creation but where other types of habitat may be created or land management may be enhanced including delivery of suitable Green Infrastructure

**Landscape-led development brief**

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

- 6.10.26. The landscape led brief was revised following the consultation and following further liaison with the land promoter who advised the NP group the site available for development was to be reduced in order to allow for agricultural buildings to be built/remain to the south of proposed residential area.
- 6.10.27. The landscape-led brief was revised to address community feedback provided in late 2021 and to address changed circumstances in relation to site availability.
- 6.10.28. The landscape-led approach as resulted in the following priorities for the site:
- retain current hedgerows and trees,
  - plant native tree belt on the west side to provide screening and integrate the development with surrounding green belt land
  - maintain a quiet vegetated character of Lodge Road by lining with a hedge

#### Habitats Regulation Assessment

- 6.10.29. Clause j) has been added to the policy in response to the HRA undertaken for this plan. In addition, proposals must comply with Policy THP 8: Promoting nature recovery by protecting existing sites and features, increasing biodiversity and delivering biodiversity net gain through development proposals.

#### Delivering Sustainable Design

- 6.10.30. The Local Plan 2018 currently includes a requirement for schemes to be accompanied by a sustainability statement that demonstrates how a development embeds the principles of climate change mitigation and adaptation. See Policy CC/1: Mitigation and Adaptation to Climate Change. See also Policy CC/3: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy in New Developments and Policy CC/4: Water Efficiency.
- 6.10.31. The Grainstore site provides a precious opportunity to deliver energy efficient and low carbon homes.
- 6.10.32. Since the adoption of the Local Plan in 2018, SCDC have worked together with Cambridge City to produce the Greater Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document. This was adopted in January 2020. It provides guidance to planning applicants on how to prepare the required sustainability statement. It also includes in Appendix 1 a sustainability checklist for all applications coming forwards in South Cambridgeshire.

### **Policy THP 10 – Grain store site allocation**

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

#### **Housing:**

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

#### **Vehicular Access:**

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

#### **Connectivity and permeability:**

- d) Incorporation of safe and attractive walking and cycling routes on site providing access links to and from both Lodge Road and Fowlmere Road
- e) Pedestrian footways to be provided along Lodge Road and Fowlmere Road, together with a pedestrian crossing where the two meet in order to facilitate a safe pedestrian route to existing pavement infrastructure along Fowlmere Road and allow for safe walking routes to village services.

Policy continued overleaf...

## Policy THP 10 – Grain store site allocation continued

### Landscaping

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

### Design:

- f) The proposal must be the result of a design-led process which acknowledges the sensitivities and opportunities for improvement with respect to this village gateway location abutting both the countryside and the Thriplow conservation area.

### Sustainable design and construction

- g) A Sustainable Statement must accompany the planning application demonstrating how the development:
  - a. facilitates low carbon living for future occupiers through 1. Reducing the need for energy through site layout, orientation and building fabric. 2. Incorporation of low carbon heating solutions and 3. Incorporation of renewable energy technology as appropriate and
  - b. meets other sustainability criteria set out in Appendix 1 to the Great Cambridge Sustainable Design and Construction SPD, or any updated version of this.

Policy continued overleaf...

**Policy THP 10 – Grain store site allocation policy continued...**

A proposal which adopts an innovative approach to the construction of low and net zero carbon homes (for example construction to Passivehaus or similar standards) is strongly encouraged.

**Biodiversity**

- h) Submission of an Ecological Study that establishes either**
  - a. That there would be no negative impact on flora and fauna; or if any negative impacts are identified, establishes that**
  - b. These negative impacts are suitably mitigated against; and**
  - c. The scheme as a whole will deliver a net gain in biodiversity.**
- i) Significant impacts on hedgerows or any severance of bat flight lines must be avoided to protect foraging and commuting habitat for Barbastelle bats which could belong to the population protected by Eversden & Wimpole Woods SAC**

KEY					
	Site boundary		Vehicular access road. No ingress from Lodge Road		Proposed pedestrian public access links across the site
	Cambridge Green Belt		Proposed native tree belts - on-site and off-site shown		Indicative skyline scale tree planting to break up roof line.
	Indicative arrangement of new homes - maximum 20No. with 40% affordable units		Proposed hedges around the site boundary		Existing vegetation to be retained as far as possible



Map 20: The Grainstore site

## Policy THP 11 – Rural exception sites in Thriplow

Context and rationale:

- 6.11. As set out in Chapter 3, the Housing Needs Survey (HNS) undertaken by Cambridgeshire ACRE in September 2018 identified 22 households as being in need of affordable housing who either live in, or have a local connection to, Thriplow. Since the completion of this survey, no additional affordable housing units have been completed in the parish.
- 6.11.1. Every year, the housing team at SCDC provides updated figures on housing need in the parishes. As at April 2022, SCDC provided up to date figures indicating 12 households were on the housing register with a housing need for affordable rent or social rent in Thriplow and Heathfield parish. Six of these were for 1-bedroom properties, 3 for 2-bedroom properties, 2 for 3-bedroom properties and 1 for a 4-bedroom property.
- 6.11.2. The use of rural exception site policy is increasingly seen as one of the ways to retain balanced rural communities. Rural exception sites are defined in the NPPF 2021 as *Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. A proportion of market homes may be allowed on the site at the local planning authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding*
- 6.11.3. Applications for rural exceptions housing must be supported by evidence of local need and be prioritised for people with a local connection to the parish.
- 6.11.4. Respondents to Thriplow's Housing Needs survey showed that sixty-four per cent of respondents supported the principle of such a development and 35 per cent were opposed. There is a low proportion of affordable homes and they are all in Thriplow Village. The HNS 2018 reports 9 per cent of housing to be affordable housing for rent with one shared ownership property. The focus on bungalows and larger houses means housing is generally inaccessible to younger families and couples, being too expensive.
- 6.11.5. Rural exception sites are not considered appropriate on the edge of Heathfield due to its distance from Thriplow and lack of amenities.

Policy Intent

- 6.11.6. The intention of Policy THP 11 is to encourage the delivery of a rural exception site that is outside the Thriplow development framework but well related to village services.

### **Policy THP 11 – Rural exception sites in Thriplow**

Proposals for small scale affordable housing schemes on rural exception sites for people with a Thriplow parish connection (see glossary) on the edge of Thriplow village are supported provided that:

- a) the proposed development, by virtue of their size, scale and type, will not exceed the identified local needs for affordable housing;
- b) the types of dwellings proposed meet the needs identified in Thriplow parish as identified in an up to date housing needs survey;
- c) the homes are located within easy access to Thriplow village centre,
- d) the affordable housing is provided in perpetuity; and
- e) no significant harm would be caused to the character of the village, its setting or the countryside.

**Objective 9: Plan for improved outdoor recreational facilities in the parish**

6.11.7. Whilst an objective in this NP, there are no planning policies specifically related to this. Please see Community Initiative 5, which sits outside the land use planning process, which will assist with achieving this objective. In addition, Policy 13 and Policy THP 14, which sits under Theme 3 Social Cohesion and Parish links are applicable to the provision of outdoor recreation activities in the parish.

## **Objective 10: A safer, less congested village.**

### **Policy THP 12 – Improving parking provision and improving road safety in Thriplow and Heathfield**

#### Context and rationale:

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

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

- 6.12.1. The village of Thriplow is accessed from the south off the A505 either at Flint Cross via Fowlmere or onto Gravel Pit Hill and from the A10 to the north either via Newton or Fowlmere. The access off the A505 from the south is regarded by most who use it as hazardous. When travelling from the east, there is a need to sit in the middle lane whilst fast traffic rushes past on the left, until there is an adequate gap in the traffic to turn right into Gravel Pit Hill. According to Cambridgeshire County Council maintained statistics on road traffic accidents there has been one accident at this junction in the five year period 2014 to 2018 (inclusive). Based on reports by local people, it is considered this statistic understates the problem. See paragraph 4.6.18.
- 6.12.2. The parish residents aspire towards the provision of a safer junction at Gravel Pit Hill. However, it is outside the scope of this neighbourhood plan to resolve this issue. The parish council will continue to work with stakeholders to seek solutions. This is raised again in Chapter 7 of this plan.
- 6.12.3. Parish residents are also concerned about the current access off the A505 into the Heathfield settlement at the Heathfield Way/A505 junction. There is only one access on and off the estate and the current layout is widely regarded as a safety hazard. No viable solutions have been identified to address the issue. The current situation, however, further highlights the reasons why additional development in Heathfield should be limited.

#### **Parking provision and road safety within Thriplow village**

- 6.12.4. Fowlmere Road and School Lane are the only village roads which benefit from having pavements and, as detailed in Chapter 4, the pavement along School Lane is in a poor state of repair. There is also a narrow footpath on one side only for part of Church Street. The rest of Church Street, along with other village roads, Farm Lane, Lodge Road and Lower Street are single lane farm roads. During term-time, Fowlmere Road, School Lane and Church Street are used for the twice daily school drop off. Due to the parked vehicles on the northern side, School Lane operates as a one way road for just under a kilometre during the school pick-up and drop-off period. Children are also

dropped off along Church Street. Here, there is no clear pavement and children, and their carers have a particular hazardous walk to school, having to walk along a road before then crossing the triangular junction with Church Street and Brook Road, where there are two blind corners and no footpath.

- 6.12.5. The speed and volume of through-traffic in the village is an identified concern. Middle Street and Fowlmere Road form a short cut for local traffic from nearby villages to the A505 and also all traffic in the area going to the nearby recycling centre.
- 6.12.6. A number of options for addressing traffic issues have been considered in the preparation of this plan. This includes:
- a) Implementing a 20mph zone in the built-up areas of the residential areas. This is identified as a community aspiration in Chapter 7.
  - b) Better and more organised provision of off-street parking to cater for the Thriplow primary school.
  - c) More off-street parking generally. The policy below seeks to address this as far as new development proposals are concerned.
  - d) Better footpaths along Fowlmere Road and School Lane as a way of improving pedestrian safety for school children but also residents walking to Fowlmere. Improvements will be sought as part of any applicable new planning proposals.
  - e) Better provision of off-road public footpaths. See Policy THP 13 – *Protecting and improving our rural routes for non-motorised users and creating sustainable connections to neighbouring settlements.*
  - f) The provision of an all-weather cycling route to the nearest railway stations, Whittlesford and Foxton (See Policy THP 13 and Map 24); and
  - g) Restricting access to the village for heavy goods vehicles.

Road safety within Heathfield:

- 6.12.7. The need for residents and visitors to park cars has been poorly planned for in the design and layout of the built environment at Heathfield. Problems associated with high levels of on street parking is well evidenced.
- 6.12.8. In response to the November 2021 consultation, ‘car parking problems caused by high density accommodation’ was the fourth most popular issue flagged up by respondents, following ‘improve main entrance image’, ‘improve community amenities’, and ‘A505 lack of landscaping, maintenance and pollution’. When asked to prioritise required improvements in Heathfield, addressing car parking issues was the second most popular mentioned issue. Addressing the need to provide emergency vehicle access and the design and management of open spaces were also popular. These latter priorities are connected with the problems associated with on-street parking.

6.12.9. The Heathfield Masterplan document (2020) identifies a range of issues in the different Heathfield Local Character Areas. The issues specific to parking are repeated below:

**LCA 2 (Kingsway).**

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

**Local Character Area 3 (Whitehall Gardens and Woburn Place)**

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

**LCA 4 (Pepperslade)**

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

**LCA 6 (Hurdles Way)**

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

**LCA 7 (Ringstone)**

- i) Parking congestion creates safety issues for pedestrians and cyclists, particularly at the corners of the road where visibility is notably reduced
- j) Parking congestion along linear sections of the road significantly reduces the otherwise open aesthetic of the street
- k) Parking along the edge of the green space dominates the area, restricts access, views and visually detracts from the edge of the development
- l) Rear parking courtyards and garages are underused and constitute hidden spaces with limited positive contribution to the wider character

**LCA 8 (Ringstone playing field and woodland)**

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

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

6.12.11. A planning policy however can ensure that any new development proposals do not exacerbate existing problems and where proportionate to the size of a proposed development, a planning policy can require new opportunities to be taken to improve road safety through a scheme.

#### Policy intent

6.12.12. Policy T1/3: *Parking provision* in the Local Plan requires of all development across the district to provide car parking provision through a design-led approach in accordance with indicative standards. In the village of Thriplow, most of the rural roads are without pavements and on-street parking becomes hazardous for pedestrians. This is a particular problem for school children and carers on the route to school. In Heathfield, the current roads are over-saturated with on-street parking, as documented above.

6.12.13. Policy THP 12 requires a design-led approach to be taken which is informed by existing problems related to parking and road safety in both Thriplow and Heathfield.

6.12.14. The policy also identifies opportunities which will be sought to help address existing problems when new development comes forward. Any contributions being sought from new development will need to comply with national policy in particular paragraph 56 that states planning obligations must be a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms b) directly related to the development and c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

## **Policy THP 12 – Improving parking provision and improving road safety in Thriplow and Heathfield**

1. In order to maintain pedestrian safety on the village roads, all new development proposals will be expected to adopt a design-led approach to addressing the parking needs generated by the development. This should take into account known existing issues, in the vicinity, including those described in the supporting text to this policy, This would normally mean providing dedicated parking on-plot. Off-plot parking provision will only be acceptable where spaces are provided in a convenient location, for example in the form of parking bays or inset bays, in front of or adjacent to the proposal and without impeding road safety, particularly for pedestrians and other non-motorised users. Tree planting and other landscaping should be incorporated to maintain or create a high quality streetscape, that is not visually dominated by parked cars.
2. Reliance on rear parking courtyards as providing suitable parking for residential properties will not normally be supported due to their proven underutilisation in the parish and due to this resulting in damage to open space, amenity space and street scape through inappropriately parked vehicles. Rear parking courtyards, will only be considered as a viable option when all on-plot and on-street parking options are exhausted and evidence is submitted that the rear parking provision provides a convenient (easily accessed and exited), safe (with good surveillance) and attractive (incorporating landscaping) option for future occupiers.
3. Opportunities will also be sought from new development proposals to:
  - a) Improve existing pavements serving the development to make them more accessible for all users.
  - b) Alleviate existing congestion and on street parking issues particularly relating to the Thriplow primary school and in the parking issues in Heathfield.
4. Where necessary to achieve a good quality and accessible walking and cycling environment to meet the needs of the users of the development and where directly, fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development, s106 contributions towards the initiatives identified above will be sought.

**Objective 11: The quality and quantity of our rural footpath network and interconnectivity with neighbouring settlements will be improved.**

**Policy THP 13 – Protecting and improving the rural footpath network and sustainable connections to neighbouring settlements.**

Context and rationale

Existing recreational walks and exercise

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

Existing active travel routes

- 6.13.4. There is an active travel route connecting Thriplow village with Heathfield, enabling children to take bikes to school (in Thriplow village) from Heathfield (see Maps 21 and 25). Moving in the direction from Thriplow to Heathfield, the route comprises firstly, the bridleway going from the south-east of Church St to the KWS /Smiths industrial area, then going north-east past the sewage works and joining up with a Smith’s farm track going north-south from Heathfield past the fishing ponds between the Drift and Heathfield. This latter section is provided as a well footed concrete road width.
- 6.13.5. A further active travel route is via a public bridleway, referred to locally as the Drift (see Map 21). This goes from Church Street in an easterly direction towards Whittlesford. Part of it is low lying and liable to flooding, but there is a good bridge over the M11, enabling off-road cyclists to make their way to Whittlesford, as well as pedestrians. This is an existing gateway route to Whittlesford, which could be made part of a proper cycle network, were the two dips, which are liable to frequent flooding, to be improved (See Map 24)

- 6.13.6. There is an alternative which goes via the concrete path to Heathfield, then through the ramped hole in the wall from Woburn Place to Pepperslade. Once one has got through the ramp and doorway in the wall, the cyclist must use the dilapidated, overgrown footpath beside the A505 until reaching the cycle route , which crosses the M11 at the vehicle slip roads from and to the roundabout after which there is a sounder cycle path alongside and separate from the A505 which goes to Station Road. The slip roads and dilapidation on this route make it dangerous. This maintenance is not in our parish area. Responsibility lies with the Highways Authority, IWM and Whittlesford and Duxford Parishes.
- 6.13.7. There is no safe active travel route to Foxton from Thriplow. The access to Foxton station is only along roads with 60mph limit and blind summits, with no road markings. There are possible footpath routes, which could be adapted to suit cycle use, if permissive routes were re-opened.

#### Aspirations-to Improvements

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

#### Improving recreational access (see Map 23).

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

#### Improving active travel routes (see Map 24)

- a) Off road pedestrian access to Newton: Woodland north of Heathfield: The continuation of this woodland as a walk in the northerly direction towards Newton via Great Nine Wells. If the northern part of this woodland were to be publicly navigable, it would open up access to another farm track, which goes close to Newton, onto the B1368.
- b) Provision of safer and separate bike routes between Thriplow and Foxton for access to railway station.
- c) Improvements to the bike access from Thriplow to Heathfield and Thriplow to Whittlesford, to reach the other railway network. This could partly be achieved if the flood issues were addressed along parts of this route.

- d) improvements throughout to ensure the network is good enough for disabled access and smooth enough for wheeled bikes.

Policy intent

- 6.13.9. The intention of Policy THP 13 is to protect and improve routes for non-motorised users in the parish so that parishioners have increased options for both outdoor recreation purposes and for travelling to neighbouring settlements and linking up with the local railway network.

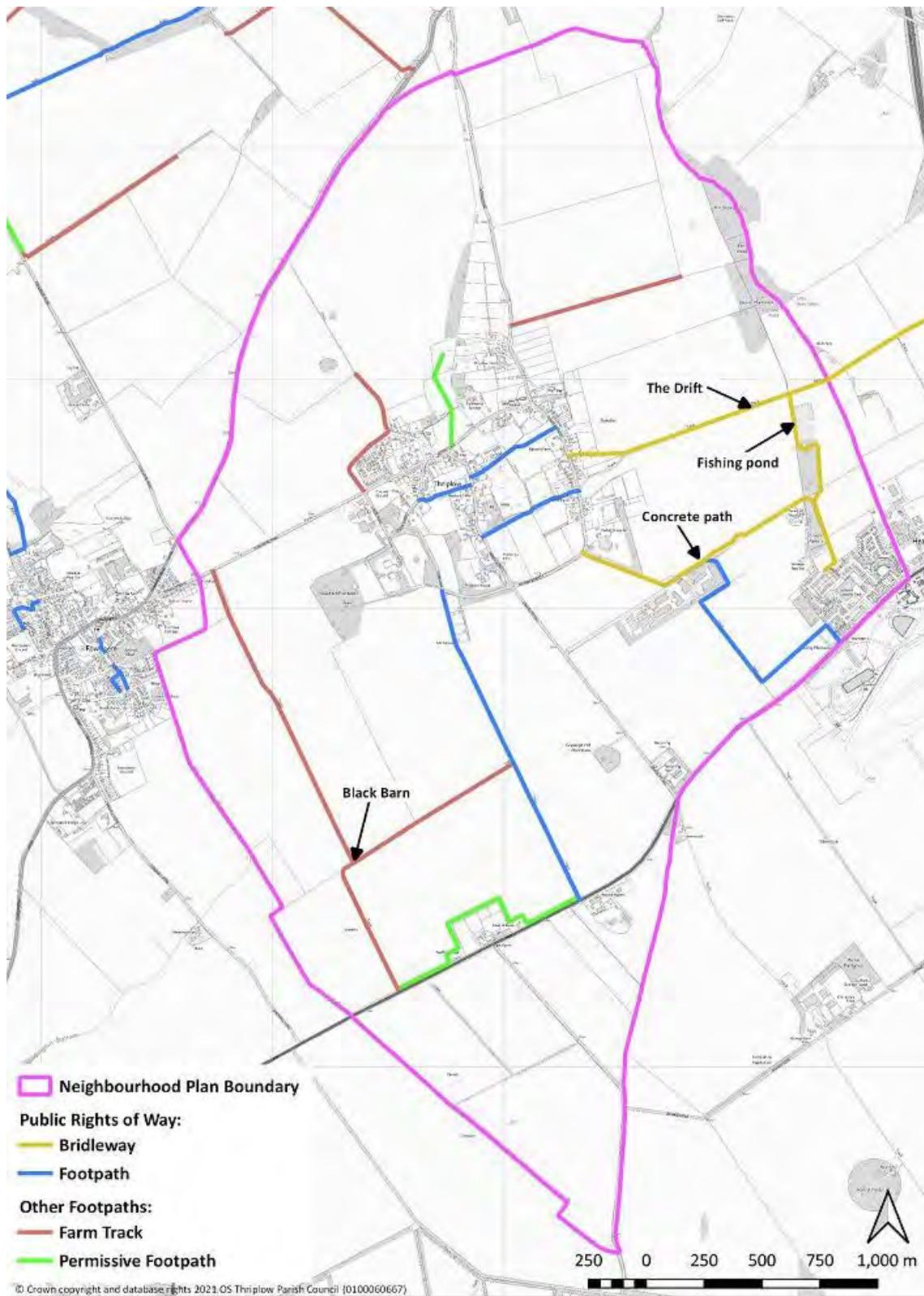
**Policy THP 13 – Protecting and improving our rural routes for non-motorised users and creating sustainable connections to neighbouring settlements.**

All new development will be expected to protect existing rural routes available to for non-motorised users in the parish. (see Maps 21, 22 and 25)

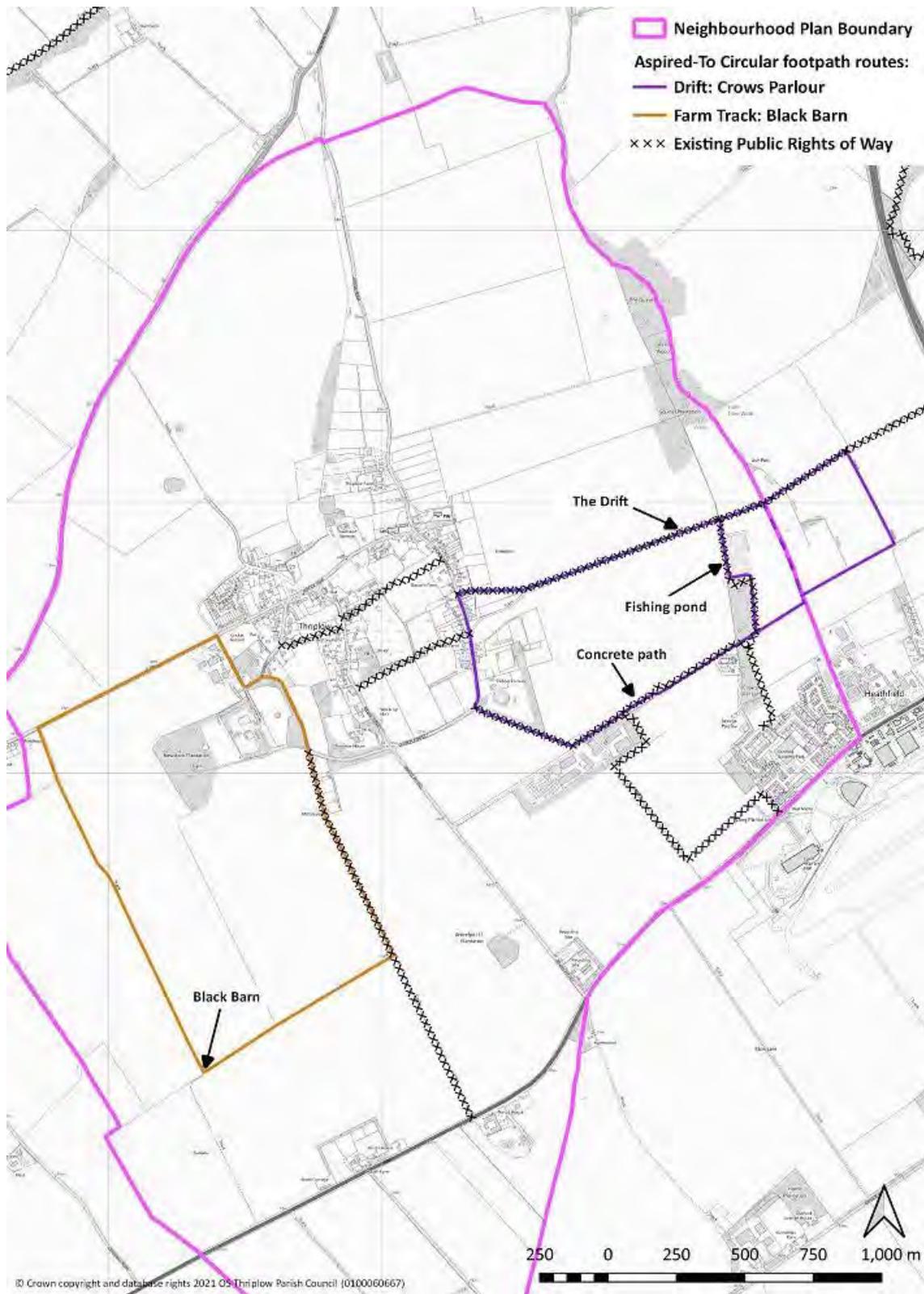
Where necessary to make a development proposal acceptable and where directly and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development, contributions towards improvements (as set out in this plan) to this network will be sought.

Where a development proposal comes forward which presents an opportunity – see Maps 23 and 24 - (e.g by way of its location) for improving the existing footpath, bridleway and cycling routes, such opportunities should be taken.

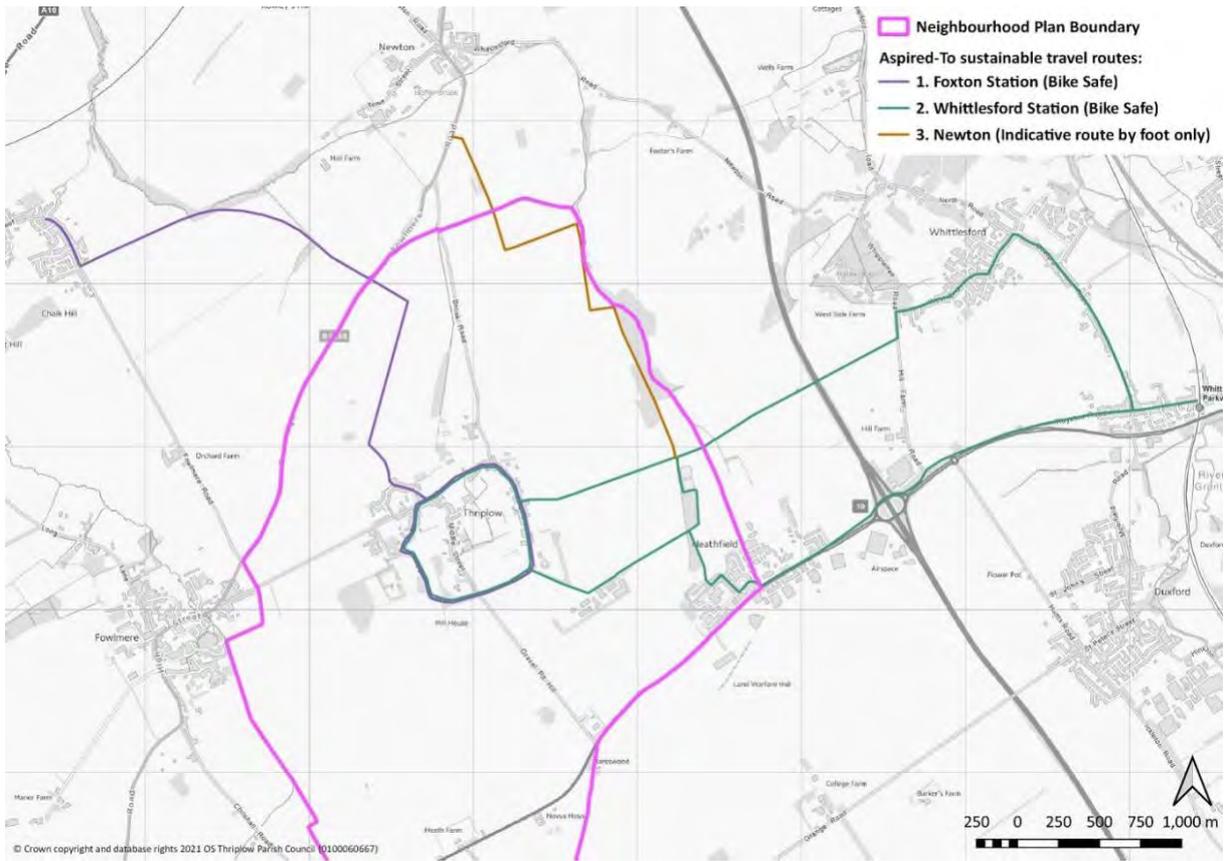




**Map 22:** Existing rural routes for non-motorised users. Parish-wide



**Map 23:** Aspired-to circular routes.



**Map 24:** Aspired-to sustainable travel routes

**Objective 12: There will be more cohesion between the two communities of Thriplow and Heathfield**

**Policy THP 14 – Development proposals resulting in better links between the Heathfield and Thriplow communities.**

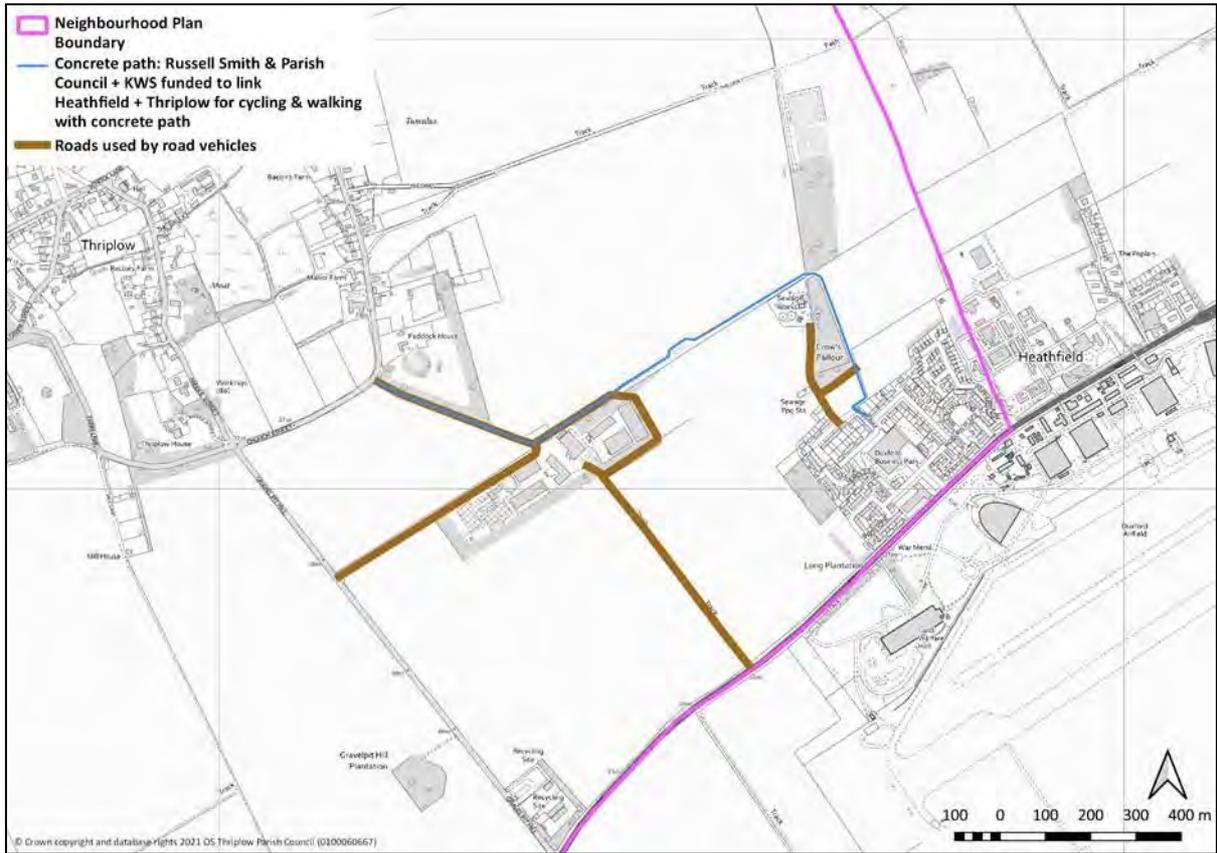
- 6.14. The NP seeks to encourage better connections between Heathfield and Thriplow. A key challenge is overcoming the difficulties created by having no direct vehicular link between the two settlements. There is a public footpath linking the two settlements. Recently, the footpath was re-laid as a concrete path, which has resulted in an easier and more pleasant access between the two settlements, in particular for cyclists. This has the important benefit of increasing access to the Thriplow based village services to Heathfield residents. Discussions are currently underway as to whether this path should be lit at night. There are different views on this, with energy conservation and night sky darkness going against the increased amenity that this would provide.
- 6.14.1. The Parish Council will continue to work with stakeholders including landowners in the area between the two settlements to explore further initiatives which would result in improved interconnectivity between the two settlements. This could for instance include contributions towards the provision of improvement at the Pepperslade/Woburn Place link when development comes forward, which will help make Heathfield more accessible. Another initiative that has been identified as part of this NP is a parish wide aspiration for an accessible area of community woodland to be provided on the farmland that lies between Thriplow and Heathfield.
- 6.14.2. Development proposals which would lead to additional severance between the two communities would not be supported. This could be through the inappropriate expansion of the KWS site agricultural seed research centre (located south of Thriplow) or through diverting the A505 to the north of Heathfield. The latter is a proposal put forward by land promoters in the past although dismissed as part of the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan.

Policy intent

- 6.14.3. Policy THP 14 is an aspirational policy, which welcomes future proposals that will lead to better links between the Heathfield and Thriplow communities.
- 6.14.4. Sub clause 2) has been added as a requirement from the HRA of the NP. In addition, proposals must comply with Policy THP 8: Promoting nature recovery by protecting existing sites and features, increasing parish biodiversity and delivering biodiversity net gain.

**Policy THP 14 – Development proposals resulting in better links between the Heathfield and Thriplow communities**

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



Map 25: Thriplow to Heathfield Sustainable Travel Route

## 7. Other Community Initiatives

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

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

- 7.2 Some of the building blocks to realise this vision are the planning policies in chapter 6. Planning policies have however limited functionality. They only apply when planning applications for development come forward in the parish. The Parish Council has therefore identified other initiatives which can be progressed outside the scope of the planning policies themselves. These are summarised in the Table on pages 43 to 45 and are discussed in more detail below.

### Heathfield environment

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

## **Protecting and increasing biodiversity in the parish.**

- 7.6 **Community Initiative 4: Protecting and increasing biodiversity in the parish** To complement our planning policies we will work outside the planning system, with our residents (including community volunteer groups) and landowner community to seek the following:
- the creation of new ponds and improved use of natural flood management techniques that slow the flow of floodwater (for example through leaky woody dams).
  - restoring the biodiversity of our waterways through increasing light levels along overgrown/shaded ditches, stabilising banks and planting native locally provenant aquatic plants.
  - revitalising our hedgerows through coppicing/laying and gapping up. Planting new hedgerows where appropriate. Planting standard hedgerow trees at irregular spacing to provide the next generation of trees. Use locally provenant native hedge plant varieties such as hawthorn, blackthorn, maple, hornbeam, dog rose etc
  - the creation of new woodland (using the principles of Right Tree, Right Place – see glossary), additional biodiverse green space (flower rich areas with scrub/trees) particularly where it extends and links existing habitats.
  - enhanced protection of existing wildlife areas, for example, through supporting work in Thriplow Meadows with BCN Wildlife Trust
  - if we succeed in achieving our other objective of improving access to our woodlands (see Community Initiative 8 below), coppicing and maintenance could become voluntary activities carried out by the community.
  - organising regular litter picks and promoting zero tolerances to fly tipping/littering in the parish and beyond.
  - the planting of a traditional community orchard using local heritage varieties (using principles of Right Tree, Right Place).

## **Improved outdoor recreational facilities**

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

- 7.9 **Improving the rural footpath network.**
- 7.10 **Community Initiative 6: Improving the rural footpath network.** The Parish Council will work with interested groups to improve and develop routes for sustainable travel on bicycle and foot to the nearby villages of Newton, Whittlesford, Fowlmere and Foxton (Map 21). Particular emphasis would be given to establishing good routes to the railway stations at Whittlesford and Foxton.

**Closer cohesion between Heathfield and Thriplow**

- 7.11 **Community Initiative 7:** The Parish Council will continue to work with stakeholders including landowners in the area between the two settlements to explore further initiatives which would result in improved interconnectivity between the two. This could for instance include contributions towards the provision of an accessible area of community woodland and recreation space on the farmland that lies between Heathfield and Thriplow.

**A safer, less congested parish**

- 7.12 **Community Initiative 8: reducing parish speed limits** The Parish Council will continue to campaign for a 20mph zone in Thriplow Village and in Heathfield. We will also continue to work towards achieving a safe junction at Gravel Pit Hill
- 7.13 **Community Initiative 9: protecting Heathfield and Thriplow from HGV movements through the parish** The Parish Council will continue to respond to planning applications outside the plan area where there is a concern they will generate HGV movements through the village and parish

## Glossary & References

References	Explanation
<p>Greater Cambridge Chalk Streams Project Report (2020).</p> <p>Available at:</p> <p><a href="https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/chalk-streams">https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/chalk-streams</a></p>	<p>A report commissioned by Cambridge City Council and Cambridge Water as an audit of chalk streams in the upper Cam catchment. Work was completed in 2020.</p>
<p>Heathfield Masterplan document (2022)</p>	<p>A report undertaken by AECOM in 2022, with the official title of Thriplow &amp; Heathfield Neighbourhood Masterplan August 2020. The report is a study of Heathfield. It includes an analysis of character areas in the built-up part of Heathfield and provides a series of recommendations, in masterplan form, to improve the public realm and overall appearance of Heathfield.</p>
<p>Natural England (May 2020)</p>	<p>National habitat network user guidance v.2 (Natural England May 2020) available to view:</p> <p><a href="https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/data.defra.gov.uk/Natural_England/Habitat_Species/Habitats/Habitat_Network_England_NE/Habitat_Networks_England_Version_2_Guidance.pdf">https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/data.defra.gov.uk/Natural_England/Habitat_Species/Habitats/Habitat_Network_England_NE/Habitat_Networks_England_Version_2_Guidance.pdf</a></p>
<p>Thriplow &amp; Heathfield Parish Character Assessment (2020)</p>	<p>A document, jointly undertaken by Thriplow Neighbourhood Plan group and Chartered Architect Lucy Batchelor-Wylam.</p> <p>The study has two key purposes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to provide a framework for understanding the different patterns of landscape and settlement elements across the parish and their relative value and importance</li> <li>to help understand different sensitivities along the village's fringes and open spaces and develop appropriate neighbourhood plan policies in response</li> </ul>
<p>Thriplow &amp; Heathfield Site Selection: Landscape and visual Sensitivity Assessment 2020</p>	<p>A report of an assessment undertaken by landscape architect Lucy Batchelor-Wylam for the purpose of informing the sites put forward to the Parish Council in response to a call for sites in 2020</p>

Glossary	Explanation
Local connection	<p>An applicant will be considered to have a strong local connection to the Thriplow and Heathfield parish if they meet one of the following criteria:</p> <p>a) The applicant has worked (paid employment) in the parish for the last 12 months for sixteen hours or more per week; or</p> <p>b) The applicant has lived in the parish for at least 5 years out of the last 8 years; or</p> <p>c) The applicant has family members who are resident in the parish. Family members are defined as parents, children or brothers or sisters who have been resident in the village for a period of 5 years or longer. Other close family ties will be considered in agreement with SCDC on a case by case basis; or</p> <p>d) There are special circumstances that SCDC considers give rise to a local connection to the parish, for example where the applicant’s substantive role is as a carer to a person resident in the village.</p> <p>Source: Used by SCDC housing team – local connection criteria for rural exception sites.</p>
Right Tree, Right Place principle	<p>The Right Tree, Right Place principle refers to the need to ensure there is enough space for a tree to reach maturity in terms of height, canopy spread and rooting area</p>
Rural Exceptions Sites	<p>Defined in NPPF 2021 as Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. A proportion of market homes may be allowed on the site at the local planning authority’s discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding</p>

Appendix 1: Parish-wide Landscape Character Appraisal

Appendix 2: Views Assessment and Important Countryside Frontages

Appendix 3: Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) - citations

Map 1: Village Character areas



Thriplow village - see also map 2

These character areas were drawn up by the Neighbourhood Plan group after field-walks of the village. The areas are generally geographically assigned, and based on the road layout. Boundaries were positioned at nodal points and/or where a notable change in character was experienced. The areas were then drawn up and described with help from a professional landscape architect under agreed set headings. Each character area is described and mapped on the following pages.

**Character Areas:**

- TP1 - Church Street
- TP2 - Brook Road & School Lane
- TP3 - Middle Street & Farm Lane
- TP4 - The Green
- TP5 - Seralds Croft Lane & Fowlmere Road
- TP6 - Lodge Road and Lower Street
- HF1 Heathfield

## Map 2: Thriplow village

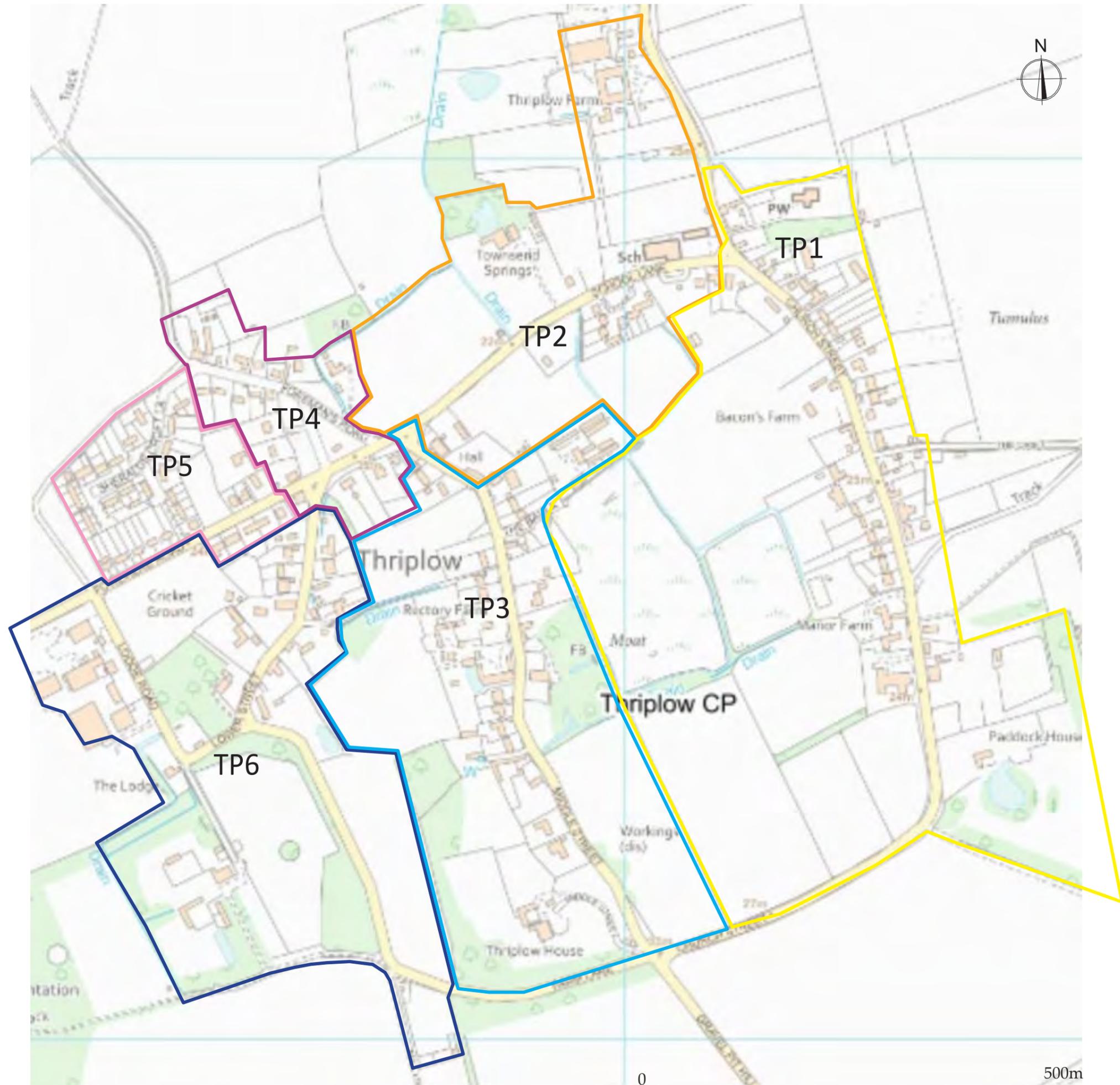
The Neighbourhood Plan group divided Thriplow village into 6 character areas.

These are each focused around a geographic part of the village, and divided where differences in the characteristics of built form and open space are felt. A further character area is assigned to Heathfield.

The outer boundaries with countryside do not necessarily relate to local plan policy boundaries but extend to include all contiguous built up areas adjacent to the village edges to assess their contribution to character. .

### Character Areas:

-  TP1 - Church Street
-  TP2 - Brook Road & School Lane
-  TP3 - Middle Street & Farm Lane
-  TP4 - The Green
-  TP5 - Sheralds Croft Lane & Fowlmere Road
-  TP6 - Lodge Road and Lower Street



# CHARACTER APPRAISAL

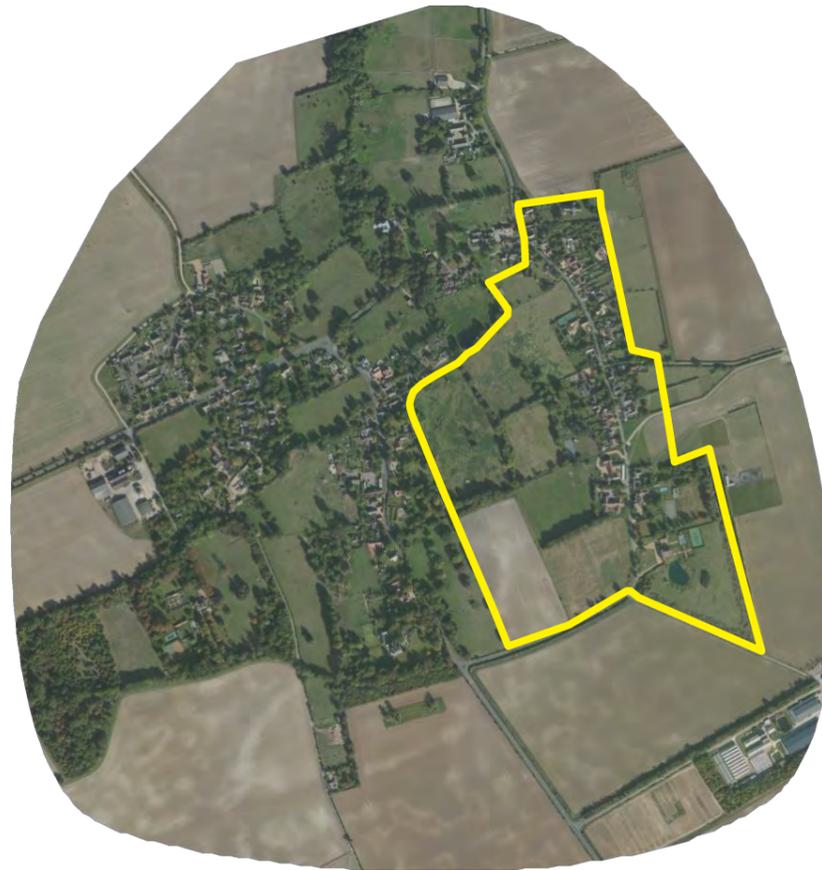
## TP1 — CHURCH STREET CHARACTER AREA

### Location and description

The character area takes in the loop of Church Street from just east of its junction with Middle Street in the south, to the small green at the junction with School Lane and Brook Road to the north, taking in the properties to the east of the green and the church which sits on the northern edge of the village.

Settlement here forms the eastern extents of the village, and the lane would have originally served the two old farmsteads found here. Today it comprises a mix of old and newer properties as well as a commercial (office) site, but most of its area is formed of the network of meadows that back properties on the west side of Church Street and separate it from Middle Street.

Church Street itself has a fairly flat feel, it sits between the 30m and 25m contour, but land falls almost imperceptibly to soggy meadows to the west, divided by straight drainage ditches, and rises gently to the north east to a shallow hill that is just high enough to contain longer views out to the east.



### Settlement pattern and character of built form

Church Street is a very gently winding settled lane and is settled in a linear, generally 'one plot deep' arrangement of properties with well vegetated curtilages. A number of often striking historic farmhouses and cottages are scattered along the lane, often set close or directly onto the roadside, (no footways) where they contribute strongly to the historic feel. Infill by more modern properties over time has given rise to a more or less continuous building line, but where gaps are encountered, the sudden longer views into farmland or meadows are attractive and contribute to a sense of prevailing ruralness.

Twentieth century additions to the housing stock have been reasonably well absorbed into the historic pattern, disrupting it by sometimes sitting back behind the primary building line, and their presence only highlighted by modern materials on access points or curtilages. A large modern, but classic designed house - Paddock House - sits in extensive grounds at the southern end of Church Street and provides a sense of an 'gateway' to the village on the southern approach.

Materials are mixed but rendered timber framed houses are the historic vernacular. Roofs are a mix of plain tiles, with some thatch. More recent additions to the housing stock are of mixed architectural merit, and have expanded the range of materials now seen.

Trees are important along the lane and along with grass banks, hedges and shrubs they provide softening and strengthen the rural, village edge feel.

### Open spaces and interactions with settlement

The pattern of open space and settlement is distinctive in Thriplow; here a wide belt of small and medium sized meadows separate the historic Middle and Church Streets and provide a rural backdrop and setting, often grazed by sheep. Equine land use is also present. Fringed with trees the meadows offer only occasional glimpses of other parts of the village in summer conditions.

### Aspects of value - Heritage and Access

There are 12 listed buildings, including 3 no. Grade two star listed, several of which are attractive thatched cottages. The character area is entirely in the Conservation Area. Two historic farmsteads Bacons Farm and Manor farm have associated clusters of barns and out buildings. Much of the area is therefore highly sensitive in heritage terms.

Footpaths connect into Church Street at intervals from the east and west. Church Street forms part of the resulting circular walks highly valued by villagers.

### Perceptual and visual experience - important views

The overriding sense is of a quiet, narrow village edge lane set in a pastoral backdrop - views into meadows both from the south and from north of Bacons Farm are important for conveying this sense of ruralness and should be preserved.



View westwards into meadows, just north of Bacons Farm. Trees help screen the rest of the village from view



Much less of a 'street' than a quiet lane



Historic buildings make important contribution



The grand Paddock House provides a sense of arrival from the south

# CHARACTER APPRAISAL

## TP2 — BROOK ROAD & SCHOOL LANE CHARACTER AREA

### Location and description

The character area is in the north east corner of the village and takes in Brook Road from Thriplow Farm on the far northern edges of the village, and then west along School Lane into the heart of the village as far as the triangular green at the junction with Middle Street.

Land use in the character area is mainly pasture, poorly drained land that is associated with the little brook, which rises in the streams and ditches that divide the damp meadows in the centre of the village, before flowing northwards to join the Hoffer Brook at Newton. These pastures form part of the 'streetscene' at the heart of the village.

Settlement here is sparse and this part of the village comprises only a small number of dwellings in addition to the farmstead and the school. The land has a flat feel, sits on and around the 25m contour, Brook Road rising briefly where it rides over the toe of the shallow hill found east of the Church Street junction, slightly elevated land on which St George church is sited so it forms a landmark in views from the north.



### Settlement pattern and character of built form

Old maps show that historically Brook and School Road were not settled - the school was the first built form to appear in the late 1860s on the north/west side of the road. Thriplow Farm and other dwellings were added in the 20th century - Pigeons Close is a small low density late twentieth century housing estate set within maturing trees that is relatively unobtrusive. Townsend Springs is a large house set within tree cover in extensive grounds.

The original parts of the Victorian school buildings are buff brick with red brick detailing. Recent additions use brick and render.

### Open spaces and interactions with settlement

The built areas of the village are permeable to belts of countryside which pass right through it. Pastures form the dominant land use and sit between and behind the built form. Often lined by hedges, scattered with large trees, and sometimes grazed by cattle or sheep they convey a strong sense of ruralness and historic continuity and are a key contributor to the sense of Thriplow's distinctiveness.

Links with Thriplow Meadows (SSSI) to the north, wet meadow known for its marsh orchids.

### Aspects of value - Heritage and Access

There are no listed buildings in this character area although the northern edges of the village falls within the setting of Grade II\* St. George's Church which sits to the east.

Much of the village edge falls within the villages extensive Conservation Area. The open spaces that separate clusters of built form are considered as much part of the historic character of the village as the built form.

There are no footpaths but access is permitted into Thriplow Meadows

### Perceptual and visual experience - important views

Approach from the north dominated by estate farm feel at Thriplow Farm with well managed hedges and a large swathe of equestrian land use.

The church sits prominently on the skyline on the approach to the village edge and is a key landmark. The rest of the village is generally out of sight.



View along School Lane towards village centre



Parkland-scale trees glimpsed in meadows



Cattle undertake 'conservation' grazing



Low density late 20th century housing at Pigeons Close



Thriplow Primary School



The Chauffeurs Cottage

# CHARACTER APPRAISAL

## TP3 — MIDDLE STREET & FARM LANE CHARACTER AREA

### Location and description

The character area covers the centre and south of the village and takes in Middle Street from its junction with Church Street in the south, to the small green at its junction with School Lane to the north. Wider than Church Street it forms the main route into the village from the south.

It comprises often large properties in deep plots either side of the road, and includes properties on The Baulk in the north, a small lane that serves a small holding on the east side.

Much of the character area is comprised of the network of small meadows that back the settlement.

The land has a flat feel, sits on and around the 25m contour.



### Settlement pattern and character of built form

Middle Street is a gently winding road with settlement arranged at low density along it. It originally served farms spaced at intervals along the street - three are mapped in 1905. Farmhouses and agricultural complexes and conversions continue to shape the street scene, (unconverted farmyard at Rectory Farm) often arranged with the gables onto the street and enclosed by brick or flint walls. Characteristic detail on barns adds distinctiveness. Vernacular materials are plain and pan-tiled roofs, white rendered houses, flint garden walls, some cottages have slate roofs.

### Open spaces and interactions with settlement

A historic pattern of small pastures still surround the farms, often lined by hedges and with scattered picturesque old trees. Extensive orchards, shown on late 19th century maps, have since been lost. The Pastures sit between and behind the built form and are sometimes part of the 'streetscene'. Mature trees mark garden curtilages and play a strong role in the skyline such as the pines at Rectory Farm.

### Aspects of value - Heritage and Access

The character area is highly sensitive from a heritage point of view. There are 7 listed buildings. The existing house at Thriplow Manor (Grade II\*) now sits slightly to the west of the site of the original Barentons manor house which was enclosed by a moat and around which settlement developed. Gowards is a Listed Grade II house on the west side of Middle st, with a fine unpollarded oak tree in front garden.

The area falls entirely within the extensive Conservation Area. The open spaces that separate clusters of built form are included and are considered as much part of the historic character of the village as the built form.

There are two footpaths from Middle Street connecting west to Church Street through the meadows which offer highly valued amenity and opportunity for circular routes..

### Perceptual and visual experience - important views

Gently winding approach into village from south (A505) enters through tunnel-like tree cover, which contains and conceals the village from view on the approach. Sense of affluence on route to village centre from large properties and leafy grounds. Smaller modern or gentrified houses are found closer to the village centre which have in filled road side gaps.

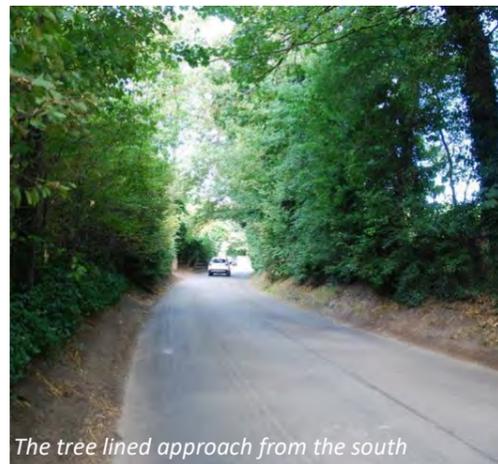
The village is gradually revealed as the road continues to wind towards the village centre. Glimpses into pastures at intervals, often grazed by sheep, are important for defining local character and conveys a strong sense of ruralness and historic continuity.



*Agricultural buildings form part of the street scene*



*Sheep grazing in the centre of the village*



*The tree lined approach from the south*



*Thriplow Village Hall*



*Thriplow Manor in extensive gardens*



*Bottles used in a outbuilding wall*

# CHARACTER APPRAISAL

## TP4 — THE GREEN

### Location and description

This a small character area is in the north of the village and is focused around the historic Green, the triangular form of which is bisected and defined by Foreman's Road, and by the main Fowlmere Road along its southern edge. It includes the junction with Lower Street, onto which the Green Man pub faces.

The Green features a little historic Smithy which acts a local landmark on the front of the Green which is lined by trees. The village War Memorial faces on the opposite side of the main road.

A small number of properties sit back off the Green, in well vegetated plots. The character area continues north along Foremans Road and ends at the sharp bend (into 20th century Sheralds Croft) where a small farmstead is found behind two roadside cottages.



### Settlement pattern and character of built form

The Settlement pattern is loose arrangement of houses scattered around the Green, mainly 17th to 19th century, with occasional modern additions which have been made to look traditional. Roofs of plain Cambs clay tiles and of greyish brick and render. No recent development is found in this area.

Houses are usually concealed within spacious plots with mature trees and hedges, which knit together visually to create a sense of enclosure.

### Open spaces and interactions with built form

The unenclosed Green is dotted with trees and helps create a spacious and leafy character at the centre of the village with built form pushed to its edges. It is designated 'Local Green Space' in the Local Plan)

### Aspects of value - Heritage and Access

There are two listed dwellings on the western side of the Green and the War Memorial and the Smithy on the Green are listed. Apart from the northern fringes of the character area, it is entirely within the Conservation Area. It would be considered very sensitive in heritage and landscape terms.

### Perceptual and visual experience - important views

The Green has an enclosed feel and views out to the wider countryside are not easily experienced in the flat contours.

The over riding sense in this character areas is of a well kept village, with few modern additions from recent decades, with facilities and services on hand with a strong sense of historic continuity.



*Distinctive tiling pattern on these two cottageroofs*



*The community owned pub*



*The Smithy is a listed building occupying the front of the Green*

# CHARACTER APPRAISAL

**TP5** — SHERALDS CROFT & FOWLMERE ROAD CHARACTER AREA

**Location and description**

This is a small character area in the northwest corner of the village comprising 20th century housing built on the north side of Fowlmere Road on the village edge, and on land behind, accessed west of Foremans Lane, known as Sheralds Croft Lane. This residential area forms the gateway access point into the village from the west.

Land use enclosing the character area is simple open arable farmland laid out in very large fields.



**Settlement pattern and character of built form**

This is the most 'modern' part of the village where the settlement pattern is a result of the 1970s era local authority estate planning and has a less distinctive character.

Here the settlement form is compact and straight edged and density is higher than other parts of the village, although still generous by today's standards - the semi-detached houses and bungalows have good sized plots. The arrangement is notably more regularised and geometric than the more piecemeal and organic settlement growth in the rest of the village.

Sheralds Croft Lane and Fowlmere Road have council and private dwellings of one and two storeys - some of which have been enlarged after being privatised. There is a mixture of materials: brick, render, timber cladding.

**Open spaces and interactions with built form**

There are small areas of communal green space and deep grassed road verges within Sheralds Croft Lane that are often integrated with parking and pedestrian links.

**Aspects of value - Heritage and Access**

There are no listed buildings and the area is entirely excluded from the Conservation Area.

There is an important pedestrian link between Sheralds Croft and Fowlmere Road that passes beside the sheltered housing units.

**Perceptual and visual experience - important views**

A somewhat less distinctive feel in these roads given the more generic 1960s architecture, which was common to most villages in this era. Fowlmere is quite a wide road and there is a sense of openness - the cricket pitch opposite and the long straight stretch of Fowlmere road allows longer uninterrupted views.



*The village edge viewed from farmland towards Sheralds Croft Lane*



*View along Sheralds Croft*



*Local authority built houses on north side of Fowlmere Road*



*Converted bungalows on south side of Fowlmere Road*



# CHARACTER APPRAISAL

## TP6 — LODGE ROAD AND LOWER STREET CHARACTER AREA

### Location and description

This is one of the larger character areas and comprises the western and south western edge of the village.

It features only a few dwellings on Lower Street which leads southwest from the pub/Green. The character area includes the village cricket pitch and includes Thriplow Farm's large grain storage yard with its substantial scale agricultural buildings. Some smaller buildings in the yard are being used as a car repair business. (The site is the ongoing subject of housing development applications.)

Thriplow Place is grand country house on the site of a medieval manor and occupies large partly formal grounds that form the southwest corner of the village. Beyond this to the south lies open farmland.



### Settlement pattern and character of built form

Settlement is sparse, except for a scattering of houses along the narrow and gently winding route of Lower Street. The exception is Thriplow Bury, a grand house which occupies grounds in the south-west edge of the village, and its estate cottages which sit on the roadside. A house was first recorded here in 1279 and its extensive private grounds continue to dominate the character of this corner of the village, although the house itself is generally out of sight.

The large structures and buildings of the Grain store site dominate the skyline along the western edge of the village and form a distinctive backdrop to the cricket grounds.

### Open spaces and interactions with built form

Undeveloped land makes up most of this character area, the grounds of Thriplow Place, and meadows, the cricket pitch. The amount of tree cover is relatively high and the area often feels wooded and enclosed.

### Aspects of value - Heritage and Access

There are 11 listed structures or dwellings - Thriplow Place is a Grade II\* part-17th-century timber-framed house now substantially altered and restored. This and its grounds are included within the Conservation Area which covers most of the character area except the grainstore/farm yard. Parts of the area would therefore be considered very sensitive in heritage and landscape terms.

### Perceptual and visual experience - important views

The feel here is very wooded, with lanes often enclosed by tall hedges and trees. Woodland blocks on the west side of the village provide visual containment and prevent longer views. The associated estate cottages of Thriplow House on Lodge Lane convey the status of the house otherwise generally concealed within its grounds.

The grainstore, whilst not particularly attractive site, is nevertheless a distinctive collection of buildings and significant for reminding of the dominance and importance of agriculture, and the reason for the evolution of Thriplow into an affluent village with its substantial stock of listed buildings and grand houses.



View to the Grainstore over the cricket pitch



Estate cottage



Modern addition on Lower Lane



# CHARACTER APPRAISAL

## HF1 — HEATHFIELD CHARACTER AREA

### Location

This character area takes in the whole of the Heathfield residential area and its associated public open spaces. It is associated with the campus of Duxford Imperial War Museum which lies adjacent, either side of the A505. Duxford was an RAF airfield, built at the end of World War I, opening in 1919 as a Flying Training School. It continued to be important through WWII and into the Cold War era until its closure in 1961.

The area was not historically a settled part of the parish, but was first developed for housing sometime around the 1960s/70s, after the closure of the airfield. Approx. 125 houses were built by the local authority, and later were sold off to private individuals. The residential area is built tightly along the southeast boundary of Thriplow parish. It's physically connected to the ex-military campus to the east, but this falls into the parish of Whittlesford and is not included in the character assessment.



### Settlement pattern and character of built form

The Settlement pattern has a planned estate feel and comprises three main phases of expansion. The original residential roads were Kingsway, Woburn Place and Whitehall Gardens. Pepperslade was added later on the east side and more recently predominantly flats in Hurdles Way and Ringstone on the west side, built only in the last decade.

As the houses were built in planned phases, there is a uniformity in design and layout and materials in each zone. Brick and concrete tiles dominate the palette of materials.

In the centre of the residential zone there is commercial land use which feels somewhat out of place and associated fencing and car parking are visual detractors.

### Open spaces and interactions with built form

Although the form of the settlement is tight, there are a number of small open green spaces found within in the residential areas that were mostly designed in - for example the semicircular green at the centre of Whitehall Place. These are important for providing space and opportunities for tree planting. Some are under pressure from car parking.

The residential area is somewhat inward looking and views out to countryside are not easily experienced. Much reduced sense of ruralness compared to the main village.



*New flats on Ringstone*



*The original housing stock on Whitehall Gardens*



*Heathfield has two large recreational greenspaces*



*Modern flats on Hurdles Way*

### Aspects of value - Heritage and Access

There are no listed buildings and there is no Conservation Area here.

There are two area of recreational open space on the edges of Heathfield which are highly valued. A footpath also leads into countryside to the north which has woodland, farmland and a series of ponds. It also offers a pedestrian link to Thriplow but which is somewhat indirect. There is also a footpath link from Ringstone green space which heads west towards the KWS site that sits between Thriplow village and Heathfield.

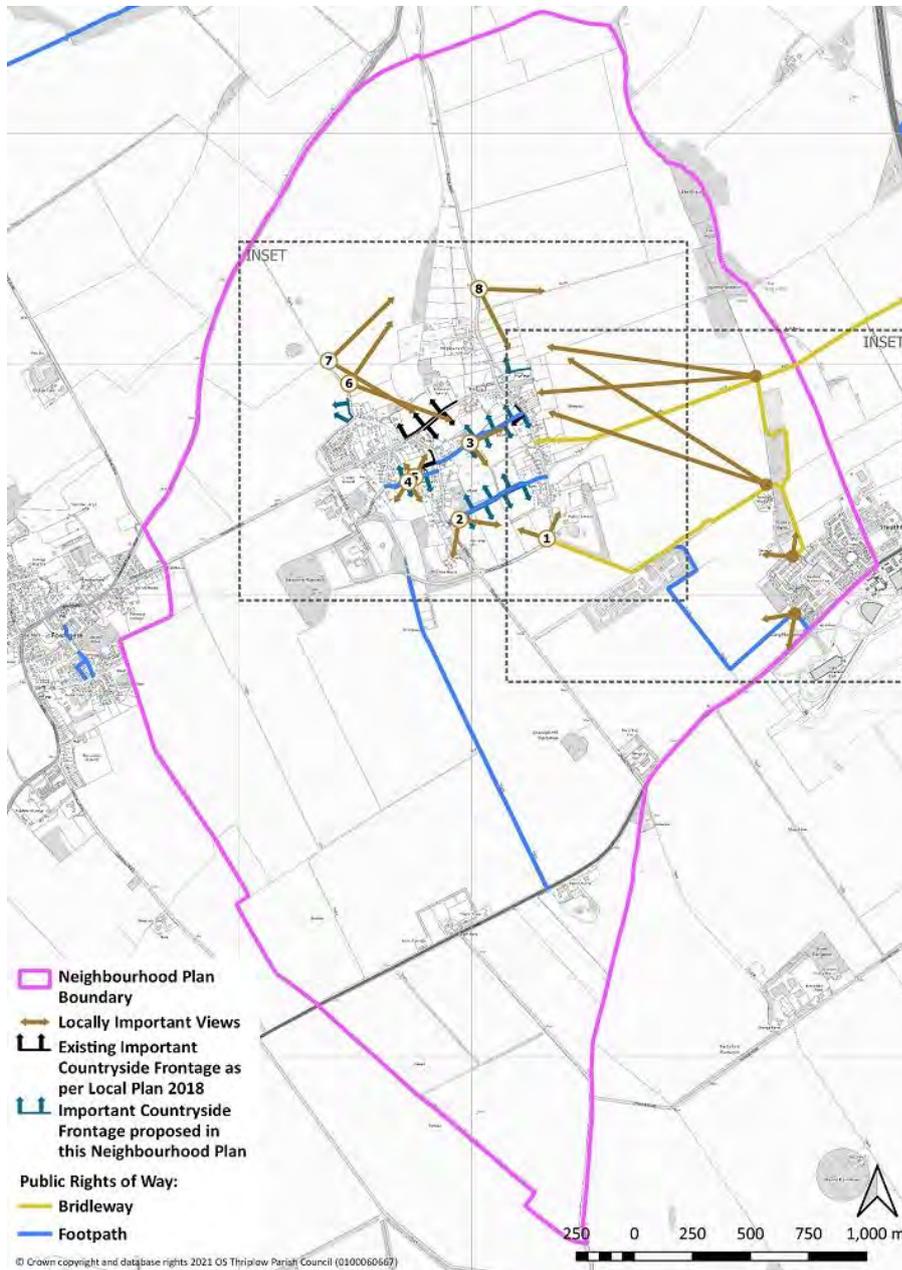
Access between areas of housing built in different decades is poor. The Pepperslade residential area connects through to Heathfield only via a single narrow and awkward gap in a wall. There are problems of separation both between Heathfield and Thriplow main village, but also between different area of Heathfield itself.

### Perceptual and visual experience - important views

Heathfield has a less affluent feel than the main village. It has a number of environmental issues and suffers a good deal of road noise from the busy A505 along its southern boundary to the south, and from the M11 which lies only a kilometer or so to the east.

The over-riding sense is of an estate with somewhat more suburban feel and with disconnection between its different zones. There are few opportunities for rural views owing to enclosure by trees along its boundaries with the countryside.

## Appendix 2: Views Assessment and Important Countryside Frontages



*Map 1: views and important countryside frontages. Parish wide.*



# View 1



*Image 1: View 1*

**Location:** View 1

Thriplow village entrance on Church Street at meeting of bridleway (PROW 234/8) taken from entrance to KWS)

**Description:**

View of Thriplow settlement edge and into the Thriplow village conservation area (including KWS and Manor Farm) looking north towards Church Street

**Key contributing features to sense of place and to be respected:**

- Characterful setting to village gateway and Thriplow conservation area, provided by key landscape features (curving avenue of trees along Church Street, the paddock which forms part of Manor Farm and the avenue of tall trees along the skyline which line the public right of way PROW 234/3).
- Attractive clay tile long pitched roofs of KWS buildings glimpsed through the trees.
- The buildings sit comfortably and are nestled in the surrounding landscape

## View 2



*Image 2: View 2*

**Location:** View 2 and proposed Important Countryside Frontage “The View”.

The public footpath between Manor Farm and Manor House and proposed Important Countryside Frontage looking south

**Description:** View from the public footpath (locally called “The View”) alongside the Manor House looking south uphill in the direction of the disused quarry next to Middle St on the right.

**Key contributing features to sense of place and to be respected:**

- Characterful rural landscape typical in the parish
- Informal avenue of mature trees
- This landscape provides a characterful setting to the Manor House (behind camera) and its grounds (Grade II\* listed)

**Why it qualifies as an Important Countryside Frontage:**

- Open countryside sweeps into this edge of settlement location



*Image 3: Important Countryside Frontage: Manor Farm paddock looking north from "The View" footpath*

**Location:** Proposed Important Countryside Frontage "The View" Manor Farm paddock looking north from "The View" footpath

**Description:** private horse paddock used by owners of Manor Farmhouse, surrounded by trees on edge of field

**Why it qualifies as an Important Countryside Frontage:**

- Rural gap with strong countryside character between Manor Farmhouse (Church Street) and the Manor House (Middle Street)

# View 3



*Image 4: View 3*



*Image 5: Important Countryside Frontage "The Baulk", looking south*

**Location:** View 3 AND proposed Important Countryside Frontage "The Baulk" (along both frontages north and south).

View looking south on the footpath known as the Baulk between Middle Street and Church Street

**Description:** A view looking south (east and west) across paddocks (occasionally used for grazing sheep) framed by residential gardens in Church Street and trees to the south (second photo). There is a small copse located in the east on lower level land.

**Key contributing features to sense of place and to be respected:**

- Characterful rural landscape typical in the parish
- Openness and rising land dominated by open skies
- Trees in the distance

**Why it qualifies as an Important Countryside Frontage:**

- Rural gap with strong countryside character between three parts of the village (Bacon's Farm (east), Middle Street residential area (west) and School Lane (north)).

## View 4



Image 6: View 4

**Location:** View 4

The View public footpath (PROW 234/1) and proposed Important Countryside Frontage “Narrow Lane” looking south

**Description:**

View from the public footpath between Lower Street and Middle Street looking south to rural sheep pasture

**Key contributing features to sense of place and to be respected:**

- Characterful rural landscape typical in the parish
- Strong countryside feel in the middle of the village

**Why it qualifies as an Important Countryside Frontage:**

- Rural gap where the countryside sweeps into the village between (Middle Street (east) and Lower Street (west)).

## View 5



Image 7: View 5



Image 8: Important Countryside Frontage: "Narrow Lane"

<p><b>Location:</b> View 5 and Proposed Important Countryside Frontage “Narrow Lane”.</p> <p>A view looking north from only footpath between Middle St and Lower St and ends at Lower St between numbers 11 and 13.</p>
<p><b>Description:</b> Field, known as Peg’s Close, used as sheep pasture generally looked onto from private gardens in Lower St, The Green and Middle St, most easily viewed from existing Important Countryside frontage in Middle St.</p>
<p><b>Key contributing features to sense of place and to be respected:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rural space, mainly surrounded by woodland and private rear gardens</li> <li>• Typical valued aspect of Thriplow village settlement, providing farmland penetrating into village</li> <li>• Residential buildings and farm building sit comfortably in the landscape</li> </ul>
<p><b>Why it qualifies as an Important Countryside Frontage:</b></p> <p>Rural gap with strong countryside character between three parts of the village (Middle Street (east), Lower Street (west and and School Lane (north)).</p> <p>Strong countryside character penetrates into the village.</p>

## View 6



*Image 9: View 6*

**Location:** View 6

Sheralds Croft Farm Track (widely used by parishioners but not a public right of way)  
Formerly permissive footpath access to A505, now barred to access.

**Description:**

Looking east across rural landscape towards St George's Church (Grade II\* listed) beyond trees and SSSI

**Key contributing features to sense of place and to be respected:**

- St George's Church and its setting in distance.
- Characterful rural landscape typical in the parish
- Meadow and the trees and hedgerows which enclose it
- The skyline of mature trees which screens farm buildings from sight

## View 7



Image 10: View 7

**Location:** View 7

Northern point Sherald's Croft Farm Track (widely used by parishioners but not a public right of way)

**Description:**

Looking east across farmed arable landscape towards St George's Church (Grade II\* listed)

**Key contributing features to sense of place and to be respected:**

- Open landscape of arable farming
- Tree belt which screens the SSSI and farm buildings from view

## View 8



Image 11: view 8

**Location:** View 8

North of village looking south

**Description:**

Open horse paddocks with church on prow of hill to right hand side of view at entrance to village from Newton on the north.

**Key contributing features to sense of place and to be respected:**

- View of Church: Listed Grade II\* in open fields
- Entrance to village: rural landscape meeting settlement edge

## “Sheralds Croft Lane” Important Countryside Frontage



*Image 12: Important Countryside Frontage: Sheralds Croft Lane*



*Image 13: Important Countryside Frontage: Sheralds Croft Lane*



*Image 14: Important Countryside Frontage: Sheralds Croft Lane*

<b>Location:</b> Proposed Important Countryside Frontage “Sheralds Croft Lane”
<b>Description:</b> View of farming land from circular walk track (which leads to the allotments) at northern part of the settlement.
<b>Why it qualifies as an Important Countryside Frontage:</b> Strong countryside character sweeping into the northern edge of the village between Foremans Road and Sherald’s Croft.

# The Churchyard ICF



*Image 15: Important Countryside Frontage "The Churchyard"*

**Location:** Proposed Important Countryside Frontage "The Churchyard". Churchyard looking north, northern edge of settlement.

**Why it qualifies as an Important Countryside Frontage:**

- Strong countryside character on north eastern edge of the village in setting of the Grade II\* listed Church .
- View from higher vantage point of church with sweeping rural view

### Appendix 3: Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) – citations

**COUNTY:** CAMBRIDGESHIRE **SITE NAME:** WHITTLESFORD-THRIFLOW  
HUMMOCKY FIELDS

**Status:** Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

**Local Planning Authorities:** South Cambridgeshire District Council

**National Grid Reference:** TL 428463  
TL 451488

**Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000:** 154                      **1:10,000:** TL 44 NE, TL 44 NW

**Date Notified (Under 1949 Act):**                      **Date of Last Revision:**

**Date Notified (Under 1981 Act):** 1987                      **Date of Last Revision:** 1993

**Area:** TL 428463 7.9 ha 19.5 ac  
TL 451488 47.74 ha 117.99 ac

**Other information:** This is a new addition to the Cambridgeshire Schedule. Part of the SSSI as notified in 1987 has been deleted at this revision.

#### **Description and Reasons for Notification**

Fields at Whittlesford and Thriplow have a combination of local topography and agricultural practice which provides a suitable habitat for the nationally rare species grass poly *Lythrum hyssopifolia*. This species is now confined in mainland Britain to a small area of south Cambridgeshire where it occurs locally in shallow depressions in arable fields, together with a number of scarce bryophytes. The occurrence of the nationally uncommon fairy shrimp *Chirocephalus diaphanus*, in some of the hollows, adds to the importance of the site.

The depressions in which grass poly occurs are a result of the melting of ice lenses after the last glaciation. They support a characteristic assemblage of plant species including grass poly, toad rush *Juncus bufonius*, greater plantain *Plantago major* ssp. *intermedia*, knotgrass *Polygonum aviculare*, redshank *P. persicaria* and the very local tasteless water-pepper *P. mite*. The uncommon liverworts *Riccia cavernosa*, *R. warnstorffii* and *R. subbifurca* are also present. Both flooding and ploughing are essential in maintaining this specialised community and so the depth of the depressions is a crucial factor.

The fairy shrimp is also present. It is an uncommon crustacean which occurs in temporary freshwater pools where predators are absent. The extremely drought-resistant eggs of this species enable it to survive during periods when the pools are dry. The fairy shrimp has shown a marked decline in frequency during this century, probably as a result of improved drainage and infilling of seasonal pools.

**COUNTY:** CAMBRIDGESHIRE **SITE NAME:** THRILOW MEADOWS

**Status:** Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

**Local Planning Authorities:** South Cambridgeshire District Council

**National Grid Reference:** TL 437470

**Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000:** 154                      **1:10,000:** TL 44 NW

**Date Notified (Under 1949 Act):** 1963                      **Date of Last Revision:** 1971

**Date Notified (Under 1981 Act):** 1984                      **Date of Last Revision:**

**Area:** 3.3 ha 8 ac

**Other information:** A boundary modification has been made to exclude some 5 acres which has been reseeded. The Cambridgeshire and Isle of Ely Naturalists' Trust have a nature reserve agreement on this site.

### **Description and Reasons for Notification**

This site supports species-rich neutral pasture of variable drainage characteristics, ranging from dry with calcareous influences, to marshy areas containing many uncommon plants. The habitats represented are geographically a lowland England type, examples of which are now scarce and occur mainly as scattered and fragmented sites.

The grassland communities are characterised by the presence of such species as red fescue *Festuca rubra*, Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus* and knapweed *Centaurea nigra*.

The wetter areas are dominated by a mixture of grasses, sedges and rushes with a good range of typical wetland herbs such as ragged Robin *Lychnis flos-cuculi*, fleabane *Pulicaria dysenterica* and purple loosestrife *Lythrum salicaria*. A number of species uncommon in the region are also present, and of particular note is the large population of marsh orchids *Dactylorhiza pratermissa* and *D. incarnata*. The small area of dry grassland is calcareous in nature reflecting the presence of underlying chalk. The dominant grass is false oat *Arrhenatherum elatius* and herbs present include the field scabious *Knautia arvensis*.

Hedgerows, scrub and peripheral watercourses provide additional habitats on the site.

**COUNTY:** CAMBRIDGESHIRE **SITE NAME:** THRILOW PEAT HOLES

**Status:** Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) notified under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

**Local Planning Authorities:** South Cambridgeshire District Council

**National Grid Reference:** TL 450475

**Ordnance Survey Sheet 1:50,000:** 154                      **1:10,000:** TL 44 NW, TL 44 NE

**Date Notified (Under 1949 Act):** 1958                      **Date of Last Revision:** 1971

**Date Notified (Under 1981 Act):** 1986                      **Date of Last Revision:**

**Area:** 10.4 ha 25.7 ac

**Other information:** A boundary amendment has been made.

### **Description and Reasons for Notification**

The Thriplow Peat Holes hold remnants of relic fen and alder carr habitats which are now very restricted both nationally and especially locally.

Such overgrown fen and alder carr communities are characteristically rich in invertebrate life and ponds and ditches within the site further enhance this value.

The vegetation of the alder carr is characteristically alder *Alnus glutinosa*, ash *Fraxinus excelsior* and willow *Salix cinerea*, together with guelder rose *Viburnum opulus*. Herbs include common reed *Phragmites australis*, herb Bennet *Geum urbanum* and herb Robert *Geranium robertianum*. The ferns broad buckler fern *Dryopteris austriaca* and male fern *Dryopteris filix-mas* are common.

The site is additionally of historical interest, the botany having been recorded for over 300 years. Past records have included sundews *Drosera* sp. and butterwort *Pinguicula vulgaris* which are characteristic of acid soils. More typical fen species which have been recorded are the bog bean *Menyanthes trifoliata*, marsh helleborine *Epipactis helleborine*, grass of parnassus *Parnassia palustris* and the great fen sedge *Cladium mariscus*.