



BLETSOE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Our Parish – Our Plan – Our Future
Shaping Our Future



**PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE
DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN:**
15 SEPTEMBER 2018 - 31 OCTOBER 2018

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

OUR PARISH – OUR PLAN – OUR FUTURE

The Bletsoe Neighbourhood Plan will allow the community to have some influence in the planning decisions of Bedford Borough Council regarding the Parish of Bletsoe. This includes more control over where development takes place and also the type and quality of development. Following feedback, the following draft Vision emerged:

"Bletsoe will remain a peaceful rural village that seeks to meet the housing, economic and infrastructure needs of its residents. Any future development must, therefore, be sensitive and respect the character of the village that makes it so special"

53 (93%) of the respondents to the draft Vision that was identified in the consultation that was undertaken from 10 September 2016 to 14 October 2016 strongly agreed or agreed with the statement. It is concluded, therefore, that there is overwhelming support for the vision statement.

The consultation events held during the neighbourhood planning process have posed a number of questions with the intention of setting objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan and the following key objectives have emerged:

- ***To deliver housing which both sustains the current and meets the future needs of the community;***
- ***To protect and enhance existing and future open spaces;***
- ***To manage both existing and future traffic and transport provision and encourage safe and sustainable movement;***
- ***To ensure the Village benefits from sufficient facilities and services;***
- ***To protect and enhance all listed buildings and the Ancient Monument within the Parish.***

The comments made in the first stages of consultation have helped identify key issues and options to address them, including locations for small scale future growth to meet local need. This feedback enabled policies to be determined and the Bletsoe Neighbourhood Plan to be drafted. This latest consultation sought to ensure that the Plan had been drafted in line with the views and requirements of the community. In addition to formal policies, a number of non-policy actions for the Parish Council to address had been identified and these were also included in the consultation.

This represented a statutory 6 week period of consultation in accordance with Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. Following this consultation, the Bletsoe Neighbourhood Plan will need to be amended and then submitted to Bedford Borough Council, as required, for Regulation 16 consultation and independent examination. The Plan, if successful at examination, will then proceed to a local referendum to ensure that it enjoys local support.

HOUSING PROVISION

OBJECTIVE: DELIVERING HOUSING WHICH BOTH SUSTAINS THE CURRENT AND MEETS THE FUTURE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY

LOCATION OF DEVELOPMENT

Policy	General Development Principles	Response								
BNP1	Development proposals within the defined Settlement Policy Area as identified by the Proposals Maps in the Bedford Borough Local Plan, will be supported subject to compliance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and any other relevant policies in the Neighbourhood Plan. In order to maintain the intrinsic value of the countryside, development proposals located outside of the defined Settlement Policy Area (except for the sites allocated by BNP policies 2, 3 and 4) will be resisted unless the proposal satisfies the appropriate policies within this Plan, or it can be clearly demonstrated the proposal is sustainable development which seeks to enhance the vitality of the village, the historic environment and rural economy.	<table><tr><td>Agree</td><td>Disagree</td></tr><tr><td>69 (No.)</td><td>4 (No.)</td></tr></table> Response (%) <table><tr><td>Agree</td><td>Disagree</td></tr><tr><td>95</td><td>5</td></tr></table>	Agree	Disagree	69 (No.)	4 (No.)	Agree	Disagree	95	5
Agree	Disagree									
69 (No.)	4 (No.)									
Agree	Disagree									
95	5									
Policy	Land Behind Captains Close	Comments								
BNP2	A residential development of up to 8 dwellings on the land behind Captains Close, as identified on the Proposals Map (at Appendix A below), will be supported subject to the following criteria: (i) The design and layout respects and enhances the natural, built and historic environment; (ii) It can be demonstrated the mix and tenure proposed meets the identified need; (iii) Parking provision is provided in accordance with BNP Policy 5 unless it can be demonstrated that a reduction would not result in a significant increase in on street parking; (iv) Private amenity space is provided in accordance with BNP Policy 5 unless it can be demonstrated that a reduction would not result in substandard amenity standards for future occupiers; (v) It can be demonstrated that an appropriate standard of access can be achieved for both vehicles and pedestrians.	<table><tr><td>Agree</td><td>Disagree</td></tr><tr><td>57</td><td>16</td></tr></table> Response (%) <table><tr><td>Agree</td><td>Disagree</td></tr><tr><td>78</td><td>22</td></tr></table>	Agree	Disagree	57	16	Agree	Disagree	78	22
Agree	Disagree									
57	16									
Agree	Disagree									
78	22									
Policy	First Field, The Avenue	Comments								
BNP3	A residential development of up to 3 dwellings on the land at First Field, as identified on the Proposals Map (at Appendix A below), will be supported subject to the following criteria: (i) The design and layout respects and enhances the natural, built and historic environment; (ii) The design and layout of the development should improve and enhance the village entrance and protect the open space on both sides of The Avenue which should continue to define the edge of the settlement; (iii) It can be demonstrated the mix and tenure proposed meets an identified need; (iv) Parking provision is provided in accordance with BNP Policy 5 unless it can be demonstrated that a reduction would not result in a significant increase in on street parking; (v) Private amenity space should be provided in accordance with BNP Policy 5 unless it can be demonstrated that a reduction would not result in substandard amenity standards for future occupiers; (vi) It can be demonstrated that suitable access and adequate visibility can be achieved for vehicles and pedestrians; (vii) Methods to mitigate noise from the A6 are incorporated into the design to ensure a satisfactory standard of amenity for future occupants.	<table><tr><td>Agree</td><td>Disagree</td></tr><tr><td>48</td><td>23</td></tr></table> Response (%) <table><tr><td>Agree</td><td>Disagree</td></tr><tr><td>68</td><td>32</td></tr></table>	Agree	Disagree	48	23	Agree	Disagree	68	32
Agree	Disagree									
48	23									
Agree	Disagree									
68	32									

HOUSING PROVISION

LOCATION OF DEVELOPMENT

Policy	Land North of The Old Rectory	Comments				
BNP4	A residential development of up to 3 dwellings on the land North of The Old rectory, as identified on the Proposals Map (at Appendix A below), will be supported subject to the following criteria: (i) The design and layout respects and enhances the natural, built and historic environment, particularly consideration should be given to the setting of the Conservation Area and the setting of the adjacent Heritage Assets; (ii) It can be demonstrated the mix and tenure proposed meets an identified need; (iii) Parking provision is provided in accordance with BNP Policy 5 unless it can be demonstrated that a reduction would not result in a significant increase in on street parking; (iv) Private amenity space should be provided in accordance with BNP Policy 5 unless it can be demonstrated that a reduction would not result in substandard amenity standards for future occupiers; (v) It can be demonstrated that suitable access and adequate visibility can be achieved for vehicles and pedestrians; (vi) The design and layout includes appropriate screening to the northern and western boundaries of the site.	<table><tr><th>Agree</th><th>Disagree</th></tr><tr><td>49</td><td>28</td></tr></table>	Agree	Disagree	49	28
		Agree	Disagree			
49	28					
Response (%) <table><tr><th>Response (%)</th></tr><tr><td>Agree: 64</td></tr><tr><td>Disagree: 36</td></tr></table>		Response (%)	Agree: 64	Disagree: 36		
Response (%)						
Agree: 64						
Disagree: 36						

ACHIEVING QUALITY DESIGN AND LOCAL DISTINCTIVENESS

Policy	Design Criteria	Comments													
BNP5	All proposals for new development, including extensions to existing dwellings will be expected to meet the following criteria to be considered acceptable in design terms: • The design and layout is of a high quality that is considered to be in keeping with the scale and character of the immediate surroundings; • Respect the context and setting of all Heritage Assets, particularly those that are designated; • It can be demonstrated that the proposal would provide sufficient parking in accordance with the Village Design Advice (at Appendix B below) and would not result in an unacceptable increase in on street parking; • The proposal provides an adequate level of private amenity space accordance with the Village Design Advice (at Appendix B below); • Provide hard and soft landscaping appropriate to the scale, location and design of the development; • There is no unacceptable loss of amenity to neighbouring developments through loss of privacy, loss of light, visual intrusions, noise and pollution. All planning applications should provide a written statement which demonstrates how the above criteria has been considered and incorporated into the proposal. Proposals should take into account the design criteria as set out in the Village Design Advice (at Appendix B below).	<table><tr><th>Agree</th><th>Disagree</th></tr><tr><td>72</td><td>3</td></tr></table> Response (%) <table><thead><tr><th>Response (%)</th><th>Agree</th><th>Disagree</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>96</td><td>Agree</td><td>Disagree</td></tr><tr><td>4</td><td>Disagree</td><td>Agree</td></tr></tbody></table>	Agree	Disagree	72	3	Response (%)	Agree	Disagree	96	Agree	Disagree	4	Disagree	Agree
Agree	Disagree														
72	3														
Response (%)	Agree	Disagree													
96	Agree	Disagree													
4	Disagree	Agree													



INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS

OBJECTIVE: MANAGING BOTH EXISTING AND FUTURE TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT PROVISION AND ENCOURAGING SAFE AND SUSTAINABLE MOVEMENT

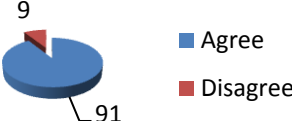
PARKING ISSUES

Policy	Vehicle and Cycle Parking	Comments				
BNP6	All new development will be encouraged to provide vehicle and cycle parking in accordance with Policy BNP5 of this Plan, and set out in the Village Design Advice (at Appendix B below) attached to the Plan, unless it can be demonstrated that the proposal would not have a significant adverse impact upon existing parking arrangements and would not result in an unacceptable increase in on street parking.	<table><tr><th>Agree</th><th>Disagree</th></tr><tr><td>70</td><td>4</td></tr></table> Response (%)  A 3D pie chart with a blue slice representing 95% and a red slice representing 5%. A legend to the right shows a blue square for 'Agree' and a red square for 'Disagree'.	Agree	Disagree	70	4
Agree	Disagree					
70	4					
Non-Policy Action	Parking	Comments				
NPA1	The Parish Council recognise the need to alleviate the pressure from limited off street parking provision in Bletsoe. The Parish Council will continue to work with residents to find a solution and will consult further on the relocation of the play area and extension of the Village Hall car park in an appropriate manner.	<table><tr><th>Agree</th><th>Disagree</th></tr><tr><td>63</td><td>10</td></tr></table> Response (%)  A 3D pie chart with a blue slice representing 86% and a red slice representing 14%. A legend to the right shows a blue square for 'Agree' and a red square for 'Disagree'.	Agree	Disagree	63	10
Agree	Disagree					
63	10					

INFRASTRUCTURE

Policy	Transportation	Comments										
BNP7	All proposals that make a contribution towards improvements to existing and/or new public and community transport services in the Bletsoe Neighbourhood Plan Area (BNPA) will be supported subject to there being no conflict with any other relevant policy within this Plan. Proposals for new development should ensure that, where practicable, provisions are made to ensure there is connection to existing footpaths enabling residents to walk to village amenities. Proposals for major developments within and adjoining the BNPA must demonstrate the development proposed would not have an unacceptable impact on the area in terms of additional traffic generation through a robust Transport Statement. Where the development proposed would involve an increase in traffic, the developer will be required to make provision for, and contribute to, appropriate mitigation measures within the BNPA.	<table><tr><th>Agree</th><th>Disagree</th></tr><tr><td>73</td><td>1</td></tr></table> Response (%) <table><thead><tr><th>Response</th><th>Percentage</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Agree</td><td>99</td></tr><tr><td>Disagree</td><td>1</td></tr></tbody></table>	Agree	Disagree	73	1	Response	Percentage	Agree	99	Disagree	1
	Agree	Disagree										
73	1											
Response	Percentage											
Agree	99											
Disagree	1											

SPEED AWARENESS

Non-Policy Action	Speed Awareness	Comments							
NPA2	The Parish Council will work with Bedford Borough Council to improve local awareness of traffic problems. This will include the provision of regulation compliant signage to encourage traffic to slow down and a review of speed restrictions. The Parish Council will liaise with the Borough Council to assess the costs and benefits of additional traffic calming measures such as the provision of average speed cameras in Bletsoe (if appropriate) to reduce speed and improve safety.	Agree	Disagree						
		60	6						
		Response (%)  <table><thead><tr><th>Response</th><th>Percentage</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Agree</td><td>91</td></tr><tr><td>Disagree</td><td>9</td></tr></tbody></table>		Response	Percentage	Agree	91	Disagree	9
Response	Percentage								
Agree	91								
Disagree	9								

THE ENVIRONMENT

OBJECTIVE: PROTECTING AND ENHANCING OUR EXISTING AND FUTURE OPEN SPACES

OPEN SPACE

Policy	Local Green Space	Comments						
BNP8	The areas of Local Green Space as identified on the Proposals Map (at Appendix A below) will be protected from inappropriate development. Redevelopment or partial redevelopment of the Local Green Space will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated: - the proposals would result in enhancement of the existing Local Green Space; - development of the Local Green Space would result in significant benefits for the community as a whole; and/or - there would be no significant adverse impact on the visual quality of the surrounding area and overall character of the village.	<table><tr><th>Agree</th><th>Disagree</th></tr><tr><td>67</td><td>6</td></tr></table>	Agree	Disagree	67	6		
		Agree	Disagree					
67	6							
		Response (%) A pie chart titled 'Response (%)' showing the distribution of responses. The chart is divided into two segments: a large blue segment representing 'Agree' at 92%, and a small red segment representing 'Disagree' at 8%. A legend to the right of the chart shows a blue square for 'Agree' and a red square for 'Disagree'. <table><thead><tr><th>Response</th><th>Percentage</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Agree</td><td>92</td></tr><tr><td>Disagree</td><td>8</td></tr></tbody></table>	Response	Percentage	Agree	92	Disagree	8
Response	Percentage							
Agree	92							
Disagree	8							

VILLAGE ENTRANCE

Non-Policy Action	Protection of the Village Entrance	Comments				
NPA3	The Parish Council will seek to resist proposals for new development on the land at the village entrance to the west identified on the Proposals Maps (at Appendix A below) as NPA2. As part of the BNP this land is not allocated as Local Green Space, however, it is considered to be an important landscape gap between the built form of the village and the A6. The Parish Council will not support proposals that would result in the loss of the openness of these important gaps and will endeavour to work with relevant land owners to ensure these areas remain clear of clutter.	<table><tr><td>Agree</td><td>Disagree</td></tr><tr><td>59</td><td>14</td></tr></table> Response (%) 81 19 Agree Disagree	Agree	Disagree	59	14
Agree	Disagree					
59	14					
Non-Policy Action	Identifying Potential Allotments	Comments				
NPA4	The Parish Council will identify whether there is suitable demand for community allotments. Should an appropriate level of demand exist the Parish Council will seek to establish the Bletsoe Allotment Association in order to identify suitable locations for allotments. This could also include joint discussions with neighbouring parishes.	<table><tr><td>Agree</td><td>Disagree</td></tr><tr><td>59</td><td>15</td></tr></table> Response (%) 80 20 Agree Disagree	Agree	Disagree	59	15
Agree	Disagree					
59	15					

PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

Non-Policy Action	Improvements to local Rights of Way	Comments				
NPA5	In conjunction with Bedford Borough Council, the Parish Council will encourage improved links to the public rights of way connecting to neighbouring parishes in order to support and enhance health and wellbeing beyond Bletsoe Parish. Further work is needed to assess these and to prioritise areas for improvement, such as seating and drop kerbs to assist with accessibility. Where steps are the only option, signage could be improved to advise users that there are steps ahead and to suggest alternative routes where available. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and other sources of funding will be required to assist with financial support for the promotion and improvement of the Parish Walks.	<table><tr><td>Agree</td><td>Disagree</td></tr><tr><td>70</td><td>3</td></tr></table> Response (%) 4 96 ■ Agree ■ Disagree	Agree	Disagree	70	3
Agree	Disagree					
70	3					

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

OBJECTIVE: ENSURING THE VILLAGE BENEFITS FROM SUFFICIENT FACILITIES AND SERVICES

VILLAGE HALL

Non-Policy Action	Continued Provision of Village Services	Comments				
NPA6	The Parish Council will continue to promote the use of the village hall and will work with and support the Village Hall Committee in taking steps to improve the facility where appropriate. The Parish Council will also support existing community groups and clubs together with encouragement for residents to use local services such as the mobile library and weekly post office visits. Where possible additional sources of funding retained by the Parish Council through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will be spent on improvements that benefit the community.	<table><tr><th>Agree</th><th>Disagree</th></tr><tr><td>73</td><td>0</td></tr></table> Response (%) ■ Agree ■ Disagree	Agree	Disagree	73	0
Agree	Disagree					
73	0					

BROADBAND

Policy	Next Generation Broadband	Comments				
BNP9	All new residential, commercial and community buildings within the Neighbourhood Plan area should be served by a superfast broadband (fibre-optic) connection to premises unless it can be demonstrated, through consultation with Next Generation Access (NGA) Network providers, that this would not be either possible, practical or economically viable. Where this is the case, sufficient and suitable ducting should be provided within the site and to the property to facilitate installation at a future date.	<table><tr><th>Agree</th><th>Disagree</th></tr><tr><td>71</td><td>0</td></tr></table>	Agree	Disagree	71	0
		Agree	Disagree			
71	0					
Response (%) ■ Agree ■ Disagree						

HERITAGE ASSETS

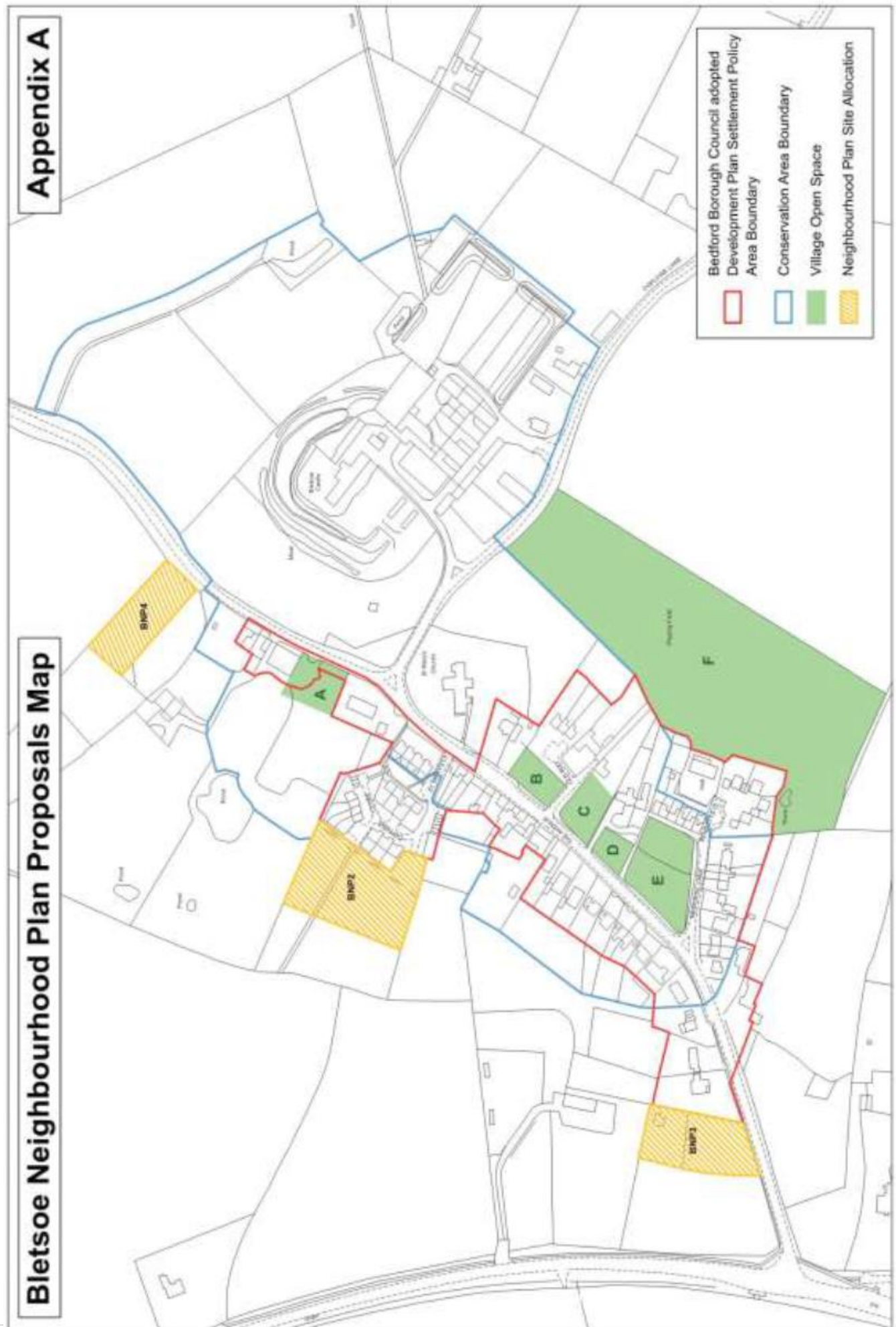
OBJECTIVE: PROTECTING AND ENHANCING OUR LISTED BUILDINGS AND ANCIENT MONUMENT

LOCAL ISSUES

Non-Policy Action	Protection for Buildings of Local Interest	Comments				
NPA7	The community will work with Bedford Borough Council and Historic England to explore the development of a Local List for the Bletsoe Neighbourhood Plan area to include buildings noted as historically important in the Neighbourhood Plan engagement process.	<table><tr><th>Agree</th><th>Disagree</th></tr><tr><td>64</td><td>5</td></tr></table>	Agree	Disagree	64	5
		Agree	Disagree			
		64	5			
Response (%)  93 7 Agree Disagree						

Bletsoe Neighbourhood Plan Proposals Map

Appendix A



Bletsoe Village Design Advice (VDA)

It should be noted the VDA provides general advice for developers and is not intended to be prescriptive. Each case will be judged on its own merits based on the circumstances of the individual site and proposal.

General guidelines

- New development must not detract from views of St Mary's Church or Bletsoe Castle.
- It is important to consider property frontages. Low brick walls, low hedges and open gardens are appropriate for Bletsoe.
- The scale of new development should be appropriate to its location, this includes existing properties wishing to extend. Houses must not dominate neighbouring buildings in height or massing.
- Existing historic buildings should be conserved and their original features retained. This includes alterations and conversions of historic barns, outbuildings and agricultural buildings; their character is important and should also be conserved where appropriate.
- Existing planting that contributes to the character of Bletsoe should be retained and, where possible, replaced if necessary.
- When altering residential gardens, the effect the changes would have on the character of the village should be considered.
- Unnecessary signage and clutter should be avoided as far as practicable.

Building design principles

- Architectural features must be genuine and be an integral part of the building design. External features similar to the existing surrounding properties are preferred.
- Replacement doors and windows should accord with the form, proportion and style of the originals. External colour should complement the wall colour and original decorative features should be retained within the appearance of the property.
- Grouped buildings (i.e. houses/houses and houses/garages) should form a mix of shapes and layout typical of the immediate area in which they are being built.
- Brick colours traditional to Bletsoe are soft red brick and stone work, together with light coloured render.
- Brick bond and the colour and type of mortar should be considered, particularly for extensions to existing buildings.
- Natural Grey slate or red/brown clay plain tiles are preferred to maintain the original character of the village and roof windows should ideally only be positioned on rear slopes.
- Significant hard standing and hard landscaping can result in a stark appearance changing the feel of a rural setting to that of an urban area. Consideration should be given to the colour and style of paving and solid tarmac surfaces should be avoided where possible. Bricks or setts should be used as demarcation.

Residential parking

- New residential development should provide appropriate levels of on plot parking in accordance with Bedford Borough Council adopted parking standards unless it can

be clearly demonstrated it would be impractical or the development would not result in an unacceptable increase in on street parking:

- 1 bed properties should provide 1 on plot parking space;
 - 2 bed properties should provide 2 on plot parking spaces;
 - 3 bed properties should provide a minimum of 2 on plot parking spaces;
 - 4 bed + properties should provide a minimum of 3 on plot parking spaces, however, 4 spaces are encouraged to provide space for growing families.
- Parking spaces should be generally be provided at a width and length to provide adequate space for larger vehicles to park. This is suggested as being 2.5m x 4m deep per parking space.
 - Garages should ideally be constructed to a width of 3.3m and at least 6m in length so that they provide a usable parking space suitable for modern day vehicles.
 - Cycle parking should be provided at a ratio appropriate to the size of the house and within a space that is covered and lockable.

Residential amenity space

- On new developments, design should take into account the need to provide adequate spacing between new and existing dwellings and the minimum depth for all rear gardens should be at least 10m. This will ensure that suitable levels of privacy are maintained, and that reasonable sized gardens are created. For three and four bedroom homes rear gardens of about 100sqm are encouraged.
- Smaller gardens will be appropriate for one or two bedroomed dwellings, particularly so for bungalows.
- Regard should be had for any up to date recommended internal and external space standards set out by the Government.

Design considered to be unsuitable for Bletsoe

- Building heights that dominate neighbouring properties;
- Large buildings on a small site leaving little garden area where spacious gardens are predominant;
- High density development with no space between buildings, particularly on the edges of the settlement;
- Bright shades of brickwork or roofing materials;
- Flat roof buildings;
- Pastiche decorative features.

