

RECORD OF EXECUTIVE DECISION TAKEN BY AN EXECUTIVE MEMBER

This form **MUST** be used to record any decision taken by the Elected Mayor or an individual Executive Member (Portfolio Holder).

T The form must be completed and passed to the Chief Officer Legal and Democratic Services no later than NOON on the second working day after the day on which the decision is taken. No action may be taken to implement the decision(s) recorded on this form until 7 days have passed and the Chief Officer Legal and Democratic Services has confirmed the decision has not been called in.

1. Description of decision

- To make modifications to the Riseley Neighbourhood Plan in line with the recommendations set out in the examiner's report (Appendix A) and that, as modified (Appendix B), the Plan meets the basic conditions.
- That the formal Decision Statement (Appendix C) be published by 6 December 2023 in order to comply with the statutory deadline, and to inform those interested about the Council's decision.
- That arrangements to progress the Plan to the referendum stage of plan preparation are made.
- That the designated Riseley Neighbourhood Area represents the appropriate geographical area to be covered by the referendum.

2. Date of decision

1 December 2023

3. Reasons for decision

The purpose of this report is to provide information about the examination of the Riseley Neighbourhood Plan; to explain the examiner's recommended modifications to the plan and to set out the Council's response to those modifications. The Council must decide whether to progress the plan to referendum and in doing so, decide the area over which the referendum should take place.

4. Alternatives considered and rejected

Consideration has been given to the need for modifications not proposed by the examiner. It has been determined that no such modifications are required in order for the Riseley Neighbourhood Plan to meet the basic conditions. Consideration has also been given to the need to extend the referendum area beyond the neighbourhood area but it has been determined that this is not necessary.

5. How decision is to be funded

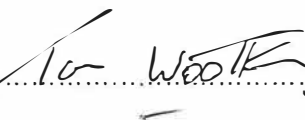
Once the date for the referendum is published, a claim for £20,000 from DLUHC can be made in the next available claim window (March 2024). This represents a contribution towards the Council's costs associated with fulfilling its duty to assist the Parish in the preparation of its plan, and the costs associated with the examination process (including the examiner) and the referendum. Any costs in excess of £20,000 will need to be borne by the Council, though it is not anticipated that the examination process and the referendum combined will be more than this amount. Costs associated with assisting the neighbourhood plan group to prepare their Plan are funded from the Plans and Strategies Reserve.

6. Conflicts of interest

Name of all Executive members who were consulted AND declared a conflict of interest.	Nature of interest	Did Standards Committee give a dispensation for that conflict of interest? (If yes, give details and date of dispensation)	Did the Chief Executive give a dispensation for that conflict of interest? (If yes, give details and the date of the dispensation).

The Mayor has been consulted on this decision

Not Applicable

Signed 

Date: 1 December 2023

Name of Decision Taker: Tom Wootton

This is a public document. A copy of it must be given to the Chief Officer Legal and Democratic Services as soon as it is completed.

Date decision published:1December2023.....

Date decision can be implemented if not called in:13December2023.....

(Decision to be made exempt from call in.....NO.....)

Bedford Borough Council – Report to the Mayor

Date of Meeting: 22 November 2023

Report by: The Chief Officer (Planning, Infrastructure & Economic Growth)

Subject: RISELEY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Neighbourhood plans are statutory development plans produced by parish/town councils or neighbourhood forums. Riseley Parish Council has produced a neighbourhood plan for the Riseley parish area.
- 1.2 The Plan was submitted to Bedford Borough Council on 19 April 2023 and, in line with regulatory requirements, was subject to a six-week consultation (2 June 2023 – 16 July 2023). It has since been formally examined by an independent examiner.
- 1.3 The examiner has produced a report (Appendix A) which recommends that the Plan is modified in order to meet legal requirements and is then progressed to a referendum of people who live within the designated neighbourhood area.
- 1.4 Bedford Borough Council must decide:
 - Whether to progress the Plan to a referendum and
 - Whether to modify it (in the ways recommended by the examiner or otherwise) or
 - Whether to refuse the Plan.
- 1.5 Bedford Borough Council must consider each of the examiner's recommendations on the content of the Plan and decide what action to take. If the Plan is to progress to referendum, the Bedford Borough Council must also decide whether the referendum area should be extended beyond the neighbourhood area, which in this case is Riseley Parish.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The Mayor is asked to consider this report and, if satisfied, agree:

- To make modifications to the Riseley Neighbourhood Plan in line with the recommendations set out in the examiner's report (Appendix A) and that as modified (Appendix B), the Plan meets the basic conditions.
- That the formal Decision Statement (Appendix C) be published by 6 December 2023 in order to comply with the statutory deadline, and to inform those interested about Bedford Borough Council's decision.
- That arrangements to progress the Plan to the referendum stage of preparation are made
- That the designated Riseley Neighbourhood Area represents the appropriate geographical area to be covered by the referendum.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 To give information about the outcome of the Riseley Neighbourhood Plan examination and to secure agreement to progress the Riseley Neighbourhood Plan to referendum, which is the next stage of the plan-making process.

4. THE CURRENT POSITION

4.1 The Examiner's final report has been received and the next step is to agree for the plan to proceed to referendum. This must be carried out within 56 working days after the decision has been made.

4.2 If there is a majority vote of voters in Riseley Parish in favour of making the plan, then the Council must make the plan within 8 weeks of the date of the referendum.

5. DETAILS

- 5.1 Neighbourhood planning was introduced through the Localism Act 2011. New powers allow qualifying bodies (parish or town councils, or neighbourhood forums in areas without parish or town councils) to produce neighbourhood plans which enable communities to set planning policies for their area. Once adopted, neighbourhood plans become part of Bedford Borough Council's statutory development plan and must be taken into account alongside Bedford Borough Council's local plans and national policy when planning applications are determined.
- 5.2 Producing a neighbourhood plan allows parish and town councils to increase the amount of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds they receive from developments within their area from 15% to 25%, incentivising the production of plans, especially those that propose growth.
- 5.3 The stages of preparation of a neighbourhood plan are similar to those for the preparation of a local plan. They are summarised in the following table.

Preparing a Neighbourhood Plan		
Stage	Responsibility	Progress
Neighbourhood Area Designation	Application by parish council, publicity & decision by BBC	Complete
Prepare draft neighbourhood plan	NP group/parish council with assistance from others	Complete
Pre submission consultation (Regulation 14)	NP group/parish council (6 weeks minimum)	Complete
Finalise plan in light of comments made	NP group/parish council	Complete
Submit plan to the local planning authority	NP group/parish council	Complete
Pre-examination consultation(Regulation 16)	BBC (6 weeks minimum)	Complete
Examination	Examiner appointed by BBC (agreed by NP group / parish council)	Complete
Consider examiner's recommendations	BBC and NP group / parish council	We are here
Referendum	Organised by BBC	
Plan 'made' (part of the development plan)	BBC	

The examination

- 5.4 Neighbourhood plans must be examined by a suitably qualified independent person, appointed by Bedford Borough Council and agreed by the qualifying body.
- 5.5 The neighbourhood plan examiner's role is limited to considering whether the neighbourhood plan meets the basic conditions and other relevant legal requirements. The examiner does not consider whether the plan is sound. The examiner also considers whether the referendum area should be extended beyond the neighbourhood area.
- 5.6 Most neighbourhood plan examinations will not require a hearing session to be held though this is an option if the examiner considers it necessary.
- 5.7 Legislation requires that Bedford Borough Council considers each of the recommendations made by the examiner in his/her report and decides what action to take in response. This decision must be published within five weeks of the receipt of the examiner's report.
- 5.8 However, if the authority proposes to make a decision which differs from that recommended by the examiner, it must notify relevant people and invite representations. This is further explained in the 'Legal Issues' section above.
- 5.9 If the plan proceeds to referendum and passes by a simple majority, legislation does not allow any further amendments to be made to the plan. Therefore, the stage between examination and referendum (this stage) is the only point at which further amendments can be made.

The referendum

- 5.10 Anyone who can usually vote in a local election and who is resident in the referendum area can vote in a neighbourhood plan referendum. The referendum area is usually the neighbourhood area, but the examiner may recommend that it be extended if there are matters that are of interest to nearby communities. The plan must pass by a simple majority and there is no minimum turnout. If a simple majority is achieved Bedford Borough Council will be required to 'make' (adopt) the plan unless it breaches EU or human rights legislation.
- 5.11 The decision on when to hold the referendum falls to Bedford Borough Council's returning officer. Bedford Borough Council must hold a referendum within 56 working days from the date that the decision to take the plan forward to a referendum is published. Bedford Borough Council must also publish notice that the referendum will take place not fewer than 28 days before the referendum date.

5.12 The qualifying body (the parish council or neighbourhood forum) can withdraw a plan at any time up until the point that the decision on the modifications is publicised.

The Riseley Neighbourhood Plan

Progress of Riseley Neighbourhood Plan	
Neighbourhood area designated	14 March 2018
Draft plan consultation (Regulation 14)	21 November 2022 – 16 January 2023
Post submission consultation (Regulation 16)	2 June – 16 July 2023
Submitted for examination by BBC	24 July 2023
Examiner's report received	31 October 2023

5.13 The following extract from the examiner's report summarises her findings. The full report can be found at Appendix A.

Main Findings – Executive Summary

From my examination of the Riseley Neighbourhood Development Plan (the Plan/RNP) and its supporting documentation including the representations made, I have concluded that subject to the policy modifications set out in this report, the Plan meets the Basic Conditions.

I have also concluded that:

- The Plan has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body – Riseley Parish Council;
- The Plan has been prepared for an area properly designated – the Parish of Riseley, as shown on Map 1 (page 5) of the Neighbourhood Plan;
- The Plan specifies the period to which it is to take effect: 2022 to 2030; and
- The policies (as proposed to be modified) relate to the development and use of land for a designated neighbourhood area.

I recommend that the Plan, once modified, proceeds to referendum on the basis that it has met all the relevant legal requirements.

I have considered whether the referendum area should extend beyond the designated area to which the Plan relates and have concluded that it should not.

5.14 The examiner proposes recommendations as follows:

Proposed modification number (PM)	Submitted Neighbourhood Plan Para no/ other reference	Examiner's Recommended Modification	Reason for recommendation
PM1	Annex 5, page 49	On the map show the Ross Meadow LGS in the same colour as the existing LGS and remove it as a separate item on the key.	As the new Local Green Space would have the same status as the existing designations, it is recommended that the map key should be the same as the existing Local Green Space.
PM2	Policy HE2, page 26	In the first line after "including", delete "but not limited to".	The reference to heritage assets which are not limited to those in Annex 2 widens the scope of the policy and an unlimited and precise degree and would therefore be unreasonable.
PM3	Policy HE3, page 27	Delete Policy HE3.	The policy has the potential to detract from the requirements set out in national and local policy and result in ambiguity.
PM4	Policy H1, page 30	Delete the third bullet point.	In order for Policy H1 to meet the Basic Conditions.
PM5	Policy CF1, page 32	In the list of bullet points, delete bullet points 5 and 7.	To remove from the list commercial premises which are not subject to control under national or development plan policies.

PM6	Policy CF2, page 34	In clause 1 after “Policies Map”, insert “(Annex 5)”. In clause 2, delete “permitted” and insert “supported”.	In order to identify the policies map in Clause 1. As the parish council has no power to permit applications for development.
PM7	Policy CF3, page 35	In the second clause, prefix “Development” with “Inappropriate”.	The policy does not acknowledge that certain types of development might be considered ‘appropriate’.
PM8	Policy TT1, page 37	In the second clause: In the first sentence delete “include measures that keep traffic speeds low and”. In the second sentence insert “and” after “junctions”, and delete “and traffic management measures”.	Measures relating to traffic management is not a land use matter and should therefore be deleted.

- 5.15 These recommendations serve to ensure that the plan meets the basic conditions. Officers, therefore, recommend that they are agreed and the Riseley Neighbourhood Plan be amended accordingly.
- 5.16 The examiner explains that it is open to the Parish Council to make minor modifications to the Plan such as attending to typographical errors (para 4.61 of the examiner’s report). A small number of these have been identified. Officers recommend however that no further changes are required in order for the Plan to meet the basic conditions and therefore if agreed, no further consultation is necessary before proceeding to referendum.
- 5.17 The Riseley Neighbourhood Plan incorporating the examiner’s proposed modifications and other minor modifications can be found at Appendix B.

Examination area

- 5.18 The examiner considered whether or not the referendum area should be extended beyond the designated area to which the Plan relates. She concluded that the Plan as modified would have no policies or proposals which she considered significant enough to have an impact beyond the designated Neighbourhood Plan boundary. As a result she recommends that the boundary for the purposes of any future referendum on the Plan should be the boundary of the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area. Officers agree with this conclusion and recommend that the neighbourhood area as designated should be agreed as the referendum area.

Next steps

5.19 Bedford Borough Council must publish a statement (Appendix C) setting out with reasons its decision on each of the examiner's recommendations. Preparations must then be made to hold the referendum.

6. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

6.1 Consideration has been given to the need for modifications not proposed by the examiner. It has been determined that no such modifications are required in order for the Riseley Neighbourhood Plan to meet the basic conditions. Consideration has also been given to the need to extend the referendum area beyond the neighbourhood area but it has been determined that this is not necessary.

7. KEY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Legal Issues	<p>The scope of a neighbourhood plan examination is set out in Paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). The examiner must consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Whether the plan meets the Basic Conditions;• Whether the plan complies with provisions under s.38A and s.38B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). These are:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- it has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body, for an area that has been properly designated by the local planning authority;- it sets out policies in relation to the development and use of land;- it specifies the period during which it has effect;- it does not include provisions and policies for 'excluded development';- it is the only neighbourhood plan for the area and does not relate to land outside the designated neighbourhood area;- whether the referendum boundary should be extended beyond the designated area, should the plan proceed to referendum; and• Such matters as prescribed in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).
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The examiner must also consider if the neighbourhood plan is compatible with the Convention on Human Rights.

On receipt of the examiner's report, the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 require that a Local Planning Authority must publish a decision statement setting out what actions will be taken in response to each of the examiner's recommendations.

If the authority proposes to accept the examiner's recommendations, a decision statement must be published within 5 weeks of receiving the examiner's report. Arrangements for the referendum must then commence.

If the authority proposes to make a decision which differs from that recommended by the examiner, it must notify relevant people and invite representations for a period of 6 weeks. The local planning authority may, if it considers it appropriate to do so (for example if Bedford Borough Council's proposed changes are significant or controversial), refer the issue to further independent examination and receive a further report. Once any period for further representations is over, the local planning authority must issue its final decision within 5 weeks and proceed to referendum.

In this case it is recommended that the examiner's proposed amendments are accepted. If this is agreed, the decision statement relating to the Riseley Neighbourhood Plan must be published by 6 December 2023.

The neighbourhood plan passes the referendum of local voters if it achieves a simple majority (i.e. 50% +1 or over). No minimum turn-out is required. If a plan passes referendum, Bedford Borough Council must 'make' (adopt) it as soon as reasonably practicable unless Bedford Borough Council considers that the plan breaches EU obligations or human rights legislation. If there is a majority 'No' vote or a tied vote then the neighbourhood plan will not come into legal force.

Bedford Borough Council must hold a referendum within 56 working days from the date that the decision to take the plan forward to a referendum is published and publish notice that the referendum will take place, not fewer than 28 days before the referendum date.

	<p>The Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012 (as amended) cover all aspects of organising and conducting polls.</p> <p>The Referendum question is ‘Do you want Bedford Borough Council to use the neighbourhood plan for Riseley Parish to help it decide planning applications in the Neighbourhood Area’.</p> <p>Decisions to proceed to referendum and to ‘make’ the neighbourhood plan are taken by Bedford Borough Council’s Executive rather than Full Council.</p> <p>Bedford Borough Council can be challenged on the making of the plan by way of judicial review. Challenges must normally be made within six weeks of the making of the plan.</p>
<p>7.2 Policy Issues</p>	<p>Neighbourhood plans are examined to ensure that they meet the ‘Basic Conditions’ which are set out in Paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). The ‘Basic Conditions’ ensure, amongst other things, that appropriate regard has been had for local and national policies. In order to meet the Basic Conditions, the neighbourhood plan must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State; - Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development; - Be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area (in this case saved policies in the Local Plan 2002, continuing policies in the Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013 and the Local Plan 2030); - Be compatible with and not breach European Union (EU) obligations; and - Meet prescribed conditions and comply with prescribed matters. <p>Regulation 32 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) prescribes a further Basic Condition for a neighbourhood plan. This requires that the making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.</p>

<p>7.3 Resource Issues</p>	<p>The Government provides funding to assist councils to fulfil their neighbourhood planning duties. Once the date for the referendum is published, a claim for £20,000 can be made in the next available claim window (March 2024 This represents a contribution towards Bedford Borough Council's costs associated with fulfilling its duty to assist the Parish Council in the preparation of its plan, and the costs associated with the examination process (including the examiner) and the referendum. Any costs in excess of £20,000 will need to be borne by Bedford Borough Council, though it is not anticipated that the examination process and the referendum combined will be more than this amount. Costs associated with assisting the neighbourhood plan group to prepare their Plan are funded from the Plans and Strategies Reserve.</p> <p>When the neighbourhood plan is formally 'made', the percentage of community infrastructure levy (CIL) receipts payable to the Parish Council arising from development within the parish will increase from 15% to 25% resulting in Bedford Borough Council's percentage decreasing to 75%. National Planning Practice Guidance explains that parish councils must use the CIL receipts passed to them to support the development of the parish council's area by funding the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure; or anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on the area.</p>
<p>7.4 Risks</p>	<p>The recommendations in the examination report are not binding, but if Bedford Borough Council chooses not to agree with the examiner's recommendations without a sound reason, there is a risk of legal challenge which could lead to reputational damage and financial costs. Whilst there is also a risk of legal challenge if Bedford Borough Council does follow the examiner's recommendations, it must be considered that the risk is lower.</p> <p>Any modifications made to the content of the plan should be done so only in order to make the plan meet the basic conditions and other legislative requirements. Making modifications for any other reasons (other than formatting or spelling corrections) could lead to a legal challenge.</p>

<p>7.5 Environmental Implications</p>	<p>The Riseley Neighbourhood Plan was screened for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) by Riseley Parish Council. The SEA screening concluded that it was unnecessary to undertake SEA. The examiner supported this conclusion.</p> <p>The Plan was further screened to determine if Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) was necessary. The HRA was carried out by specialist consultancy Greenwillows Associates Limited. It concluded that the Plan would not have a significant effect on European sites either alone or in combination. Natural England, which was consulted on the Plan, did not dispute this conclusion. The examiner found no reason to disagree.</p> <p>Both the SEA screening and the HRA have been reviewed in light of the proposed modifications to the Plan. The conclusions of both remain unchanged.</p>
<p>7.6 Equalities Impact</p>	<p>In preparing this report, due consideration has been given to Bedford Borough Council's statutory Equality Duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, as set out in Section 149(1) of the Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>A relevance test for equality has been completed. The equality test determined that consideration as to whether the Riseley Neighbourhood Development Plan should progress to referendum has no relevance to Bedford Borough Council's duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. An equality analysis for this decision is not needed.</p> <p>However, the development of the Riseley Neighbourhood Development Plan is relevant to Riseley Parish Council's General Equality Duty. The Parish Council is responsible for discharging their duty. An equality analysis has been carried out by the Parish Council and is included in the Basic Conditions Statement.</p>
<p>7.7 Impact on Families</p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan will have no direct impact on families.</p>
<p>7.8 Community Safety and Resilience</p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan is not considered to have an impact on community safety and resilience.</p>
<p>7.9 Impact on Health and Wellbeing</p>	<p>The Riseley Neighbourhood Plan does not directly contain any policies that will have an impact on health and wellbeing.</p>

8. SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS AND OUTCOME

8.1 The Plan has been the subject of two statutory consultations. The neighbourhood plan group carried out pre-submission consultation on a draft plan, known as Regulation 14 stage, and Bedford Borough Council undertook post-submission consultation; the Regulation 16 stage. Details of the Regulation 14 responses are posted on the neighbourhood plan web site. The Regulation 16 responses were provided to the examiner of the Plan who considered them during the examination. They can be found on Bedford Borough Council's web-site on the neighbourhood planning pages.

8.2 The following people have been consulted in preparing this report:

- Chief Officer for Legal
- Chief Officer for Finance
- Energy Team

8.3 No adverse comments have been received.

9. CONTACTS AND REFERENCES

Report Contact Officer	Kim Wilson (01234)228484 Kim.wilson@bedford.gov.uk
File Reference	Neighbourhood Plans
Previous Relevant Minutes	None
Background Papers	None
Appendices	Appendix A - Examiner's Report Appendix B - Riseley Neighbourhood Plan showing modifications Appendix C – Decision Statement



Report on Riseley Neighbourhood Development Plan 2022 - 2030

An Examination undertaken for Bedford Borough Council with the support of Riseley Parish Council on the March 2023 submission version of the Plan.

Independent Examiner: Wendy Burden BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

Date of Report: 31 October 2023

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Main Findings - Executive Summary

From my examination of the Riseley Neighbourhood Development Plan (the Plan/RNP) and its supporting documentation including the representations made, I have concluded that subject to the policy modifications set out in this report, the Plan meets the Basic Conditions.

I have also concluded that:

- The Plan has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body – Riseley Parish Council;
- The Plan has been prepared for an area properly designated – the Parish of Riseley, as shown on Map 1 (page 5) of the Neighbourhood Plan;
- The Plan specifies the period to which it is to take effect: 2022 to 2030; and
- The policies (as proposed to be modified) relate to the development and use of land for a designated neighbourhood area.

I recommend that the Plan, once modified, proceeds to referendum on the basis that it has met all the relevant legal requirements.

I have considered whether the referendum area should extend beyond the designated area to which the Plan relates and have concluded that it should not.

1. Introduction and Background

Riseley Neighbourhood Development Plan

- 1.1 The Neighbourhood Plan Area for Riseley was approved by Bedford Borough Council (BBC) in March 2018, and the Riseley Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (RNPSG) was created to help guide and progress the RNP.
- 1.2 The Neighbourhood Plan Area comprises the Parish of Riseley, which lies about 9 miles to the north of Bedford within Bedford Borough. The nearest town is Rushden in Northamptonshire which is around 8 miles to the northwest of Riseley. The Parish has a population of about 1,286 and 520 dwellings according to the 2011 census. The village has a convenience store, a police station, a garage, a cafe and a pub. It also has a village hall and a primary school.
- 1.3 The Parish has a rich history having been recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086. It has a linear layout with buildings from a variety of periods and styles. There are two Conservation Areas: the Riseley North Conservation Area covering the northern area of the village, and the Riseley Conservation Area for a majority of the rest of the village. There are some 61 listed buildings in the Parish, including the Grade I All Saints Church as

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well as one Scheduled Monument, Hall Close Moated Site. The village lies at the bottom of the valley formed by Riseley Brook in the "1B-Riseley Clay Farmland" landscape character area.¹ There are working farms and attractive countryside surrounding the settlement.

- 1.4 The RNP is required to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the statutory Development Plan, which includes the Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030 (BBLP) and the Bedford Borough Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013 (ADLP). The BBLP 2030 is currently subject to review: the emerging BBLP 2040 is at the examination stage of the plan making process. I address the matter of general conformity of the RNP with the Development Plan throughout my report (as well as noting the relationship to relevant emerging policies).²

The Independent Examiner

- 1.5 As the Plan has now reached the examination stage, I have been appointed as the examiner of the RNP by BBC, with the agreement of Riseley Parish Council (RPC).
- 1.6 I am a chartered town planner and retired government Planning Inspector, with more than 45 years of experience in the private and public sectors. I am an independent examiner, and do not have an interest in any of the land that may be affected by the draft Plan.

The Scope of the Examination

- 1.7 As the independent examiner I am required to produce this report and recommend either:
- (a) that the neighbourhood plan is submitted to a referendum without changes; or
 - (b) that modifications are made and that the modified neighbourhood plan is submitted to a referendum; or
 - (c) that the neighbourhood plan does not proceed to a referendum on the basis that it does not meet the necessary legal requirements.
- 1.8 The scope of the examination is set out in Paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) ('the 1990 Act'). The examiner must consider:
- Whether the plan meets the Basic Conditions.
 - Whether the plan complies with provisions under s.38A and s.38B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) ('the 2004 Act'). These are:

¹ Bedford Borough Landscape Character Assessment 2020 (Reference 8).

² See the advice in the Planning Practice Guidance, Reference ID: 41-009-20190509.

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- it has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body, for an area that has been properly designated by the local planning authority;
 - it sets out policies in relation to the development and use of land;
 - it specifies the period during which it has effect;
 - it does not include provisions and policies for 'excluded development'; and
 - it is the only neighbourhood plan for the area and does not relate to land outside the designated neighbourhood area.
- Whether the referendum boundary should be extended beyond the designated area, should the plan proceed to referendum.
 - Such matters as prescribed in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended)('the 2012 Regulations').

1.9 I have considered only matters that fall within Paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act, with one exception. That is the requirement that the Plan is compatible with the Human Rights Convention.

The Basic Conditions

1.10 The 'Basic Conditions' are set out in Paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act. In order to meet the Basic Conditions, the neighbourhood plan must:

- Have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
- Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
- Be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area;
- Be compatible with and not breach European Union (EU) obligations (under retained EU law)³; and
- Meet prescribed conditions and comply with prescribed matters.

1.11 Regulation 32 of the 2012 Regulations prescribes a further Basic Condition for a neighbourhood plan. This requires that the making of the Neighbourhood Development Plan does not breach the requirements of

³ The existing body of environmental regulation is retained in UK law.

Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.⁴

2. Approach to the Examination

Planning Policy Context

- 2.1 During the early preparation of the draft RNP, the Development Plan for BBC, not including documents relating to excluded minerals and waste development, comprised the following documents:
- Saved Local Plan 2002 (LP 2002) policies;
 - The Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan (CSRI) 2008 (to 2021); and
 - The Allocations and Designations Local Plan (ADLP) 2013.
- 2.2 The BBLP 2030 was adopted by BBC in January 2020 and largely replaces the policies in the LP 2002 and the CSRI 2008. It does not replace some policies in the ADLP, which remain a part of the Development Plan.⁵ BBC is preparing the Local Plan 2040 which builds on the Local Plan 2030 strategy and rolls the planning of the Borough on a further 10 years to 2040. The strategy explains where homes and jobs will be delivered through new allocations alongside the allocations already adopted in the Local Plan 2030.⁶ I note that the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) advises that where a neighbourhood plan is brought forward before an up-to-date local plan is in place, the qualifying body and the local planning authority should discuss and aim to agree the relationship between policies in the emerging neighbourhood plan; the emerging local plan; and the adopted development plan, with appropriate regard to national policy and guidance.⁷ Notwithstanding this, the Basic Conditions require me to examine the Plan against the extant adopted strategic development plan policies.
- 2.3 The planning policy for England is set out principally in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).⁸ In addition, the PPG offers guidance on how the NPPF should be implemented.

⁴ This revised Basic Condition came into force on 28 December 2018 through the Conservation of Habitats and Species and Planning (Various Amendments) (England and Wales) Regulations 2018.

⁵ BBLP 2030 Appendix 1.

⁶ [Planning Policy News | Cannock Chase District Council \(cannockchasedc.gov.uk\)](https://www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/planning-policy-news)

⁷ PPG Reference ID: 41-009-20190509.

⁸ A new version of the NPPF was published during the examination on 5 September 2023. It sets out focused revisions (to the previously published version of 20 July 2021) to the extent that it updates national planning policy for onshore wind development. As such, all references in this report read across to the latest 5 September 2023 version.

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Submitted Documents

2.4 I have considered all policy, guidance and other reference documents I consider relevant to the examination, alongside those submitted. These include the:

- Riseley Neighbourhood Plan submission version, March 2023;
- Basic Conditions Statement, March 2023;
- Consultation Statement, March 2023;
- Habitats Regulations Assessment, October 2022;
- Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report, March 2023;
- Housing Needs Survey, July/August 2019;
- Transport Survey Results, December 2019;
- Design Guidance and Codes, February 2022;
- Regulation 16 Consultation Responses;
- Councils' response to examiner's initial Questions of 24 July 2023 and accompanying documents dated 14 August 2023;
- Interested persons' responses to the above dated 23 and 26 August 2023;
- RPC's response received 22 September to the further examiner's Questions of 11 September 2023; and
- Riseley Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Communications Protocol March 2022.⁹

Site Visit

2.5 I visited the Neighbourhood Plan Area unaccompanied by any interested party on the 22 August 2023. I carried out a general review of the area in terms of its setting and character in order to familiarise myself with it and visited relevant sites and areas referenced in the Plan and evidential documents.

Written Representations with or without Public Hearing

2.6 This examination has been carried out on the basis of the written submissions (written representations). The Regulation 16 consultation responses clearly articulated the objections to the Plan and presented arguments for and against the Plan's suitability to proceed to a referendum. Requests have been submitted from some parties for evidence to be heard at a hearing. However, as noted, in addition to the Regulation 16 responses, I have received further necessary clarifications through the exchange of correspondence during the examination. These include two further representations received in response to the BBC letter of 14 August 2023, and the response from RPC to my letter of the 11 September 2023.¹⁰ As a result, in terms of the appropriate level of scrutiny for the RNP, I consider that hearing sessions are not necessary.

⁹ View at: <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning/riseley-neighbourhood>

¹⁰ See paragraph 2.4 above.

Modifications

- 2.7 Where necessary, I have recommended modifications to the Plan (**PMs**) in this report in order that it meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements. For ease of reference, I have listed these modifications separately in the Appendix.

3. Procedural Compliance and Human Rights

Qualifying Body and Neighbourhood Plan Area

- 3.1 The Riseley Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared and submitted for examination by RPC, which is the qualifying body for an area that was designated by BBC in March 2018.
- 3.2 It is the only Neighbourhood Plan for Riseley Parish and does not relate to any land outside the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area.

Plan Period

- 3.3 The Plan specifies the period to which it is to take effect on the front cover which is 2022 - 2030. The RNP covers the period in the BBLP and does not therefore raise any issues of compliance in that regard. It may however be appropriate to review the RNP when the BBLP 2040 is adopted.¹¹

Neighbourhood Plan Preparation and Consultation

- 3.4 In March 2018, BBC approved the designation of the Riseley Neighbourhood Plan Area, as shown on page 5 of the submitted RNP. RPC is responsible for providing leadership for the RNP, the production of which has been driven forward by the RNPSG on behalf of RPC. The RNPSG was set up following a call for volunteers from the RPC in 2018 and comprises a number of Parish Councillors and interested local residents. There have been some changes as members left for various reasons and new people joined the RNPSG. My understanding is that meetings have been held monthly with a report then sent to the Parish Council for their meeting.
- 3.5 The nature and level of involvement of the local community in the development of the RNP over a period of more than 5 years has been disputed. In some responses to the Regulation 16 consultation, criticisms of the consultation process include the design of questionnaires, a lack of open meetings and the lack of opportunities for residents and stakeholders to contribute to the Plan making process. Nevertheless, the Plan is based on evidence from surveys, expert reports and local

¹¹ The Bedford Local Plan 2040 is currently at the examination stage: [Local Plan 2040 Examination | Bedford Borough Council](#)

consultations and a detailed record of the consultation process is set out in the Consultation Statement.

- 3.6 An early consultation was carried out in October 2018 and the comments are summarised in the Consultation Statement. RNPSG and RPC meetings were held monthly. Issues have been raised in regard to the extent to which meetings were widely advertised, or the public were invited to attend, alleging there are shortcomings in the Parish Council's administrative procedures. Whilst I am considering compliance with the statutory neighbourhood planning requirements relating to consultation on the draft Plan (and relevant national Planning Practice Guidance), my role is not to consider the propriety or otherwise of the formal administration of the Parish Council.¹² I made this clear in my letter of 11 September 2023 to RPC and BBC.¹³
- 3.7 The RNPSG provided update reports to RPC meetings and a bi-monthly newsletter provided information on village events and progress on the RNP. Publicity stands were set out at Village Shows in 2018, 2019 and 2020 and a further public consultation was carried out in the village hall in 2021. I have also requested and received further information and documentation from the RPC. This provides support to the evidence set out in the Consultation Statement.
- 3.8 In addition to the publicity provided during the preparation of the RNP, the draft RNP has been the subject of pre-submission (Regulation 14) consultation from 21 November 2022 to 16 January 2023. Some 34 comments were received. Details of the Regulation 14 consultation process together with a precis of comments made, RPC responses and any action taken are set out in the Consultation Statement. Following submission to BBC, representations were invited on the RNP in accordance with Regulation 16 from the 2 June 2023 to the 16 July 2023. These formal consultations provided further opportunities for the public to express their views on the emerging and submitted RNP.
- 3.9 At Regulation 16 stage some 21 responses were submitted to BBC and forwarded to me. I have had regard to those comments as part of the examination process.
- 3.10 Although I have received further representations from two members of the public who consider that the consultation process has been flawed, both BBC and the RPC have confirmed they are satisfied that public

¹² The sector led publication 'Guidance to service users and examiners' advises in paragraph 1.16 that '*An independent examiner has no authority to consider such allegations of misconduct. Such matters should be dealt with through internal complaints handling procedures of the qualifying body or local planning authority*'. View at: https://www.rics.org/content/dam/ricsglobal/documents/dispute-resolution-service/Npiers_Planning_Guidance_To_Service_Users_And_Examiners_Rics.pdf

¹³ View at:

<https://edrms.bedford.gov.uk/OpenDocument.aspx?id=ZK2nm2u%2fwbMUKDGtGr9hNw%3d%3d&name=Examiner%20Third%20Procedural%20Letter.pdf>

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consultation has been carried out in accordance with the 2012 Regulations and the PPG.¹⁴ I have no reason to disagree with this view. Furthermore, for those who do not agree with the final version of the RNP, there will be the opportunity if the Plan proceeds to make their views known at a referendum, which is required to be carried out by BBC before the RNP can be made.

- 3.11 I am satisfied that a sufficiently transparent, fair and inclusive consultation process has been followed for the RNP. Due regard has been had to the advice in the PPG on plan preparation and engagement, and the RNP is procedurally compliant in accordance with the legal requirements.

Development and Use of Land

- 3.12 With the exception of Policy TT1 (see paragraph 4.53 below), the Plan sets out policies in relation to the development and use of land in accordance with s.38A of the 2004 Act.

Excluded Development

- 3.13 The Plan does not include provisions and policies for 'excluded development'.¹⁵

Human Rights

- 3.14 No issues have been raised in relation to any potential breach of Human Rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998). From my independent assessment, I see no reason to find otherwise.

4. Compliance with the Basic Conditions

EU Obligations

- 4.1 The RNP has been screened by RPC to determine whether or not the Plan requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The screening assessment concludes that it is unlikely there will be any significant environmental effects arising from the RNP. Historic England and Natural England agree with this conclusion but no response was received from the Environment Agency (albeit reminders were sent). I have no reason to disagree with the conclusion of the screening assessment.
- 4.2 A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of the RNP has also been produced. HRA was carried out for the BBLP 2030, which identified the potential for likely significant effects on two European sites, The Ouse

¹⁴ Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and PPG Reference ID 41-047-20140306.

¹⁵ See section 61K of the 1990 Act.

Washes (Special Area of Conservation, Special Protection Area and Ramsar) and Portholme (Special Area of Conservation), downstream of Bedford. Although the policies within the Local Plan should protect the European sites if followed, detail was not available from the other emerging Neighbourhood Plans in the authority area to confirm this for all developments. Further screening of the RNP has therefore been carried out to ensure that there were no unforeseen likely significant effects.

- 4.3 The screening assessment concludes that there are no policies within the RNP which could generate a likely significant effect on any European sites itself or in combination with other plans or projects. It finds that some of the RNP policies support, and strengthen, those in the BBLP 2030 in relation to mitigating impacts on river flows and water quality. Based on my own independent assessment, I agree with this conclusion.

Main Issues

- 4.4 I have approached the assessment of compliance of the RNP with the remaining Basic Conditions as two main matters:
- General issues of compliance of the Plan, as a whole; and
 - Specific issues of compliance of the Plan policies.

General Issues of Compliance of the Plan

Regard to National Policy and Advice

- 4.5 The RNP sets out the background and context to its preparation and provides a broad description of the history, the character and the appearance of the Plan area, with its village rich in heritage and its rural setting. The vision statement for the RNP in Section 5 has been developed to reflect the priorities of the community and help set the future of the Parish:

"Riseley will retain and nurture a sustainable rural character. The character will be enhanced through well-designed, controlled small scale development which respects the rural feel, the linear structure of the village, and landscape setting of the Parish. Small businesses and local enterprises will be encouraged and supported. The strong sense of community spirit that exists in the village will be fostered and enhanced by the support of amenity facilities and community projects such that people will want to live here and enjoy good health and wellbeing."

- 4.6 This vision was confirmed by the public consultation in September 2021. It has four constituent parts which are listed in the RNP and provides the basis for the 9 aims of the RNP. These aims in turn provide for the basis of the policies proposed in the RNP. The 9 policy areas for the RNP are:

- Rural Character
- Landscape and Natural Environment
- High Quality Design
- Flooding
- Heritage
- Housing
- Community Facilities
- Traffic and transport
- Local Employment and Business.

- 4.7 The policies have been developed to address the vision and aims of the RNP. They generally relate to the matters identified in NPPF Paragraph 28 as appropriate matters to be addressed through non-strategic policies in neighbourhood plans. The RNP is positively prepared, with an aspirational but deliverable approach to the development of the Parish, and it has been shaped through early, proportionate and effective engagement within the local community.
- 4.8 In general, the policies of the RNP are clearly written and unambiguous¹⁶ and I recommend modifications where necessary to have due regard to national advice.¹⁷ However, I noted that there is duplication of relevant policy which is set out in the NPPF or the BBLP 2030¹⁸ in a number of the Plan's policies. I therefore asked 8 questions in this regard in my letter of 11 September 2023 in relation to Policies D2, F1, HE3, H1, CF1, CF2, TT1 and LEB1. I received a response from RPC on 22 September 2023. At the same time, BBC advised that it had no comments. I have considered RPC's response to each question very carefully. As a result, I have concluded that recommendations for amendment or deletion are necessary to some policies in order to have due regard to national policy and ensure the Basic Conditions are met. I deal with this compliance matter in my commentary on each policy later in this report.
- 4.9 Having regard to the work which has been carried out and the range of policies which have been formulated to meet its vision and aims, I am satisfied that the RNP demonstrates a positive approach to the implementation of the policies of the BBLP. Furthermore, the RNP is generally in accord with the emerging policies of the BBLP 2040.¹⁹ Subject to the modifications which I recommend, the RNP has had regard to national policy and advice.

¹⁶ PPG Reference ID: 41-041-20140306.

¹⁷ In order to meet the Basic Conditions, the Plan must have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, as noted in paragraph 1.10 above.

¹⁸ See NPPF Paragraph 16 f): "*Plans should...serve a clear purpose, avoiding unnecessary duplication of policies that apply to a particular area (including policies in this Framework, where relevant).*"

¹⁹ PPG Reference ID: 41-009-20190509.

Contributes to the Achievement of Sustainable Development

- 4.10 The policies of the submitted RNP have regard to the economic, social and environmental needs of the local community. Furthermore, the Plan accords with Paragraph 29 of the NPPF since it complements and delivers the strategic policies for the area.
- 4.11 The three overarching objectives of sustainable development are integral to the core aims of the RNP. Together with the policies of the BBLP 2030, the policies and proposals of the RNP contribute to the achievement of sustainable development in accordance with national policies and advice.
- 4.12 Subject to the detailed comments and modifications which I set out below for individual policies, I am satisfied that the Plan makes a positive contribution to the achievement of the economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable development.

General Conformity with Strategic Policies in the Development Plan

- 4.13 I set out the planning policy context for the RNP in section 2 above. The BBLP 2030 together with the saved policies in the ADLP 2013 comprise the statutory Development Plan for the RNP. The policies in the submitted RNP are required to be in general conformity with those that are strategic in the statutory Development Plan in order to meet the Basic Conditions. The BBLP 2040 has now reached the examination stage and is at an advanced stage in its preparation. Although a draft neighbourhood plan is not tested against the policies in an emerging local plan, the reasoning and evidence informing the local plan process is likely to be relevant to the consideration of the Basic Conditions against which a neighbourhood plan is tested.²⁰ I therefore comment in my report on the RNP in regard to both the adopted and emerging Development Plan policies for completeness.
- 4.14 The adopted BLP Policy 3S sets out the Spatial Strategy for BBC. In Policy 3S Riseley is not included in the list of settlements where land is to be allocated to provide for new housing. Policy 3S is proposed to be replaced by new Policy DS2(S) in the emerging BBLP 2040. In Policy DS2(S) the status of Riseley is maintained as a rural settlement which is not required to allocate land for new housing to meet the future housing requirements of the Borough. Riseley remains as a small settlement subject to rural area policies as set out in Policies 5S and 7S of the adopted BLP. These policies are proposed to be saved in the BBLP 2040. Within small rural settlements which have a Settlement Policy Area (SPA), such as Riseley, Policy 5S allows for development within the existing SPA. Policy 7S sets out the strict tests required to allow development outside the SPA.
- 4.15 For Riseley, the policies of both the existing and emerging BBLP direct new housing development to within the SPA boundaries. Development

²⁰ PPG Reference ID: 41-009-20190509.

outside the SPA may occur in certain specified circumstances in accordance with Policy 7S. In the emerging BBLP, a further policy which may allow housing development outside an existing settlement is proposed as Policy DM4. This policy provides for new homes adjacent to existing settlements which would meet a need for First Homes.

- 4.16 The issue of providing for new housing development in Riseley Parish to meet local housing needs is raised in the Regulation 16 representations. However, there is no conflict between the RNP as submitted and the existing and emerging strategic policies of the BBLP which I identify above. The strategic policies would continue to allow for the provision of new housing if the requirements of the policies are met.
- 4.17 The RNP has been developed with proper regard to the strategic direction and policies of the existing and emerging BBC Development Plan Documents, which I identify in Section 2 above. In addition, with some modifications which I recommend below, the RNP demonstrates general conformity with the adopted strategic policies of the BBLP. BBC has been involved throughout the preparation of the RNP and is generally supportive of its policies. Subject to some detailed comments and the modifications which I make to the Plan's policies below, I am satisfied that the RNP is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Development Plan.

Specific Issues of Compliance of the Plan Policies

Policies Map

- 4.18 The BBLP Policies Map for Riseley is appended at Annex 4 to the RNP. Annex 5 is entitled "Policies Map: Local Green Space". This shows the proposed change in Policy CF3 of the remaining area of Ross Meadow from Village Open Space (VOS) to Local Green Space (LGS). No other Policies Map is proposed for the RNP.
- 4.19 Since there are no other proposals for new allocations or designations in the RNP, I am satisfied that there is no need for a RNP Policies Map to cover the whole of Riseley. However, since the new area of LGS would have the same status as the existing designations once the RNP is made, I recommend that it is shown in the same colour as the existing LGS and that the key is amended accordingly. **[PM1]**
- 4.20 I am satisfied that with the modification to Annex 5, the RNP meets the Basic Conditions in regard to this matter.

Rural Character

- 4.21 The maintenance of the rural character of the village emerged as a very high priority in the course of public consultation on the RNP. Policy RC1 identifies the locally valued features which are to be taken into account

when any new development is proposed. The Policy raises no issues of compliance with the Basic Conditions.

Landscape and Natural Environment

- 4.22 A high value was placed by local people on the landscape and natural environment as a result of public consultation. Policy LNE1 sets out the landscape features to be considered in any proposals for development, identifying the particular characteristics of the RNP area which are to be protected. The Policy raises no issues of compliance with the Basic Conditions.
- 4.23 Policy LNE2 reflects the aim of the RNP in relation to the natural environment, setting out the matters to be considered in order to deliver that aim. The Policy raises no issues of compliance with the Basic Conditions.

High Quality Design

- 4.24 "Design Guidance and Codes" has been produced for the RPC and is included within the documents submitted with the RNP. Policy D1 indicates support for new development which complies with the guidance and lists detailed criteria to ensure that the character of the village is maintained. The Policy raises no issues of compliance with the Basic Conditions.
- 4.25 Policy D2 addresses the sustainable design of homes and buildings. In my third procedural letter of 11 September 2023²¹, I noted in Question 1(a) that matters covered in the Policy are generally wide ranging rather than locally specific in character. Energy and water efficiency and sustainable design are addressed in the BBLP 2030 through Policies 52, 53 and 54. I further noted that the policies are proposed to be saved in the BBLP 2040. They are also the subject of Building Regulation control.
- 4.26 The NPPF states that plans should avoid unnecessary duplication of policies that apply to a particular area.²² It is also unnecessary to duplicate controls which are covered in other legislation, such as the Building Regulations. However, in response to my letter²³, RPC made it clear that Policy D2 highlights those matters which are of particular importance to the local community when new development is proposed within the RNP area. The Policy does not result in any inconsistency or ambiguity and in these circumstances the element of duplication is acceptable.

²¹ View at:

<https://edrms.bedford.gov.uk/OpenDocument.aspx?id=ZK2nm2u%2fwbMUKDGtGr9hNw%3d%3d&name=Examiner%20Third%20Procedural%20Letter.pdf>

²² NPPF Paragraph 16 f).

²³ View at:

<https://edrms.bedford.gov.uk/OpenDocument.aspx?id=sIGFNxkU%2fG4gHPENH68Fkw%3d%3d&name=PC%20Response%20to%20Examiners%20Third%20Procedural%20Letter.pdf>

- 4.27 In addition to the matter of duplication, I noted in my Question 1(b) that there are some provisions within Policy D2 which address matters which are in addition to those covered in BBLP 2030. These include the retrofitting of heritage properties and alterations to existing buildings. BBLP Policy 54 does not include extensions and renovations to existing properties. However, the RNP policy seeks to encourage rather than to require this additional matter and would not therefore be unduly onerous and unreasonable.
- 4.28 In these circumstances I am satisfied that Policy D2 raises no issues of compliance with the Basic Conditions.

Flooding

- 4.29 Flooding is clearly an important issue for Riseley. Flood risk arises primarily from surface water and from the presence of the Riseley Brook. There have been incidents of flooding of both residential and commercial properties in the village and high levels of surface water run-off can lead to the release of sewage into the flood waters. Policy F1 understandably seeks to address the issue of Flood Risk. Nevertheless, in my third procedural letter I noted in Question 2 that this is a matter which is addressed in depth throughout the policies of the BBLP 2030, with many of those policies proposed to be saved in BBLP 2040. In particular Policy 92, together with its supporting text, addresses in detail the need to undertake flood risk assessments in areas at risk of surface water flooding. Policy 93 then sets out requirements for sustainable drainage systems.
- 4.30 Although the policies in the BBLP 2030, as proposed to be saved in the BBLP 2040, make detailed provision for risk assessment and infrastructure to address the problems which arise in Riseley, RPC's response explains that Policy F1 is intended to summarise and distil the wide range of issues and technical matters in the BBLP policies in so far as they relate to the Neighbourhood Plan Area. In doing so, consistency is retained between Policy F1 and the policies of the existing (and emerging) BBLP and therefore the element of duplication is considered reasonable.
- 4.31 In these circumstances I am satisfied that Policy F1 raises no issue of compliance with the Basic Conditions.

Heritage

- 4.32 Riseley has two Conservation Areas which cover the northern area of the village and a large area of the village centre. Policy HE1 applies to the Conservation Areas and their settings. The policy sets out the criteria against which proposals within the Conservation Areas will be considered. The criteria relate to the special characteristics of the Riseley Conservation Areas and are therefore specific to the neighbourhood and appropriate for inclusion in the RNP. This policy meets the Basic Conditions.

- 4.33 Policy HE2 deals with the protection and enhancement of local heritage assets, including both designated and non-designated heritage assets. A list of non-designated heritage assets is included at Annex 2.
- 4.34 The NPPF sets out the matters to be taken into account in the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment.²⁴ BBLP, Policy 41S (Historic environment and heritage assets), sets out comprehensively the Borough Council's requirements when considering an application which might affect a designated or non-designated heritage asset. The RNP Policy HE2 makes reference to the matters of particular concern to the local community which include local styles, materials and architectural detailing which is appropriate for the RNP. Furthermore, the identification of the non-designated heritage assets in Annex 2 will be of benefit in the implementation of the relevant development plan policies.
- 4.35 However, the reference (in brackets) in the first sentence of Policy HE2 to "heritage assets", which are not limited to those identified in Annex 2, widens the scope of the policy to an unlimited and imprecise degree which would be unreasonable. I therefore recommend a modification to reword this part of Policy HE2. **[PM2]**
- 4.36 The protection of archaeological sites is proposed through Policy HE3 in the RNP. Question 3 of my third procedural letter advised that Scheduled monuments and archaeological sites are protected by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (as amended). The statutory provisions in the Act are carried forward into National Policy as set out in the NPPF and further established through Policy 41S in the BBLP 2030. As a result, the existing statutory and policy provision provides clearly stated, unambiguous protection to Scheduled monuments and archaeological sites. I understand the desire to include a concise policy provision in the RNP as stated by RPC in response to my letter. However, in this case I consider that the wording of Policy HE3 has the potential to detract from the requirements set out in both statute and the BBLP and result in ambiguity. The deletion of the policy would not undermine the aim of the RPC to protect and enhance archaeological sites within Riseley or the opportunity for the RPC to comment on development proposals which affect such sites. However, its deletion would ensure that the requirements in statute and in the development plan are those which must be met in any assessment of development affecting such sites. I therefore recommend Policy HE3 be deleted. **[PM3]**
- 4.37 With the modifications as proposed, the Heritage Policies of the RNP meet the Basic Conditions.

²⁴ NPPF Section 16.

Housing

- 4.38 It is a requirement of the NPPF that neighbourhood plans do not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area or undermine those strategic policies.²⁵ Riseley is a rural settlement which is not identified in the BBLP 2030 for any new housing allocations to meet the strategic housing requirement for the Borough.
- 4.39 The Housing Needs Survey for Riseley (HNS) 2019 does identify a local need for affordable and market housing and consideration was given in the preparation of the RNP to potential sites for allocation in the RNP. However, through the process of plan preparation and public consultation the decision was taken not to allocate any land for new housing, but to rely on the BBLP 2030 Policy 5S for the provision of any new housing. This policy is proposed to be saved in the emerging BBLP and aims to direct development to within the SPA boundaries. Whether or not there are sufficient opportunities within the SPA to meet the needs identified in the HNS, my role as an independent examiner is limited to testing whether the Neighbourhood Plan, as submitted, meets the Basic Conditions. The PPG is clear that whilst neighbourhood plans can allocate sites for development, including housing²⁶, they “are not obliged to contain policies addressing all types of development”²⁷ and “the scope of neighbourhood plans is up to the neighbourhood planning body”.²⁸ The position of the Courts on the absence of a requirement to allocate sites in a neighbourhood plan is most recently stated in *Park Lane Homes (South East) Ltd, R (On the Application Of) v Rother District Council*²⁹, more particularly that the absence of housing allocations in a draft Plan is not of itself a basis to conclude that the Plan fails to meet Basic Condition a) (regard to national policies and advice). Notwithstanding any merits of the proposed allocation of land for housing, the RNP meets the Basic Conditions in respect of housing.
- 4.40 Policy H1 deals with the mix of housing proposed in new developments. Having regard to the results of the HNS, the requirements in bullet points 1 and 2 are justified.
- 4.41 The requirement in bullet point 3 for 50% of new dwellings to be affordable in developments of 5 or more dwellings exceeds the requirement set in BBLP 2030 Policy 58S for 30% of new dwellings to be affordable in developments of 10 or more dwellings. Policy 58S is proposed to be replaced by new Policy DM1(S) in the BBLP 2040. The emerging policy requires sites of 10 or more residential units or 0.5 hectares or more to provide 30% affordable housing.

²⁵ NPPF Paragraph 29.

²⁶ PPG Reference ID: 41-042-20170728.

²⁷ PPG Reference ID: 41-040-20160211.

²⁸ PPG Reference ID: 41-104-20190509.

²⁹ [2022] EWHC 485 (Admin) | England and Wales High Court (Administrative Court).

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4.42 It is recognised in the PPG³⁰ that people living in rural areas can face particular challenges in terms of housing supply and affordability, while the location of new housing can also be important for the broader sustainability of rural communities. Strategic policies will need to be informed by an understanding of these needs and opportunities and where justified, identify policies in designated rural areas where it is appropriate to set lower thresholds for affordable housing than those which otherwise apply. Riseley is not in a designated rural area in which a lower threshold has been set or is proposed, and the threshold in Policy 58S therefore applies. In my third procedural letter, I requested in Question 4 that further clarification be provided as to the justification for bullet point 3. RPC's response confirms that there is no special justification to underpin this requirement and agrees to the deletion of the bullet point. Accordingly, I recommend bullet point 3 be deleted in order for Policy H1 to meet the Basic Conditions. **[PM4]**

Community Facilities

- 4.43 Policy CF1 addresses the protection of existing community facilities. Question 5 of my third procedural letter raised a number of potential issues in relation to this policy. Whilst it is appropriate for the RNP to specify the premises which it seeks to protect, it includes some commercial enterprises in the list of community facilities. In the BBLP, community facilities are identified as follows: "*meeting places, village halls, social club venues, sports venues, cultural buildings and places of worship*".³¹ I noted that Policy 99 of the BBLP provides for the protection of such facilities and the Policy is proposed to be saved in the BBLP 2040.
- 4.44 With regard to the local convenience shop, the Giddy Goat Café and the Fox and Hounds public house, I advised that the acknowledgement of their importance is recognised in paragraph 11.58 of the BBLP and their protection is provided through Policy 83. Policy 83 is proposed to be replaced in the BBLP 2040 by Policy TC8 which would provide equivalent protection.
- 4.45 In response to my letter, the RPC has emphasised the importance that residents place on the limited facilities available to them in this relatively remote village. I note that the BBLP Policies are generic in substance. The naming in Policy CF1 of the premises in Riseley which accord with the categories identified in BBLP Policies 83 and 99 would accord with the development plan. However, neither national or Local Plan policy provides for the protection of commercial premises such as the HP Motors Garage and the Residential Care Home. I note the reference to the Use Classes of the various premises, but do not consider that this would justify their inclusion in Policy CF1 which would be overly onerous.

³⁰ PPG Reference ID: 67-009-20190722.

³¹ BLP 2030, Paragraph 12.60.

- 4.46 In these circumstances I recommend modifications to Policy CF1 to remove from the list of community facilities the commercial premises which are not subject to control under national or development plan policy. With this modification the Policy raises no issues of compliance with the Basic Conditions [**PM5**].
- 4.47 Policy CF2 deals with Open Spaces and Recreation. Protection for open space and recreation is clearly set out in the NPPF.³² Question 6 of my third procedural letter advised that this states that open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on except in circumstances which meet one of three criteria. Policy CF2 makes reference to just one of the three criteria, in clause 2, and RPC in its response to my letter has made it clear that this is the most important issue for the local community. There would be no inconsistency or ambiguity with national or development plan policy if this clause was to be retained in the RNP. However, since the RPC has no power to permit applications for development, I recommend a modification to the wording of Clause 2.
- 4.48 In order to identify the Policies Map in Clause 1, I recommend a reference to Annex 5 is added. Clause 3 in Policy CF2 is relevant to the local neighbourhood and therefore appropriate for the RNP.
- 4.49 With the modifications recommended above, Policy CF2 raises no issues of compliance with the Basic Conditions. [**PM6**]
- 4.50 Two areas of open space are designated in the BBLP 2030 as Local Green Space (LGS) and the RNP proposes to add the remaining area of Ross Meadow to the Ross Meadow allotments LGS. The NPPF (Paragraph 102) confirms that LGS should be in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves; demonstrably special to the community and holds a particular local significance; and local in character and is not an extensive tract of land. Designating land as LGS should also be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the Plan period (Paragraph 101). I have considered the reasons for the designation and walked the whole of Ross Meadow. I agree that the proposal meets the criteria set out in the NPPF.
- 4.51 Policy CF3 identifies the two areas of LGS as shown on the Policies Map at Annex 5. The second clause of the policy seeks to resist the development of the LGS. Policies for managing development within an LGS should be consistent with those for Green Belts.³³ BBLP Policy 45 provides for the control of development on land designated as LGS in accordance with the NPPF (the policy is also proposed to be saved in the BBLP 2040). Notwithstanding this, I am aware it has become common place to restate the policy protection for LGS designated in neighbourhood plans. Whilst

³² Paragraphs 98 and 99.

³³ Paragraph 103 and see Paragraph 147 for Green Belts.

the second clause does, to some extent, have regard to national Green Belt policy in so far as it refers to the very special circumstances test, it does not acknowledge that certain types of development might be considered “appropriate”.³⁴ I recommend an amendment to address this omission. **[PM7]**

- 4.52 With the modifications proposed to the Policies CF1, 2 and 3, the RNP raises no issues of compliance with the Basic Conditions in respect of Community Facilities.

Traffic and Transport

- 4.53 Policy TT1 seeks to provide for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders. I raised two issues in regard to this policy in Question 7 of my third procedural letter. Having considered the response of RPC, I am, satisfied that the first clause in the policy generally accords with the provisions made in detail in BBLP 2030 Policy 91, which is proposed to be saved in BBLP 2040. Whilst it is not necessary to repeat these provisions, I understand that this part of the policy reflects the importance of the rights of way network to the local community. However, the second clause refers to measures to keep traffic speeds low. Such measures relate to traffic management, which is not a land use matter, and together with the reference to traffic management measures in the second sentence should be deleted from the second clause of the policy. Whilst there are policies in the BBLP which deal with the impact of new development and the design of traffic and transport provision in new development, the remainder of the second clause relates to the matters to be given particular attention in the Neighbourhood Plan Area and are appropriate to the RNP.

- 4.54 For the above reasons I propose modifications to Policy TT1 to ensure that the policy complies with the Basic Conditions. **[PM8]**

- 4.55 Policy TT2 deals with car parking in Riseley with reference to BBC’s parking standards. The policy raises no issues of compliance with the Basic Conditions.

Local Employment and Business

- 4.56 The RNP seeks to support local employment and businesses through Policy LEB1. I find that the first three clauses of the Policy are specific to the area in so far as they focus on businesses which are relevant to Riseley Parish and have regard to the impact on local residents and the character of the village. They are therefore appropriate to the RNP. Question 8 of my third procedural letter raised the matter of the duplication of parts of BBLP 2030 Policy 91 in Clauses 4 and 5 of Policy LEB1. In their response, RPC refers to the importance of the issue for residents and businesses in Riseley Parish. In these circumstances I accept that the clauses are

³⁴ NPPF Paragraphs 149 and 150.

relevant to Riseley, and that any duplication of the development plan policy would be unlikely to result in ambiguity or conflict.

- 4.57 I find that Policy LEB1 raises no issue of compliance with the Basic Conditions.

Non-Land Use Actions

- 4.58 In addition to the RNP policies which I am required to consider against the statutory tests, Section 16 of the Plan addresses issues which are not land use matters, but which are of importance to the local community. They relate to measures which may be sought in order to improve the general quality of life and wellbeing within the village, rather than land use issues which relate to the development and use of land in the statutory sense. As such they are not matters that can be addressed through a policy in the RNP, and RPC intend to develop a community strategy to help secure the local improvements of concern identified in the process of preparing the RNP.
- 4.59 Although I have taken note of the issues identified in Section 16, they will not form part of the statutory Development Plan for the area and are not therefore considered against the Basic Conditions.³⁵

Implementation and Monitoring

- 4.60 I note the provisions set out in Section 17 for the implementation and monitoring of the RNP. Whilst there is no statutory requirement for a neighbourhood plan to be reviewed, local plans are required to be reviewed at least every five years.³⁶ The RNP sets out the processes to make provision for a review of the RNP in response to changes in relevant national and local plan policies. These are positive proposals which would enable the RNP to remain relevant and complementary to national and local plan policies.

Factual and Minor Amendments and Updates

- 4.61 I have not identified any typographical errors in the text of the RNP that would affect the Basic Conditions. Minor amendments to the text can be made consequential to the recommended modifications, alongside any other minor non-material changes or updates, in agreement between RPC and BBC.³⁷

³⁵ PPG Reference ID: 41-004-20190509.

³⁶ Reg 10A Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

³⁷ PPG Reference ID: 41-106-20190509.

5. Conclusions

Summary

- 5.1 The Riseley Neighbourhood Development Plan has been duly prepared in compliance with the procedural requirements. My examination has investigated whether the Plan meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements for neighbourhood plans. I have had regard to all the responses made following consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan, together with the evidence documents submitted with the Plan and in the course of my examination.
- 5.2 I have made recommendations to modify some of the policies to ensure that the Plan meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements. I recommend that the Plan, once modified, proceeds to referendum.

The Referendum and its Area

- 5.3 I have considered whether or not the referendum area should be extended beyond the designated area to which the Plan relates.
- 5.4 The Riseley Neighbourhood Development Plan, as modified, has no policy or proposals which I consider significant enough to have an impact beyond the designated Neighbourhood Plan boundary and which would require the referendum to extend to areas beyond the Plan boundary. I therefore recommend that the boundary for the purposes of any future referendum on the Plan should be the boundary of the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area.

Overview

- 5.5 The production of the RNP has undoubtedly required a high level of commitment and hard work by the Parish Council and other volunteers from the local community. This task has no doubt been made more difficult by the abnormal conditions arising from COVID-19. I commend the Parish Council and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group for their hard work and application in producing a well written and effective Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5.6 I am satisfied that RPC has consulted with and taken into account the views of the local community, whilst seeking to protect the character and setting of Riseley as an attractive and historic settlement within the countryside. As a result, the RNP, with the recommended modifications appended to my report, meets the Basic Conditions. The modified RNP has the potential to provide an effective Plan for the management of the future planning of Riseley.

Wendy J Burden

Examiner

Appendix: Modifications

Note: Some consequential renumbering, amendment to alphabetical listings etc within the Plan will be necessary as a consequence of the PMs set out below.

Proposed modification number (PM)	Page no./ other reference	Modification
PM1	Annex 5 page 49	On the map show the Ross Meadow LGS in the same colour as the existing LGS and remove it as a separate item on the key.
PM2	Policy HE2 page 26	In the first line after "including", delete "but not limited to".
PM3	Policy HE3 page 27	Delete Policy HE3.
PM4	Policy H1 page 30	Delete the third bullet point.
PM5	Policy CF1 page 32	In the list of bullet points, delete bullet points 5 and 7.
PM6	Policy CF2 page 34	In clause 1 after "Policies Map", insert "(Annex 5)". In clause 2, delete "permitted" and insert "supported".
PM7	Policy CF3 page 35	In the second clause, prefix "Development" with "Inappropriate".
PM8	Policy TT1 page 37	In the second clause: In the first sentence delete "include measures that keep traffic speeds low and". In the second sentence insert "and" after "junctions", and delete "and traffic management measures".

Our Village



Our Future

Riseley Neighbourhood Plan

2022-2030

~~Submission March 2023~~

Examiners modifications marked with additions highlighted **yellow** and deletions ~~strikethrough~~

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Foreword

During late 2017 informal discussions were held between interested parties from the community and members of the Parish Council on the desirability of developing a Neighbourhood Plan for Riseley.

In March 2018 the Parish Council applied, as the Qualifying Body, for the parish of Riseley to be designated as a Neighbourhood Area.

Since that time a group of volunteers, including Parish Councillors, known as the Riseley Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group have worked towards delivering a Neighbourhood Plan. Since early 2019 Sally Chapman, an independent planning consultant, has worked as part of the project team.

Financial support for the project has been made available via annual grants from Locality. Two Technical Support Packages; Site Options Assessment, and Design Guidance and Codes have also been successfully applied for and delivered by AECOM to assist development of the plan. When appropriate, the Parish Council has also made small financial contributions to the project. The Parish Council acknowledges the hard work of the team and commends this plan to the community.

Jim Allen, Chairman, Riseley Parish Council, **March 2023**

1. Introduction

- 1.1. In 2011, the Localism Act (Reference 1) introduced a new opportunity for local communities to shape their future formally as part of the planning system. Neighbourhood Plans can be produced by Parish Councils and when they have gone through all the required steps and processes, they become part of the development plan for the area. This means that any planning applications will have to take account of policies contained within the Neighbourhood Plan. It also provides local people with a say on how land use and buildings can develop over time, such as protecting open spaces and improving local character.
- 1.2. Producing a Neighbourhood Plan is a formal process involving several stages, governed by the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (Reference 2), but critically important is that the Plan is developed with community involvement. Over the past 5 years the Riseley Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has been researching local issues, carrying out surveys and hosting consultation events to find out what residents want for their community and what should be included in the plan. To rigorously test the policies of a Neighbourhood Plan, an independent Examination is carried out. The Neighbourhood Plan must conform to the following 'basic conditions':
 - have regard to national policy;
 - be in general conformity with strategic local policy;
 - contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
 - be compatible with EU obligations; and
 - meet prescribed conditions and comply with prescribed matters.
- 1.3. Once the Plan has passed Examination, it is voted upon in a referendum by registered electors of the Parish and if a simple majority 'yes' vote is achieved, then the Neighbourhood Plan is 'made' by Bedford Borough Council (BBC) and comes into force as a planning document with legal weight in decision-making.
- 1.4. Riseley Parish Council decided in March 2018 to apply for the Neighbourhood Area to be designated as contiguous with the Parish boundary (Map 1) to enable them to produce a Neighbourhood Plan.

2. The Strategic Policy Context

The National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Reference 3) sets out the Government's approach to sustainable development. The most recent version was published in July 2021. At the heart of the NPPF is the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. Essentially, it is about positive growth with economic, social and environmental gains being sought simultaneously through the planning system. Neighbourhood planning forms part of the NPPF approach to planning, to allow local communities to shape sustainable development within their area and to enable local communities to address their strategic needs and priorities. The NPPF states that Neighbourhood Plans should set out a positive vision for the future of the local area with planning policies to determine decisions on planning applications, including policies which set out the quality of development that should be expected for the area, based on stated objectives for the area's future and an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics. However, a Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and plan positively to support these policies.

Sustainable development

- 2.2. The Neighbourhood Plan must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF states that pursuing sustainable development includes making it easier to create jobs in villages, to promote gains in biodiversity, to achieve better quality design, to improve people's quality of life, and to provide a wider choice of high-quality homes.
- 2.3. Therefore, the aims, policies and proposals of the Neighbourhood Plan should be assessed against their ability to achieve sustainable development. Wherever possible the Neighbourhood Plan should actively promote the achievement of sustainable development, and where possible include actions appropriate to reducing climate change.

Local Planning Documents

- 2.4. The current Local Plan consists of the Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030 (Reference 4) which was adopted in January 2020 and the Allocations and Designations Local Plan which was adopted in July 2013 (Reference 5). BBC have embarked on their next Local Plan which will cover up to 2040, conducting a 'call for sites' and asking for comments on their 'Issues and Options' Consultation during 2021.
- 2.5. The Local Plan policy 3S – Spatial Strategy seeks to deliver sustainable growth and in small settlements such as Riseley some development may be appropriate if needed and supported by the community, often through Neighbourhood Plans. Local Plan Policy 5S says that development within the Riseley Settlement Policy Area will be acceptable in principle whilst Policy 7S sets out the strict tests required to allow development outside of the Settlement Policy Area.

Other relevant documents

Community Infrastructure Levy

- 2.6. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) (Reference 6) is a charge placed on development, such as new homes and extensions to homes according to their floor area. The money generated through the levy will contribute to the funding of infrastructure to support development growth in Bedford Borough. The current CIL charging schedule was brought into effect by BBC in 2014.

3. Parish Description

- 3.1. Riseley is a parish located in North Bedfordshire. The nearest town is Rushden in the neighbouring county of Northamptonshire, approximately 8 miles away to the northwest. The county town of Bedford is approximately 9 miles to the south of Riseley. It is bordered by other rural parishes including Bletsoe, Thurleigh, Bolnhurst and Keysoe, Pertenhall and Swineshead, Melchbourne and Yelden, and Knotting and Souldrop. The Parish is home to Sackville Flying Club located on the site of Sackville Farm Aerodrome, and parts of Bedford Autodrome on the site of Thurleigh Airfield, located near the northern and southern fringes of the Parish respectively.
- 3.2. The village is a linear village in the centre of the Parish, located in a shallow valley, with a few isolated houses and farmsteads scattered across the parish. It has one watercourse running through the village known locally as the 'Brook'. The source is in Halsey Wood, Souldrop, from where it meanders through Riseley to Swineshead and Pertenhall, joining the River Kym in Great Staughton. The Kym is a tributary of the River Great Ouse. The medieval village was clustered around All Saints Church. It is thought that following the Black Death the settlement moved to the opposite side of the Brook which led to the formation of the current linear structure (Riseley - Our Village, 2000, page 8) (Reference 7).
- 3.3. Riseley High Street runs approximately northeast/southwest for a distance of 1.6km from end to end. The linear layout is occasionally punctuated by green open spaces that provide direct connections and views from the High Street to the surrounding countryside. Short cul-de-sac roads also break the linear layout of the High Street.
- 3.4. In the south of the village there is a housing estate bounded by High Street, Gold Street and Rotten Row, in which there is a network of cul-de-sac roads.
- 3.5. The main thoroughfare (High Street) retains a rural and open environment. Both the approach from Swineshead in the northeast and that from Sharnbrook and Bletsoe in the southwest are flanked by wooded areas. The approach road from Keysoe in the east is downhill to the High Street opposite the shop. From the top of this hill there is a good view of the farmland behind the High Street across to the church and beyond.
- 3.6. There is a footpath on one side of the length of the High Street, but only for a short distance from the entrance to Ross Meadow to the shop is there pavement on both sides of the road. For much of the length, there is a green verge of varying widths between the path and the road. There are grass splays at College Drive, Paulsons Close and Maple Gardens. Between the Police Station and Gold Street the grass verge is wide with trees, a seat and a village sign. Opposite the shop at the end of Keysoe Road is a triangular green area with a larger village sign, a tree that is illuminated at Christmas time and at one boundary, grave headstones from the time when this was part of the grounds of a Baptist Chapel.

- 3.7. Church Lane runs parallel to the High Street. Recent changes to the educational provision in the Borough led to the closure of the school originally built in 1841. The former school playing field adjacent to the school site is in contrast to the modern housing development on the opposite side of the lane. Approaching the Church, there is an open field to the left side and next to the Vicarage is an orchard that is carefully maintained on former glebe lands by the tenant on behalf of All Saints Riseley Parochial Church Council. It is extensively planted with apple trees under which grow a large population of the common spotted orchid. It is a tranquil area to which village residents have free access and the opportunity to harvest the apples from the 8 varieties of trees.
- 3.8. Throughout the parish there is a large network of footpaths and bridleways (see map in Annex 1). The majority provide circular routes of varying distances in a network that provides a variety of natural environments and opportunities to observe wildlife. The majority of the routes are walked by residents and are well known to walking groups who make frequent visits to Riseley. Of particular note is the “flood path” (FPA 15) which runs along the field edge behind the houses on the eastern side of the High Street. It is well maintained to ensure that when flood waters close the High Street, there is an alternative route for people, if not vehicles.

History and Heritage

- 3.9. Riseley appears in the Domesday Book of 1086 where the village’s name is spelt Rislai. The village is listed as being in the Stodden Hundred. The village contained twenty-five households which is considered large for a settlement of the time. It is also stated that in 1066 some of Riseley was overlorded by Godric the Sheriff, a man who is assumed to have died in the Battle of Hastings. (Riseley – Our Village, 2000) (Reference 7).
- 3.10. Riseley’s mediaeval history involves the Knights Hospitallers who in 1279 gained possession of land and manors in Riseley as well as possessions in surrounding areas. The Knights owned both Harveys Manor and the Manor of Lawrence. Both the Knights Hospitaller and Knights Templar are involved in Riseley history back in 1279, but it has been suggested that the two organisations had been confused at some time in the past. Riseley was farmed in an open field system right up to the Enclosure Acts of the late 1790’s. In a few green pastures evidence of the medieval ridge and furrow system of cultivation still exists. Riseley was enclosed in 1793 creating the fields and hedgerows that make the farmed environment that is seen today.
- 3.11. The High Street was designated as a Turnpike in May 1802. A widened area in the grass verge at the southern end of the High Street where the High Street is joined by Sharnbrook Road marks where the tollbooth stood. This road junction is still known as Tollbar Corner. A Blue Plaque mounted on the end wall facing the High Street of the cottage adjoining 76-78 commemorates the placing of the plaque 200 years after the toll road designation.
- 3.12. Riseley has a long tradition of brick and tile making, dating back to at least 1558, due to its clay rich soil. During the nineteenth century the village was home to a brickworks and brickmaking became one of the village’s main industries with 12 brickmakers recorded living in the village in the 1841 census and 15 brickmakers living there according to both the 1851 and 1861 censuses. There are many village dwellings constructed from Riseley Brick with many in the characteristic

chequerboard pattern (Flemish bond). The village also had a history of lace making with 80 of the 118 houses in the village being involved in the activity in 1851.

- 3.13. During World War 2 Riseley found itself surrounded by USAAF bomber bases at Thurleigh, Poddington, Chelveston, Molesworth and Kimbolton. A large supply and logistics base was built on the Melchbourne Estate for the storage and supply of bombs and munitions and assembly of war materials for supply to those bases and other USAAF units throughout East Anglia. Operating from December 1942 through to the War's end, the network of roads and concrete hard standings remain today and are a feature of the local landscape.
- 3.14. The Parish has a rich architectural legacy with buildings from a variety of construction periods and styles. It contains two Conservation Areas: The Riseley North Conservation Area covering the northern end of the village, and the Riseley Conservation Area for a large portion of the remainder of the village. There is a total of 61 listed buildings and structures, including the Grade I-listed All Saints Church (see Annex 2), as well as one Scheduled Monument, Hall Close Moated Site.

Landscape

- 3.15. Riseley village is located at the bottom of the valley formed by Riseley Brook, in the "1B-Riseley Clay Farmland" landscape character area defined by the Bedford Borough Landscape Character Assessment 2020 (Reference 8). This area is characterised by open lowland with gently undulating valleys, open farmland with scattered woods, and dispersed settlements connected by small rural roads and verges.
- 3.16. Most of the Neighbourhood Area is occupied by open fields separated by ditches, hedges, and small areas of woodland.

Green Infrastructure (GI)

- 3.17. Green Infrastructure (GI) is a descriptive term which describes the network of open spaces, countryside, footpaths, the heritage landscape, rivers/stream etc. Established woodland, hedgerows, grass verges and pasture comprise the Parish's green and leafy character.
- 3.18. Footpaths, byways and bridleways, including the North Bedfordshire Heritage Way, connect settlements with one another and the wider countryside. There are several local publicly accessible areas of green and open space such as the church yard of All Saints, the orchard and allotments, Riseley Playing Field, and Ross Meadow.
- 3.19. These all form a strong green infrastructure network, which connects built-up areas to the wider countryside.

Facilities

- 3.20. Facilities in the village are limited and include, but are not limited to, a convenience store, a police station, a garage, a café, and a pub. The village does not have medical provision or a permanent post office.

- 3.21. Riseley also has a Village Hall on Gold Street and a primary school, Riseley C of E Primary School, on High Street.
- 3.22. A sports field is adjacent to the Village Hall with a football pitch, cricket square and children's play equipment.

Local business, services and employment

- 3.23. Sporting Targets, Brook House and other small and medium businesses are located in the Parish, including those clustered on the sites of Sackville Farm Aerodrome, Lodge Farm Business units, Thurleigh Airfield and units at the start of Keysoe Road.

Population & Household Data

- 3.24. Riseley has a population of 1,286 and 520 dwellings according to the last census in 2011.

4. Consultation

- 4.1 A number of varied consultation activities have been conducted in order to build the evidence base for the Neighbourhood Plan. Riseley Parish was designated as a Neighbourhood Plan area by BBC in March 2018. The Riseley Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group was formed by volunteers from the community and planned a first public consultation. Specific consultation activities are summarized below. More detail about the consultation activities, the frequency and the modes of communication are contained in the Consultation Statement.

Month/Year	Activity
September 2018	Publicity stand at the Village Show
October 2018	Consultation event in the Village Hall
July 2019	Housing Needs Survey conducted by Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity
August – December 2019	Transport Survey
September 2019	Publicity stand at the Village Show
July 2020	Call for sites issued
September 2020	Publicity stand at Village Show
September 2021	Consultation event in the Village Hall

- 4.2. A report has been delivered by the Riseley Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to every Parish Council meeting since 2018. In addition, a summary of activities and progress has been reported in every Parish Council Newsletter since 2018 (24 in total) which is delivered to every home in the Parish.
- 4.3. The Covid-19 pandemic and the resulting lockdowns presented challenges to the operation of the Steering Group by members becoming seriously ill and not being able to meet in person. Fortunately, the Steering Group were able to continue business, albeit at a slower pace, via use of Zoom (the Parish Council had a Zoom licence) which enabled virtual meetings. When lockdown restrictions were lifted and the Group members felt comfortable, in person meetings resumed. However, restrictions on public gatherings delayed until September 2021 the key public consultation on the draft objectives that helped define the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 4.4. Consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan under Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 as amended took place between the 21st November 2022 and the 16th January 2023; a period of 8 weeks. The consultation was publicised by banners at 3 locations in the village, a flyer including a response form and a copy of the draft Neighbourhood Plan were delivered to every household, business and the school, the Riseley Parish Council website and Facebook posts. Responses could be delivered either as hard copy or online.

- 4.5. 34 representations were received from statutory consultees including BBC, stakeholders and residents. The comments were carefully considered and relevant changes made to the Neighbourhood Plan. Further details are set out in the Consultation Statement.

5. Vision and Objectives

- 5.1. The Vision of this Neighbourhood Plan has been carefully developed from information provided by the community at a public consultation in October 2018 and refined by the Parish Council to reflect the priorities of the community and help set the future of the Parish. The Vision expresses the overall intention of the Neighbourhood Plan. The integrity of the Vision was confirmed by the public consultation in September 2021.

Vision

Riseley will retain and nurture a sustainable rural character. The character will be enhanced through well-designed, controlled small scale development which respects the rural feel, the linear structure of the village, and landscape setting of the Parish. Small businesses and local enterprises will be encouraged and supported. The strong sense of community spirit that exists in the village will be fostered and enhanced by the support of amenity facilities and community projects such that people will want to live here and enjoy good health and wellbeing.

- 5.2. To aid understanding of what the Vision actually means, it can be broken down into its constituent parts and explained as follows:

A. Riseley will retain and nurture a sustainable rural character.

- Remain and feel relatively small.
- Not spread into the surrounding countryside.
- Maintain green vistas within the village
 - Retain open spaces and views.
- Maintain views out to the open countryside
 - Retain village views and sight lines to the open countryside.
- Encourage small businesses.
- Maintain local services.

B. The character will be enhanced through well-designed, controlled small scale development which respects the rural feel, the linear structure of the village, and landscape setting of the Parish.

- Well designed:
 - Housing design that respects that which is already present – compatible and consistent rather than purposefully different (housing style and materials).
 - The green infrastructure (e.g. green spaces, footpaths, bridleways and cycleways) is maintained.
 - Surface water run-off is managed to prevent flooding.
- Controlled small scale development
 - Development should be limited to between 5 and 10 dwellings that do not detract from the rural feel of the parish.
- Respects the rural feel
 - Exceptionally, a larger development (>10 dwellings) should be located so as not to dominate the character of the village and be designed to conserve the rural feel.
- Respects the linear structure
 - Developments should not project out of the village into the open countryside.
- Respects the landscape setting of the Parish
 - The village remains inconspicuous from the surrounding countryside or when entering via road.

C. Small businesses and local enterprises will be encouraged and supported.

- A small commercial development would be supported to enable small businesses to be established or grow. This may attract small businesses from elsewhere.

D. The strong sense of community spirit that exists in the village will be fostered and enhanced by the support of amenity facilities and community projects such that people will want to live here and enjoy good health and wellbeing.

- Evidence for the strong sense of community spirit is provided by, but not limited to:
 - Publication of four books summarising the history of the Parish (References 7, 9, 10 and 11)
 - A Parish Council website and frequent publication (bi-monthly) of a Parish Council Newsletter, and village specific FaceBook pages
 - A Flood Group
 - Many clubs providing social and sporting activities within the Parish; e.g. Badminton club, Gardening Club, History Society, and Wine Club (see <https://www.riseleyvillage.co.uk/organisations/>)
 - The Riseley Recreation Association
 - An annual village show
 - A thriving church community extending from worship to a variety of activities for all ages
 - A Community Kindness Group
- Fostered and enhanced
 - The Village Hall provides a focus for many of the clubs. Normally the hall is used to capacity. Proposals to extend the hall have been developed with an additional

storage space extension which was constructed in 2021. Additionally, a new social venue with a focus on supporting children and young people (the community hub) has been suggested. An opportunity to develop a hub is being actively pursued.

- 5.3 The Aims of the Neighbourhood Plan have been developed, allowing the definition of policies which in turn will be used to comment on and determine planning applications (see 13.4).

Aims

- 1. The rural, linear character of the village will be maintained and enhanced through appropriate small-scale developments and improvements.**
- 2. The historic character and heritage assets of the parish will be preserved and enhanced.**
- 3. High quality design will be secured in all new development reflecting the distinctive character of Riseley.**
- 4. The natural environment, including landscape features, biodiversity and green spaces will be enhanced and protected.**
- 5. New housing growth will contribute to a compact and integrated village, meeting the needs of existing and future residents in terms of housing mix and tenure.**
- 6. The roads in Riseley will be safe and accessible for pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders and motorists. Improvements to the road network to increase safety, reduce the impact of congestion and provide adequate parking will be required alongside new development.**
- 7. Existing community facilities will be protected. New facilities or improvements to existing facilities will be encouraged to enhance opportunities for community cohesion.**
- 8. Formal and informal amenity spaces will be protected and enhanced and Local Green Space designated to protect those spaces of particular community value.**
- 9. Local businesses, including homeworking and rural businesses will be encouraged and an up-to-date communications network will be supported.**

6. Sustainable Development Principles

Introduction

- 6.1. Reflecting the NPPF and the consideration of locations for new housing development through the Bedford Borough Local Plan process, there are three over-arching principles (Development Principles) to ensure that new development is sustainable, achieves high design and environmental standards, reflects local preferences in terms of location and, especially important, supports community infrastructure.
- 6.2. The Parish has a very distinctive character (see Design Guidance and Codes - Riseley, AECOM, 2022: Reference 12) and all new development should protect, reflect and enhance that character by following the Guidance and Codes. There is a need for development to contribute to the quality of life for residents, including healthy lifestyles, access to local services, green open spaces, safe places for active play, and wherever possible, for facilities to be accessible by walking.
- 6.3. Some new development over the Neighbourhood Plan period is likely to happen but this should only occur applying the principles of sustainable development to reflect environmental, economic and social needs.

6.4. For Riseley, the meaning of sustainable development is set out below.

Sustainable Development Principles

Sustainable development for Riseley means that development should be:

- *At an appropriate scale and in locations where it would support the community.*
- *Of a high standard of design, reflecting and enhancing the character of the surroundings.*
- *Contributing towards community infrastructure, where necessary.*
- *Meeting contemporary construction, energy efficiency and water management standards, (including Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and other flood mitigation measures).*
- *Located and designed to enable safe walking to local facilities.*

The following adverse impacts should be avoided:

- *The loss of agricultural land.*
- *The loss or inappropriate diversion of public rights of way.*
- *Intrusion into open countryside and existing green spaces.*
- *The loss of or damage to wildlife habitats and hedgerows and trees.*
- *A loss of amenity for existing residential properties.*
- *Overloading existing utilities and services (water, drainage, sewage and waste, broadband and mobile phones).*

7. Rural Character

- 7.1. The village of Riseley is the main settlement in the Parish and is located in a shallow valley within which flows Riseley Brook. Much of the village is partly hidden from the surrounding undulating landscape.
- 7.2. There is overwhelming community support for maintaining the rural character of the parish which means any development should be small-scale, preferably on previously developed land rather than greenfield sites; retaining green open spaces and verges in the village; retaining trees that limit the visibility of the village from the surrounding countryside; retaining heritage assets (both listed buildings and non-listed heritage assets). (See Reference 13 and the Consultation Statement).
- 7.3. Some new development over the lifetime of this Neighbourhood Plan is inevitable. Local Plan policy 5S (Reference 4) allows new development within Riseley's Settlement Policy Area (SPA) in principle, subject to consistency with other policies of the development plan (which includes Neighbourhood Plan policies).

Settlement Pattern

- 7.4. The settlement pattern in most of the village is linear: most properties in the historic core are distributed along High Street, a road that runs alongside Riseley Brook. The linear pattern is occasionally punctuated by sections of open space that provide direct connections and views from High Street into the surrounding countryside. Modern infilling with short cul-de-sac roads also breaks the linear pattern at various points along High Street. The spacious arrangement of the settlement has enabled many parts of the village to retain a one-plot configuration with properties either backing onto or fronting open space. Most houses are oriented to be accessed directly from High Street or via cul-de-sacs that connect with High Street. A minority of buildings are arranged into small clusters served by a common courtyard.
- 7.5. The settlement patterns in the south of Riseley, in contrast, are marked by the enclosure formed by High Street, Gold Street, and Rotten Row, into which feeds a more complex network of cul-de-sac roads. Due to the settlement's largely linear configuration, most properties directly back onto or front open space, and the countryside can be viewed directly from the village centre at several points along High Street. Access points to some public rights of way also provide views into the countryside.
- 7.6. Overall, the variety in parcel dimensions, garden depths, and architectural details enhances the informal rural character. Estate or infill housing built in the 20th and 21st centuries display more uniform plot layouts and architectural details.
- 7.7. Outside of the main village, a few isolated houses and farmsteads are scattered across the Parish, and clusters of larger industrial and commercial buildings can be found on the sites of Sackville Farm Aerodrome and Thurleigh Airfield.

Boundary treatments and frontages

- 7.8. Dwellings are predominantly detached houses, with a minority of semi-detached houses and terraces. Most are set back from the road with a front garden, but in the historic parts of the village, a significant minority abut directly onto High Street with no front gardens or courtyards.
- 7.9. Due to their rural origins, many minor roads in the village do not have pavements or only have pavements on one side. Some sections of High Street are bordered by grass verges instead of pavements. The backs of the roads are typically enclosed by landscaped hedges or low brick or stone walls.
- 7.10. Where there are hedgerows and low walls, new development should seek to retain and recreate this style of boundary treatment, for example by avoiding the use of close boarded fences more suitable to the urban environment. Planting of native hedgerows and trees also add to the rural character as well as increasing biodiversity, but the positioning of hedgerows where views of the open countryside might be interrupted, should be avoided.
- 7.11. It is important that full account is taken of the local context and that any new development responds to and enhances the sense of place and meets the aspirations of people already living in the area. Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030 policy 28S requires development to contribute to good place-making including the promotion of local distinctiveness and complementing the character of the area in which the development is located. The intrinsic rural character of the Parish must be retained through reinforcing the eclectic nature of existing development whilst recognising and mitigating the potential visual impact of new buildings and their mass, bulk and materials.

Policy RC1: Rural Character

The rural character of the village and its surroundings should be respected through new development by ensuring that:

- ***the variable sense of space between and around existing buildings is retained, particularly in the village and where views of the countryside beyond the village are available.***
- ***the cumulative impact of new buildings does not result in intensifying or creating an urban character.***
- ***proposals take advantage of the local topography, landscape and water features, trees and plants in the vicinity and on the site.***
- ***the scale and character of new buildings are in keeping with the rural setting with all rooflines below the 70m contour lines on the valley sides.***
- ***boundary treatment and landscaping schemes are carefully designed so as to maintain the rural character of the area.***

8. Landscape and Natural Environment

Natural environment

- 8.1. Natural environment is a phrase that includes landscape features, biodiversity, green spaces and views and public rights of way. Consultation with the community demonstrates the high value that local people place on the landscape and natural environment of the Parish. In the public consultation 2021 (Reference 13), 91% of respondents agreed with protecting and enhancing the features of the natural environment.
- 8.2. Green Infrastructure (GI) is a term which covers a network of multifunctional green spaces and inter – connecting links which is designed, developed and managed to meet the environmental, social and recreational needs of existing and new communities. The network includes open land of ecological, historical, landscape, amenity and formal and informal recreational value. Within this Neighbourhood Plan, GI is separated out under several headings, but to enhance the GI network is an aim of all the relevant policies. BBC have also recently commissioned a Natural Capital Project (Reference 14) which produced a detailed basemap for the Borough which allows identification opportunities to enhance accessible natural greenspace, biodiversity and a range of ecosystem services.

Landscape

- 8.3. Riseley is located at the bottom of the valley formed by Riseley Brook, in the “1B-Riseley Clay Farmland” landscape character area defined by the Bedford Borough Landscape Character Assessment Updated 2020 (Reference 8).
- 8.4. This area is characterised by open lowland with valleys, open farmland with scattered woods, and dispersed settlements connected by small rural roads and verges.
- 8.5. Most of the Neighbourhood Area is occupied by open fields separated by ditches, hedges, and small areas of woodland. The gently undulating topography results in long views and the dispersed settlement pattern creates an often remote, isolated perception of the area.
- 8.6. Significant stretches of land alongside Riseley Brook between High Street and the church remain unbuilt, thus enabling easy access to and views of open spaces from the village centre. Mature trees at the edges of the village conceal most of the settlement from inward views when approaching Riseley from High Street, The Butts, Swineshead Road, Keysoe Road and Bletsoe. Areas of woodland such as Melchbourne Woods are located mostly outside the Parish.
- 8.7. There is overwhelming support for maintaining the landscape setting of the village by minimizing its visibility from the surrounding countryside (Consultation Report, September 2021. Reference 13). This to be achieved by maintaining existing trees and planting new ones where possible and ensuring that housing development does not extend into the countryside, especially on higher ground.

- 8.8. The overall landscape strategy for this area is to conserve the open rural landscape while enhancing the elements of the landscape which are in declining condition such as hedgerows, hedgerow and field trees and resisting urbanizing influences by keeping the wide grass verges to rural roads and avoiding excess road signage and kerbing. Local Plan Policy 28S and 37 (Reference 4) require that proposals will be required to enhance and protect the local landscape in line with the Landscape Character Assessment (Reference 8).
- 8.9. Some change that occurs in the landscape is outside planning control, but where planning permission is required for development, landscape features should be considered in a systematic way. Proposals for new development should include an appropriate landscape analysis either as a freestanding report or as part of a design and access statement.

Policy LNE1: Protecting the Landscape

Any proposals for development in the Parish should recognise and seek to protect and enhance the historic and natural landscape.

Field patterns and elements of the landscape heritage of the area, including field ponds, ancient woodland, mature trees and historic hedgerows should be protected and incorporated into any landscape design schemes and their long-term maintenance ensured.

The impact of any development on long distance views shall be carefully considered. Schemes that would have a deleterious impact on the landscape will be unacceptable. All new development should support the aims of enhancing the Green Infrastructure network and take identified opportunities to enhance natural capital.

Nature Conservation

- 8.10. Protection of the nature conservation interest in the Parish, which is valued by local people, is critical, with reference to the important habitats and landscape identified in both the Landscape Character Assessment 2020 (Reference 8) and the Riseley Design Guidance and Codes 2022 (Reference 12).
- 8.11. Within the Riseley Neighbourhood Plan area there are parts of three County Wildlife Sites (CWS), each extends beyond the Parish boundary:
- Coppice, Flint's, Ladywood TL038645 (Also known as Melchbourne Wood). This includes areas of semi natural ancient woodland.
 - Penn and Worley Wood TF947191 Semi natural broadleaf woodland.
 - Galsey Wood TL036610. The section within the Parish is neutral grassland.
- 8.12. On a shared boundary with the Parish is Keysoe Park TL038645.
- 8.13. In 'Rebuilding diversity in Bedford Borough' Bedford Borough Council 2009 (Reference 15) there is the following reference to Thurleigh Airfield, part of which is within the Parish: "Extensive open

grasslands of the wartime airfields at Chelveston and Thurleigh. The grassland at Thurleigh is one of the county's largest areas of this habitat outside the Chiltern Hills around Luton and Dunstable."

- 8.14. The Bedfordshire and Luton Recording and Monitoring Centre completed a search in April 2022 for species records within the Neighbourhood Plan area. (Note: the full search has to remain confidential). It is to be noted that absence of a record for a species in the search does not imply that that species does not exist in the area. Records for protected and notable species in Riseley Neighbourhood Plan area include:
- 38 flowering plants and 1 tree
 - 3 lichens
 - 2 molluscs
 - 44 butterflies and moths
 - 2 amphibians including 2 records of Great Crested Newt
 - 1 reptile
 - 89 birds including 9 sensitive species
 - 20 terrestrial mammals including 6 species of bats and badgers.
- 8.15. The common spotted orchid (*Dactylorhiza fuscii*) growing in the orchard on Church Lane does not meet the criteria for inclusion in this list but the large size of the population in this location is of significance.
- 8.16. In Britain all bat species and their roosts are legally protected by both domestic and international legislation. There are 6 species of bats in the records for Riseley. Bats forage for insects widely over distances of up to 10 km. One of the listed species has legal and conservation status of 'near threatened'. This should be considered when developments are considered particularly on previously developed sites or those with mature trees and hedgerows.
- 8.17. All proposals for new development will be required to demonstrate how the design has taken into account its potential impact on local habitats and species. This will include sites and features that are locally important in Riseley, including Riseley Brook valley, trees, hedges and woodland, watercourses and unimproved grassland.
- 8.18. Development should be planned to avoid habitat loss and fragmentation, and opportunities should be sought to improve ecological connectivity, including through the creation, restoration and enhancement of linking habitats and 'stepping stones' through the landscape. Developers will be required to ensure that appropriate measures are put in place to protect wildlife and take every available opportunity to enhance biodiversity, wildlife corridors and important habitats. Where ecological surveys are required, submitted information must be consistent with British Standard 42020 2013 (Reference 16).
- 8.19. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is a concept proposed in the Governments 25 Year Environment Plan and mandated as a condition of planning permission in the 2021 Environment Act (Reference 17) from November 2023.

- 8.20. BNG requires a minimum 10% increase in biodiversity after development, compared to the level of biodiversity prior to the development taking place. In locations such as Riseley where all new development will be close to the countryside, it is really important that this principle is adopted to mitigate the impact of losing biodiversity value of undeveloped land to development. In order to objectively assess net ecological impacts and therefore achieve net gains in biodiversity, as required by the NPPF, it is vital that a fair robust mechanism for measuring these impacts is applied. To ensure they are consistently quantified, when required, applications must be accompanied by a Biodiversity Impact Assessment Calculation using the Natural England Biodiversity Metric (Reference 18).
- 8.21. The application of this metric (which may be periodically updated) will be required for all development with negative impacts on biodiversity.
- 8.22. BBC Local Plan policy 35S (Reference 4) requires that existing GI is protected, enhanced and managed and policies 39 and 40 seek to retain trees and hedgerows. Policies 42S and 43 seek to minimize or mitigate for any loss of biodiversity and result in a net gain. Developers will therefore be required to ensure that appropriate measures are put in place to protect wildlife and take every available opportunity to enhance biodiversity and important habitats and linking with existing wildlife corridors where possible.
- 8.23. Landscaping schemes will be required to use native species for planting schemes, particularly those found locally. Known invasive non-native species must not be included in landscaping schemes. All new development should seek to increase biodiversity such as incorporating bat boxes and swift bricks etc. into new buildings.
- 8.24. Where Sustainable Urban Drainage systems (SuDS) are required to serve new developments, every opportunity to link them into habitats should be taken.

Policy LNE2: Nature Conservation

New development will be required to protect and enhance existing natural features of sites and provide at least 10% net gain in biodiversity.

Provision of appropriate species-related measures will be required, including, for example, swift bricks, bat and owl boxes and the incorporation of native species into landscaping schemes. Known invasive non-native species must not be included in landscaping schemes.

Opportunities should be taken by developers and landowners to link with existing wildlife corridors, enhance the Green Infrastructure Network and natural capital opportunities.

Sustainable drainage solutions in new development should complement nature conservation objectives.

9. High Quality Design

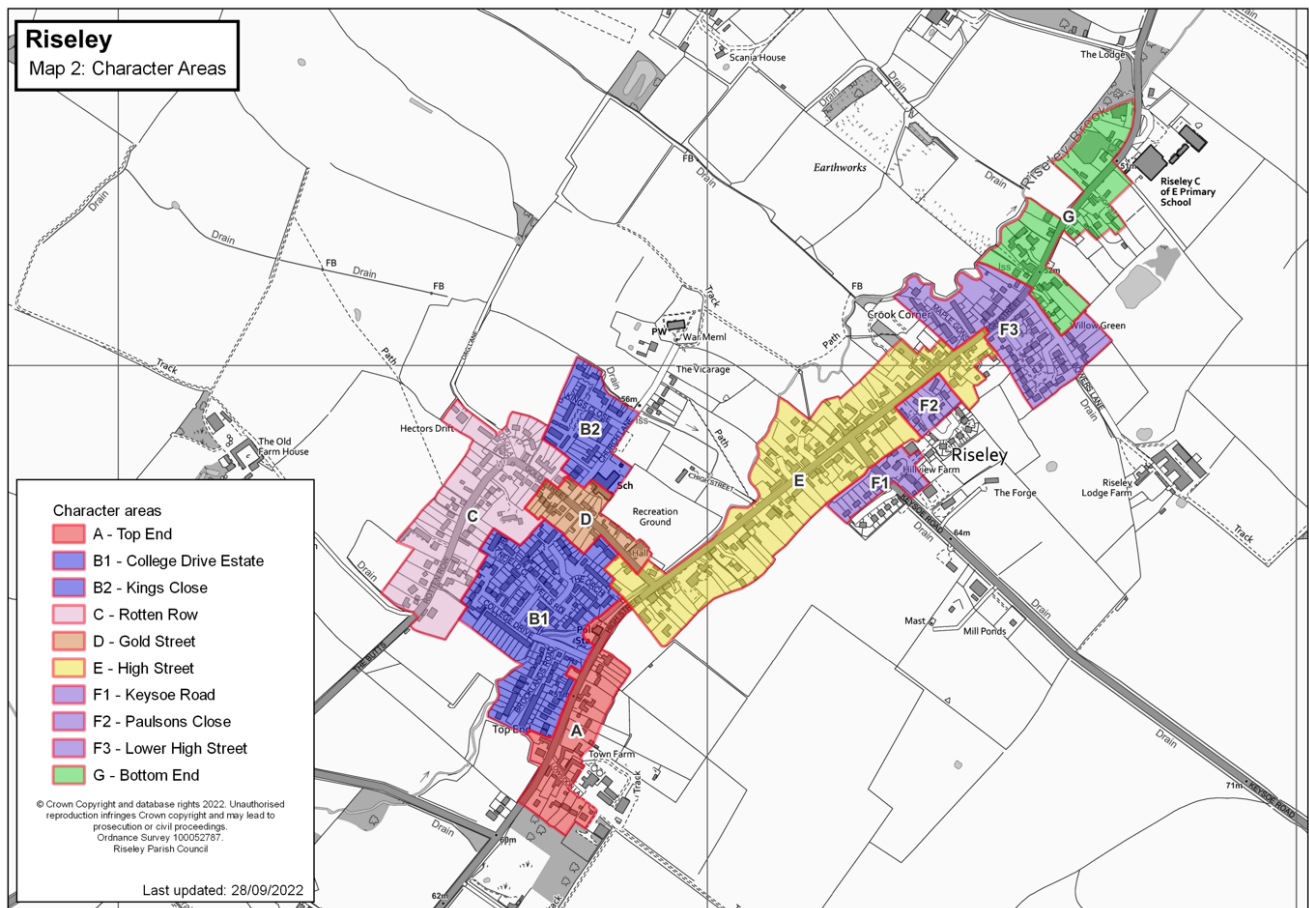
- 9.1. The NPPF (Reference 3) recognises that well-designed buildings and places improve the quality of life and that it is a core planning principle to secure good design. Good design is not just about appearance, but also functionality and the relationship to surroundings and it is not about copying past styles or preventing innovative modern design. The aim is to create site-specific creative design, which is contextual by referencing form and materials to the surroundings which adds to the beauty of an area.
- 9.2. High quality design that reflects the distinctive character of Riseley is a very high priority for local people. In the public consultation September 2021 (Reference 13), 94% of respondents agreed that high quality design reflecting the distinctive character of Riseley should be secured for all new developments.

Design Codes

- 9.3. A Design Guidance and Codes document has been produced for the Parish Council by AECOM and is a supporting document which compliments the Neighbourhood Plan (Design Guidance and Codes – Riseley, AECOM, 2022: Reference 12). Design codes inform development proposals to provide guidance and clarity on design that reflects local character and preferences. Design codes exist to provide a framework for creating high quality places with high quality design standards, particularly for new developments.

9.4 The Riseley Design Guidance and Codes divides the village into seven Character Areas (see Map 2):

- A: Top End
- B: College Drive Estate and Kings Close
- C: Rotten Row
- D: Gold Street
- E: High Street
- F: Keysoe Road, Paulsons Close and Lower High Street
- G: Bottom End



9.5. For each of the areas, the Design Guidance and Codes provides a description, a list of the positive aspects to be retained, reinforced and enhanced and specific Design Principles under the Design Code headings.

9.6 Guidance for new development is organized under four headings:

- SL: Site Layout and Open Spaces, Context, Patterns of Growth and Layout of buildings, Open Spaces, Views and Landmarks
- BF: Built forms
- MO: Mobility
- SU: Sustainability

- 9.7. The following table shows the subcategories within each Design Code. Requirements for appropriate development for each of the seven character areas for each Design Code and subcategory are set out in the Design Guidance and Codes document.

Design Code Name	Sub-categories						
Site Layout and Open Space	SL01: Context	SL02: Patterns of growth and layout of buildings	SL03: Open Spaces	SL04: Views and landmarks			
Built Forms	BF01: Housing mix and typology	BF02: Building scale and massing	BF03: Building height and roofline	BF04: Enclosure	BF05: Building line and boundary treatment	BF06: Modification, extensions and infills	BF07: Materials and details
Mobility	MO01: Pedestrian and cycle connectivity	MO02: Traffic calming	MO03: Car and cycle parking				
Sustainability	SU01: Carbon Neutral Homes	SU02: Sustainable drainage	SU03: Biodiversity and tree protection	SU04: Servicing			

- 9.8. Development proposals should include a Design and Access Statement, or other written statement related to the scale and complexity of the scheme, which shows that the development has been designed to specifically relate to its setting and taken full account of the Design Guidance and Codes (Reference 12). This is essential to ensure that the special character of the village is protected and its local distinctiveness is enhanced and reinforced.

Policy D1: The Design of New Development

Proposals for good quality new development (including new buildings and extensions to existing buildings) will be supported, where they comply with the Riseley Design Guidance and Codes (Reference 12) and address the following criteria.

Where relevant to the scale and type of development proposed, new development will:

- ***Relate well to the existing development pattern.***
- ***Respect existing and enhance green spaces.***
- ***Ensure that views, landmarks and gateways are retained.***
- ***Be of an appropriate scale, height and density in relation to its setting.***
- ***Be visually well integrated with surroundings whilst ensuring that the building line and boundary treatments are appropriate to the context.***
- ***Use materials and detailing appropriate to the development's context.***
- ***Ensure new development is connected to the existing village and services allowing safe pedestrian connections and providing traffic calming where appropriate.***
- ***Integrate car parking within landscaping so that it does not dominate the street.***
- ***Provide an appropriate level of parking for the development proposed. Provide modern solutions to the impact of climate change including sustainable building design and construction, energy efficiency, water management and drainage.***
- ***Provide landscaping and planting including suitable new trees to create well defined streets and spaces.***
- ***Provide convenient, well-screened storage for bins and recycling and bicycles.***

Sustainable Buildings and construction

- 9.9. The Centre for Sustainable Energy (Reference 19) encourages neighbourhood plans to include policies on mitigation and adaptation to climate change (Reference 20).
- 9.10. The UK government needs help to meet its commitments under the Climate Change Act 2008 (Reference 21) to reduce global warming. One of the commitments made by the Government is to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050. The reality is that the homes built today will still be in use in 2050. Therefore, to achieve the UK and BBC carbon reduction targets cost effectively, new housing built today must be built to zero carbon standards as soon as possible. However, even if all new housing were to be carbon neutral from tomorrow, this would still not be enough to achieve the carbon emission reductions, as around 70% of buildings that will be in use in the 2050s already exist. If carbon reduction targets are to be met, and if fuel poverty is to be tackled, it is essential that the energy efficiency of existing buildings, including historic and listed buildings is also improved.
- 9.11. In March 2019, BBC declared a Climate Emergency (Reference 22) and has pledged to become Carbon Neutral by 2030. Policies 53 and 54 of the Local Plan (Reference 4) require development to take opportunities to integrate the principles of sustainable design and energy efficiency into development.

- 9.12. Water management plays an important part in the climate change agenda and water efficiency measures can contribute to the protection of this resource in the future. Water resources are under pressure across the East of England including Bedford Borough and the Environment Agency classifies the Anglian Water supply region as an area of serious water stress. A small local contribution to improved water supply can be made by requiring that all new homes and extensions are provided with water butts for harvesting and storage of water for garden use and incorporate other measures designed to reduce water consumption.
- 9.13. Further detail and suggestions can be found in the Design Guidance and Codes SU01 (Reference 12).

Policy D2: Sustainable design of homes and buildings

The design and standard of any new building should aim to meet a high level of sustainable design and construction and be optimised for energy efficiency, targeting zero carbon emissions. This includes:

- ***Siting and orientation to optimise passive solar gain.***
- ***The use of high quality, thermally efficient building materials.***
- ***Installation of energy efficiency measures such as loft and wall insulation and double glazing.***
- ***Any new development should incorporate on-site energy generation from renewable sources such as solar panels where appropriate.***

The retrofit of existing buildings including heritage properties, is encouraged to reduce energy demand and to generate renewable energy where appropriate, providing it safeguards historic characteristics.

Alterations to existing buildings must be designed with energy reduction in mind and comply with sustainable design and construction standards.

All developments must be designed taking into account best practice in water efficiency where relevant, such as water efficient fittings and appliances, water harvesting, grey water recycling, and storage features.

10. Flooding

- 10.1. Flooding is an important issue for many Riseley residents and at all village consultations great concern was expressed over historic and recent flooding problems and the potential increases in flood risks from any new building developments. The flood risk in Riseley arises from surface water and Riseley Brook (see flood risk map in Annex 3).
- 10.2. The linear pattern of the settlement runs along the length of the High Street, roughly in parallel with the Riseley Brook and it contains the lowest points in the valley bottom.
- 10.3. The Brook rises in Halsey Wood, Souldrop, passes through the village to Swineshead and then into Pertenhall Brook which feeds the River Kym near Great Staughton. The River Kym joins the River Great Ouse north of St Neots. The catchment area and most of the agricultural land is underlain by impermeable clay in which there is little groundwater flow. When there is heavy rainfall, the clay becomes saturated and surface water runs down into the valley bottom on the High Street. Run off from the fields and the impermeable sloping road surfaces on Lowsdon Lane, Gold Street, Keysoe Road and other smaller side roads enters the brook and the water level rises causing flooding. When this flood water has receded the increased flow from the catchment area causes another rise in brook water level and further flooding.
- 10.4. In the past both residential and commercial properties have been flooded. The High Street becomes impassable for ordinary domestic cars and when careful passage is possible it is closed because 'bow waves' from the vehicles cause flooding of property. The footpath FPA15 (see map in Annex 1) follows higher ground on the eastern side of the High Street and although a muddy route, can be used as a 'Flood Path' to walk around the flood waters.
- 10.5. When there is flooding or high levels of surface water run-off, the levels in the foul water sewers rise with backing up of the water in ground floor toilets of properties at the North End of the Village. At times the water pressure causes the inspection covers to lift allowing sewage to flow into the flood waters along this part of the High Street.
- 10.6. The volunteers of the Riseley Flood Group play a significant role when flood warnings are issued in both monitoring water levels and notifying residents of the water situation. If flooding occurs, they can deploy additional measures to help to protect property and ensure safety of residents.
- 10.7. Water level monitoring stations on the Brook at the road to Sharnbrook and next to Bridge House provide live information. BBC has provided the opportunity for owners to develop flood resilience measures for their properties.
- 10.8. In view of the topography, all future developments will require a flood risk assessment and the suitability of conventional SuDS will need to be explored at a site level and, where suitable, these measures must be incorporated in the development.

- 10.9. Proposals will be required to comply with the relevant up to date guidance from competent authorities including the Environment Agency and Anglian Water Authority. Policies in the BBC Local Plan 2030 (Reference 4) and the NPPF (Reference 3) are also important particularly with regard to the sequential test, climate change and conserving watercourses.

Policy F1: Flood Risk***Development proposals shall;***

- ***Be designed and constructed so that the overall level of flood risk from all sources within the village will not be increased.***
- ***Provide appropriate and effective surface water drainage demonstrating compliance with existing guidelines including use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) to ensure no net increase in run off. The location of SuDS within multifunctional green infrastructure is recommended.***
- ***Make suitable arrangements for the future maintenance of flood alleviation measures.***
- ***Include separate provision for surface water so that it cannot drain into the sewage system.***

11. Heritage

- 11.1. Riseley Parish is rich in heritage assets. The Parish has two Conservation Areas – Riseley North Conservation Area and Riseley Conservation Area, both designated in 1985 and revised in 2003. (Reference 24).
- 11.2. The former covers the northern end of the village while the latter covers a large area of the village centre along High Street as well as sections of Gold Street and Church Lane. There is a total of 61 listed buildings and structures, all of which are Grade-II listed except All Saints Church which is Grade-I listed. There is also a Scheduled Monument at Hall Close moated site, fishponds, trackway, field system and dovecote. (See Annex 2.)
- 11.3. During consultation in September 2021 (Reference 13), 90.3% of respondents agreed that the historic character and heritage assets of the Parish should be preserved and enhanced.
- 11.4. Designated heritage assets are protected through the paragraphs 192-199 of the NPPF (Reference 3) and designated and non-designated heritage assets/conservation areas are protected through Policy 41S of the BBC Local Plan 2030 (Reference 4).

Policy HE1: Conservation Areas and their settings

Development in the Conservation Areas and their settings shall achieve high quality design, set in a clear context in terms of materials, scale, setting and layout. The following criteria apply:

- ***The contrast of spaciousness of the green spaces with the intimacy of the rows of buildings set on the road frontage will be retained; development that would fill in historic gaps will be resisted.***
- ***Development shall be of an appropriate scale and mass for the immediate area and take into account the potential views of the new development from both within and outside the village.***
- ***Use of locally distinctive details, (materials, openings/access and boundary treatments) will be required.***

Applicants must explain in a Design and Access Statement and/or Heritage Statement how the proposal will address these criteria.

Local Heritage Assets

- 11.5. It is essential that the location and design of new development has regard to the designated historic buildings and structures of the local area, and their setting, because residents place high value on the historic character and heritage assets in the parish.
- 11.6. However, there are also a number of other features and buildings which have historic value but are not designated. These include bridges, wells, standpipes, buildings made of Riseley Brick and other notable buildings.

- 11.7. The information about non-designated heritage assets at Annex 2 was compiled during the production of this Neighbourhood Plan. The buildings and features identified may not be of sufficient architectural or historic merit to justify listing but are an important part of the character of the Parish. The policy will help to ensure they are retained. The information may change over time as other buildings and structures may be added to the list. Enhancements to the local features may be sought through funding bids to support their management.

Policy HE2: Protecting and enhancing local heritage assets

All development proposals affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets (including ~~but not limited to~~ those identified in Annex 2) shall take into account the significance of affected assets, as well as the contribution made by the setting. Development shall take into account local styles, materials and architectural detailing which contributes to local distinctiveness.

The total loss of, or substantial harm to, a designated heritage asset will be resisted unless substantial public benefits can be demonstrated. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Archaeology

- 11.8. The NPPF (Reference 3) identifies the historic environment as a Core Planning Principle. Prehistoric evidence of settlement in Riseley comes from two main sources: artefacts, and cropmarks showing disturbances in the soil which indicate the presence of ditches. For example, a cropmark north of Galsey Wood on Ministry of Defence land shows rectangular enclosures which may be either Iron Age or Romano-British in date. Riseley has yielded a number of finds from the Romano-British period, mainly coins.
- 11.9. A number of archaeological finds and crop marks are recorded by Historic England (Reference 25).
- 11.10. From 2014 to 2017 a total of 39 one square metre archaeological test pits were excavated as part of the Independent Learning Archaeology Field School run by Access Cambridge Archaeology in conjunction with Riseley Historical Society. (Reference 26). Pottery shards dating from the early Anglo-Saxon period provided the earliest evidence for activity in the village from one test pit. Abundant pottery recovered from most of the test pits provided evidence for a thriving community during mediaeval times. Large quantities of late mediaeval pottery were also recovered indicating a thriving industry in the manufacture of domestic pottery. Among the items recovered was a merchant's trading token from Nuremberg, suggesting pottery was being traded from Riseley to destinations in Europe.
- ~~11.11. It has been demonstrated that there is a rich archaeological history in Riseley. This policy will ensure that development takes account of archaeological considerations.~~
- 11.11 It has been demonstrated that there is a rich archaeological history in Riseley. Any new developments should take account of this.

Policy HE3: Protecting and enhancing archaeological sites

Development proposals should demonstrate that they have considered the potential impact on above and below ground archaeology and identify mitigation strategies to ensure that evidence of past environments is not lost.

12. Housing

- 12.1. BBC do not allocate housing for Riseley in their Local Plan 2030. BBC Policy 4S does not list Riseley as one of the settlements that should allocate houses through the Neighbourhood Plan. Accordingly, there is no requirement for the Neighbourhood Plan to allocate sites for housing. Whilst this option has been explored during the neighbourhood planning process by producing technical reports and holding public consultations in October 2018 and September 2021, the Parish Council has taken the decision not to allocate sites for housing (Reference 27). No site was considered ideal for development from the September 2021 consultation and allocation of sites had become a divisive and contentious issue in the village.

Population and demographics

- 12.2. In 2011 (latest census information available – see Reference 28, Riseley Parish Profile 2013) in the parish of Riseley there were 520 households containing 1286 residents. Compared to 2001, this represents an increase of around 7% in terms of households (from 486) and also a small increase of 2% in terms of residents (from 1264). Figures provided by Riseley Parish Council show the number of households in 2019 to be around 560, an increase of around 8% in the number of households since the 2011 census. At the time of writing the 2021 census data are not available.
- 12.3. The age profile in 2011 (compared to 2001, and then to Bedford Borough as a whole in 2011) is shown below.

Age	% Riseley 2011	% Riseley 2001	% Bedford Borough 2011
0 – 4	4.0	4.4	6.3
5-15	15.2	16.7	14.3
16-17	2.6	3.3	2.6
18-64	58.7	60.0	61.7
65-84	17.0	12.5	13.1
85+	2.4	3.0	1.8

- 12.4. The age demographics has got slightly older in Riseley over the 10 years between 2001 and 2011. The proportion of those aged 65+ has risen from 15.5% in 2001 to 19.4% in 2011. The age profile is also older than that of Bedford Borough as a whole.
- 12.5. There are higher levels of households with dependent and non-dependent children and also households where occupants are aged over 65 years when compared to Bedford Borough as a whole.

Household Type	% Riseley	% Beds Borough
1 person – pensioner	10.0	11.9
1 person – other	11.0	16.9
Couple + dependent children	22.3	20.9
Couple + non-dependent children	32.9	23.5
Lone parent + dependent children	5.6	7.6

Lone parent + non-dependent children	3.1	3.4
All aged 65 and over	11.3	8.2
Other	3.8	7.5

- 12.6. The majority of households are owner occupiers in Riseley (42% owned outright, 37% with a loan). The levels of shared ownership properties in the parish is below the average figure for Bedford Borough. Levels of both social and private rented properties were much lower than the Bedford Borough averages.
- 12.7. Dwelling Types: There are significantly more detached properties, with correspondingly fewer semi-detached, terraced houses and flats in Riseley compared to Bedford Borough averages.

House Type	% Riseley	% Beds Borough
Detached house	57.7	27.4
Semi-detached house	26.3	32.2
Terraced house	15.1	21.9
Flat	0.9	17.6
Caravan/other temp. accommodation	0.0	0.9

Housing Affordability

- 12.8. The Housing Needs Survey for the Parish was carried out by Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity in 2019 and the following information refers to the latest available information at that time (Reference 29). Such a survey provides a 'snapshot' of the housing market and needs.
- 12.9. 169 responses were received to the questionnaire, around a 30% response rate. The majority of residents of Riseley who responded to the questionnaire agreed that there will be a need for new affordable housing in the Parish: 86% said that they would support a small development of up to 12 affordable homes specifically for people with a local connection to the Parish. 40 respondents indicated that their current home was not suitable for their future housing needs, including 20 who were considering affordable rent, shared ownership or a starter home initiative and were not currently owner occupiers.
- 12.10. According to the Department for communities and Local Government guidance at that time (Reference 30), in order to purchase an average 3-bedroom semidetached home at £240,000 in 2019 as a first-time buyer, a single earner household would need an annual gross income of over £68,500 and dual-income household would need over £82,750. It should be noted that the median annual full-time wage in the UK stood at £28,200 in April 2016.
- 12.11. According to the same guidance, "A household can be considered able to afford market house renting in cases where the rent payable was up to 25% of their gross household income." In order for a household to be able to rent the only property available in Riseley in the summer of 2019 (a 2-bedroom cottage at £700pcm), a household's gross income therefore needed to be over £33,600.

- 12.12. Another major barrier to entry to the property market for first-time buyers is the high deposit needed for a competitive mortgage rate. The average loan to value for first-time buyers nationally in October 2017 was 84.7%, meaning that the average deposit was 15.3%.
- 12.13. Phase 2 of the government's Help to Buy scheme facilitated a market in mortgages for first-time buyers at up to 95% loan to value. These mortgages are generally offered at higher rates of interest than for buyers with larger deposits. (However, the government has recently announced that Help to Buy will be discontinued.)
- 12.14. At 95% loan to value, a first-time buyer household in order to purchase the cheapest property available on the market in the parish in 2019 (3-bedroom semi-detached house) at £240,000, would require a deposit of around £12,000. At the average of 84.7% loan to value, a deposit of over £36,700 would be required.
- 12.15. Zoopla (Reference 31) shows that in the last 5 years, 72 properties in Riseley have sold for an average price of £353,800 with the least expensive sold in 2021 for £184,000 (a 3-bed listed building needing extensive refurbishment) and the most expensive, a 4 bedroom detached house for £700,000.
- 12.16. Based on data supplied by respondents, up to 20 households with a local connection would be likely to qualify for affordable housing whether for rent, shared ownership or under a starter homes initiative. However, it must be recognized that this was a snapshot of current, self-assessed need: some respondents may withdraw, move, or be housed by other means during the planning and development of any future scheme.
- The HNS 2019 recommendation is to meet around 50% of the need identified over the next 5 years, which would be around 10 units. Any mix and tenure for future housing development in Riseley would need to reflect the most up to date Housing Needs Survey or successor policies.
- 12.17. BBC are aware of affordability issues in the rural areas of Bedfordshire and the Local Plan requires the provision of 30% affordable homes on sites of more than 10 houses (Policy 58S) and Policy 67 may allow 'rural exceptions schemes' where housing for local people can be provided at a lower cost.

Housing Provision and Mix

- 12.18. Information from the 2011 census shows that nearly 60% of the dwellings were detached, 26% semi-detached and only 15% terraced. This shows that the majority of properties in the Parish are larger family homes, backed up by the 63% figure for family households whilst only 21% were one-person households.
- 12.19. Analysis of the responses considered in the HNS (Reference 29) suggests that there is a need for both affordable and market housing if Riseley is to meet the identified current and future needs of existing residents wishing to stay in the Parish. The need identified for market housing is split between 2- and 3-bedroom properties, mainly bungalows or accessible homes but with a smaller demand for houses. However, this perceived need for bungalows should be set in context. The English Housing Survey Housing Stock Report 2008 (Reference 32) reported that 9.4% of all

dwellings were bungalows. By 2019, the percentage of bungalows had reduced to 8.2% (Reference 33). There are currently 88 bungalows in Riseley. Taking the number of dwellings in Riseley as 559 (Bedford Borough Council, 2022: personal communication), then the percentage of bungalows is 16%, which is approximately twice the national average.

12.20. Whilst there were no bungalows or retirement properties available for sale on the open market in the summer of 2019 when the HNS was being conducted, that situation was a snapshot at that time. Since 2019, 13 bungalows have been sold. These are of different sizes: 3 x 4-bedroom, 5 x 3-bedroom and 5 x 2-bedroom. In March 2020, planning permission was granted for 7 bungalows to be built on the site of the Old Lower School in Church Lane. Construction of the bungalows has started.

12.21. There appears to be a relative shortage of smaller properties for sale in Riseley. The relative scarcity of smaller properties is corroborated by the percentage of properties in the lower Council Tax bands:

Council Tax Band	Number of properties	Percentage (to 1 decimal place)
A	6	1.1
B	70	12.5
C	133	23.8
D	108	19.3
E	122	21.8
F	70	12.5
G	49	8.8
H	1	0.2
	Total = 559	100

12.22. The overall conclusion is that whilst there is a need for both market housing and for affordable housing, both of these sectors need to provide affordable properties in the widest meaning of the term. This would enable younger people and first-time buyers to live in Riseley to help build the community of the future.

Policy H1: Housing mix

In new residential developments of 5 dwellings or more, there should be a varied mix of house types and sizes which should include:

- *More than 50% of smaller dwellings (one to three bedrooms)*
- *Homes suitable for less mobile people including bungalows*
- ~~*50% of new dwellings should be affordable homes*~~

13. Community Facilities

- 13.1. The NPPF (Reference 3) and BBC Local Plan 2030 (Reference 4) recognize it is important that these facilities are situated within local communities so that they are accessible, help to reduce the need to travel and provide opportunities for people to participate in activities within their own community.
- 13.2. The Parish has limited facilities and does not have medical provision or a permanent post office. The existing facilities include, but are not limited to:
- All Saint's Church –with regular services and groups for all ages
 - Londis Stores – a convenient and well-stocked shop
 - Fox & Hounds – Traditional English village pub serving food.
 - HP Motors –MOT's, service, tyres, and car valets
 - Playing Fields – large village sports field with cricket and football pitches as well as a children's play area
 - Riseley Primary School –Church of England voluntary aided School with reception class and Nursery/Foundation Stage.
 - Sporting Targets –Clay Shooting and Corporate Entertainment Complex
 - Sackville Flying Club
 - The Giddy Goat Coffee Shop – Providing locally roasted coffee, cake, breakfast and lunch.
 - Village Hall – A multi-functional hall and lounge with a kitchen, bar and changing rooms
- 13.3. The policy is intended to retain the current facilities and services as far as possible. For the facilities listed in Policy CF1, proposals which result in the loss or permanent change of use of Classes E (including retail, offices, cafes) and F2 (Local community uses) to other uses will only be supported where the applicant has demonstrated that there is no reasonable prospect of the site or premises being used for ongoing retail or community uses. The applicant will need to put forward evidence that the existing use is no longer commercially viable and prove that a genuine attempt has been made to market the enterprise as a going concern for at least a year.
- 13.4. New facilities and improvements to existing facilities will be encouraged and supported. For example, 63% of respondents in the public consultation September 2021 (Reference 13) indicated their support for a new Community centre. There is an established charity – Riseley Children's Centre and Community Hub, Registered charity 1174707 – that could provide a focus for development of a "community centre" if more active support can be won from the community.

Policy CF1: Community facilities

The following community facilities shall be retained and planning applications which result in either the loss of, or significant harm to them will be resisted:

- ***The Village Hall***
- ***The shop (currently Londis)***
- ***Fox and Hounds Public House***
- ***The Giddy Goat Café***
- ~~***HP Motors garage***~~
- ***All Saints Church***
- ~~***Brook House Residential Care Home***~~

If it can be clearly demonstrated that the facilities continued use is no longer viable, and evidence that the facility has been actively marketed, commensurate with its use at an open market value for a period of at least 12 months, other uses may be supported.

Proposals to improve the viability of a community facility by way of the extension or partial replacement or redevelopment of buildings, structures and land, will be supported, provided the design of the scheme respects the village character in general, and the resulting increase in use is appropriate in design terms and will not have negative impact on the amenities of adjoining residential properties.

The provision of new community facilities will be encouraged and when sufficient support is demonstrated, could become a community project.

Open Space and Recreation

- 13.5. Health and wellbeing is a theme running through the NPPF (Reference 3) and the BBC Local Plan 2030 (Reference 4), with planning recognised as having a role in creating healthy, inclusive communities and facilitating social interaction. Open spaces and formal and informal recreation play a huge part in the social cohesion in a small village such as Riseley, providing opportunities for people to meet through walking and making use of the recreational facilities.
- 13.6. As well as the formal recreation facilities at the playing field next to the Village Hall, there is a wealth of informal recreation such as the extensive network of footpaths and bridleways throughout the Parish. Some of the green spaces also add to the enjoyment by the residents simply by providing visual breaks in the built-up elements of the village, which contributes to the rural character of the village.
- 13.7. Riseley has several green spaces, both privately and publicly owned, which play a role in the general character of the village as well as benefiting the general populace. It is a key feature of the village that a number of the green spaces are linked by footpaths enabling movement within the village away from roads. This pedestrian connectivity is an asset to the community.
- 13.8. There are seven areas designated as Village Open Spaces in the BBC Allocations and Designation Local Plan 2013 and given protection through Policy AD40 which states '*Development will not be permitted on land designated as a village open space or view unless it can be demonstrated that*

the reasons for designation are not compromised or that other material considerations outweigh the need to retain the Village Open Space or View undeveloped.'

(see Local Plan Policies Map Inset 28 Riseley in Annex 4.) Six of these areas are Open Spaces and one is a View. These areas provide breaks between dwellings often with views to the surrounding countryside and so provides transition from the built-up area to the countryside. The locations and attributes of the Village Open Spaces are shown in the table below and on the Map at Annex 4 .

Village Open Spaces – Location and Attributes

Area	Location	Attributes
A	Bottom of Keysoe Road, opposite the village shop.	An area of historic significance – site of the now-demolished Baptist Chapel with several gravestones at the south-eastern end of the site. The village sign is located there along with a Parish Council noticeboard. The site has been used for occasional village sales.
B	Church Lane	The area is agricultural land owned by St Albans Diocese that forms a buffer between the housing of Kings Close and The Old Vicarage next to the Church. It provides views to the open countryside and adds to the tranquillity of the setting of the Church.
C	The Orchard, Church Lane	This field, known as Corn Close, is between the new vicarage and the Church. It belongs to All Saints Riseley Parochial Church Council. It is the site of the village orchard which has around 180 apple trees and is notable for over 1,000 Common Spotted orchids.
D	Field House and the old Lower School playing field	Part of the area is privately owned, with Field House in the middle which is accessed from the High Street, and the old Lower School playing field accessed from Church Lane. The area contributes to the green area in the centre of the village.
E	Field next to the old Five Bells pub.	This View, in private ownership, provides an uninterrupted sight line into open countryside and to the higher ground to the south-east of the village. It also provides a break among the frontages of dwellings along the High Street.
F	Field off High Street, Bottom End.	This field, in private ownership, provides a break between the frontages of dwellings in Bottom End and contributes to its rural feel. It also contributes to the setting of three listed buildings.
G	Field off High Street, Bottom End	This field, in private ownership, provides a break between the frontages of dwellings in Bottom End and contributes to its rural feel. It also contributes to the setting of two listed buildings, one of which, 135 High Street, is probably the oldest house in North Bedfordshire.

- 13.9. In addition, there are several incidental green spaces which add character to the village. These include the Washbrook which is common land (BBC reference CL39) and The Pound at the top end of the High Street. There are areas of grass verge, e.g. the entrance splays to College Drive and Maple Gardens, the verge opposite the old Five Bells pub, the entrance to Paulsons Close, and the grass verge at the top of Gold Street with an old well.

- 13.10. New local open space and recreation facilities will be encouraged and supported as and when opportunities emerge. Of the respondents to the consultation in September 2021 (Reference 13) that wanted additional outdoor sports facilities, access to tennis courts received the highest number of requests, while respondents to the question of play equipment requested more/updated climbing equipment or skateboard facilities.

Policy CF2: Open Spaces and Recreation

Existing designated open spaces as shown on the Policies Map (Annex 5) will be protected from development.

Proposals which would reduce the quality or quantity of recreational facilities will only be ~~permitted~~ supported where the existing facilities are re-provided to a better quality or quantity in an appropriate location.

The provision of new recreational facilities and spaces will be encouraged and supported. Priority should be given to the equipment and facilities preferred by residents in the consultation, particularly those for children and those that promote activity and well-being.

Local Green Spaces

- 13.11. The designation of Local Green Space (LGS) gives a very high level of protection to such open spaces. In the NPPF (Reference 3) it is stated that in Neighbourhood Plans, local communities can identify green areas of particular importance to them for special protection and to rule out new development, other than in “very special circumstances”. Paragraph 100 of the NPPF stipulates that the LGS designation should only be used where the green space is:
- a) In reasonably close proximity to the community it serves,
 - b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value, tranquillity, or richness of its wildlife; and
 - c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.
- 13.12. There are currently two areas of green space designated as LGS in the BBC Local Plan 2030 (Reference 4): the allotments on Ross Meadow and the playing field adjacent to the Village Hall on Gold Street. Both of these areas are of great significance to the village. The playing field has a football pitch, a cricket square and practice nets, and children’s play equipment at the north-western end. For many years a village fete was held on the field in May. However, this has now been replaced by the village show which is held in September.
- 13.13. Ross Meadow has allotments, a Women's Institute garden containing a Millennium Time Capsule, and a grass area with seating, and the village beacon. As noted previously, the allotments are designated as LGS but the remaining area of Ross Meadow is Village Open Space. This is an anomaly that needs correcting. Ross Meadow is centrally located in the village and provides a

green connection from Church Lane to the High Street. A succinct description of the history of Ross Meadow is provided in “Riseley – Our Village”, 2nd Edition, 2021 (Reference 11) and is reproduced below:

“For many years this two-acre plot was owned by the Ross family from Thurleigh and rented out for a variety of uses— keeping chickens, pasture for horses and market gardening. At one time the meadow was filled with allotments, where villagers grew vegetables, fruit and flowers. Demand for the allotments dwindled and the area became untidy and under-used. In 1995, the Parish Council purchased the land for the use of villagers, ensuring that it was not used for housing development. With the help of a grant and a lot of hard work from a team of volunteers, ably led by Sheila and Tim Copping, the area has been turned into an attractive pocket park. There are seats among the trees, shrubs and flowers so that villagers can stroll or sit to enjoy the plants and the wildlife. Ross Meadow seemed to the Women's Institute to be the most appropriate place to bury their Millennium Time Capsule.”

- 13.14. Previously, representation was made to BBC in 2019 for all of Ross Meadow to be designated as LGS. Two public consultations in Riseley have demonstrated that the community values green space within the built-up area.
- 13.15. When judged against the NPPF criteria, all are satisfied in that:
- a) Ross Meadow is located centrally within the village and is clearly within close proximity of the community it serves.
 - b) Ross Meadow is special to the community since it has allotments, the WI garden, seating and the village beacon which is lit to celebrate national ceremonial occasions. The area is tranquil and provides a quiet area for walking or meeting friends. It contributes to the wellbeing of the community.
 - c) Ross Meadow is about 0.8Ha (2 acres) in area and so it is not an extensive tract of land. It is local in character and provides a view of the tower of All Saints Church located at the end of Church Lane.
- 13.16. For the above reasons, all of Ross Meadow is hereby designated in this Neighbourhood Plan as LGS (see map in Annex 5).

Policy CF3: Local Green Spaces

The following areas are designated as Local Green Spaces as shown on the Policies Map (Annex 5):

- ***Ross Meadow, including the allotments***
- ***The playing field adjacent to the Village Hall (allocated as LGS in the Local Plan 2030)***

Inappropriate Development will be resisted in the Local Green Spaces, other than in very special circumstances, to protect their special character and contribution to the Parish.

14. Traffic and transport

- 14.1. As with many other rural communities, residents of the Parish are very dependent on cars for their access to services, facilities, work and schooling. In the 2011 census, over 61% of households had 2 cars or more. When asked in the Riseley Neighbourhood Plan Transport Survey (Reference 34) where respondents travelled to in an average month, the top answer was supermarkets, followed by Bedford and Rushden Lakes (retail and leisure facilities) and 76% of respondents used their car every day or most days.

Public Transport

- 14.2. Riseley is very poorly served by public transport and residents are dependent on car travel for work, shopping, social and other activities. (Transport Survey; Reference 34).
- 14.3. The lack of public transport particularly impacts teenagers and young adults, the elderly, disabled and those on low incomes. Residents who do not have a car or can no longer drive are reliant on family or friends for transport.
- 14.4. The majority of residents said that they would use public transport if there were regular, reliable cost-effective services that ran into the evening.
- 14.5. **Rail** - There are main line railway stations at Bedford and St Neots. **Bus**- there is a limited daytime service in the village (Mon-Sat) operated by Grant Palmer to Bedford (Reference 35). It has a journey time that is substantially longer than driving and is not considered overly reliable. The Villager minibus (volunteer supported) runs services to: Sainsbury's (Bedford, Clapham Road), Rushden Waitrose/Rushden Lakes, and Brampton, Huntingdon and St. Ives (Reference 36).

Traffic/Road Safety

- 14.6. The network of local roads and public rights of way are extensively used by walkers, cyclists and horse riders. The increase in traffic and the high speed of some vehicles is a concern, particularly on High Street which is heavily used by pedestrians, particularly schoolchildren at school times. The top answers given by respondents of the Transport Questionnaire (Reference 34) relating to traffic concerns were speeding, road maintenance, parking, bottlenecks at peak times, and safety of pedestrians.
- 14.7. All developments which will increase traffic are recommended to be accompanied by a Transport Statement or Assessment and should include the following matters:
- Road Safety and Parking, including the avoidance of congestion;
 - A local focus on providing pedestrian and cycle links between new housing and local facilities;
 - Developers should identify the realistic level of traffic their development will generate taking into account the outcomes of Riseley Traffic Survey.
 - Development should not add to existing traffic congestion but should strive to reduce it.
 - Public transport should be considered with new developments with a recommendation that services are increased to accommodate the increase in residents. (See Non Policy Action 1).

- 14.8. As part of the underlying approach to achieving sustainable development in the Neighbourhood Plan any development should encourage walking, cycling, and the use of public transport. It is important that new development complements and, where possible, improves provision with a focus on providing safe access to the school.

Provision for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders

- 14.9. There is a comprehensive and well-used Public Rights of Way network running both through the village and the surrounding countryside (See Annex 1).
- 14.10. A partnership approach between the Parish Council, BBC and developers will be required to improve highway safety and minimize conflicts between road traffic, cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders. It is intended to support new ways of managing the traffic throughout the Parish by promoting pedestrian and cyclist safety and resident well-being through lower traffic speeds and traffic volumes and by encouraging the use of public rights of ways as an alternative to short car journeys.

Policy TT1: Provision for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders

The rights of way network will be retained and maintained, and new links both within the village and to the wider countryside will be encouraged.

New development should ~~include measures that keep traffic speeds low and~~ improve the provision of pavements and access for pedestrians and cyclists and horse riders. Where they are proposed, new roads, junctions, **and pavements** ~~and traffic management measures~~ should be designed to complement the rural character of the village and reflect local heritage.

Parking

- 14.11. With the demise of a suitable public transport system, the village relies heavily on private vehicles for access to workplaces, retail facilities, for secondary schooling, medical facilities and post office access. Such trips require households to own vehicles, many with multiple vehicles requiring parking space. There is a large number of residents cars in the village, including more larger vehicles. In the 2011 census only 6.5% of households had no cars with 61% having 2 cars or more. The Riseley Transport survey conducted in 2019 (Reference 34) found that each household had an average of 2.35 vehicles which is far higher than the average of 1.40 in the East Midlands, the average of 1.35 in the East of England and the average of 1.24 in England overall (Department for Transport Statistics, National Travel Survey, Table NTS9902, 2020; Reference 37).
- 14.12. In Riseley, non-roadside parking is limited to the Village Hall, the Fox and Hounds, the primary school, and the Giddy Goat.
- 14.13. Concerned residents through the Transport questionnaire, made comments regarding road safety in relation to traffic speeds and raised concerns about inconsiderate parking and current lack of parking provision. There are challenges for parking within the north-eastern end of the village especially during school drop off and pick up times.

- 14.14. On road parking, especially on the narrower roads, at corners and junctions can be a problem for delivery vans and lorries, particularly the waste collection vehicles. Access for emergency vehicles and large agricultural vehicles can also be a problem.
- 14.15. Unfortunately, measures to slow traffic and motorists speed and behaviour cannot be within the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan because behaviour does not directly translate into land use, but the Parish Council will consider how these issues can be addressed separately.
- 14.16. Adherence to BBC's parking standards as a minimum standard (Reference 38) will ensure that new dwellings have sufficient parking spaces. There is no need for specific requirements to be set out in the Neighbourhood Plan. Any parking spaces provided should not increase net water run-off rates.
- 14.17. Electric vehicles are a broadly sustainable mode of travel that is increasing market penetration and Building Regulations require that new houses will be required to provide electric charging points. However, in a village like Riseley, where residents rely on cars to reach local services and shops, provision of charging points for electric cars for the public to use will be encouraged.

Policy TT2: Car Parking

Proposals for new housing developments will provide as a minimum, parking in line with BBC's parking standards and have adequate on-site parking to meet current and future needs, unless alternative and accessible car parking arrangements can be made which do not add to on-street congestion.

Amenity and facility buildings will be encouraged to install electric vehicle charging points where possible.

New development should not result in the loss of publicly accessible off-street car parking. Developments which propose to remove off-road parking spaces will only be supported where alternative provision is made which increases or maintains the number of accessible parking spaces available on or within the immediate vicinity of the site.

Proposals for new development that provide additional off-road car parking spaces, to alleviate parking congestion will be encouraged. Any parking spaces provided should not increase net water run-off rates.

15. Local Employment & Business

Local Businesses

- 15.1. Riseley has limited employment opportunities within the Parish with the majority of employed people working elsewhere. Local businesses include, but are not limited to; Sporting Targets, Brook House Residential Home & Day Centre, Greenthumb Lawn Treatment Services, the Londis shop, the Primary School, Giddy Goat Café, HP motors, the Fox & Hounds, Palmer Sport at Bedford Autodrome on Thurleigh Airfield, Toseland Agricultural Engineering, Tech Cargo, and Oakgate Joinery.
- 15.2. The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate employment sites, but it supports the viability of local businesses and their expansion, where this is proportionate and appropriate in the individual circumstances. The aim is to facilitate economic development within the Parish which is appropriate in scale, supports existing local businesses, and where appropriate brings vacant historic buildings back into beneficial use. However, development must be of a scale and intensity appropriate to its context, must not impact detrimentally on residential amenity, and must have an acceptable impact on the character and scale of the village and its rural hinterland.
- 15.3. Home working is also seen as a means of encouraging business and creating a sustainable community with less commuting and a more sustainable lifestyle, saving individuals the cost of travel and increasing their leisure time. Working from home has become increasingly a semi-permanent or permanent option since the Covid-19 pandemic. In the September 2021 consultation (Reference 13), 41% of respondents work from home and, of those, 81% believed that they would continue to do so. 6% indicated that they may have need of occasional office space in the future and 7% would rent office space to supplement home working. 5% of respondents indicated that they may rent a workshop for practical work if one was available.
- 15.4. Limited extensions to properties and part conversions of existing buildings could provide living/work opportunities and such proposals are to be encouraged.
- 15.5. The provision of good telecommunications is particularly important in rural areas and in supporting the viability and sustainability of rural enterprise and homeworking. 139 consultation respondents indicated that they use broadband for working in Riseley and, of those, 66% found the speed currently adequate. 254 respondents use broadband for domestic use with 76% finding it adequate. 146 respondents use a mobile phone for work with 56% finding the service adequate. 259 respondents use a mobile phone domestically and, of those, 73% find the service adequate.

Policy LEB1: Supporting Local Employment and Businesses

Employment – new businesses that offer employment for local people will be looked upon favourably.

Proposals for the development of new small businesses and for the expansion or diversification of existing businesses, including farm-based operations, will be encouraged, providing that:

- ***it can be demonstrated that there will be no adverse impact from increased traffic, noise, smell, lighting, vibration or other emissions or activities arising from the proposed development;***
- ***it would have an acceptable impact on the character and scale of the village, its rural hinterland and landscape; and***
- ***where relevant, opportunities are taken to secure the re-use of vacant or redundant historic buildings as part of the development.***

Applications for extensions or part change of use of dwellings to enable flexible or home working within the settlement policy area will be supported, subject to there being appropriate parking and that the residential amenity of neighbouring properties is maintained.

In each instance, the provision of effective broadband services will be encouraged and appropriate measures should be incorporated into the design of workplaces.

Likely changes in homeworking, lifestyles and general communication requirements should be taken into account when providing broadband and telecommunication services to ensure they stay relevant and adequate for the foreseeable future.

16. Aspirations

- 16.1. This Neighbourhood Plan focuses on land use and identifies a number of relevant land use policies. However, the neighbourhood planning process also identified a number of issues and concerns raised by residents that are not directly related to land use although they may indirectly relate to use of land in some form. As such, they are not matters that can be addressed directly by the provision of a planning policy in the Riseley Neighbourhood Plan.
- 16.2. These are, however, matters that are important to the residents of the Parish and, as such, the Parish Council will develop a community strategy so that it can schedule actions as part of its endeavour to facilitate and secure local improvements over time on the range of issues and concerns identified during the consultation and evidence gathering processes. A number of Non-Policy Actions, which may result in community projects, are specified in order to capture these issues.
- 16.3. Riseley is poorly served by public transport, especially in the evenings. Consequently, the large majority of residents use private motor vehicles to move from and to the village but many would use conveniently-timed public transport (Reference 34). Increased public transport services especially extending into the evenings would be welcomed.
Non-Policy Action 1: Specific evidence should be gathered by the Parish Council of the need for improved public transport and representations made to BBC and service providers to lobby for increased and more reliable public transport services to Riseley.
- 16.4. The public consultation 2021 (Reference 13) demonstrated that around half of respondents use broadband or a mobile phone for home working or as part of their business. Two thirds were content that the broadband speed was adequate and just over half found the mobile phone coverage adequate. High speed broadband and reliable mobile phone coverage for the whole parish would be welcomed.
Non-Policy Action 2: The Parish Council should explore ways of achieving high speed broadband and improved mobile phone coverage for the whole community with relevant suppliers.
- 16.5. **Traffic calming measures:** Throughout development of the draft plan and during the public consultations, concern has been expressed about traffic speeding through the village, mainly down the High Street. Over the last three years, three parked cars have been hit by moving vehicles causing significant damage. The Parish Council has installed 3 speed indicator signs: one at each entrance to the village on the High Street (during Q1 2022) and one near the shop (3 years ago). Data recorded by these speed indicator signs demonstrate that a significant number of vehicles break the 30mph speed limit, some by a considerable margin.
- 16.6. During the public consultation in September 2021 (Reference 13) respondents were asked to indicate which traffic calming measure they would prefer. The clear preference is for speed cameras either standalone or combined with other measures with 68% of respondents in favour. 19 % favoured just 40mph zones at the entrances to the village prior to the 30mph speed limit zone, while speed humps either standalone or combined with 40mph zones were favoured by only

5% of respondents and 8% did not answer the question. The main objections to speed humps were given as noise, and vibration that can affect the foundations and footings of listed buildings.

- 16.7. These data provide useful information that may inform future decisions on traffic calming measures in the High Street should they be deemed necessary.

17. Implementation and Monitoring

- 17.1. This section outlines the approach to the implementation of the Riseley Neighbourhood Plan, including: working in partnership, funding mechanisms, priority projects and monitoring/review. The approach will be that new development should be supported by the timely delivery of infrastructure, services and facilities necessary to provide a balanced, self-sufficient community.

Working in partnership

- 17.2. Riseley Parish Council is committed to Localism and locally informed influence over planning decisions and it will be the key organisation in the implementation, monitoring and review of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Council will build upon its excellent track record in engaging in planning decisions (reactively through consultation and proactively through promoting the policies of this plan) and by delivering related projects for the local community. However, it is recognised that partnership working is needed for the potential of the plan to be realised. Partnership and joint working will be key elements in the successful implementation of the plan. The main organisations and the roles that they can play are summarised below.
- **BBC**-- Planning Policy, Development Control, Housing Management and Improvement, Economic Development, Open Spaces, Recreation and Community Facilities, Highways and Transport, Education, Landscape and Social Services.
 - **Adjoining Parish Councils** – Assessing impact of cross boundary planning applications.
 - **Environment Agency** The planning, design and delivery of development, taking account of: Flood risk management, Water quality and water resources, Waste management, Land contamination & soil and Environmental permits and other regulations.
 - **Site owners and developers** will need to liaise with the Parish Council as well as the other relevant agencies involved in any development.

Funding and Implementation

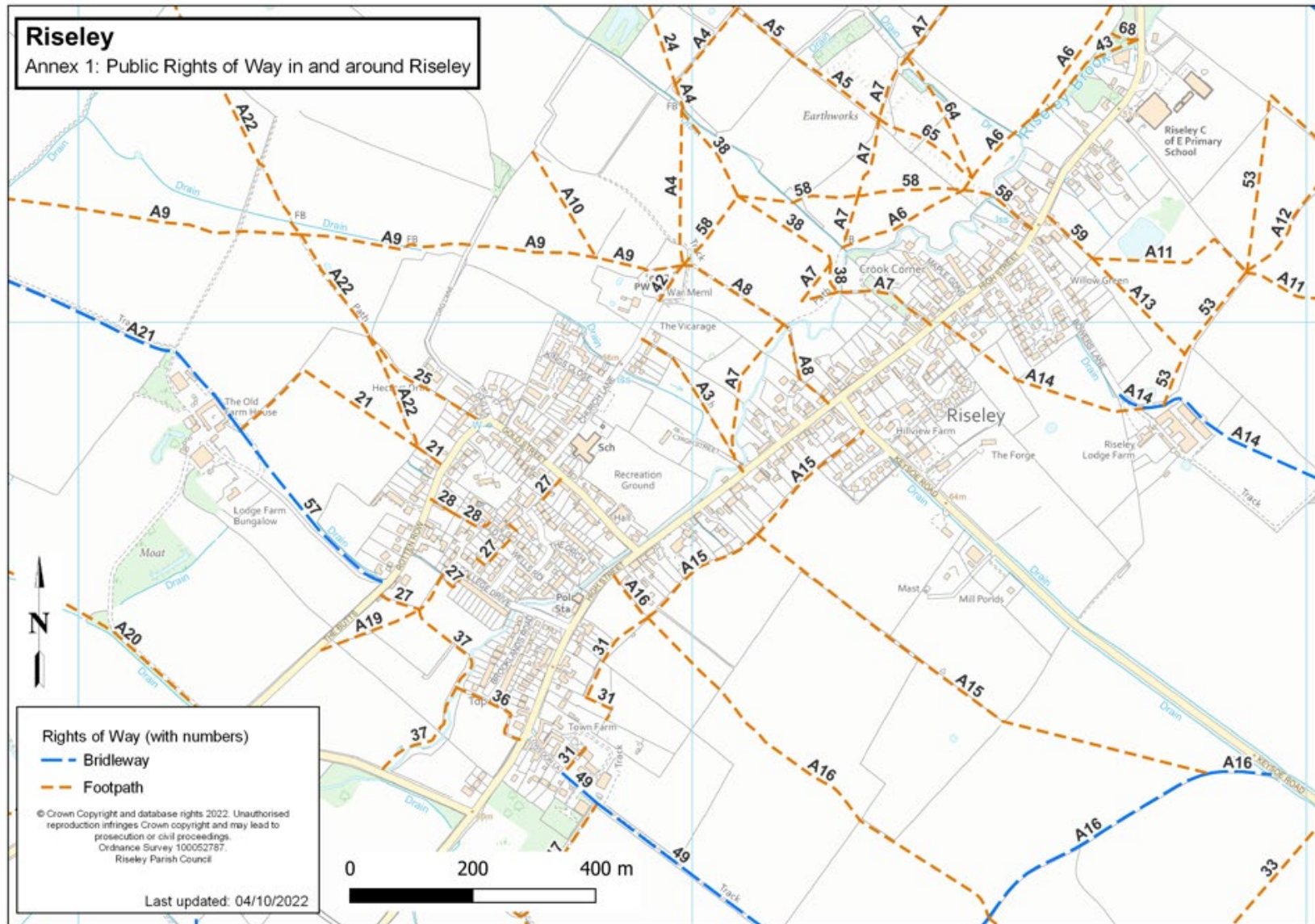
- 17.3. Financial contributions will be sought from developers through Section 106 agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) which provides a legal framework to raise funds to provide the infrastructure needed to cope with new developments.
- 17.4. The Neighbourhood Planning Regulations of the 2011 Localism Act enable areas with a Neighbourhood Plan in place to receive at least 25% of the CIL (25% uncapped, paid to the Parish Council) raised in their area to direct to their own local infrastructure priorities.
- 17.5. In addition, the Parish Council will seek to influence annual and other budget decisions by BBC on housing, open space and recreation, economic development, community facilities and transport, through the Local Transport Plan.
- 17.6. The Parish Council will also work with the appropriate agencies and organisations to develop funding bids to help to achieve Neighbourhood Plan policies and objectives. This might include, but not be limited to: The National Lottery; UK Government programmes; land fill tax credits, EU Funds and Local Enterprise Partnership funding.

- 17.7. The Plan will be used by the Parish Council to:
- guide comments on planning applications,
 - negotiate with landowners and developers to achieve the best possible outcomes from new development,
 - direct financial resources to the village in a structured way,
 - bring together groups or working parties to improve the village environment,
 - lobby local authorities and service providers to support the parishioner's wishes and aspirations.

Monitoring and Review

- 17.8. It is important to check that progress is made towards meeting the objectives and policies of the Plan. The Parish Council will report on the implementation of the Plan at least every 2 years and consider:
- if progress is being made to achieve the vision and the objectives of the Plan,
 - if progress is being made towards the implementation of the policies in the Plan,
 - if financial contributions available to the community arising from development is being targeted towards the identified plans and projects,
 - if the Plan remains based on the most up to date information,
 - if the Plan is being taken into account by BBC when determining planning applications.
- 17.9. It will then conclude whether a review is required. If so, it will secure opinions of residents and stakeholders to update the Plan.

Annex 1: Public Rights of Way



Annex 2. Listed Buildings and Non-Designated Heritage Assets

Listed Buildings in Riseley Parish (Information derived from Historic England)

BOWERS LANE

Granary at Riseley Lodge Farm (North East of house)

Riseley Lodge Farmhouse

CHURCH LANE

1 Red Lion House

14-16

All Saints Church (no number)

The Old Vicarage (no number)

GOLD STREET

8-12

18-22

HIGH STREET

Farriers Barn, bordering road next to Town Farm

Town Farmhouse

16-20

22

24 Ivy House

26

29

35

38 & 40

39 Highbarn House

42 The Old Boot

44 & 46 Cannon Cottage

50 Fox & Hounds Public House

57 Rosebank

58

59 Field House

60

61-67

62

68 & 70

72 Brook House

75 & 77

76 & 78

80 Mistletoe Cottage

82 & 84 The Old Mill Cottage

86

Methodist Chapel (no number)

95

99 The White House

100 Cobblestones

101 Swan Cottage

103

105

107 Royal Oak Public House

110

111 House to rear of former Moravian Chapel

118

122 Dove Cottage Ivy Lodge

124 Maple Cottage

133

135

Outbuilding to number 135

151 Rafters

153 Whitegates

160

161 Low Thatch

162

170

ROTTEN ROW

2

8

14 & 16

15

SWINESHEAD ROAD

Lodge to Melchbourne Park

Scheduled Monument in Riseley Parish (Information derived from Historic England)

Hall Close moated site, fishponds, trackway, field system and dovecote: The monument includes a rectangular moated site with integrated fishponds, an old sunken trackway linking the moat with Riseley village, the headland of a ridge-and-furrow field system to the north of the moat and the foundations of a circular dovecote located at the northern end of the trackway.

Non-designated heritage assets

- Throughout the village many properties are constructed from locally made bricks. Riseley Brickyard operated until the mid-1800s. The bricks were a range of colours often laid in a chequerboard pattern, known today as Flemish Bond.
- The well on the green verge at the corner of Gold Street and Rotten Row is just one example of the many wells that are in the gardens of Riseley cottages.

- Drinking water standpipes are part of the street furniture on the roadsides fronting 81-83, 110 and 170 High Street.
- A characteristic feature of the village is the arched, brick bridges over the brook at Gold Street on the road from Sharnbrook near to the junction with High Street, the access to High Barn House, 39 High Street and to Field House, 59 High Street.
- The village sign and stone beneath it on the grass verge in front of High Barn House, 39 High Street. The sign commemorates the Festival of Britain in 1951. It is said that Katharine of Aragon who was the first wife of Henry VIII sat on this stone whilst waiting for a change of carriage horses as she travelled to Kimbolton Castle.
- A single-track lane leads from Rotten Row to the road to Sharnbrook. It is called the Butts as it is thought to have been used for practise of archery and longbow skills during the reign of Edward III when it was compulsory for young men to practise these skills.
- The non-conformist chapels in Riseley closed leaving two old buildings. The Moravian Chapel at 111 High Street is part of a private property. The Methodist Chapel (86 High Street) was raised to the ground and rebuilt in a similar style to the original. It is a private residence. A third Baptist chapel was demolished for road widening. The only evidence remaining from this chapel are the old gravestones along the top of the green area opposite the Londis Shop. More recently a painted village name sign has been erected on this site.
- The Old Police House (131) High Street is a reminder from the time when the village had a resident Policeman.
- Washbrook is the strip of common land adjacent to 131a High Street which runs from the High Street to the brook.

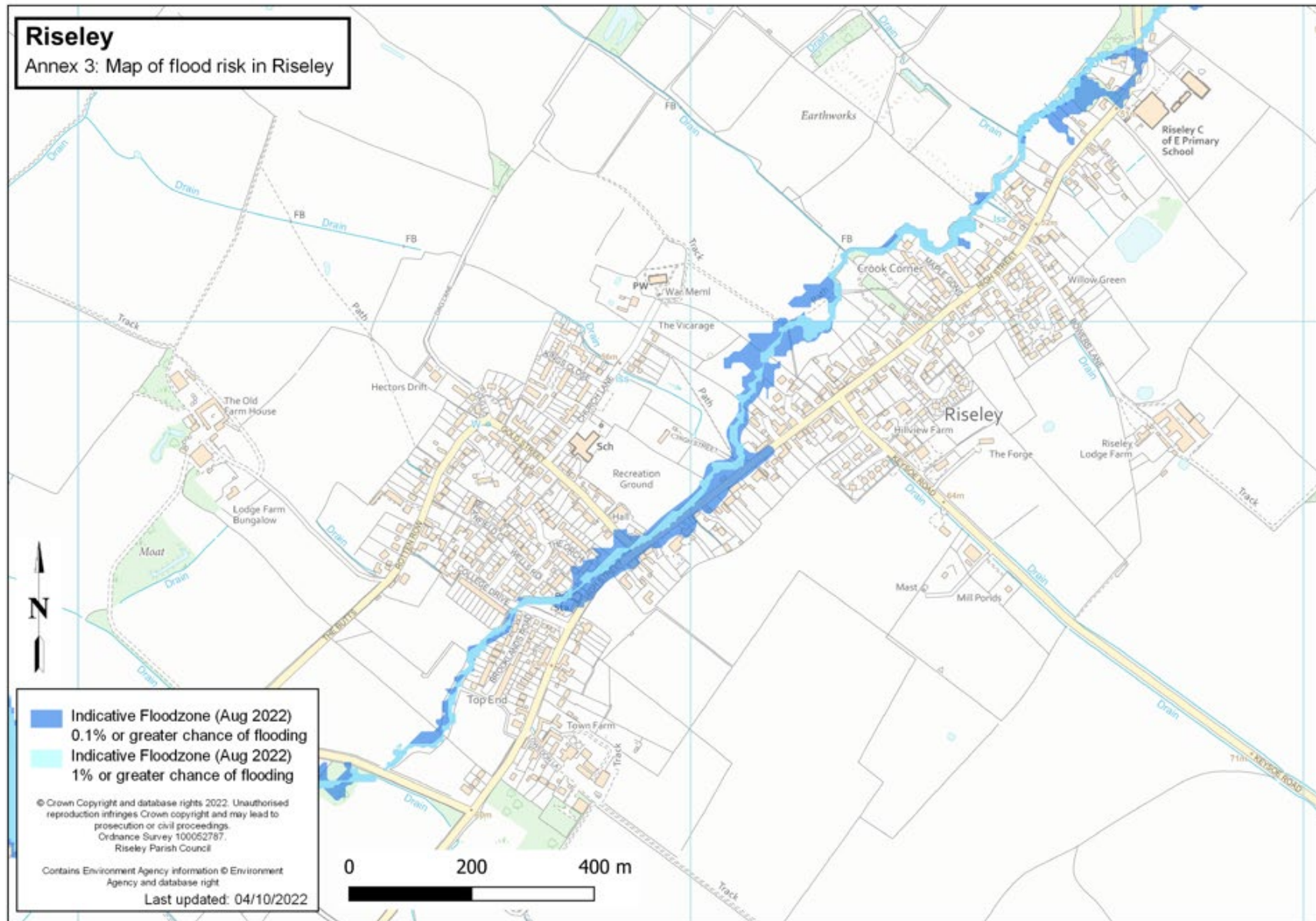
More information about the Heritage of Riseley Village can be found in:

Riseley Our Village, Riseley Historical Society 2000, ISBN 0-9539263-0-3 (Reference 7)

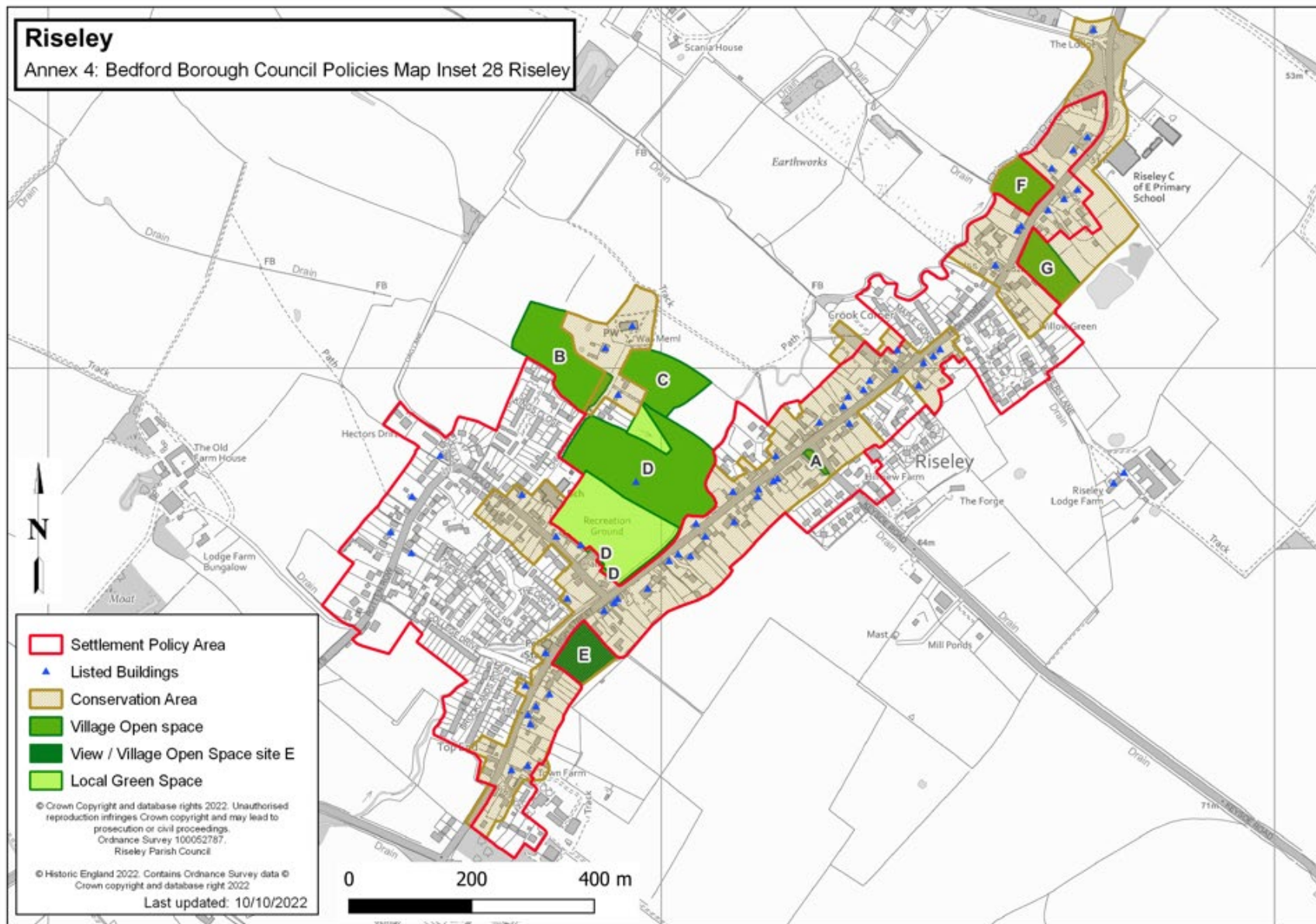
Riseley Our Village in Pictures, Riseley Historical Society 2004, ISBN 0-9539263-1-1 (Reference 9)

Riseley Our Village 2nd Edition, Riseley Historical Society 2021, ISBN 978-0-9539263-3-6 (Reference 11)

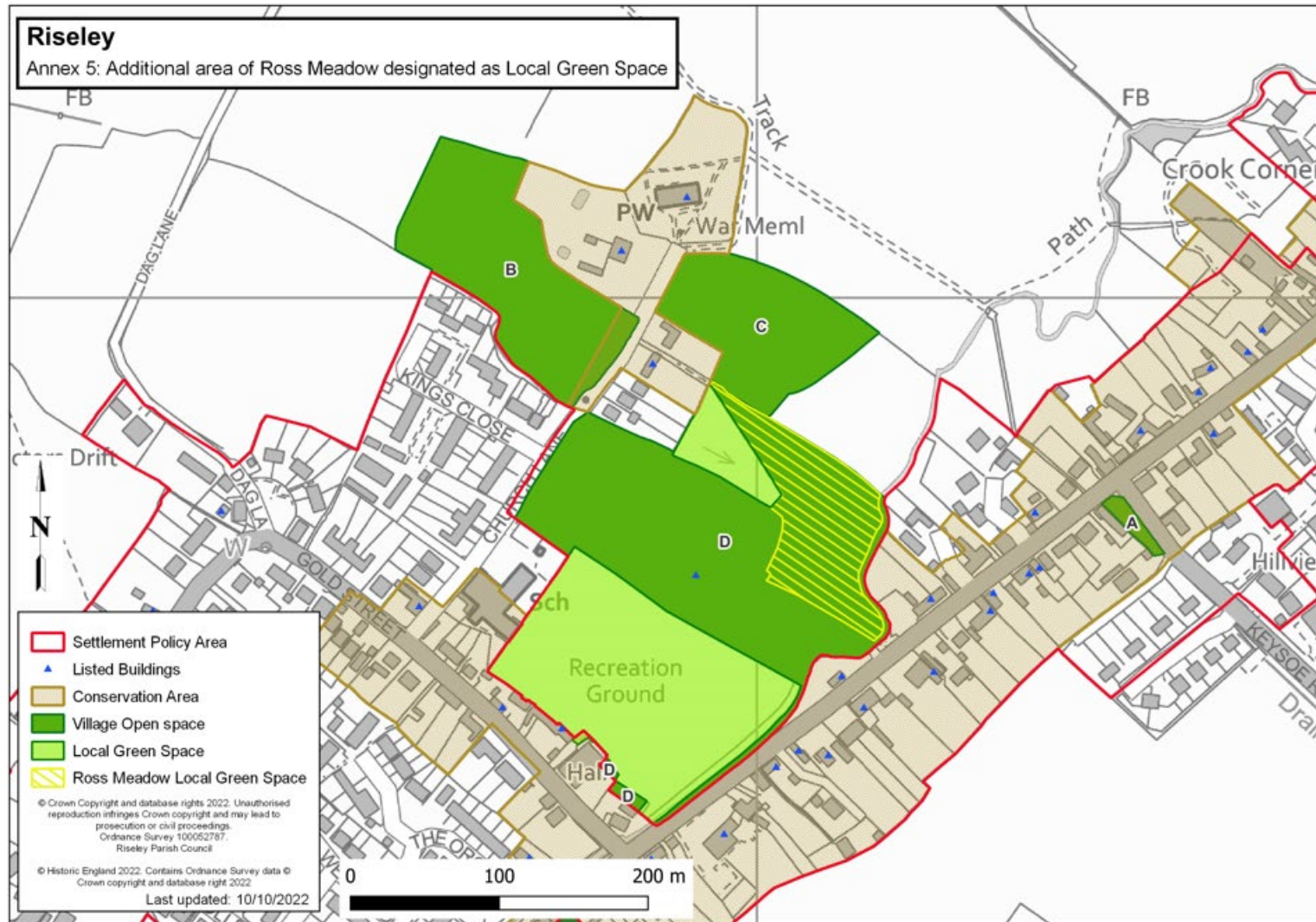
Annex 3: Map of Flood Risk

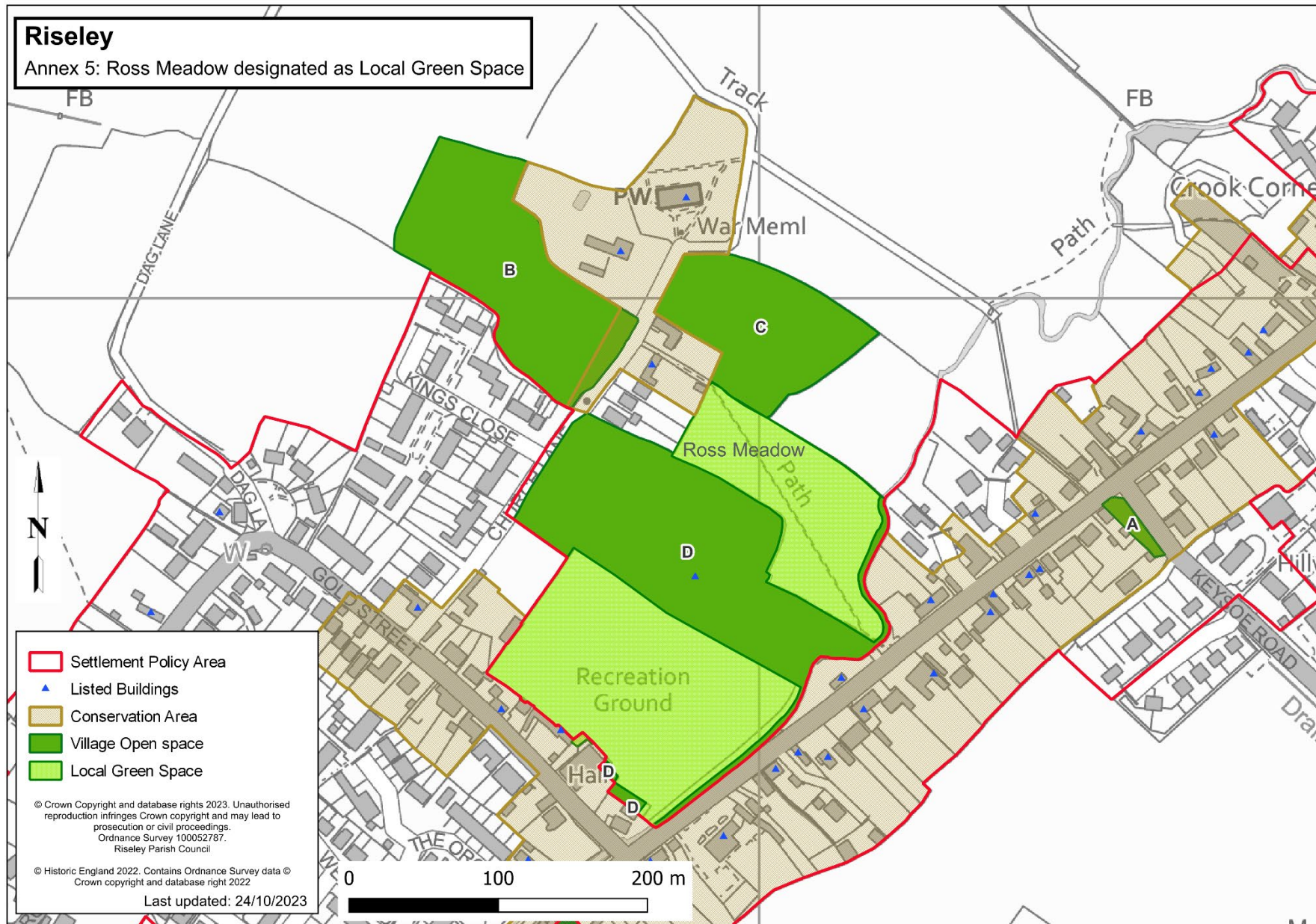


Annex 4: Bedford Borough Council Policies Map



Annex 5: Policies Map: Local Green Space – remove this map and replace with updated map on next page





Annex 6: Table cross referencing aims and policies

Neighbourhood Plan Aim	Policy
1. The rural, linear character of the village will be maintained and enhanced through appropriate small-scale developments and improvements.	RC1: Rural Character LNE1: Protecting the Landscape
2. The historic character and heritage assets of the parish will be preserved and enhanced.	HE1: Conservation Areas and their Settings HE2: Protecting and enhancing local heritage assets HE3: Protecting and Enhancing archaeological sites
3. High quality design will be secured in all new development reflecting the distinctive character of Riseley.	D1: The Design of New Development D2: Sustainable Design of Development
4. The natural environment, including landscape features, biodiversity and green spaces will be enhanced and protected.	LNE1: Protecting the Landscape LNE2: Nature Conservation
5. New housing growth will contribute to a compact and integrated village, meeting the needs of existing and future residents in terms of housing mix and tenure.	H1: Housing Mix
6. The roads in Riseley will be safe and accessible for pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders and motorists. Improvements to the road network to increase safety, reduce the impact of congestion and provide adequate parking will be required alongside new development.	TT1: Provision for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders TT2: Car Parking
7. Existing community facilities will be protected. New facilities or improvements to existing facilities will be encouraged to enhance opportunities for community cohesion.	CF1: Community facilities
8. Formal and informal amenity spaces will be protected and enhanced and Local Green Space designated to protect those spaces of particular community value.	CF2: Open Spaces and Recreation CF3: Local Green Spaces
9. Local businesses, including homeworking and rural businesses will be encouraged and an up-to-date communications network will be supported.	LEB1: Supporting Local Employment and Businesses

Annex 7: Glossary

Words or phrases that are or may be used in the Neighbourhood planning process.

Word or phrase	Abbreviation	Meaning
Adoption		The procedure by which a plan becomes formal council responsibility. The Neighbourhood Planning Regulations also call this stage 'made' for the purposes of a Neighbourhood Plan.
Affordable housing		Housing provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision
Allocation		A piece of land that has had a particular use earmarked via a Neighbourhood Plan or Local Plan. This might be for housing, employment or another use such as open space.
Amenity		A positive element or elements that contribute to the overall character or enjoyment of an area. For example, open land, trees, historic buildings and the interrelationship between them, or less tangible factors such as tranquillity.
Biodiversity		The whole variety of life encompassing variations, including plants and animals.
Biodiversity Net Gain	BNG	Biodiversity Net Gain - or BNG for short - means leaving the natural environment in a better state than before a development or infrastructure project was built. Ensuring this happens via the planning process has now been made law through the Environment Act 2021. Essentially it means measuring a development's impact in biodiversity 'units', using a government metric created in collaboration with a range of stakeholders, reducing those impacts where possible and retaining areas within the development where appropriate, and then offsetting the residual by restoring land elsewhere.
Brownfield		Land that has been previously developed on (excluding agricultural or forestry buildings and residential gardens)
Conservation Area	CA	An area designated under Section 69 of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Building and

Word or phrase	Abbreviation	Meaning
		Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as being of 'special architectural or historical interest' the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance.
Consultation Statement		A document which details when, where and how the public and stakeholders have been consulted, issues that were raised and how they were addressed.
Countryside		Land not within settlement boundaries
Community Infrastructure Levy	CIL	An amount of money payable to the Council on new housing and other development which is used for infrastructure and community facilities and services
Design Code		A document containing a set of design principles for a specific location or site.
Developer Contributions/Planning Obligations/Section 106		Developer contributions, also known as planning obligations, can be secured via a section 106 legal agreement or planning condition attached to a planning permission. They help mitigate any adverse impacts generated by new development on infrastructure and facilities.
Employment Land		Land that is used or is proposed to be used for offices, industry and/or storage and distribution – covered by the B Class in the Use Classes Order
Evidence Base		The information and data gathered by local authorities and other plan makers to inform and support the policy approaches to be set out in a Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan
Examination		For neighbourhood planning, an independent assessment carried out by an examiner to determine whether the plan meets the Basic Conditions
Flood risk		The combination of probability of a particular flood event and its corresponding hazard and is used to refer to the scale of flood effect, combining hazard and probability, upon a particular site. Flood Zones 1-3b describes land with a specific probability of flooding with 1 being the least affected. Development may be restricted by Flood Zones.
General Permitted Development Order	GPDO	A statutory document that allows development (such as small house extensions) to be undertaken without planning permission.

Word or phrase	Abbreviation	Meaning
Greenfield		Land where there has been no previous development.
Green Infrastructure	GI	A network of multi-functional green space and other environmental features, urban and rural, including both established and new sites - which support natural and ecological processes, and are capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.
Habitats Regulation Assessment	HRA	Tests the impacts of a plan or project on nature conservation sites of European importance and is required under EU legislation.
Heritage asset		A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and non-designated heritage assets identified by the local planning authority or Neighbourhood Plan (sometimes called local listing).
Infrastructure		Refers to the fundamental facilities and systems serving an area, including the services and facilities necessary for its residents and economy to function, including transport.
Local Green Space	LGS	Local Green Space designation is a way to provide special protection against development for green areas of particular importance to local communities.
Local Nature Reserve	LNR	A site of importance for wildlife, geology, education or public enjoyment, declared by district, borough and county councils.
Local Plan		The main planning document in an area which sets out what type and how much development will occur across the area for the next 15 years or so. It also provides a suite of policies that help manage development including for design, access and amenity etc.
Local Wildlife Site (some areas County Wildlife Site)	LWS/CWS	Non statutory sites of substantive nature conservation interest determined locally according to national, regional and local biodiversity needs.
National Planning Policy Framework	NPPF	Sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

Word or phrase	Abbreviation	Meaning
National Planning Practice Guidance	NPPG	A web-based resource, provides more detailed guidance on the contents of the NPPF
Neighbourhood Area		This is the area that the Neighbourhood Plan will focus on. For town or parish councils, the designated area is usually the boundary. Sometimes Parishes will combine to form one area.
Neighbourhood Development Plan or Neighbourhood plan	NDP/NP	Will set out the vision for a neighbourhood area and the planning policies for the use and development of land. These policies will be at a local level to support the strategic policies within the emerging Local Plan. Plans should guide development rather than stop it. If adopted, a Neighbourhood Plan will become a statutory plan carrying equal weight with adopted local plan policies
Policy		A concise statement of the principles that a particular kind of development proposal should satisfy in order to obtain planning permission.
Parish Plan		A Parish Plan or community led plan can include planning related issues but they can focus purely on areas other than development. Parish Plans will not have the same legal status in planning terms as a Neighbourhood Plan
Policies Map (s)		Illustrates the spatial extent of the planning policies and designated areas.
Qualifying Body		Either a parish/town council or neighbourhood forum, which can initiate the process of neighbourhood planning.
Referendum		A vote by the eligible population of an electoral area who may decide on a matter of public policy. Neighbourhood Plans are subject to a referendum of the eligible voters within a neighbourhood area. There is a specific question set in Regulations which has a yes or no answer.
Settlement Hierarchy		Many Local Plans set out a hierarchy of settlements according to their population and facilities. Different levels of growth may be attributed to each tier.
Settlement Policy Area	SPA	An area designated in the Local Plan 2030 within which Policy 5S applies, allowing development in principle which complies with other policies in the development plan.

Word or phrase	Abbreviation	Meaning
Site of Special Scientific Interest	SSSI	Designated under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 by Natural England they are a protected area designated as being of special interest by virtue of its flora, fauna, geological or geomorphological features.
Strategic Environmental Assessment	SEA	European requirement assesses the significant environmental impacts of plans and programmes.
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	SFRA	An assessment of the probability of flooding within a particular area.
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment	SHLAA	Assesses the suitability, availability and deliverability of land that have been promoted as sites for housing development
Strategic Housing Market Assessment	SHMA	Assessment of the local housing market, which studies the supply and demand of housing, the need for affordable housing and the affordability of the local housing market
Supplementary Planning Document	SPD	A document which elaborates upon a policy or policies of the Local Plan to provide additional guidance for a particular topic or type of development.
Sustainability Appraisal	SA	An assessment of the environmental, social, and economic impacts of a Local Plan to check that the plan accords with the principles of sustainable development.
Sustainable Development		An approach to development that aims to allow economic growth without damaging the environment of natural resources thereby development which 'meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.'
Sustainable Urban Drainage System	SuDS	An artificial drainage solution which reduces and slows the quantity and rate of surface water run-off from new development, dealing with it as close to the source as possible
Tree Preservation Order	TPO	An order made by a local planning authority to protect a specific tree, a group of trees or woodland. TPOs prevent the felling, lopping, topping, uprooting or other deliberate damage of trees without the permission of the local planning authority.
Use Classes Order	UCO	The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) defines the categories of use of buildings or land for the purposes of

Word or phrase	Abbreviation	Meaning
		planning legislation. In most cases, planning permission must be obtained to change the use of a building or land to another use class
Windfall Site		Sites which have not been identified as available in the Local Plan. They normally comprise previously developed sites that have unexpectedly become available.

Annex 8: References

Chapter	References
Chapter 1 Introduction	<p>Reference 1: Localism Act 2011 https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents/enacted (Accessed 13 October 2022)</p> <p>Reference 2: Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/637/contents/made (Accessed 13 October 2022)</p>
Chapter 2: The Strategic Policy Context	<p>Reference 3: National Planning Policy Framework https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework (Accessed 13 October 2022)</p> <p>Reference 4: Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030 https://www.bedford.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy-its-purpose/local-plan/ (Accessed 13 October 2022)</p> <p>Reference 5: Bedford Borough Council Allocations and Designations, 17 July 2013 https://www.bedford.gov.uk/media/3991/download?inline (Accessed 13 October 2022)</p> <p>Reference 6: Bedford Borough Community Infrastructure Levy https://www.bedford.gov.uk/planning-and-building/community-infrastructure-levy/ (Accessed 13 October 2022)</p>
Chapter 3. Parish Description	<p>Reference 7: Riseley – Our Village 2000, Sue Davies (Ed.), Riseley Historical Society, Newnorth Print Limited, ISBN 0-9539263-0-3</p> <p>Reference 8: Bedford Borough Landscape Character Assessment 2020 https://edrms.bedford.gov.uk/OpenDocument.aspx?id=H1s1ijkK2oPN8wKbNf7JDw%3d%3d&name=Bedford%20LCA%202020.pdf (Accessed 13 October 2022)</p>
Chapter 5. Vision and Objectives	<p>Reference 9: Riseley – Our Village In Pictures 2004, Sue Davies (Ed.), Riseley Historical Society, Newnorth Print Limited, ISBN 0-9539263-1-1</p> <p>Reference 10: Riseley – Our Village. How they served in World War One, 2017, Riseley Historical Society, Russell Press Ltd. ISBN 978-0-9539263-2-9</p> <p>Reference 11: Riseley – Our Village, 2nd Edition 2021, Riseley Historical Society, iprint, ISBN 978-0-9539263-3-6</p>
Chapter 6. Sustainable Development Principles	<p>Reference 12: Design Guidance and Codes – Riseley, AECOM 2022. https://www.riselevillage.co.uk/category/neighbourhood-plan/ (Accessed 14 October 2022)</p>
Chapter 7. Rural Character	<p>Reference 13: Report of the Public Consultation held in September 2021. https://www.riselevillage.co.uk/category/neighbourhood-plan/ (Accessed 13 October 2022)</p>
Chapter 8. Landscape	<p>Reference 14: Bedfordshire Natural Capital Project</p>

<p>and Natural Environment</p>	<p>https://edrms.bedford.gov.uk/OpenDocument.aspx?id=1rkHwuoSPwJQcXryjXzrtg%3d%3d&name=Bedford%20Borough%20natural%20capital%20assessment%20report%20-%20FINAL.pdf (Accessed 13 October 2022)</p> <p>Reference 15: Rebuilding Biodiversity in Bedford Borough, 2009. https://www.bedscape.org.uk/BRMC/newsite/docs/bedslife/rebuild/Rebuilding%20Biodiversity%20in%20Bedford%20Borough.pdf (Accessed 13 October 2022)</p> <p>Reference 16: Biodiversity — Code of practice for planning and development, BS 42020: 2013. https://www.omegawestdocuments.com/media/documents/43/43.35%20BSI%20Biodiveristy%20Code%20of%20Practice.pdf (Accessed 14 October 2022)</p> <p>Reference 17: Environment Act 2021 (Biodiversity Net Gain) https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/30/contents/enacted (Accessed 13 October 2022)</p> <p>Reference 18: Biodiversity Metric http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6049804846366720 (Accessed 13 October 2022)</p>
<p>Chapter 9. High Quality Design</p>	<p>Reference 19: Centre for Sustainable Energy https://www.cse.org.uk/downloads/reports-and-publications/policy/planning/renewables/neighbourhood-planning-in-a-climate-emergency-feb-2020.pdf (Accessed 13 October 2022)</p> <p>Reference 20: Neighbourhood Planning in a Climate Emergency https://www.cse.org.uk/downloads/reports-and-publications/policy/planning/renewables/neighbourhood-planning-in-a-climate-emergency-feb-2020.pdf (Accessed 13 October 2022)</p> <p>Reference 21: Climate Change Act 2008 https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/27/contents (Accessed 13 October 2022)</p> <p>Reference 22: Climate Emergency Declaration 2019 https://data.climateemergency.uk/councils/bedford-borough-council/ (Accessed 13 October 2022)</p>
<p>Chapter 10 Flooding</p>	<p>Reference 23: Update to the SuDS Manual https://www.gov.uk/flood-and-coastal-erosion-risk-management-research-reports/update-to-the-suds-manual (Accessed 13 October 2022)</p>
<p>Chapter 11 Heritage</p>	<p>Reference 24: Bedford Borough Council, Historic Areas and Building, Conservation Areas, 2003 https://www.bedford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/conservation-and-heritage/historic-areas-and-buildings (Accessed 13 October 2022)</p>

	<p>Reference 25: Historic England, Aerial Photo Explorer https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/archive/collections/aerial-photos/ (Accessed 13 October 2022)</p> <p>Reference 26: Archaeological test pit excavations in Riseley, Bedfordshire, 2014-2017. Catherine Collins. Access Cambridge Archaeology. University of Cambridge, 2019. https://accesscambridgearchaeology.wordpress.com/2017/09/ (Accessed 17 October 2022)</p>
<p>Chapter 12 Housing</p>	<p>Reference 27: Riseley Parish Council https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KGb5ZudX7Wc7KCVu3ZDdquCN598mdCtb/view (Accessed 13 October 2022)</p> <p>Reference 28: Riseley Parish Profile 2013 https://www.bbcdevwebfiles.blob.core.windows.net/webfiles/Files/Riseley.pdf (Accessed 13 October 2022)</p> <p>Reference 29: Riseley Housing Needs Survey 2019 https://www.riseleyvillage.co.uk/housing-needs-survey-report-2019/ (Accessed 13 October 2022)</p> <p>Reference 30: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/strategic-housing-market-assessments-practice-guidance (Now superseded) (Accessed 13 October 2022)</p> <p>Reference 31: Zoopla https://www.zoopla.co.uk/house-prices/bedfordshire/riseley/?q=Riseley%2C%20Bedfordshire&search_source=house-prices&numMonths=60&pn=8 (Accessed 14 October 2022)</p> <p>Reference 32: The English Housing Survey Stock Report 2008 https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2008-housing-stock-report (Accessed 14 October 2022)</p> <p>Reference 33: English Housing Survey 2019-2020 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/945013/2019-20_EHS_Headline_Report.pdf (Accessed 14 October 2022)</p>
<p>Chapter 14 Traffic and Transport</p>	<p>Reference 34: Riseley Transport Questionnaire results https://www.riseleyvillage.co.uk/riseley-neighbourhood-plan-transport-survey-results/ (Accessed 14 October 2022)</p> <p>Reference 35: Timetable for Grant Palmer bus service number 28 https://www.grantpalmer.com/media/2591/28-bedford-circular-011121.pdf (Accessed 14 October 2022)</p> <p>Reference 36: Sharnbrook Villager minibuss timetable https://www.sharnbrookvillagerminibus.co.uk/</p>

(Accessed 14 October 2022)

Reference 37: Department for Transport Statistics, National Travel Survey, 2020).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/national-travel-survey-2020>

(Accessed 15 October 2022)

Reference 38: BBC parking standards

<https://www.bedford.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy-its-purpose/other-planning-policy-documents/parking-standards/>

(Accessed 15 October 2022)



BEDFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Bedford Borough Council Risley Neighbourhood Plan POST- EXAMINATION DECISION STATEMENT

Regulation 18 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended)

This document is the decision statement required to be prepared under Regulation 18(2) of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (as amended). It sets out the response of Bedford Borough Council to each of the recommendations contained within the independent examination report of the Riseley Neighbourhood Plan (“the Plan”) by independent examiner Wendy Burden, which was received by the Bedford Borough Council on 31 October 2023.

This decision statement, the independent examiner’s report and the submission version of the Riseley Neighbourhood Plan and supporting documents can be viewed on the [neighbourhood planning pages](#) of Bedford Borough Council’s website.

BACKGROUND

Under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), Bedford Borough Council has a statutory duty to assist communities in the preparation of neighbourhood plans and to take plans through a process of examination and referendum. The Localism Act 2011 (Part 6, Chapter 3) sets out the Local Planning Authority's neighbourhood planning responsibilities.

This statement confirms that the modifications proposed in the examiner's report have been considered and accepted and that subject to making the recommended modifications (and other minor modifications) the Riseley Neighbourhood Plan may now be submitted to referendum.

The Riseley Neighbourhood Plan relates to the area that was designated by Bedford Borough Council as a Neighbourhood Area on 14 March 2018. This area is coterminous with the boundary of the parish of Riseley and is entirely within the Local Planning Authority's area.

Between 21 November 2022 – 16 January 2023, Riseley Parish Council undertook consultation on the draft Plan in accordance with Regulation 14.

Following the submission of the Riseley Neighbourhood Plan to Bedford Borough Council on 19 April 2023, Bedford Borough Council publicised the draft Plan for a six-week period and representations were invited in accordance with Regulation 16. This consultation took place between 2 June to 16 July 2023.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION

Bedford Borough Council appointed Wendy Burden, with the agreement of Riseley Parish Council, to undertake the independent examination of the Riseley Neighbourhood Plan and to prepare a report of the independent examination.

The examiner examined the Plan by way of written representations supported by an unaccompanied site visit of the Neighbourhood Plan Area on 22 August 2023.

The examiner's report was formally received by Bedford Borough Council on 31 October 2023. The report concludes that subject to making the modifications recommended by the examiner, the Plan meets the basic conditions set out in the legislation and should

proceed to referendum. The examiner also recommends that the referendum area should be the same as the designated Neighbourhood Area, which is the same as the administrative boundary for Riseley parish.

Following receipt of the examiner's report, legislation requires that Bedford Borough Council considers each of the modifications recommended, the reasons for them, and decides what action to take. Bedford Borough Council is also required to consider whether to extend the area to be covered by the referendum.

DECISION AND REASONS

Having considered each of the recommendations made in the examiner's report and the reasons for them, Bedford Borough Council has decided to accept all of the examiner's recommended modifications to the draft Plan. These are set out in Table 1 below.

Bedford Borough Council considers that, subject to the modifications being made to the Plan as set out in Table 1 below, the Riseley Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions explained in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), is compatible with the Human Rights Convention and that the requirements of paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) have been met.

The examiner recommended that the Plan should proceed to a referendum based on the designated Neighbourhood Area. Bedford Borough Council has considered this recommendation and the reasons for it, and has decided to accept it. The referendum area for the final Riseley Neighbourhood Plan will therefore be based on the designated Riseley Parish Neighbourhood Area.

These decisions were made by the Mayor on behalf of the Bedford Borough Council's Executive on **date???**.

As a consequence of the required modifications, Bedford Borough Council will alter the Riseley Neighbourhood Plan in order that it can proceed to referendum.

The Neighbourhood Plan document will be re-titled **Referendum Version**. The date for the referendum and further details will be publicised shortly once a date is set by Bedford Borough Council.

Table 1: Decisions on the Examiner's Recommended Modifications to the Riseley Neighbourhood Plan

Proposed Modification Number	Riseley Neighbourhood Plan Reference	Examiner's Report Reference	Recommended Modification and Reason	Bedford Borough Council Decision/reasoning
PM1	Annex 5 page 49	Page 15, para 4.19	<p>On the map show the Ross Meadow LGS in the same colour as the existing LGS and remove it as a separate item on the key.</p> <p>As the new Local Green Space would have the same status as the existing designations, it is recommended that the map key should be the same as the existing Local Green Space.</p>	Agree with the modification for the reasons set out in the examiner's report.
PM2	Policy HE2 page 26	Page 18, para 4.35	<p>In the first line after "including", delete "but not limited to".</p> <p>The reference to heritage assets which are not limited to those in Annex 2, widens the scope of the policy to an unlimited and imprecise degree and would therefore be unreasonable and modifications are recommended to reword this part of the policy.</p>	Agree with the modification for the reasons set out in the examiner's report.
PM3	Policy HE3 page 27	Page 18, para 4.36	<p>Delete Policy HE3.</p> <p>The policy has the potential to detract from the requirements set out in national and local policy and result in ambiguity.</p>	Agree with the modification for the reasons set out in the examiner's report.

PM4	Policy H1 page 30	Page 20, para 4.42	<p>Delete the third bullet point.</p> <p>In order for Policy H1 to meet the Basic Conditions as there is no special justification for this bullet point.</p>	Agree with the modification for the reasons set out in the examiner's report.
PM5	Policy CF1 page 32	Page 21, para 4.46	<p>In the list of bullet points, delete bullet points 5 and 7.</p> <p>To remove from the list commercial premises which are not subject to control under national or development plan policies.</p>	Agree with the modification for the reasons set out in the examiner's report.
PM6	Policy CF2 page 34	Page 21, para 4.47 - 4.49	<p>In clause 1 after "Policies Map", insert "(Annex 5)".</p> <p>In order to identify the policies map in Clause 1.</p> <p>In clause 2, delete "permitted" and insert "supported".</p> <p>As the parish council has no power to permit applications for development.</p>	Agree with the modification for the reasons set out in the examiner's report.
PM7	Policy CF3 page 35	Page 21, para 4.51	<p>In the second clause, prefix "Development" with "Inappropriate".</p> <p>The policy does not acknowledge that certain types of development might be considered "appropriate".</p>	Agree with the modification for the reasons set out in the examiner's report.
PM8	Policy TT1 page 37		<p>In the second clause:</p> <p>In the first sentence delete "include measures that keep traffic speeds low and".</p> <p>In the second sentence insert "and" after "junctions", and delete "and traffic management measures".</p>	Agree with the modification for the reasons set out in the examiner's report.

			Measures relating to traffic management is not a land use matter and should therefore be deleted.	
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December 2023