

2023 — 2039

Bagworth, Thornton & Stanton-under-Bardon

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN



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Foreword

A Neighbourhood Plan is our chance to have a say in the future of our parishes'. It is a powerful tool for shaping the development and growth of a local area.

Until the Localism Act in 2011, it was almost impossible for local communities such as ours to have a say in the planning matters that shape the place where we live. The Localism Act gives local communities the opportunity to develop a shared vision for their local area and to shape the development and growth of that area.

Neighbourhood Plans are developed from within the community, and provided they achieve necessary legislative milestones, they become “made” and are used by the Local Planning Authority in determining planning applications and making policy. Neighbourhood Plans have to be prepared in accordance with the Local Planning Authority’s adopted Local Development Plan, in our case that of Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council.

In March 2017, Stanton-under-Bardon Parish Council approached its neighbouring Parish Council, Bagworth and Thornton, to assess their willingness to work together on a joint Neighbourhood Plan. The intention was to make the most of pooled resources and commonality of interests. An investigative joint meeting in April 2017, resulted in an agreement to create a joint Neighbourhood Plan, and a Steering Group was formed which consisted of members of both Parish Councils as well as members of the public from each parish. This became known as the Bagworth, Thornton and Stanton-under-Bardon (BT&SuB) NP Steering Group

The development of our Plan has been led by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group on behalf of the two Parish Councils and takes account of the views of hundreds of local parishioners, businesses and other stakeholders who took the time to attend the various “drop in” and stakeholder consultations, to complete the questionnaires and to give their views. I should like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, who are all volunteers, and who have generously devoted considerable time and effort to develop this Plan for all of us. Also, I should like to thank you all for your support. Without your input our Plan could not have been prepared.

Russell George
Chairman
BT&SuB NP Steering Group
September 2024

1. Introduction

Welcome to the Neighbourhood Plan for the Parishes of Bagworth, Thornton, and Stanton-under-Bardon. The Plan has been drawn up and championed by a Steering Group made up of Parish Councillors and local residents with Bagworth and Thornton Parish Council acting as the Plan's 'accountable body'.

Neighbourhood Plans were introduced under the 2011 Localism Act. As the Plain English Guide to the Localism Act 2011 states, “Instead of local people being told what to do, the Government thinks that local communities should have genuine opportunities to influence the future of the places where they live”.

In preparing a Neighbourhood Plan, a community is not working from ‘a blank piece of paper’, there are rules and regulations that must be followed in its preparation. Based on strong evidence gathered from the consultation and statistical sources such as the 2011 Census. The Plan, once made, forms part of the Hinckley and Bosworth Development Plan. The Plan will be kept under review and may change over time in response to new and changing needs and requirements. Each Parish undertook a survey using a questionnaire format (Consultation Statement) of local residents over a period of some 4 months in 2019. The survey sample comprised all three Parishes and included house to house surveys, social media contact and interviews conducted at village social events. Findings of this survey will appear in the contents of the Plan where it illustrates the concerns of each Parish, what aspirations parishioners have for their community and what services they use and value. Respondents were asked from their viewpoint, to prioritise the three most important issues and concerns requiring consideration or improvement with the purpose of enhancing life in each Parish. The Plan area accords with the boundaries of the two Parish Councils, as shown on Figure 1.

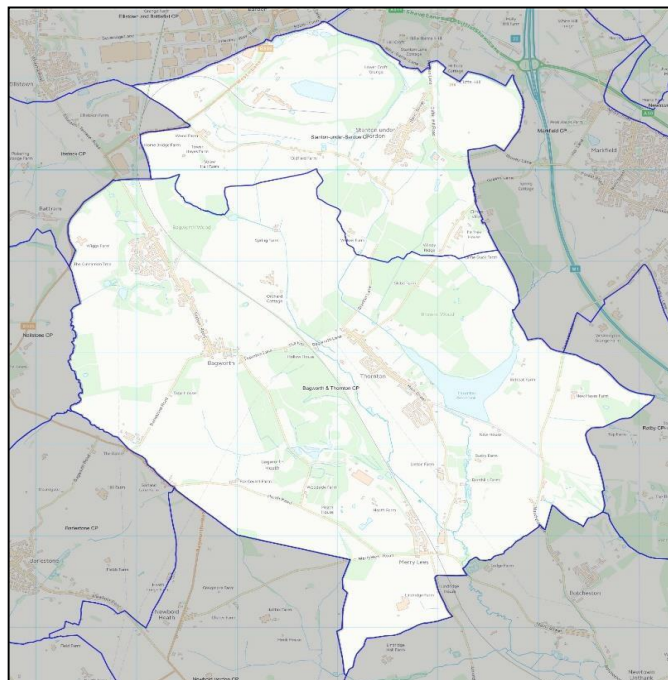


Figure 1 – Designated Neighbourhood Plan area

1.1 Why we produced a Plan

It was decided to produce a Neighbourhood Plan in order to play a much stronger role in shaping how BT&SuB develops.

A Neighbourhood Plan provides the opportunity for the community to set out a vision and to plan for how they want the two communities to develop over the next twenty years in ways that meet identified local need, make sense for local people and make BT&SuB an even better place to live, work and visit.

It enables the community to put in place planning policies that will help deliver an agreed vision for BT&SuB. It provides the opportunity to specify in more detail what we expect from development in the Plan area. Furthermore, unlike parish plans or other kinds of documents that may be prepared by a community, a Neighbourhood Plan forms an integral part of the Development Plan for an area. This legal status means that it must be taken into account by Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council and other relevant bodies when considering planning decisions that may affect the two Parishes.

The Plan is for both Parishes and covers the period up to 2039. This time scale was purposely chosen so that it mirrors that of the emerging Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan.

While every effort has been made to make the main parts of this Plan easy to understand, the wording of the actual policies is necessarily more formal, so that it complies with statutory requirements. It is important to note that when using the Plan to form a view on a development proposal or a policy issue, the whole document and the policies contained in it should be considered together.

1.2 How the Plan fits into the planning system

The Government's intention is for communities to have a greater say and role in the system by shaping future development in their area. However, all Neighbourhood Plans must be prepared to comply with a set of 'Basic Conditions', outlined as follows. Neighbourhood Plans must:

- have regard to national planning policy, notably the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF);
- generally, conform with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area;
- contribute to the achievement of sustainable development; and
- not breach, and otherwise be compatible with EU obligations.

BT&SuB Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared to conform with these rules and regulations governing the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan.

The Plan does not duplicate national or district (i.e. Hinckley and Bosworth) planning policies, rather, it adds further local detail to provide a distinct neighbourhood approach to planning in the

Parish. Its policies, where appropriate, complement the Hinckley and Bosworth Core Strategy (adopted December 2009) and Hinckley and Bosworth Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD (adopted July 2016) as well as those contained in the emerging Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan 2020 – 2039 which is currently in preparation.

The locally formulated policies will be specific to BT&SuB and reflect the needs and aspirations of each community. Where there are national and district planning policies that meet the needs and requirements of the Parishes they are not repeated in the Plan.

1.3 The Plan Process

Stanton-under-Bardon Parish Council took the decision to undertake a Neighbourhood Plan at its meeting on 4 April 2017. Similarly, Bagworth & Thornton Parish Council decided to create a Neighbourhood Plan on 7 November 2016.

Both Councils were conscious of the work involved and the potential lack of resources, both in financial terms and in personnel requirements and agreed to work together on a single Plan covering the two Parishes. A public meeting was subsequently held at Stanton-under-Bardon Village Hall when, by a show of hands, this action was endorsed. Local people expressed an interest in being members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. The first meeting of the Steering Group took place on 1 June 2017.

The Steering Group applied to the local planning authority on 27 June 2017 to designate the neighbourhood to cover the two Parishes. Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council checked that the application was appropriate and undertook the appropriate notification process. The designation was made on 23 October 2017.

The Steering Group met regularly throughout the process of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan and helped to steer the process and to pull together the various activities that were being undertaken.

Further detail on all of the following consultation activities are available on both the Parish Councils websites: <https://www.bagworthandthornton.org.uk/neighbourhood-plan1>
<https://stantonunderbardonparishcouncil.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plan>

In addition to the specific events described below, the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan was kept in the forefront of people's minds locally through numerous display board presences at village events.

Initial Open Events

An initial Open Event in April 2018 set out the context and stages of the project and asked questions about people's thoughts about the two parishes. An analysis of the event is included in the evidence base. The views expressed by the residents were used to shape the strategy in preparing the Neighbourhood Plan.

Theme Groups

As the Neighbourhood Plan progressed, residents signed up to become part of “Theme Groups” to explore the detail of the Neighbourhood Plan; to build the evidence base and to lay the foundation for the draft Neighbourhood Plan. An Environmental Theme Group was established, along with Theme Groups on housing and the built environment and a ‘sustainability’ group looking at issues to do with employment, community facilities and transport. 83 people attended the launch event demonstrating remarkable engagement with the local community.

The Theme Group work was launched with an event in February 2019 (see images below) and the work continued throughout 2019 through a range of engagement processes such as fieldwork and group discussions. Evidence was gathered from statistical data; planning documents; historical records; fieldwork and consultation activities.



Survey Work

Considerable activity took place during 2019 to engage with members of the community that do not routinely attend consultation events.

This involved knocking on the doors of many hundreds of residents and seeking their involvement in completing a survey on their thoughts about the two Parishes and aspirations for the future. One in every 5 households were surveyed through this extensive process, the outcome of which is contained in the supporting information to this Neighbourhood Plan.

Other Engagement Activity

Social media was used to promote the Neighbourhood Plan and local community events (such as the Bagworth Show) utilized to keep the Plan in the forefront of people's minds.

Regular newsletters across the Plan area informed the community of progress and of upcoming events.

Further Open Events

The Steering Group had planned to hold consultations in each village simultaneously on 28 March 2020, but these were cancelled due to the covid lockdown. As a result a four-page summary was published and circulated to residents via the free local newspaper "The Herald".

Further details of the consultation undertaken in the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan can be found in the Consultation Statement that will be prepared with the Examination version of the Neighbourhood Plan.

2. Bagworth, Thornton and Stanton-under-Bardon - A Brief History

2.1 Stanton-under-Bardon

Stanton-under-Bardon is a small rural village pleasantly situated amongst farmland but only a mile from junction 22 of the M1 in north Leicestershire; it is part of the borough of Hinckley and Bosworth.

Stanton-under-Bardon has a population of around 1,000 people and was recently expanded by three new developments of domestic property. The village possesses a newsagents/general store, two churches, public house and a primary school which is highly regarded in the area.

The name 'Stanton-under-Bardon' originates from the Latin 'stan' meaning stone and 'tun' meaning village. The name reflects the fact that, for the last two centuries at least, quarries have existed in the area and have provided a welcome source of employment.

A number of references to the village as 'Staunton-under-Bardon' are made in historical texts. Stanton-under-Bardon is featured in the Domesday Book at which point it had eighteen households, ten of which qualified to pay taxes. The households consisted of 13 homes for villagers and five smallholdings. The nearest church, for many centuries, was at Thornton, one and a half miles away, but records show that there was a Chapel in the village. The chapel was a 'sub-branch' of Thornton church and records of both marriages and burials, which took place at Stanton-under-Bardon Chapel, still exist. The last burial appears to have been that of Grace Dunisthorpe in 1685. In 1908, Stanton-under-Bardon built its own Anglican church out of local granite. The little church is a feature of the village and can seat 120 people.

The village has a lot of different types of architecture, including the Victorian terraced housing and several cottages constructed from local stone. These give the village its character and relate to its history, in particular the mining and quarrying histories. This should be preserved. Today, two major companies still quarry extensively in close proximity to the village.

The Parish Council Offices are situated in the new village hall, which was completed in 2015 as part of a development of property in the centre of the village. Further details about the workings and activities of the Parish Council can be found on the pages of this website stantonunderbardonpc.org.uk The website is of particular interest and relevance to people who live in the parish and surrounding area.

2.2 Bagworth

The recorded history of Bagworth begins with the Domesday Book in 1086, where the record is of a community of 35 people, particularly known for its wood of a mile long and half a mile wide. However, the original name, Bageworde, and archaeological finds, suggest much earlier occupation. At this time, it was held by the Earl of Mellent.

Moving forward through several centuries and changes in ownership we come to 1761 when Baron Maynard funded the building and endowment of a village school for Bagworth.

The 19th Century saw industrialisation come to the village in the form of coal mining, with the first shaft of Bagworth colliery being sunk in 1828. This was followed in 1832 with the opening of the Leicester and Swannington Railway, one of the first in England. It passed within ½ mile of Bagworth and provided a railway station to serve the village, and a convenient connection to the colliery. The Midland Railway took over the line in 1845 and in 1849 opened a new Bagworth station one mile north of the centre of the old village. British Railways withdrew passenger services from the line and closed the station in September 1964. However, the railway remains open for freight.

During the 1870s many houses were built, typically the long rows of terraces mainly for people working in the local mines. The population grew from 604 in 1881 to 1,869 in 1961, however the second half of the 20th Century saw a decline in the fortunes of the village with a significant amount of damage to buildings due to subsidence and culminating in the final closure of the mine in 1991.

Things were at their worst during the 1970s with the population falling back to well below 700 by 1976 with concerns raised in Parliament by the local MP that the village was in danger of dying on its feet and in need of investment in housing. It was cited that one in three of the population had left the village in the previous 8 years due to problems with subsidence. This was happening while the pit itself was achieving the highest productivity of any pit in the UK for 6 of the 12 months in 1975/76.

Over the last Century the village had a church, a primary school, many shops and businesses, a post office, petrol station, several haulage and coal merchants' firms and three public houses. There was a thriving agricultural sector with many small local farms.

Today, the church, school and up to 190 houses have been lost to subsidence and all the shops, (except one general store), the petrol station, the public houses and other mining related businesses have gone. At least 7 farms have gone. There is no GP or dentist present in the village.

All evidence of the coalmine and its rail connections have been removed.

A slow recovery is underway, with hundreds of new houses built in the last thirty years, the most recent being 68 houses completed in 2019, but no associated infrastructure or facilities, with the exception of some children's play areas and a new wooded area to the south of the village. Most recently a post office has been introduced into the village general store in September 2019.

The vast majority of people now travel outside the village to shop, attend schools, surgeries and church services and most work elsewhere.

There is, a thriving Community Centre, a Working Men's Club and several small businesses established within in the village.

There is a real appetite to put Bagworth back together and recover much of what has been lost. The Neighbourhood Plan is part of this renewed drive to recreate the character and qualities and facilities that people enjoy in the place they are proud to call home.

2.3 Thornton

The first historical record of Thornton, otherwise called Torinton or Torentum, is in the Domesday Book completed in 1086 AD. In it, the settlement is part of the manor of Bageworde (Bagworth).

Thornton is a linear village and was originally dominated by farming. With the coming of the collieries in Bagworth and the Coalville area, many miners lived in Thornton too. There were no colliery or mine workings in Thornton as the Thringstone Fault runs along the valley between Bagworth & Thornton resulting in the coal seams under Thornton being too steep an angle to mine economically. Additionally, some suggest that the collieries of Desford and Bagworth did not mine below Thornton saving it from the ravages of subsidence, as it may have risked damage to the railway that carried coal away from local mines, or even caused damage to the reservoir.

The population according to the 2011 Census estimate was 989. The village is now a popular place to live; this is reflected in the price of houses. The community is known to unite effectively when there is a common cause to be addressed. It is also a popular place for people to visit – especially to the reservoir.

A new housing development was given planning permission in 2022 for 49 dwellings, at Beech Drive, the only direct infrastructure to benefit the village being that of Section 106 monies for the already existing play area to the rear of the Community Centre and the creation of a wooded area on site.

2.4 Bagworth, Thornton and Stanton-under-Bardon Today (Based on the 2011 Census)

Bagworth, Thornton and Stanton-under-Bardon are relatively small parishes situated in the Hinckley and Bosworth Borough.

At the time of the 2011 Census, the Bagworth and Thornton Parish had an estimated total population of 2,463 residents living in 1,034 households whereas the smaller parish of Stanton-under-Bardon recorded 634 residents living in 272 households. The Bagworth and Thornton Parish had a higher representation of younger residents and Stanton-under-Bardon displayed a higher-than-average proportion of residents aged 65 and over. There has been significant population growth in Bagworth and Thornton with the number of residents increasing by around 857 (+35%) between 2001 and 2011. During this period the number of dwellings went up by 304 (+40%). There is evidence of further housing growth having occurred since the last Census with 49 new build sales recorded between 2013 and 2016. As of December 2019, the total was 1204.

Census data implies there was little change in the number of households in Stanton-under-Bardon between 2001 and 2011. However, Land Registry data indicates a high number (47) of new build sales were recorded in the parish between 2013 and 2015. The local population is likely to have increased during this time.

There is evidence that the population is ageing, and in line with national trends, the local population is likely to get older as average life expectancy continues to rise. Home ownership is very high and there is a high proportion of detached housing and under-occupied dwellings particularly those with 4 or more bedrooms. There is evidence of a high number of new housing developments in both parishes with 423 new build residential sales registered with the Land Registry between 1995 and 2017, the majority being detached dwellings.

3. A vision for Bagworth, Thornton and Stanton-under-Bardon

The overall objective of our joint communities is for the sympathetic development of new homes and businesses within the designated area of our Neighbourhood Plan and the provision of requisite infrastructure to provide for the needs of a steadily expanding community. Simultaneously, we will acknowledge the historical significance of the aggregate and coal extraction industries which, for more than half a millennium, provided the essential 'raison d'être' of our villages, and, to some extent, still does.

Bagworth, Thornton and Stanton-under-Bardon will continue to be attractive and desirable places to live, meeting the housing needs of all ages with a community seeking to provide a good quality of life for all residents in a rural village environment.

It will be a thriving and sustainable community, supported by appropriate infrastructure, whilst maintaining green areas that are a haven for wildlife.

The vision will be realised by a small number of planning policies specific to BT&SuB, grouped around the key policy issues identified by the community as being of special importance to them. These include policies that:

- ensure that development takes place in the most sustainable locations,
- encourage the right types of development that meets local needs,
- protect important community facilities that are special to the local community,
- promote good design,
- facilitate appropriate employment opportunities,
- ensure that the community continues to have good access to the surrounding countryside and green spaces,
- protect open spaces that are important to the community and/or wildlife,
- improve pedestrian and cycle connections within the Plan area and into the surrounding areas.

The Plan will be kept under review.

POLICIES

4. Housing

4.1 Introduction

Bagworth, Thornton and Stanton-under-Bardon are popular places to live and demand for housing across all tenures is strong, as reflected in relatively high property prices and low vacancy rates. The parishes are based around three established villages in the National Forest and there is a strong sense of community and a shared vision for how housing should be provided in the Plan period.

In recent years there have been several large residential developments that have been “out of scale” with the localised housing requirement. These large developments have attracted people from out of the local area and the speed of construction has not allowed the new members of the community to “assimilate” with local people. There is a strong feeling among local people that too many houses have been built in too short a timescale. An unfortunate sense of “us and them” has developed and this needs to be addressed going forward.

The cornerstone of this housing agenda is therefore to undertake a Plan-led approach to future housing provision that meets local needs.

A Housing Theme Group (HTG) was launched following a very successful meeting in the spring of 2019 when close to 100 local people were consulted on the Neighbourhood Plan and asked to get involved in assessing the evidence and deciding upon future policy priorities. The principal aim of the HTG has been to consider the current housing situation and plan the future housing provision that is required to meet the needs of the two parishes in a holistic fashion. It is believed by the community that planning decisions and policies have led to a distortion in the local market and an under provision of certain tenure types and sizes of dwellings in both parishes.

4.2 Approach to Development

When the two parishes took the decision to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan, the housing requirement for the neighbourhood area was understood to be 133 new dwellings up to 2039. This was made up of a requirement of 89 dwellings in Bagworth and Thornton and 44 in Stanton-under-Bardon. During the time it has taken for the preparation of the Plan, HBBC have produced numerous housing figures, ranging from the 133 to 302. This has left the Steering Group not knowing what figures it should work to. Nevertheless, pending clarity, the newly formed Housing Theme Group worked towards identifying

sustainable plots.

The Housing Theme Group, comprising a mixture of Parish Councillors and residents from across the two parishes, enthusiastically embraced the challenge of meeting this housing requirement and appointed an independent consultant to lead them through the process of determining the most suitable sites to be allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan, to meet the housing requirement in a way that was most appropriate to the local communities.

An assessment was made of HBBC's latest (2018) Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA). 10 potential development sites came forward through this process.

In order to capture the full range of potential sites, the Parish Councils undertook their own 'Call for Sites' in October 2019, writing to all landowners and stakeholders with land close to the villages. This resulted in a further three sites coming forward for assessment, 13 in total.

Each site was assessed against 26 criteria, such as site capacity, topography, distance to village centre etc. and marked red, amber, or green against each (results shown as Appendix 6).

As a result of this exercise, provision was made for around 90 new dwellings through four residential allocations in the Neighbourhood Plan. Taking into account the 81 dwellings with a planning consent or having already completed, this provided for 171 dwellings against the minimum target of 133. An allowance for windfall added considerably to this total and greatly exceeded the minimum requirement. The Neighbourhood Plan also included a Reserve Site policy, identifying a site in Stanton-under-Bardon for around a further 50 dwellings in the event that the favoured site in that parish failed to come forward.

This process concluded and the Neighbourhood Plan was prepared for pre-submission consultation. A delay was experienced as HBBC required a Heritage Impact Assessment to be undertaken to assess the impact of development on a site in Thornton on a nearby Grade II Listed Building. As a result of the delay, the number of plots required by HBBC varied greatly.

4.3 Housing Requirement

Neighbourhood Plans do not have to include allocations to meet the Borough-wide housing requirement, but where they do, Neighbourhood Plans cannot promote fewer houses than HBBC require to be built over the Plan period. The residential target in a Neighbourhood Plan can also incorporate a reasonable allowance for windfall development based upon an average of annual delivery performance. Given the issues with HBBC not having a current Local Plan and being unable

to give the Steering Group firm figures to which it can work and in order to protect the villages from uncontrolled development, the Steering Group decided to put forward sites and numbers which it considered to be appropriate and sustainable to the three villages.

The Housing Group called for sites as outlined above and carried out a thorough review, scoring each site according to the methodology criteria outlined at Appendix 6, Site Selection Framework.

The following sites were originally submitted to HBBC as suitable for future development,

Site 1 - The Rear of Main Street, Thornton

Site 2 - Thornton Nurseries

Site 3 - Land off Meadow Lane, Stanton-under-Bardon

Site 4 - Land Opposite South Charnwood High School,

which would give a total number of plots of 90.

A site off Main Street, Stanton-under-Bardon was submitted as a reserve site to the South Charnwood High School site.

HBBC subsequently informed the Steering Group that the site at South Charnwood, favoured by the Group to meet the Stanton-under-Bardon future housing needs, would not be acceptable. Therefore, the Steering Group agreed to remove this site and replace it with its reserve site to the east of Main Street, near the Old Thatched Inn. This site had scored well, with the exception of access. Since the site was scored, approximately half has been approved for development of 50 houses, which will no doubt commence build in the near future. This development has been included in numbers for this Plan. The remainder of the site has been identified for an additional 30 units.

Since commencement of the Local Plan, a planning appeal has been won for the development of 49 plots off Beech Drive, Thornton. These figures will be included in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Sites in Bagworth have been more difficult to identify. As a result only 12 windfall plots can be identified.

In summary, the following sites/plots are submitted:

Stanton under Bardon	Land off Main Street – 80 plots
Thornton	Beech Drive – 49 plots
Bagworth	12 plots
Total	141 plots

4.4 Settlement Boundary

In historical terms, development in rural communities like BT&SuB has been shaped by the designation of a village envelope (or settlement boundary) adopted in a statutory Local Plan. With a settlement boundary in place, development is permitted inside of the envelope subject to conformity with other development plan policies, or outside of the envelope in certain prescribed circumstances (for example to provide affordable housing or for agricultural purposes). The downside of such a policy can be that it overly restricts the necessary residential growth required to meet local needs and leads to an increase in house prices, making the Parish even more unaffordable to many.

In statutory planning terms, land outside a defined settlement boundary, including any individual or small groups of buildings and/or small settlements, is classed as open countryside. It is national and local planning policy that development in the countryside should be carefully managed. Development will only be allowed where it is appropriate to a rural location, such as for the purposes of agriculture, including (in principle) farm diversification, or if needed for formal sport and recreation uses or for affordable housing provision where there is a proven need. This approach to development in the open countryside is supported through the Neighbourhood Plan to help maintain the unique landscape character setting of BT&SuB and retain the open countryside surrounding each village as an attractive, accessible, distinct and non-renewable natural resource.

With the removal of the site allocations, it was agreed that the Settlement Boundaries from the Core Strategy DPD would be reinforced through the Neighbourhood Plan.

POLICY H1: Settlement Boundary - Development proposals will be supported on the sites within the three settlement boundaries. The boundaries have been updated to reflect the 141 plots identified above and are shown edged blue in Figures 2, 3 and 4 (below).

Land outside the defined settlement boundary will be treated as open countryside, where development will be carefully managed.

Figure 2: Bagworth Settlement Boundary

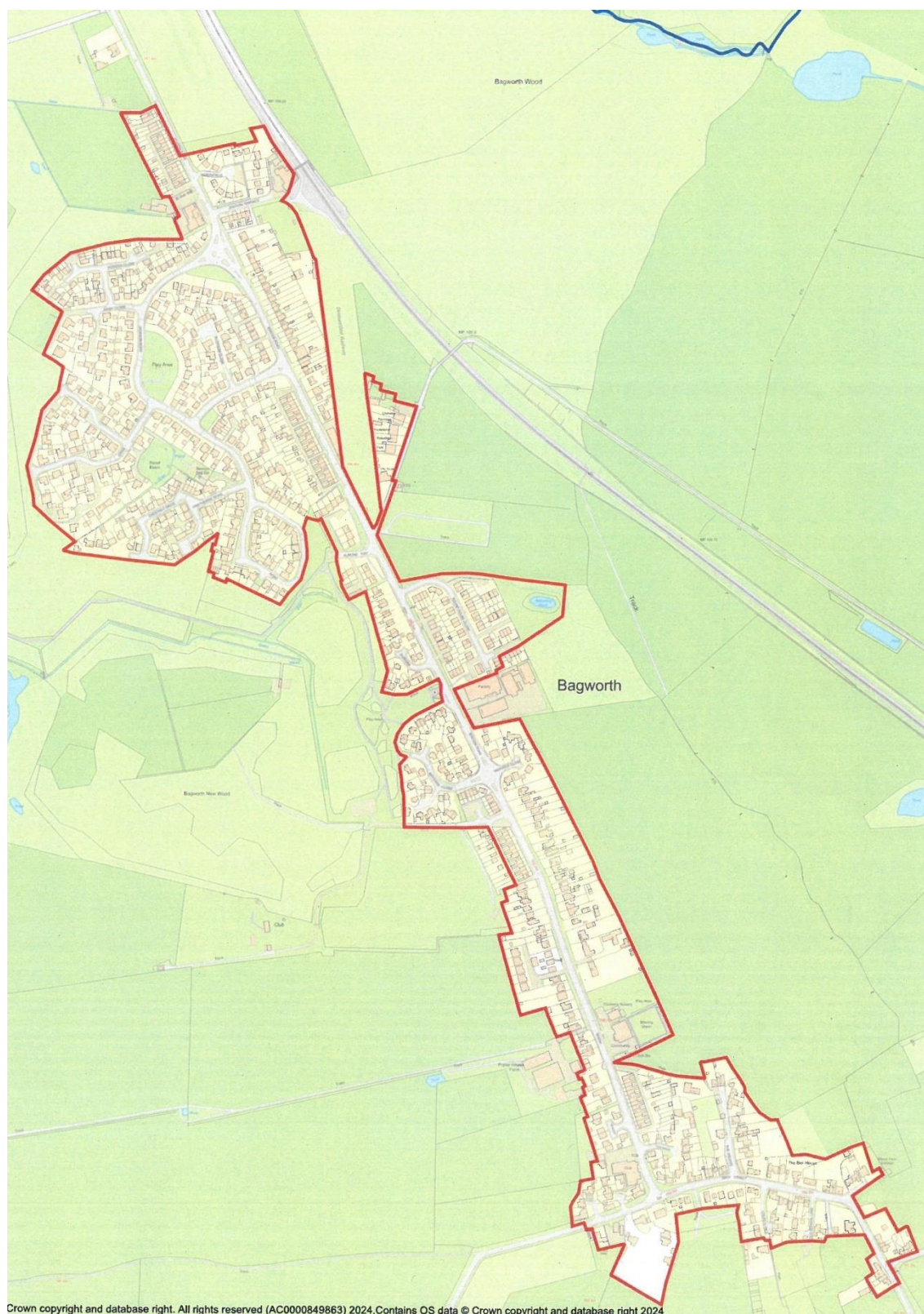


Figure 3: Thornton Settlement Boundary

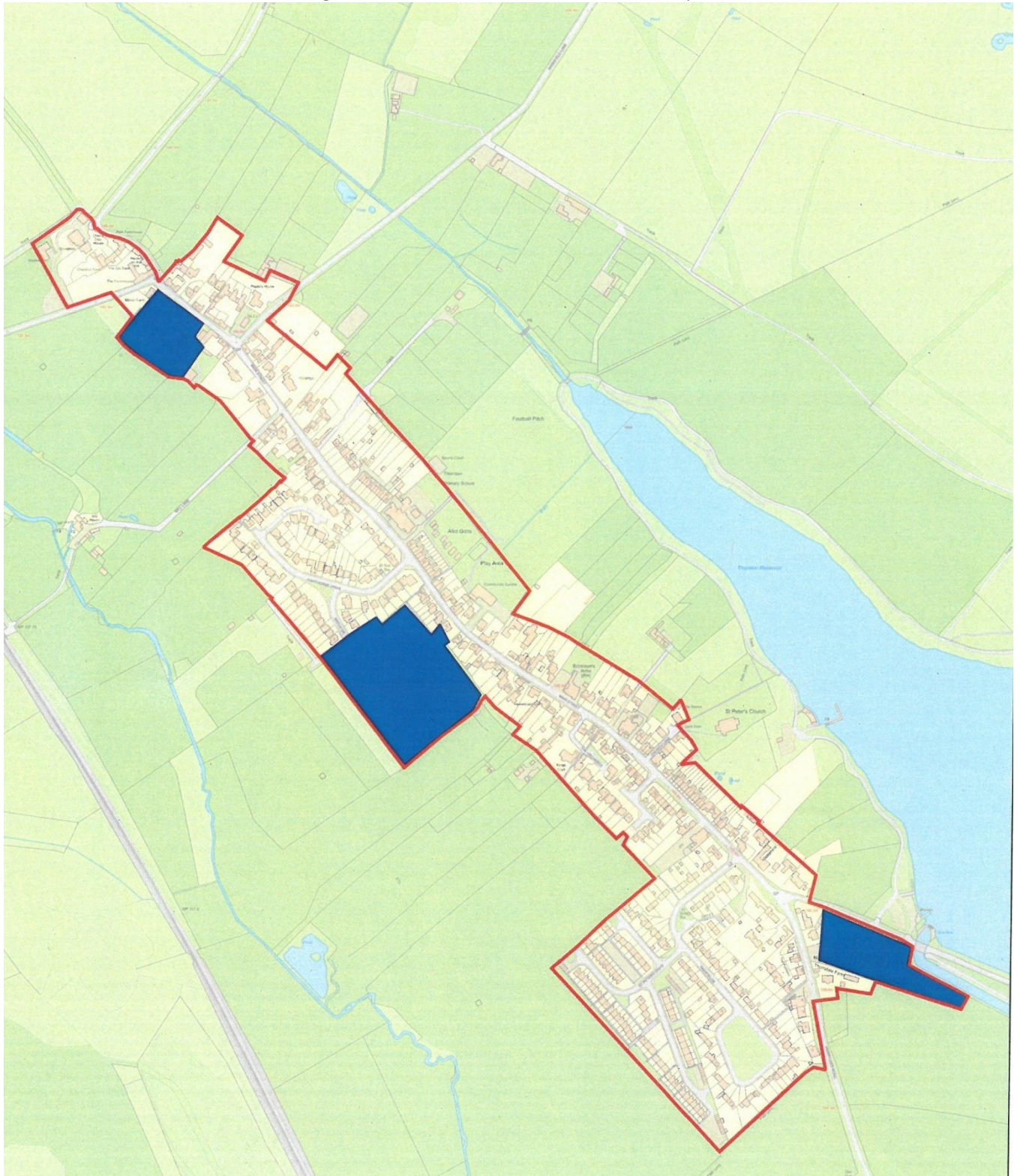
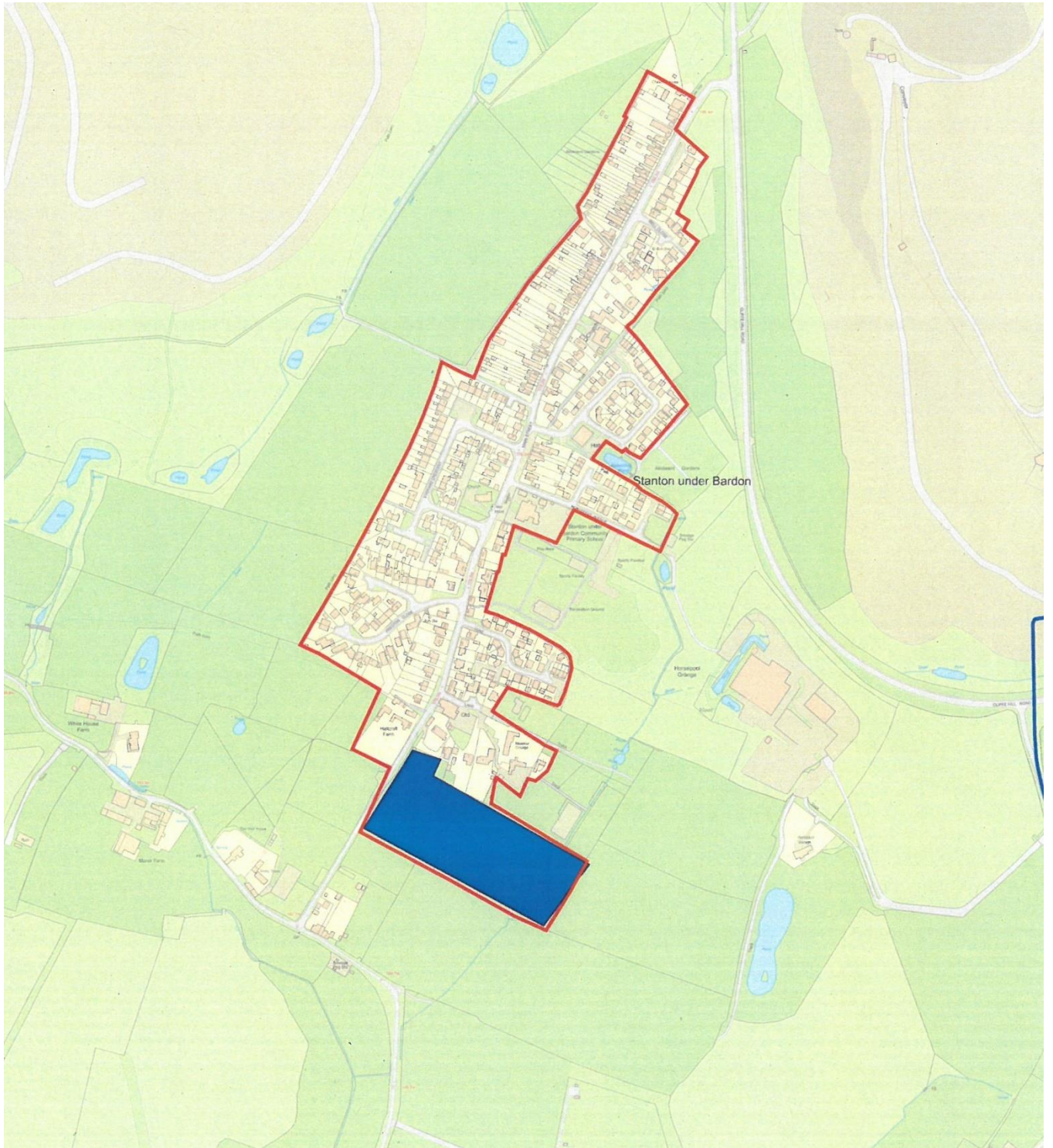


Figure 4: Stanton-under-Bardon Settlement Boundary



4.5 Housing Mix

The Plan recognises that providing a wide choice of high-quality homes of differing tenures is essential to developing a sustainable, mixed and inclusive community. The correct housing mix in terms of tenure and size will help house a future well-balanced population vital to the on-going viability of local services and the prosperity of the community.

By analysing the Census data from 2011, land registry data from between 1995 and 2017 and the HEDNA survey information it is possible to specify an optimum future housing mix for the Plan period. From the last full Census in 2011 the parishes of BT&SuB had a combined population of 3,239.

In terms of property sizes, the proportion of four bedroomed and above in Stanton-under-Bardon is 28% and in Bagworth and Thornton it is 37.6%. This compares to a much lower percentage of 21.8% in HBBC. For this reason, there is a structural imbalance in the current size of units that can be addressed through the Neighbourhood Plan.

An important part of the HTG vision was that younger residents and older people who wished to remain living in the community as their needs changed should be enabled to do so. Providing smaller homes would enable elderly and younger people to stay in the community and at the same time release under-occupied larger family homes onto the open market which would then be available to other growing families keen to live in BT&SuB

POLICY H2: HOUSING MIX - New housing development proposals should provide a mixture of housing types specifically to meet identified local needs in the Plan area. Development should deliver more than 80% of the units as 3-bed or fewer (which can include accommodation for older people which should be built to the M4(2) Building Regulations 2016 or any future standard updating this).

All proposals will be expected to demonstrate how the proposal will meet the current and future housing needs of the Parish as evidenced in the Parish Housing Needs Survey Report 2019 (Appendix 3) and the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing and Employment Development Needs Assessment 2017 or any more recent document updating either of these reports.

4.6 Affordable Housing

The NPPF (2023) defines affordable housing as ‘housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers)’ The definition goes on to list different types including affordable housing for rent (including social rent); starter homes, discounted market sale housing and other affordable

housing routes to home ownership.

People living in the neighbourhood area are more likely to be living in dwellings with 4 or more bedrooms. Results from the 2011 Census show that 38% of Bagworth and Thornton households and 28% in Stanton-under-Bardon live in homes with more than 4 bedrooms. This is above the Borough (22%), regional (20%) and England (19%) averages.

There is an under-representation of housing for single people with less than 1% of Bagworth and Thornton and 3% of Stanton-under-Bardon households having one bedroom against 6% district, 8% region and 12% England rates.

Under-occupancy (having more bedrooms than the notional number recommended by the bedroom standard) in the Parishes is typical of rural villages. Analysis of the 2011 Census shows that 53% of Bagworth and Thornton and 44% of Stanton-under-Bardon households have two or more spare bedrooms which is higher than the district (43%), region (37%) and England (34%) shares. Under occupancy is particularly evident in larger properties and is particularly evident in Stanton-under-Bardon where 45% of homes with 4 or more bedrooms are occupied by one or two people (42% in Bagworth and Thornton).

The Census data suggests that older person households are more likely to under-occupy their dwellings. Data from the Census allows an investigation using the bedroom standard. In total, some 52% of pensioner households in Bagworth and Thornton and 45% in Stanton-under-Bardon have an occupancy rating of +2 or more (meaning there are at least two more bedrooms than are technically required by the household).

House prices are generally high across the Plan area and coupled with a disproportionately high level of larger dwellings, makes it hard for young families to enter the housing market locally, or for older people to find suitable accommodation when down-sizing.

POLICY H3: AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROVISION - Development proposals which include affordable housing should provide a mix of housing types and sizes to help meet the identified needs of the Parish, based on the assessment of housing need (2019) or later report updating this document.

The provision of smaller homes especially for young people and young families and older people who wish to downsize will be supported, as will be the provision of affordable housing for people with a local connection.

Any affordable housing should be designed and delivered to be indistinguishable from market housing and must be distributed evenly through the development as a whole.

4.7 Windfall Development

A windfall site is defined in the NPPF as one which has not been specifically identified as available through the Local Plan or NDP process. These sites normally comprise previously developed land that has unexpectedly become available. To help protect the character of BT&SuB, development beyond the housing allocation described above will be restricted to windfall sites wholly within the settlement boundary.

Such sites have made a small but regular contribution towards the housing supply in the Plan area for a considerable time. It is expected that windfalls will continue to make a small contribution to housing provision in the Parishes up to 2039.

There is no policy in the Neighbourhood Plan relating to infrastructure requirements. Both Parish Councils expect to be consulted by HBBC prior to S106 contributions being finalised for any development proposal.

POLICY H4: Windfall Sites - Proposals for infill and redevelopment sites will be supported where:

- they help to meet the identified housing requirement for BT&SuB in terms of housing mix (Policy H2),
- the location is within the settlement boundary,
- they retain existing important natural boundaries and features such as gardens, trees, hedges, footpaths and streams,
- there is a safe vehicular and pedestrian access to the site, and
- they do not reduce garden space to an extent where there is an adverse impact on the character of the area, or the amenity of neighbours.

4.8 Design Standards

Villages in the Plan area have developed over a long period of time with certain times showing an increase in construction activity, for example during the 1960's and 1970's.

New development proposals should be designed sensitively to sit within the distinctive settlement patterns of the villages within the Plan area. Existing settlement patterns have grown incrementally over time. The buildings date from many different periods, providing a richness and variety of styles and materials. This traditional rural character should be enhanced by new development and schemes should be designed to ensure that new buildings sit comfortably within the existing settlement pattern and are respectful of their surroundings.

It is not considered necessary to have a uniform series of properties that all look the same, rather to ensure that new developments respect the features of buildings which make villages within the Plan area desirable places in which to live.

Residents in the Plan area want their communities to play their part in the sustainable development of the Borough. As noted in the NPPF, Planning authorities should, through their policies, contribute as fully as possible to the aims of Biodiversity 2020 DEFRA. New development in BT&SuB should be designed to incorporate the current (at time of Application) best practice standards and methods for biodiversity protection and enhancement.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) should be designed in accordance with current industry best practice, the SuDS Manual, CIRIA (C753), to ensure that the systems deliver both the surface water quantity and the wider benefits, without significantly increasing costs. Good SuDS design can be key for creating a strong sense of place and pride in the community for where they live, work and visit, making the surface water management features as much a part of the development as the buildings and roads.

The aim of the design standards policy is to keep what is special whilst accommodating modern building and design.

POLICY H5: DESIGN STANDARDS – All commercial and residential proposals of one or more properties, replacement dwellings and extensions will be supported where they meet the following building design principles to a degree that is proportionate to the development.

- development should enhance the character of the area in which it is situated and be carried out sensitively,
- any proposals should clearly show how the general character, scale, density and layout of the site fits in with the character of the surrounding area. Contemporary and innovative materials and design are supported where positive improvement can be demonstrated without detracting from the historic context,
- care should be taken to ensure that the development does not disrupt the visual impact of the street scene or adversely affect any wider landscape views,
- owing to the poor public transport and existing parking and congestion problems, sufficient off-road parking should be provided, a minimum of two car parking spaces per two bedroomed houses, three parking spaces per three bedroomed house and above.
- development should be enhanced by landscaping with existing trees, elevations and hedges preserved whenever possible to promote biodiversity. Wherever possible, plots should be enclosed by native hedging, wooden fencing or walls in keeping with the local style,

- development should incorporate sustainable design and construction techniques to meet high standards for energy and water efficiency, including the use of renewable and low carbon energy technology such as solar panels, rainwater harvesters and provision for charging an electric vehicle. These features should not adversely detract from the visual amenity of the current street scene,
- roof and wall construction should follow technical best-practice recommendations for integral bird nest boxes and bat breeding and roosting sites.

The recommended 'switch-off' times for lights during the active bat season are as follows:

March GMT 18.30, March BST 19.30, April 20.30, May 21.15, June 21.45, July 21.30, August 20.45, September 19.45, October BST 18.45 and October GMT 17.15

- security lighting should be operated by intruder switching, not on constantly. Site and sports facility lighting to be switched off during 'curfew' hours between March and October, following best practice guidelines in Bats and Lighting Leicestershire and Rutland Environmental Records Centre 2014. Maximum light spillage onto bat foraging corridors should be 1 lux,
- hedges (or fences with ground-level gaps) should be available for property boundaries that maintain connectivity of habitat for hedgehogs,
- all major developments shall ensure that Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) for the management of surface water run-off are put in place unless demonstrated to be inappropriate. All schemes for the inclusions of SuDS should demonstrate they have considered all four aspects of good SuDS design, Quantity, Quality, Amenity and Biodiversity, and the SuDS and development will fit into the existing landscape. The completed SuDS schemes should be accompanied by a maintenance schedule detailing maintenance boundaries, responsible parties and arrangements to ensure that the SuDS are maintained in perpetuity. Where possible, all non-major development should look to incorporate these same SuDS principles into their designs, and
- all residential development should ensure appropriate provision for the storage of waste and recyclable materials.

5. The Environment

5.1 Introduction

This chapter of the Neighbourhood Plan deals with the environmental component of *sustainable development*, as described in the National Planning Policy Framework (2023), paras 7-14. The chapter aims to balance the requirement for appropriate development in the Plan area against the value of environmental features that are both *special* – appreciated in their own right and as community assets, by local people - and *significant* for their wildlife and history. It also deals with broader environmental issues of concern to the community, including recognition of the amenity and setting values of open spaces, and protection and enhancement of local biodiversity.

Care was taken during preparation of the Plan to ensure that the policies (and the sites and areas of environmental significance covered by them) were not unduly restrictive on development during the Plan’s lifetime. Excluding National Forest Land and Country Parks, 13% by area of all the open and currently undeveloped land in the Plan area is protected from potential environmentally damaging development. The key statistics are:

1. Total area of Neighbourhood Plan area	2360 ha
2. Quarries and pits (approx.)	200 ha
3. Other open or undeveloped land, not including 2	1716 ha
4. Wooded National Forest land and LCC Country Park	450 ha
5. Other areas of environmental significance designated or recognised in this Plan	225 ha
6. Total area protected for environmental reasons	675 ha

5.1.1 Landscape, Geology and Setting

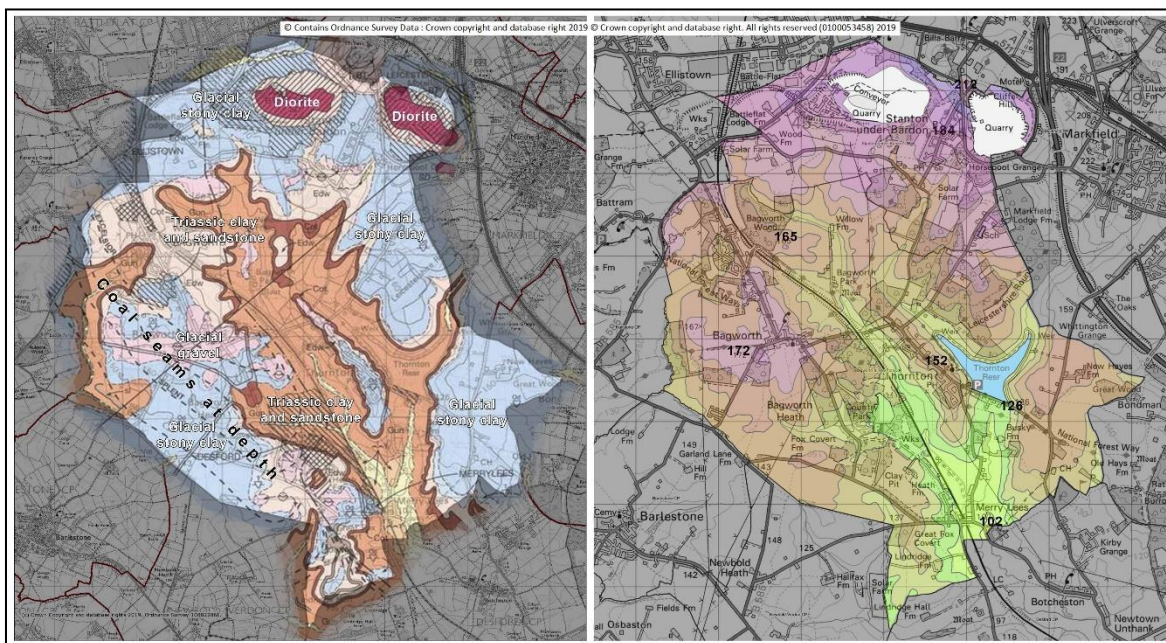
The Plan area, comprising the civil parishes of Bagworth & Thornton and Stanton-under-Bardon, extends from the southern edge of Leicestershire’s ancient upland of Charnwood Forest, over steeply hilly open country, to the northern edge of the ‘Midland Plain’ that stretches away south and west to the horizon. From the summit of Cliffe Hill to the lowest point south of Merry Lees the height difference is over 200 metres (600ft), meaning that quite spectacular views can be enjoyed from several places in the area.

This impressive (for Leicestershire) topography results from the variety of the rocks beneath the surface, their nature and hardness: the Precambrian volcanic *diorite* beneath Cliffe Hill has resisted

erosion for hundreds of millions of years as a small ‘mountain’, while younger rocks banked up against it have been gradually worn down by rivers and weather into south-trending valleys and ridges. These younger rocks (of Triassic age) are alternately hard and soft; this arrangement has produced steep valley sides with hard sandstone at the top and softer clay and siltstone lower down. Unseen beneath the Triassic rocks are coal measures, whose working in and around this area since at least medieval time has influenced the human landscape with its rich mixture of agriculture, mining and industry.

The three villages owe their locations (at the time of their first settlement about 1400 years ago) to the combination of topography and geology – the original settlers knew what they were doing – with Stanton-under-Bardon in a pass between the two summits of Cliffe Hill, while Bagworth and Thornton are on outcrops of gravel (for dry foundations plus springs of drinking water) on ridges overlooking the two main valleys.

Figure 5: Geology (left) and topography of the Plan area



5.1.2 Historic Environment

Although archaeological evidence shows human habitation here in prehistoric and Roman times, the age of foundation of the three ‘modern’ villages is demonstrated by their Anglo- Saxon names:

Stanton-under-Bardon = Old English (OE) *stan* ‘stony’ + *tun* ‘settlement’ [under] *berg* (Anglian ‘hill’) + *dun* (OE ‘hill’)

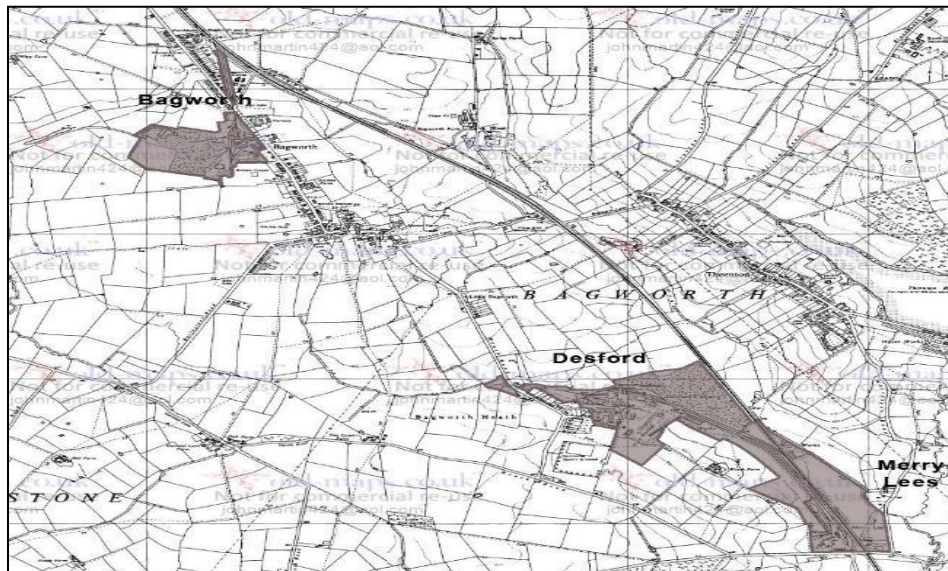
Bagworth = OE personal name *Baecga’s* + *worth* (OE ‘enclosure’)

Thornton = *thorn* (OE ‘thorn-bush’) + *tun* (OE ‘settlement’)

Land surrounding the villages was farmed through the centuries of the early and high medieval periods

using the *open field system*. Ploughing of these fields produced the earthworks now known as ridge and furrow, fragments of which can still be seen in the area and which are recorded in this Plan for recognition as non-designated heritage assets. After the Norman invasion one area was reserved (as 'Bagworth Park') for hunting and as an estate for the manorial lord; 'the moats' (site of the motte and bailey castle) and fishponds survive here as earthworks, and the park's extent is still marked by the absence of ridge and furrow.

Collieries and associated surface works, 1967. Figure 6



The rich mineral resources of the area have strongly influenced the later historic landscape. Coal had been dug and mined a few kilometres north of the Plan area for centuries, but the deep seams beneath Bagworth were not exploited until the early 19th Century. Bagworth colliery operated from 1825 to 1991, Desford Colliery opened about 1874, and Merry Lees drift began work in 1944. The colliery sites, although largely 'returned to nature' as woodland (National Forest and other) and other semi-natural greenspaces for recreation and biodiversity are still recognisable, while many of the buildings in the villages and beyond, including a number of still-active community assets established by the National Coal Board, are a direct legacy of the two centuries of mining. Railways are also part of the tangible heritage associated with mining: the Leicester & Swannington line, opened in 1832, was one of the first steam railways in England. It included the 1 in 29 gradient of Bagworth Incline (closed 1848), now partly a footpath, and became part of the Midland Railway Leicester to Burton-on-Trent line in 1847. In Stanton-under-Bardon (in keeping with its ancient 'stony settlement' name) hard-rock quarrying at Cliffe Hill began in 1868 and continues today in two giant pits, while much of the built environment of the village is the result of housing and amenities for the workers.

Finally, Thornton Reservoir, constructed in 1850 to supply mains water to Leicester (the village still relied on pumps and, later, a water tower until the mid-20th Century), is a significant part of the human and historic landscape.

This Plan identifies all known sites and visible features of historical significance in the Plan area for consideration through the Planning system.

5.1.3 Natural Environment

The Plan area's long and complex agricultural and industrial history means that no truly wild, native habitat has existed here for millennia. But the same farming and industry, particularly their changing fortunes over the centuries, means that there is a surprising variety of semi-natural places across the two parishes. These habitats include:

- permanent pasture with low or no chemical improvement resulting in a relatively rich flora
- wetlands and marshes in valley bottoms and areas of old mine subsidence
- the reservoir, lakes and ponds
- old quarry and industrial sites
- naturally 're-wilded' areas
- woodland and plantations, particularly on National Coal Board land and including significant areas of the National Forest
- species-rich hedgerows, some from early enclosures
- churchyards, burial grounds and gardens

This Plan identifies all significant biodiversity sites in the Plan area in order that the planning system can take account of them and afford protection to them whenever possible.

5.1.4 Existing Environmental Designations

The Plan area is located in National Character Areas (landscape areas identified by Natural England for Planning purposes) *71 Leicestershire and South Derbyshire Coalfield* and *73 Charnwood*. It is also in Hinckley & Bosworth BC Landscape Character Areas *A: Charnwood Forest settled forest hills* and *B: Charnwood Fringe settled forest hills*, with a fraction in *D: Newbold and Desford rolling farmland*. There are five Listed Buildings and one Scheduled Monument, together with about 25 further sites and features of historical significance and eight 'local list' buildings (Leics CC Historic Environment Records) that are relevant to the planning system.

There is one geological SSSI and two Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS; LCC), some 42 areas of Priority Habitat (as defined by Natural England), substantial areas of National Forest land, and 43 Local Wildlife Sites (including 30 from earlier Phase I Habitat Surveys). There are no biological SSSIs in the Plan area, but it is within the Impact Risk Zones (closest is 2 kms from the boundary) of six biological and one biological/geological SSSIs.

5.1.5 Environmental Inventory

An environmental inventory (Appendix 5) of Bagworth, Thornton and Stanton-under-Bardon was carried out between May and November 2019. The work comprised two elements:

- review of all existing designations and available information, and
- fieldwork to identify sites and features of natural and historical environment significance in the context of the Plan area.

The review was undertaken as a desk study, compiling information from many sources, including DEFRA, Natural England, Historic England, Leicestershire Historic Environment Records, Leicestershire Environmental Record Centre records (biodiversity and geology), Environment Agency, British Geological Survey, old maps (Ordnance Survey, manuscript), British History Online, local history and archaeology publications, and local knowledge.

The fieldwork visited and assessed all accessible, open and currently undeveloped land in the Plan area, and significant species, habitats, landscape characteristics, earthworks and other extant features were recorded or checked.

This data, along with all relevant site-specific information from the existing information review, were mapped and tabulated, and each site was scored and evaluated using the nine criteria for Local Green Space selection in the *National Planning Policy Framework 2023*:

5.1.6 Sites Qualifying for More than One Designation

Because of the assessment criteria and methodology employed in this Plan for identifying sites of environmental significance and protection, some sites qualify for two or more of the categories *Local Green Space*, *Important Open Space* and *Site of Environmental Significance*. The designations are not exclusive, as follows:

Local Green Space (LGS): score highest overall; the designation is ‘a matter for local discretion’ (NPPF *Guidelines 2023*). Criteria are a combination of community value and factual evidence, so can overlap with IOS/OSSR (Open Space, Sport & Recreation) designation and/or wildlife and history evidence.

Important Open Space (IOS): Score high under community value criteria and are designated or candidate OSSR sites. Can also be LGS (the statutory protection afforded does not affect OSSR status and amenity value) or SES (which is a fact-based designation unaffected by function as an important open space).

Site of Environmental Significance: Score high for their historical or ecological (wildlife) features. They are either existing designations by statutory bodies (Natural England, Historic England, Leicestershire County Council, Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council) or potential/candidate sites for similar designation in the Plan. The evidence for these sites' significance is a matter of fact (the habitats, species and features exist). Both LGS and IOS can have historical and wildlife significance that should be taken into account in the Planning system irrespective of any higher- level designation, status or protection.

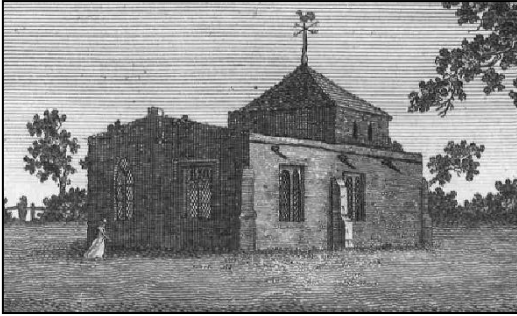


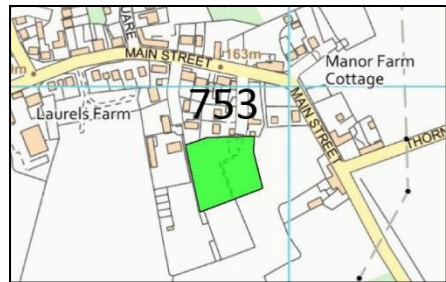
5.2 Local Green Spaces


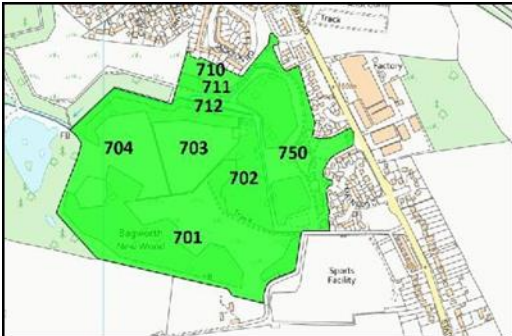
Of the approximately 500 inventoried parcels of open land in the Parishes, 98 were identified as having environmental (natural, historical and/or community value) features. These sites were scored, using the seven criteria for Local Green Space designation set out in the *National Planning Policy Framework 2023* (see figure 7 for the criteria and scoring system adopted for this Plan).



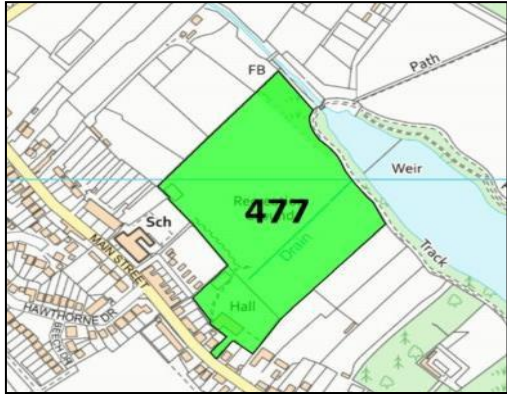
Five sites in the three villages score 75% (18/25) or more of the maximum possible and meet the essential requirements for designation as Local Green Space (NPPF 2023, paragraph 106). Designation, which has been validated by applying the NPPF criteria to the evidence assembled through local fieldwork, research, knowledge, and community consultation, is supported by Planning Practice Guidance paragraph reference 37-013-20140306: '*Whether to designate land is a matter for local discretion*'. Their statutory protection will ensure that these most important places in Bagworth, Thornton and Stanton-under-Bardon's natural and human environments are protected for future generation.


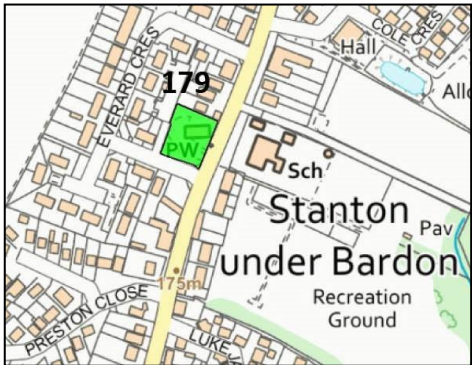

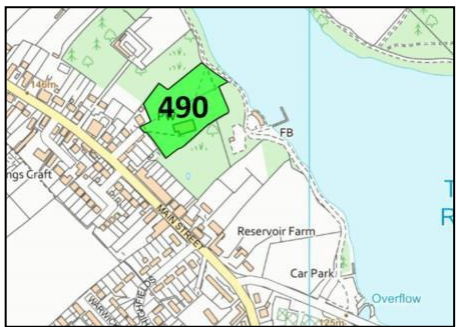
5.2.1 Summary of Evidence Base for Local Green Space

Figure 7 Green Space criteria and scoring system

REF	DESCRIPTION / EVIDENCE	NPPF (2018) LOCAL GREEN SPACE CRITERIA							
		1. LOCAL BOUNDED, NOT EXTENSIVE YES/NO	2. PROXIMITY 0 - 5	3. SPECIAL TO COMMUNITY (Max 10)			4. LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE (Max 10)		TOTAL /25
				3.1 BEAUTY 0 - 3	3.2 TRANQUIL 0 - 2	3.3 REC. VALUE 0 - 5	4.1 HISTORY 0 - 5	4.2 WILDLIFE 0 - 5	
753	Memorial Garden, Church of the Holy Rood churchyard, Bagworth	Y	5	3	2	2	4	3	19
<p>Site of the Saxon (Victorian rebuild) parish church (demolished 1968 because of mining subsidence) and of its architecturally notable prefabricated concrete replacement, also demolished (2013). The footings of the latter remain in the well-kept churchyard, with headstones from early 18th Century and Listed grade II War memorial.</p> <p>Church land maintained by Parish Council.</p> <p>Lawns, native and ornamental trees provide habitat for at least 3 BAP species birds.</p>									
 <p>Original church in 1793</p>  <p>The 1960s church, before demolition, and graveyard, 2012</p>  <p>The site in 2019</p> 									

701-750 See Map	Durham Walk Recreation Area	Y	4	2	2	4	3	3	18
<p>Public Open Space created on the site of the pithead and works. Comprises H&BBC Amenity Green Space BAG07 (Maynard's Walk) and semi-natural Open Space BAG15 (Bagworth New Wood).</p> <p>Recreational open spaces, children's play area, grass, woodland, watercourses, pools, paths etc.</p> <p>A 'living memorial' to Bagworth Colliery (1826-1991) largely on the footprints of the component areas of the 20th Century pithead and work areas.</p> <p>Footpaths, managed open grass, etc. Bagworth Parish Council asset via NCB.</p>									
 									

477	Thornton Recreation Ground, Community Centre Field and Thornton Meadows wildlife site	Y	4	3	1	5	1	4	18
<p>Group of fields on sloping site Includes small paddock functioning as the community centre grounds, a recreation ground (OSSR site) with football pitch, multi-use games area, children's playground, and two areas of managed species-rich meadow. Species-rich hedgerows on several boundaries, particularly northwest.</p> <p>Full public access plus the site is crossed by the Leicestershire Round long-distance footpath.</p> <p>Thornton meadows are long-established unimproved grassland currently being restored through an appropriate mowing regime. Judged by LCC ecologists to be one of the best areas of this type of grassland in Leicestershire, with 172 recorded species of flowering plants, insects and other invertebrates and a good range of nationally declining farmland bird species.</p> <p>Important views east across the reservoir to wooded hillsides.</p>									
<p>Thornton Recreation ground and view to the east</p>   									

179	St Mary and All Saints churchyard and adjacent open space, Stanton-under-Bardon	Y	5	3	2	2	4	3	19
<p>A pleasant hard surface walk along a path surrounded by well-kept lawns on the west and north sides of the church. The path leads to a small car park for church visitors. To the south an area with flowering shrubs and trees provides an informal garden and a haven for wildlife.</p> <p>St Mary and All Saints Churchyard, open space to left, 2019</p> <div>   </div>									
490	St Peter's churchyard, Thornton	Y	5	3	2	3	4	4	21
<p>Hillside churchyard on mounded site. Setting for Listed building Grade I. Probably on an early Christian or older sacred site; the present church dates from 13th Century; a protected, largely undeveloped site for at least 700 years. Managed grass and rougher areas, a good range of native and ornamental trees (the site is notable for its wooded appearance); headstones date from early 18th Century, include a number of highly decorative engraved Swithland Slate examples.</p> <p>Its location and secluded nature, and the views from the east side over Thornton reservoir, give it high values for tranquillity and as an informal public park.</p> <p>Locally rich for biodiversity, including bats and other mammals, several bird species of national conservation concern (5 BAP species observed in 2019), invertebrates, native trees and flowering plants.</p> <div>   </div> <p>St Peter's churchyard, 2019</p>									

POLICY ENV 1: LOCAL GREEN SPACES – Development proposals that would result in the loss of, or have an adverse effect on, the following Local Green Spaces (and Figures 8-10) will not be permitted other than in exceptional circumstances.

Thornton Recreation Ground, Community Centre Field and Thornton Meadows wildlife site (inventory reference 477)

St Peter's churchyard, Thornton (490)

Maynard Walk / Durham Way (701-750)

Memorial Garden, Church of the Holy Rood churchyard, Bagworth (753)

St Mary and All Saints churchyard and adjacent open space, Stanton-under- Bardon (179)

Figure. 8: Local Green Spaces in Thornton

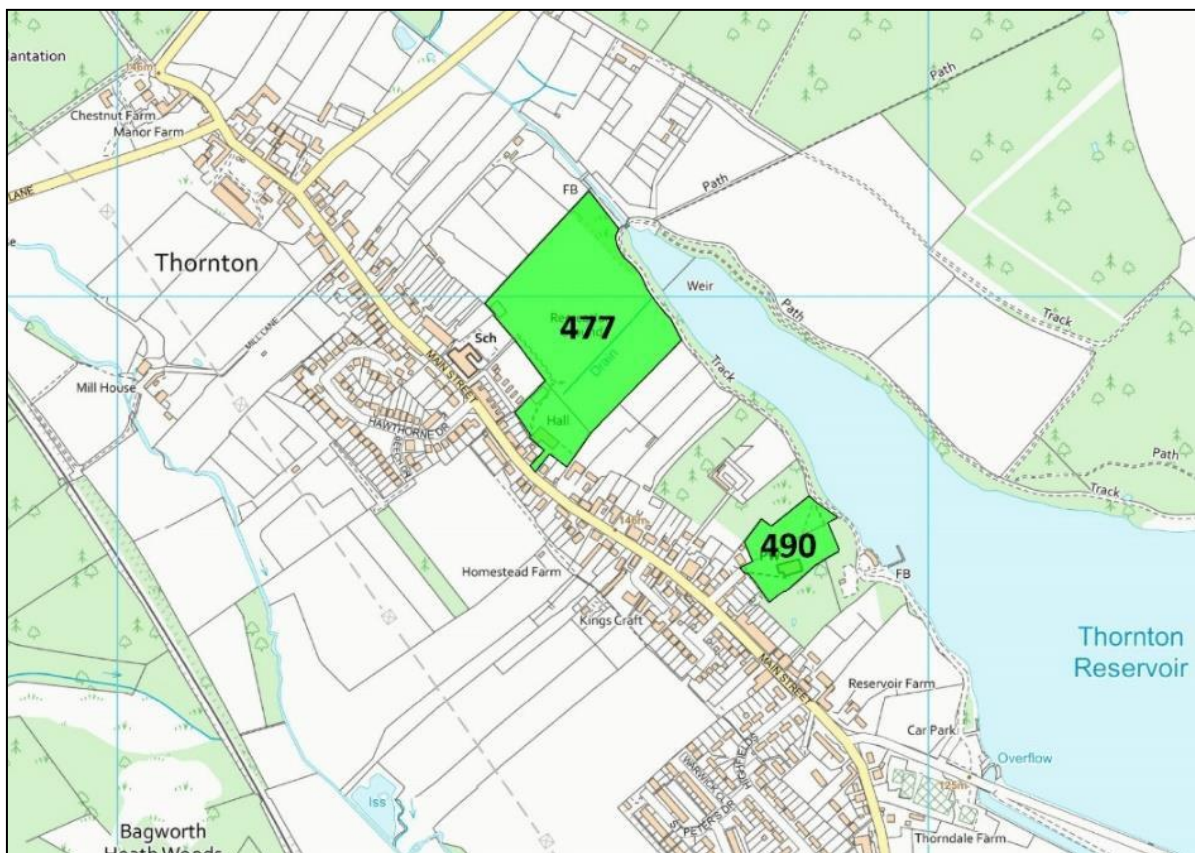


Figure 9: Local Green Spaces in Bagworth

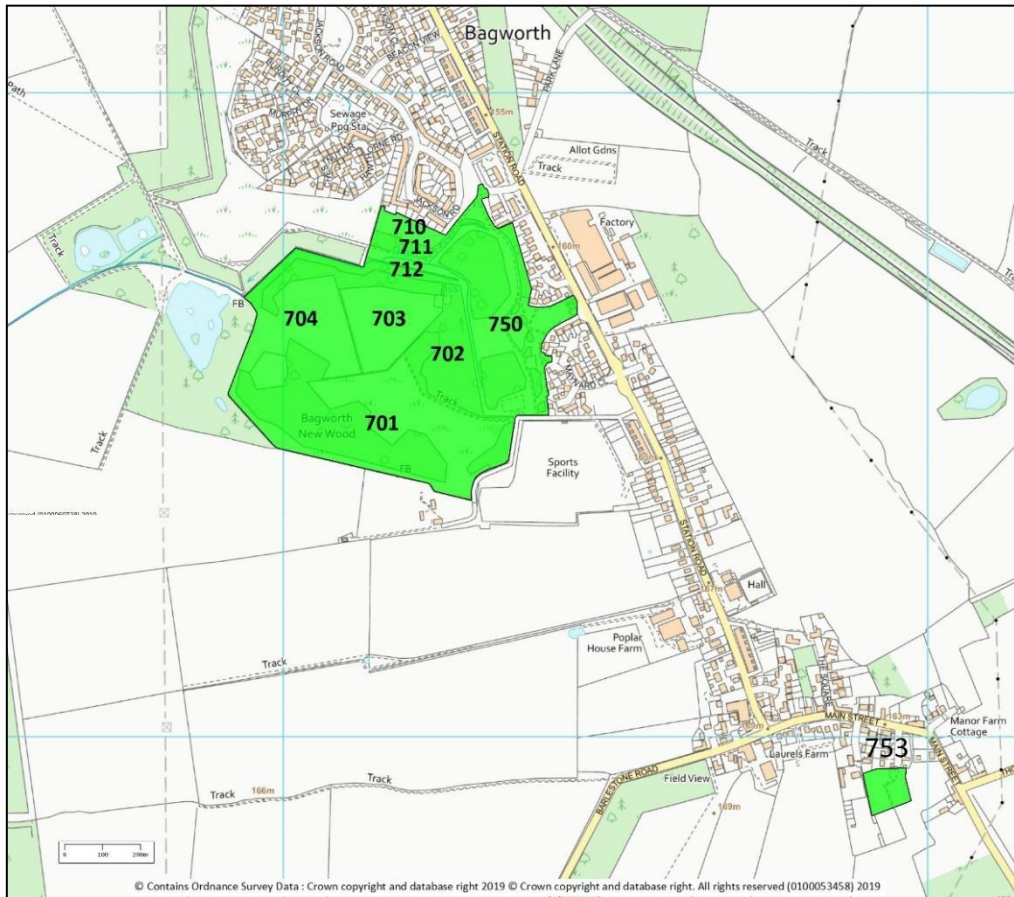
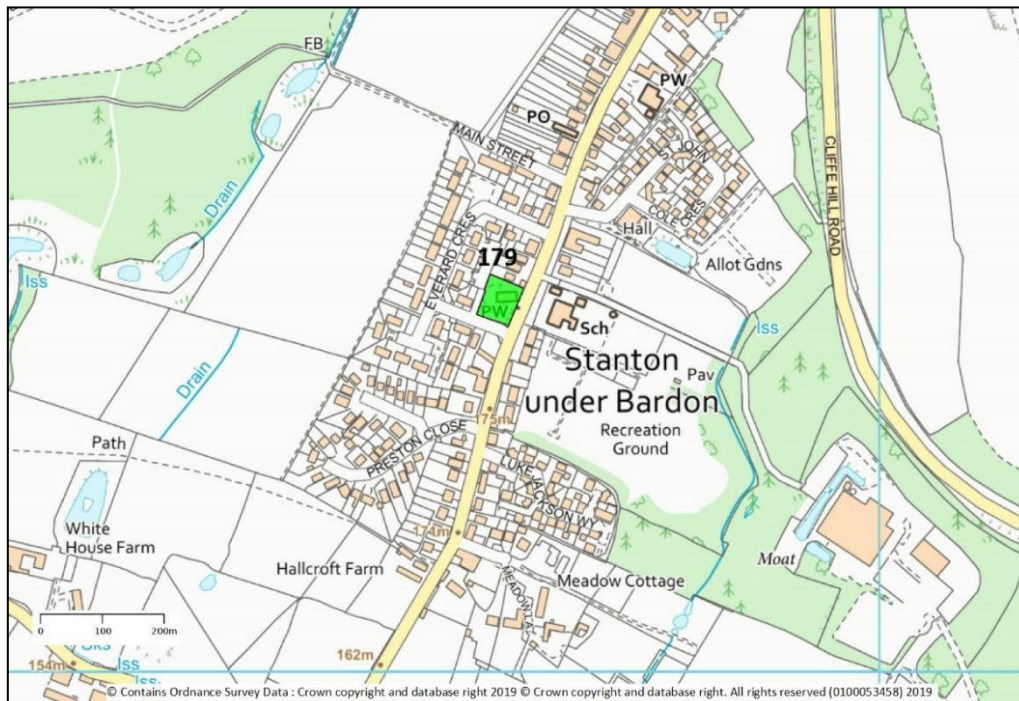


Figure 10: Local Green Space in Stanton-under-Bardon



5.3 The Natural Environment

5.3.1 Sites of Natural Environment Significance

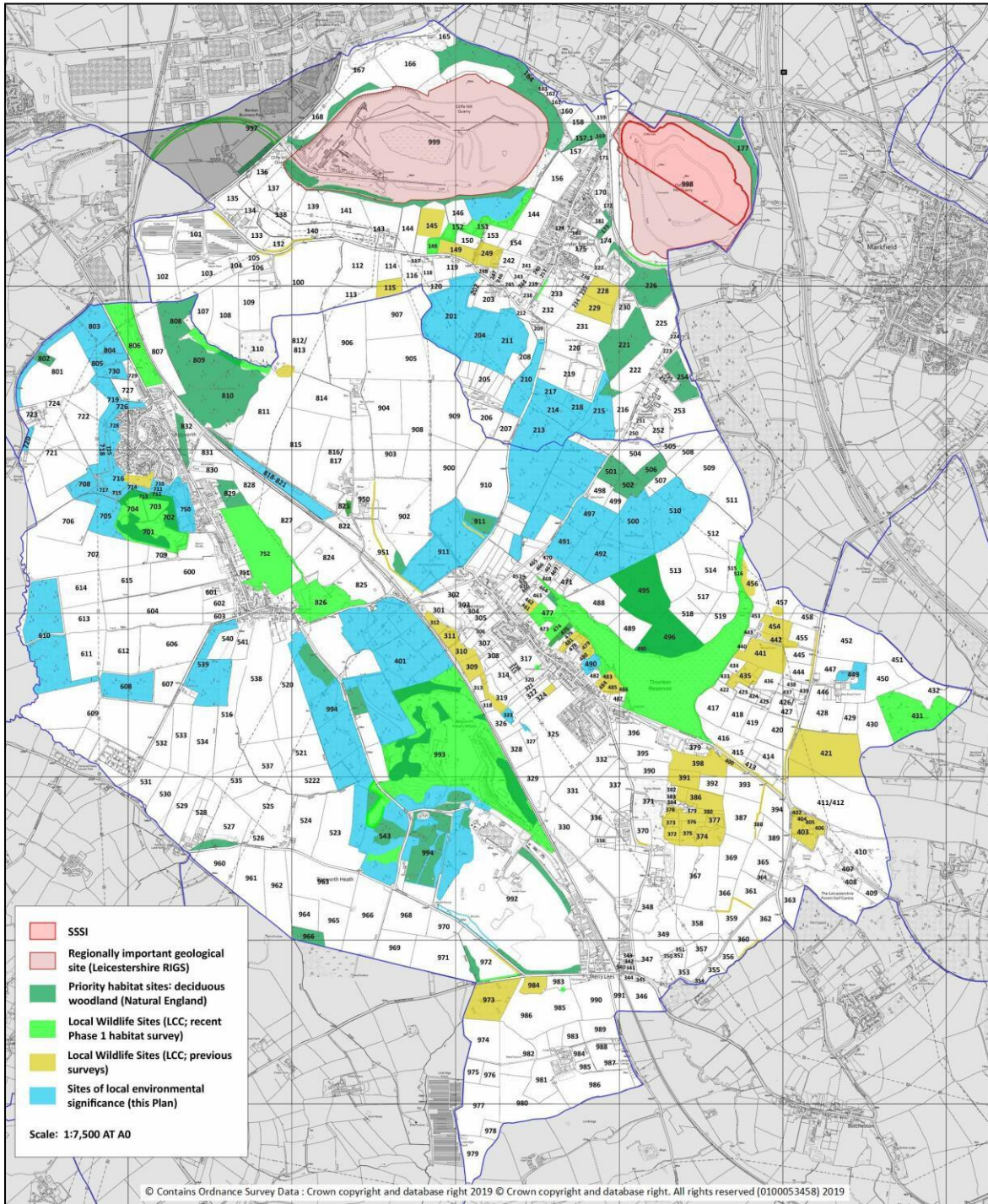
A group of inventory sites scores highly for ‘wildlife’ (scoring at least 3/5 under this criterion). The features for which the identified sites have been selected and notified are listed in the environmental inventory (Appendix 5). The map (figure 11) shows their locations.

They comprise a) sites where *priority habitats* occur (Natural England mapping) or where *biodiversity action plan (BAP) species* have been recorded as breeding or as regular visitors; b) sites identified as ecologically significant by Leicestershire County Council, including locally significant habitat areas and Local Wildlife Sites, and c) sites identified during the inventory process as being of high biodiversity significance in the context of the Plan area.

The policy provides site-level compliance in the Plan area with the relevant Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council policies, the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the European Habitats and Species Directives. It is in conformity with Section 14 of NPPF 2023 (paragraph 149) and Section 15 (paragraphs 170, 171, 174, 175 and 177).

POLICY ENV 2: SITES OF NATURAL ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE – The sites listed (Appendix 5) and mapped (figure 11) have been identified as being of local significance for their natural environmental features. They are ecologically important in their own right and they are locally valued. When determining planning applications, the significance of the species, habitats or features present should be given at least equal weight against any demonstrable local benefit of a development that would affect or damage them.

Figure 11: Sites of natural environment significance



5.3.2 Biodiversity Protection and Enhancement

As noted above, the ancient and recent histories of Bagworth, Thornton and Stanton-under-Bardon have resulted in the Plan area having (relative to much of the rest of Leicestershire) a good proportion of land whose biodiversity value is recognised in existing designations.

Most other open land also has biodiversity value, partly intrinsic (pasture, gardens, plantations, field margins and hedgerows) and partly because of its role in habitat connectivity – by providing broad wildlife corridors between the designated biodiversity hotspots. This relative biodiversity richness of the Plan area is important in the context of Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council’s efforts to protect biodiversity; it means that protection here should be maintained or enhanced, not relaxed. In other words, the idea that ‘with so much biodiversity the Plan area can afford to lose some’ should be resisted.

This policy is therefore about parish-level compliance with the relevant Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council policies, the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Hedgerows Regulations 1997 (as amended), and the European Habitats and Species Directives [or their transitioned English equivalents] – and about how Bagworth, Thornton and Stanton-under-Bardon can ‘do their bit’ to maintain biodiversity by taking it into account, at a Neighbourhood Plan level of detail, in the Planning system. It is also supported by National Planning Policy Framework 2023 paragraphs 170 (a) (d); 174; 175 (a) (c); and 177 which state that development proposals causing significant harm should be refused unless adequately mitigated or compensated for.

The Parish Councils in conjunction with other bodies will maintain the environmental inventory list of known sites of biodiversity interest prepared for this Plan and will work with community groups, landowners, farmers and other organisations to enhance the biodiversity of the Parishes by creating and/or managing habitat sites (e.g. wildflower meadows, woodland, wetland) on suitable parcels of land.

POLICY ENV 3: BIODIVERSITY PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT - All new development proposals will be expected to safeguard habitats and species, including those of local significance. If significant harm to biodiversity cannot be avoided (through locating to an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or compensated for, planning permission should be refused.

5.4 The Historic Environment

5.4.1 Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monument

Five buildings and structures in the Plan area have statutory protection through Listing at Grade I or II or as Scheduled Monuments. The Neighbourhood Plan lists them for reference, and notes that proposed development is required to take into account the direct impact upon their significance and also the affects upon their settings. Their location within, or close to, sites designated or noted for protection in the Plan’s policies contributes to these sites’ evidence of significance. Bagworth and Thornton sites are shown at Figure 12 and Stanton-under-Bardon is shown at Figure 13.

Moat with fishponds at Bagworth (3 parts)

List Entry Number: 1010485

- Heritage Category: **Scheduled Monument**
- Location: Bagworth & Thornton, Hinckley and Bosworth, Leicestershire

Church of St Peter

List Entry Number: 1074115

- Heritage Category: **Listing, Grade I**
- Location: CHURCH OF ST PETER, Bagworth & Thornton, THORNTON, Hinckley and Bosworth, Leicestershire

Bagworth Park Farmhouse

List Entry Number: 1074113

- Heritage Category: **Listing, Grade II**
- Location: BAGWORTH PARK FARMHOUSE, THORNTON LANE, Bagworth & Thornton, Hinckley and Bosworth, Leicestershire

Corner Cottage and attached walls and buildings

List Entry Number: 1074114

- Heritage Category: **Listing, Grade II**
- Location: CORNER COTTAGE AND ATTACHED WALL AND RAILINGS, STATION LANE, Bagworth & Thornton, THORNTON, Hinckley and Bosworth, Leicestershire

Bagworth War Memorial

List Entry Number: 1464881

- Heritage Category: **Listing, Grade II**
- Location: Holy Rood Church (demolished), Old School Lane, Bagworth, Leicestershire, LE67 1DE, Bagworth & Thornton, Hinckley and Bosworth, Leicestershire

Stanton-under-Bardon War Memorial

List Entry Number: 1467417

- Heritage Category: **Listing, Grade II**
- Location: Main Street, Stanton-under-Bardon, Leicestershire LE67 9TN, Stanton under Bardon, Hinckley and Bosworth, Leicestershire

Figure 12: Statutorily protected heritage assets in Bagworth and Thornton

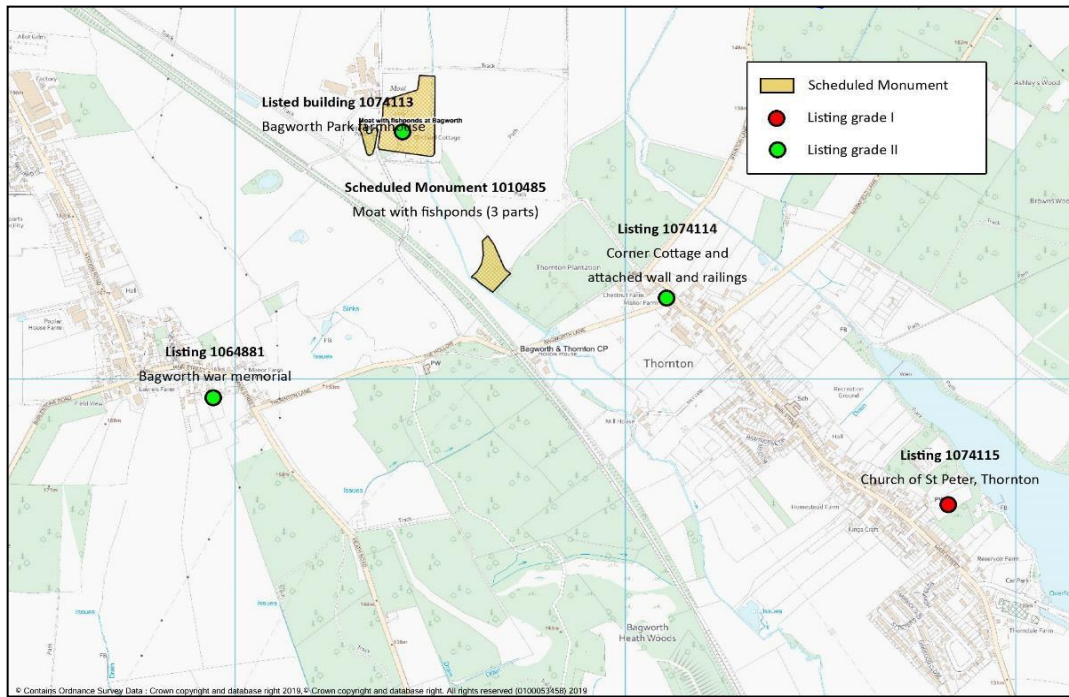
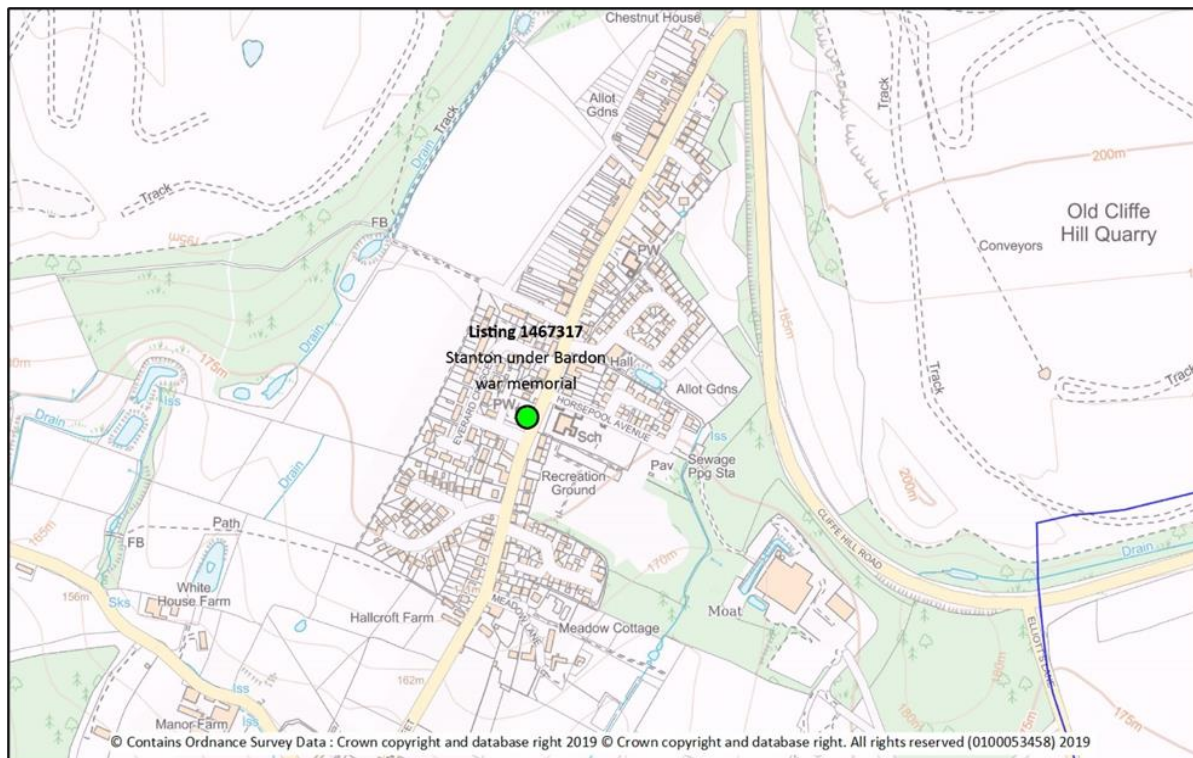


Figure 13: Statutorily protected heritage assets in Stanton-under-Bardon



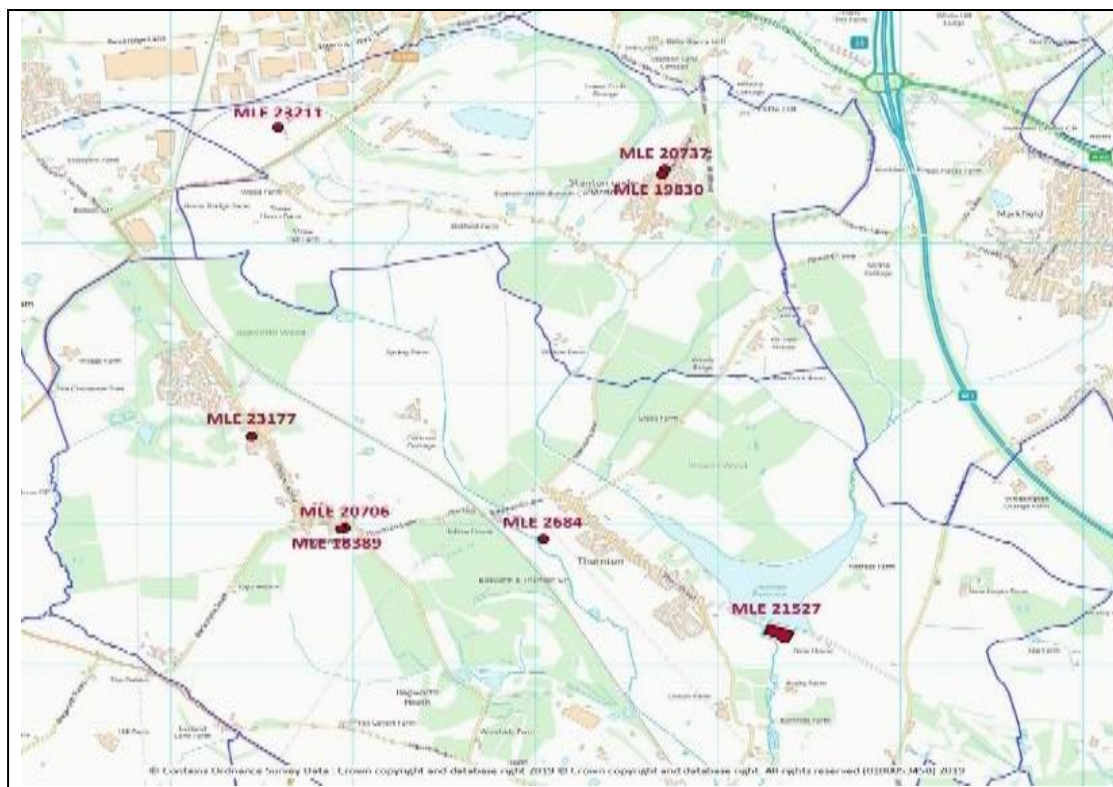
5.4.2 Local Heritage Assets

Eight other buildings and structures in the built environment of the Plan area are judged to be of local significance for architectural, historical or social reasons. The list comprises the ‘unlisted buildings’ set for the two parishes in the Leicestershire Historic Environment Records dataset compiled by LCC. Inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan records them so that they can be afforded protection (at the appropriate level) when affected by new development, as described in NPPF 2023 paragraph 194.

POLICY ENV 4: LOCAL HERITAGE ASSETS – The sites, buildings and structures listed below (see figure 14) are of high local heritage (historical, architectural and/or built environment) significance. The significance both of their intrinsic features and of their settings should be balanced against the value of development proposals adversely affecting them.

Thornton Water Mill (Leicestershire Historic Environment Record MLE 2684)
Site of Holy Rood Church, Bagworth (MLE 18389)
War Memorial, Holy Rood church (MLE 20706; now Listed grade II. War memorial WMP0042)
Thornton Water Works (MLE 21527)
Miners’ Memorial, Bagworth (MLE 23177)
St Mary and All Saints Church, Main Street, Stanton-under-Bardon (MLE19830)

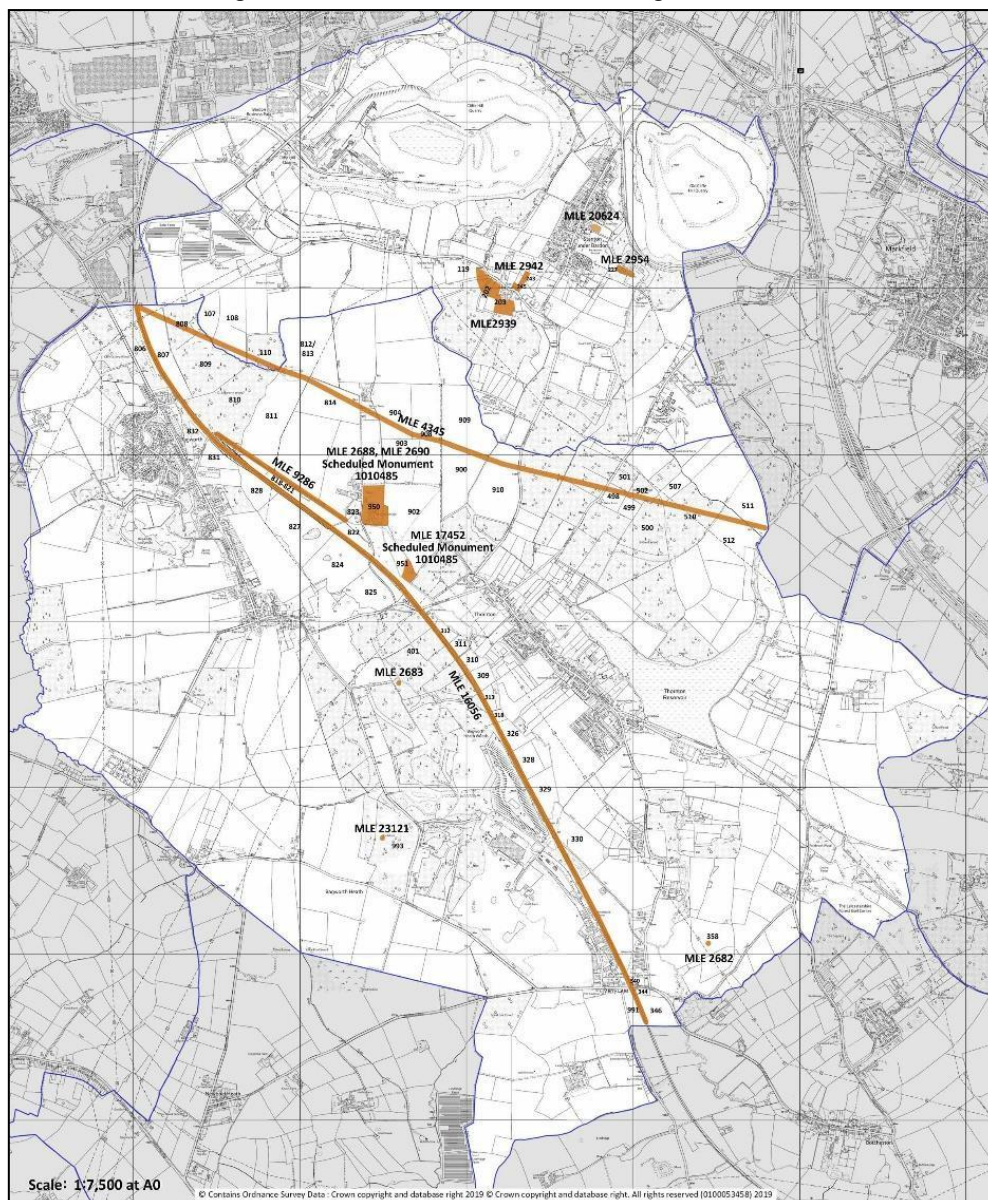
Figure 14: Local heritage assets (LCC Historic Environment Record)



5.4.3 Sites of Historical Significance

A group of inventory sites scores highly for 'history' (scoring at least 3/5 under this criterion) for their *extant and visible* archaeological or historical features or proven buried archaeology, as recorded in the Historic England or Leicestershire Historic Environment Records (HER) databases. The features for which the identified sites have been selected and notified are listed in the environmental inventory (Appendix 5). The map (figure 15) shows their locations. Inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan records them so that they can be afforded protection (at the appropriate level) when affected by new development. This policy is in conformity with NPPF paragraphs 190 and 197.

Figure 15 Sites of historic environment significance



POLICY ENV 5: PROTECTION OF SITES OF HISTORIC ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE –

The following sites mapped (figure 15) are not already statutorily protected but have been identified as being of local significance for their historical environmental features. They are historically important in their own right and locally valued.

Development proposals that would have a detrimental impact on the earthworks, buried archaeology or features present will not be supported unless the need for and benefits arising from development in that location clearly outweigh the loss.

MLE 4345 Route of Via Devana Roman Road

MLE 9286 Bagworth Inclined Plane (Leicester to Swannington Railway)

MLE 16056 Leicester to Swannington Railway / Midland Railway, Leicester & Burton branch

MLE 2680 Windmill site, southwest of Thornton Mill

MLE 23121 Royal Leicestershire Regiment war memorial, Tigers Wood

MLE 2682 Enclosure north of Botcheston Lodge

MLE 2942 Post-medieval brickyard, Stanton under Bardon

MLE 2954 Medieval grange, Horsepool Grange

MLE 20624 Undated features (earthworks) northeast of the school, Stanton under Bardon

5.4.4 Ridge and Furrow

From the time of their establishment in the late ‘dark ages’ through the medieval period Bagworth, Thornton and Stanton-under-Bardon were farmed using the *open field system*. The arable crops were rotated on a three- or four-year cycle, while the rest of the productive land was set aside as permanent meadow and woodland. Ploughing was by teams of oxen; ploughs were of the non-reversible type, meaning that as the teams progressed up and down the furlongs the earth was always thrown to the plough’s right, creating strong ridges and deep furrows. Bagworth Park was the exception, as this was *emparked* in the 15th Century or earlier and had no ridge and furrow thereafter. As in most parishes in the English midlands, farming continued in the Plan area in this way until the 18th Century, when agricultural improvement led to the *enclosure* of the open fields and their conversion to grazing land. The ridges and furrows of the old ploughlands were ‘fossilised’ under the new grass fields; except for where collieries and quarries were located in the 19th centuries, many survived in this way into the 20th Century, when a new agricultural revolution led to a return to arable farming, but this time on an industrial scale. Hedges were grubbed out and deep ploughing destroyed most of the surviving ridge and furrow; in addition, the planting areas for the National Forest in the Plan area appear to have included ridge and furrow fields, meaning, although the feature may survive, it is largely invisible.

In English legislation ridge and furrow fields (except for the few, not in this Plan area, that are Scheduled Monuments) are not statutorily protected, despite recognition that “*as the open field system was once commonplace in NW Europe, these [surviving] sites take on an international*

importance” (English Heritage, 2001). Across most of the Midlands there has been a loss of (typically) 90% since the 1940s. In the Plan area, the *Turning the Plough* (2009) survey was used as a baseline for a new survey, undertaken as part of the inventory for this Plan in 2019. The summary results show the decline since 2009 and compare it with that since 1947; the situation is now critical.

While the individual fields of surviving ridge and furrow in the Plan area are not claimed to be of international importance, their rarity in the Plan area and across the Midlands means that any further, avoidable, loss would be irreversibly detrimental. Historic England strongly recommends treating all surviving ridge and furrow as (non-designated) *heritage assets*, and this, supported by NPPF 2023 paragraph 135, is the approach taken in this Plan.

Open land in the Plan Area = c.1966 ha

1947 = 268 fields; c.880 ha (45% of the open land) (figure 15.1)

2009 = 79 fields; c.90 ha (figure 15.2)

2019 = 53 fields; c.78 ha (of which c.30 ha is well-preserved) = 91% loss by area since 1947 (figure 15)

Figure 15.1 Extent of ridge and furrow, about 1947
Reconstructed from old maps and aerial photographs by Robert F Hartley (Leicestershire County Council *Historic Environment Records*); image enhanced for this Plan

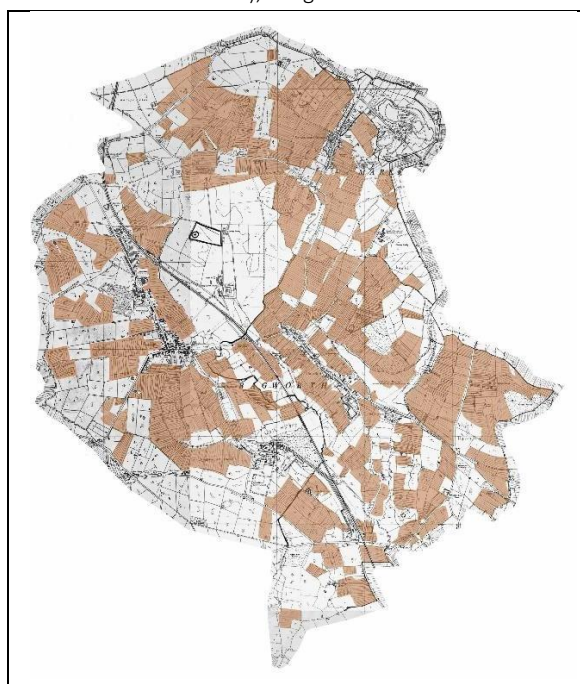


Figure 15.2 Extent of ridge and furrow, 2009
Extract from *Turning the Plough* survey data
English Heritage/ Northants CC
Data from Leics. CC *Historic Environment Record*

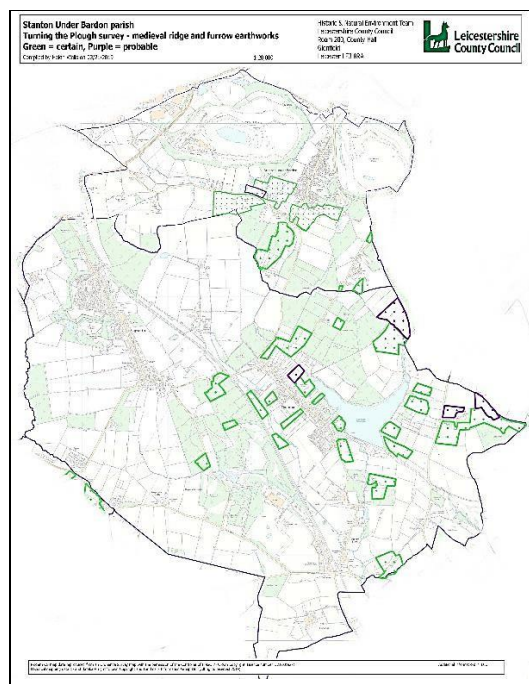
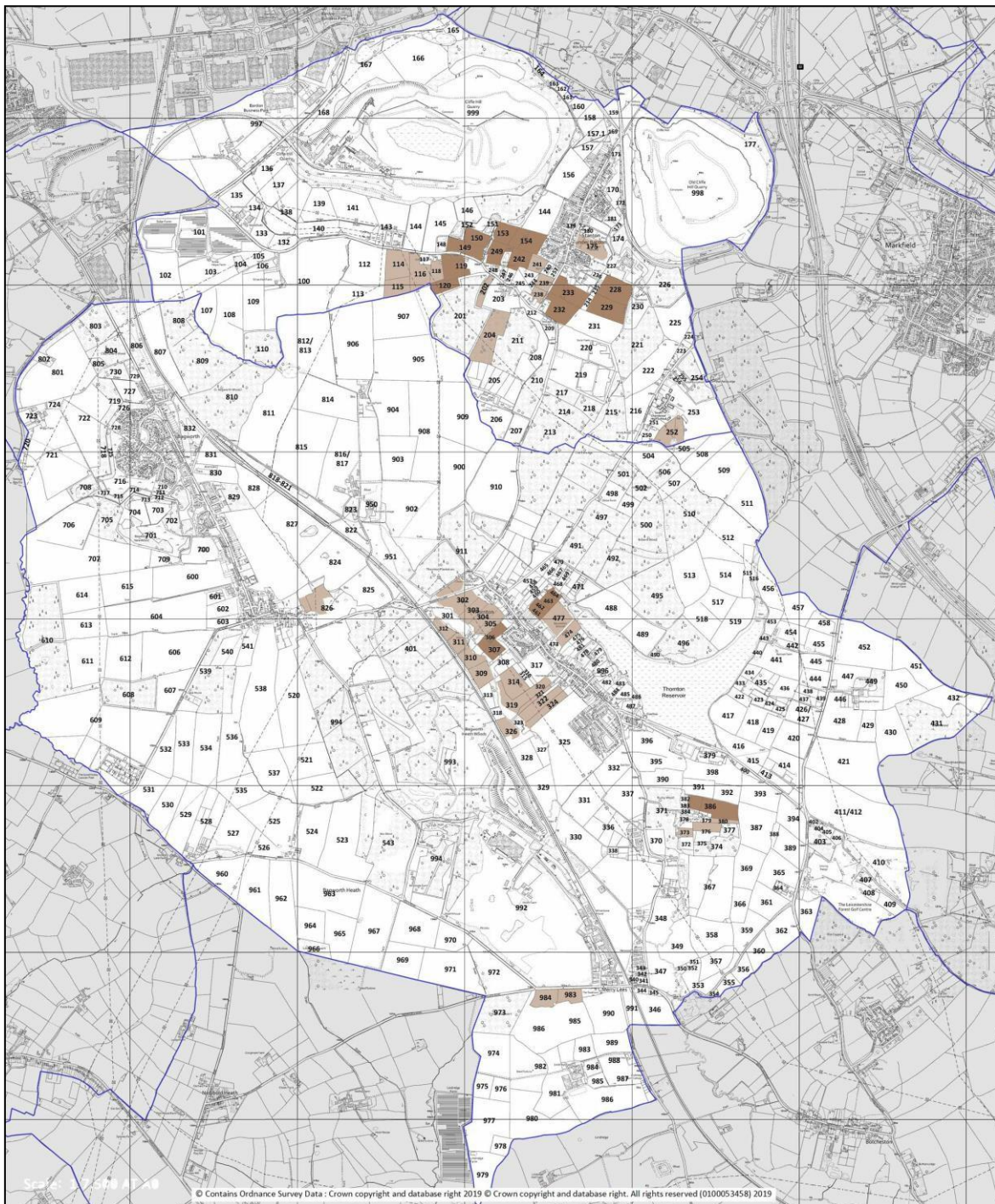


Figure 16: Surviving ridge and furrow in Bagworth, Thornton and Stanton-under-Bardon, 2019

Visible = light brown; well-preserved = dark brown



POLICY ENV 6: RIDGE AND FURROW - The areas of ridge and furrow earthworks mapped in figure 16 are recorded here as non-designated heritage assets. Any loss or damage arising from a development proposal (or a change of land use requiring planning permission) is to be avoided; the benefits of such development must be balanced against the significance of the ridge and furrow features as heritage assets.

5.5 Important Open Spaces

A group of sites have been identified in fieldwork, community consultations and in Parish records; most are existing Open Space, Sport & Recreation (OSSR) sites or Semi-natural Green Spaces as assessed and listed in the Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council *Open Space and Recreation Study*, 2016. A small number of additional sites, either post-dating the 2016 study or not recognised by the surveyors, were recorded during preparation of this Plan for their evident equivalent community value and OSSR eligibility.

Their value as open space and/or their current or potential value as community and environmental (biodiversity and climate change) resources are recognised in this Policy.

Schedule 1. Open Space. Sport and Recreation sites (HBBC listed) and other open spaces with OSSR equivalence.

17.1-Bagworth

BAG05 (HBBC reference) Northfield Road Amenity Green Space *Amenity Green Space* (HBBC typology)

BAG06 Station Road Amenity Green Space *Amenity Green Space*

BAG07 Jackson Road Amenity Green Space & children's play area *Amenity Green Space*

BAG08 Maynards Walk *Amenity Green Space* and *Children's Play Space*

BAG09 Park Lane Allotments *Allotments*

BAG10 Old Colliery Sports Ground, Off Station Road *Outdoor Sports Facilities*

BAG11 Bagworth Community Centre Green Space, Station Road *Amenity Green Space* and *Children's Play Space*

BAG12 Bagworth Bowling Club, Station Road *Outdoor Sports Facilities*

BAG NEW1 Daisy Close Amenity Green Space *Amenity green space (Persimmon Developments)*

A: Northfield Amenity Green Space *Amenity green space*

B: Jackson Road Corner Amenity Green Space *Amenity green space*

C: Jackson Play Area *Children and young people*

D: Murphy Drive / Chestnut Drive Amenity Green Space *Amenity green space*

E: Jackson Road South Amenity Green Space *Amenity green space*

17.2-Thornton

THO03 Thornton Allotments (north), Main Street *Allotments*

THO04 Thornton Primary School Playing Fields, Main Street *Outdoor sports facility*

THO05 Thornton Allotments (south), Main Street *Allotments*
 THO06 Thornton Community Centre, Play Space, 175 Main Street *Amenity green space*
 THO07 Thornton Recreation Ground, and Thornton Meadow, Main Street *Amenity green space*
 THO08 St Peters Churchyard, Church Lane *Cemeteries and churchyards*
 THO09 Warwick Close Amenity Green Space *Amenity green space*
 THO10 Highfields Amenity Green Space *Amenity green space*

17.3-Stanton-under-Bardon

STA04 St Mary and All Saints Churchyard and Memorial Garden, Main Street *Cemeteries and Churchyards and Amenity Green Space*
 STA05 Stanton-under-Bardon Recreation Ground, Main Street *Formal Park, Children's Play Space and Young Persons Facilities*
 STA06 Stanton-under-Bardon Community Primary School *Playing Fields Outdoor Sports Facilities*
 STA 07 St John Cole Crescent *Allotments*
 STA08 Main Street Allotments (North) *Allotments*
 STA14 South Charnwood College Grounds *Outdoor sports facility*
 F: Woodland margins, Recreation Ground *Amenity green space*

Schedule 2. Publicly accessible semi-natural green space (HBBC listed)

BAG13 Station Road Natural Green Space Station Road *Natural and Semi-Natural Open Space*
 BAG14 Bagworth Wood, East of Bagworth *Natural and Semi-Natural Open Space*
 BAG15 Bagworth New Wood, West of Bagworth *Natural and Semi-Natural Open Space*
 BAG16 Laurel Farm Wood, Barlestone Road *Natural and Semi-Natural Open Space*
 BAG17 Manor Farm, Thornton Lane *Natural and Semi-Natural Open Space*
 BAG23 Bagworth Heath Country Park *Country Park, Natural and Semi-Natural Open Space*
 BAG24 Chestnut Glebe, Stanton-under-Bardon Lane, NE of Bagworth *Natural and Semi-Natural Open Space*
 BAG25 Centenary Wood and Royal Tigers, Thornton Lane *Natural and Semi- Natural Open Space*
 BAG26 Woodland, The Hollow *Natural and Semi-Natural Open Space*
 THO11 Thornton Plantation, Stanton-under-Bardon Lane *Natural and Semi- Natural Open Space*
 THO12 Thornton Reservoir, Reservoir Road *Natural and Semi-Natural Open Space*
 THO17 Browns Wood, Markfield Lane *Natural and Semi-Natural Open Space*
 STA19 Markfield Lane woodland *Natural and Semi-natural Open Space*

POLICY ENV 7: IMPORTANT OPEN SPACES – The sites listed in Schedule 1 (above) and mapped in figures 17.1 – 17.3 are existing open spaces with a sport and/or recreation function, amenity value, or significance for the contribution they make to the Plan Area's setting and character.

Development proposals that result in their loss, or have a significant adverse effect on them, will not be supported unless the open space is replaced by equivalent or better provision in an equally suitable location, or unless it can be demonstrated that the open space's amenities are no longer required by the community.

The sites listed in Schedule 2 and mapped in figure 18 are recognised as publicly accessible semi-natural green spaces; their contribution to local amenity, health and wellbeing is very high and they have high biodiversity and carbon sequestration value. As they are an exceptional sub-class of open countryside for planning purposes, development proposals affecting them should only be for facilities enhancing their accessibility and community value and should cause no net biodiversity loss.

Figure 17.1: Important Open Spaces in Bagworth

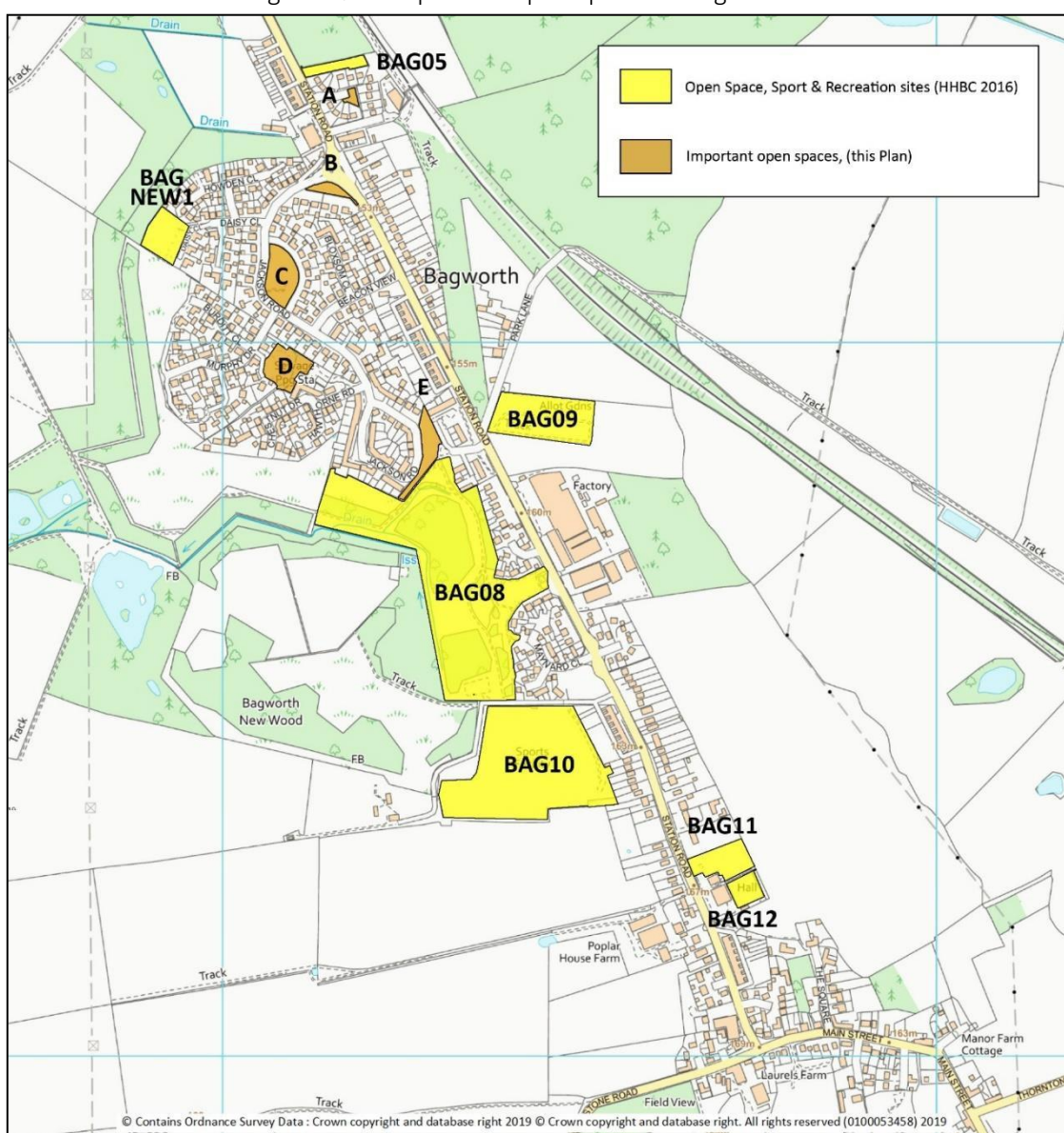


Figure 17.2: Important Open Spaces in Thornton

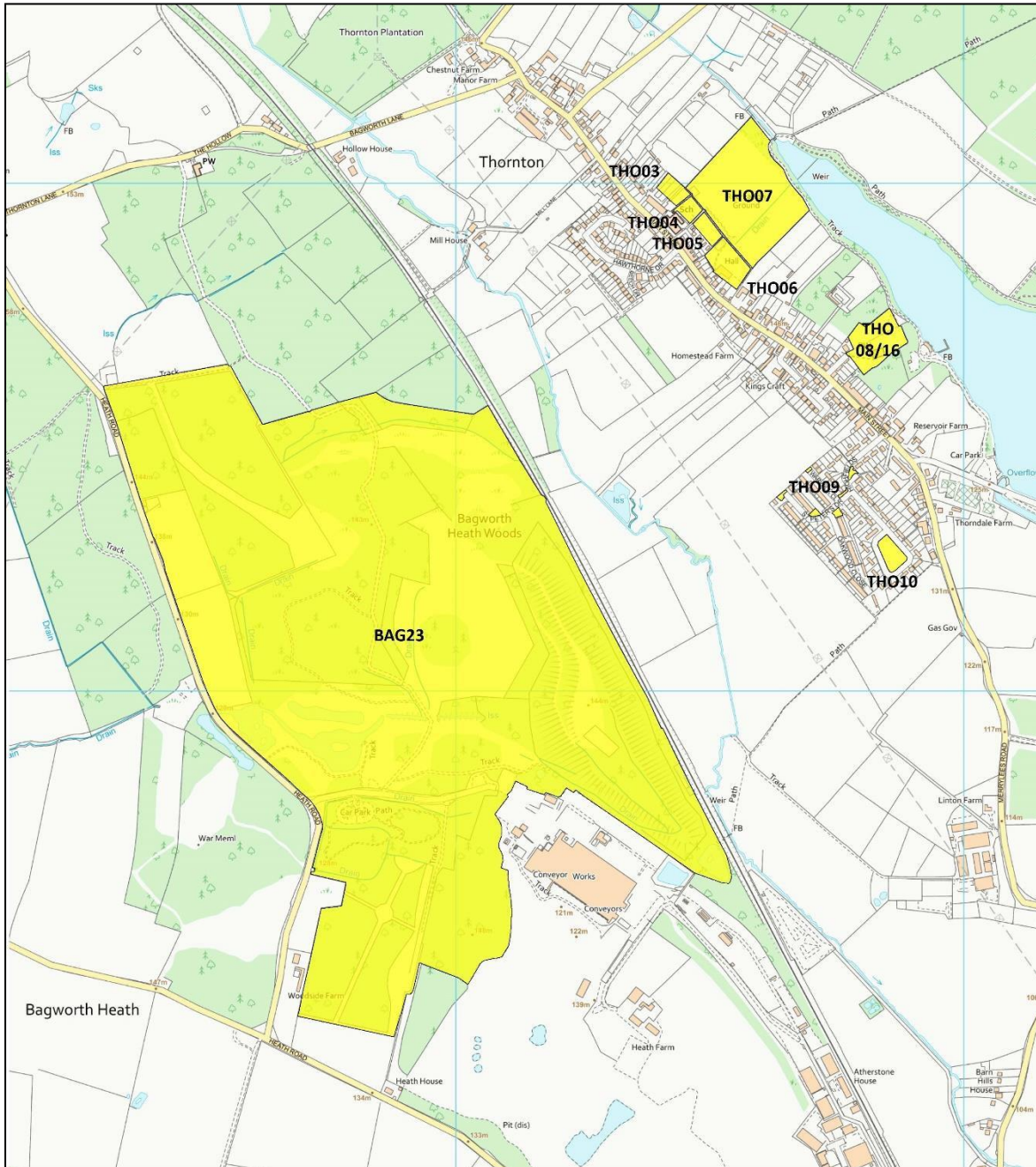


Figure 17.3: Important Open Spaces in Stanton-under-Bardon

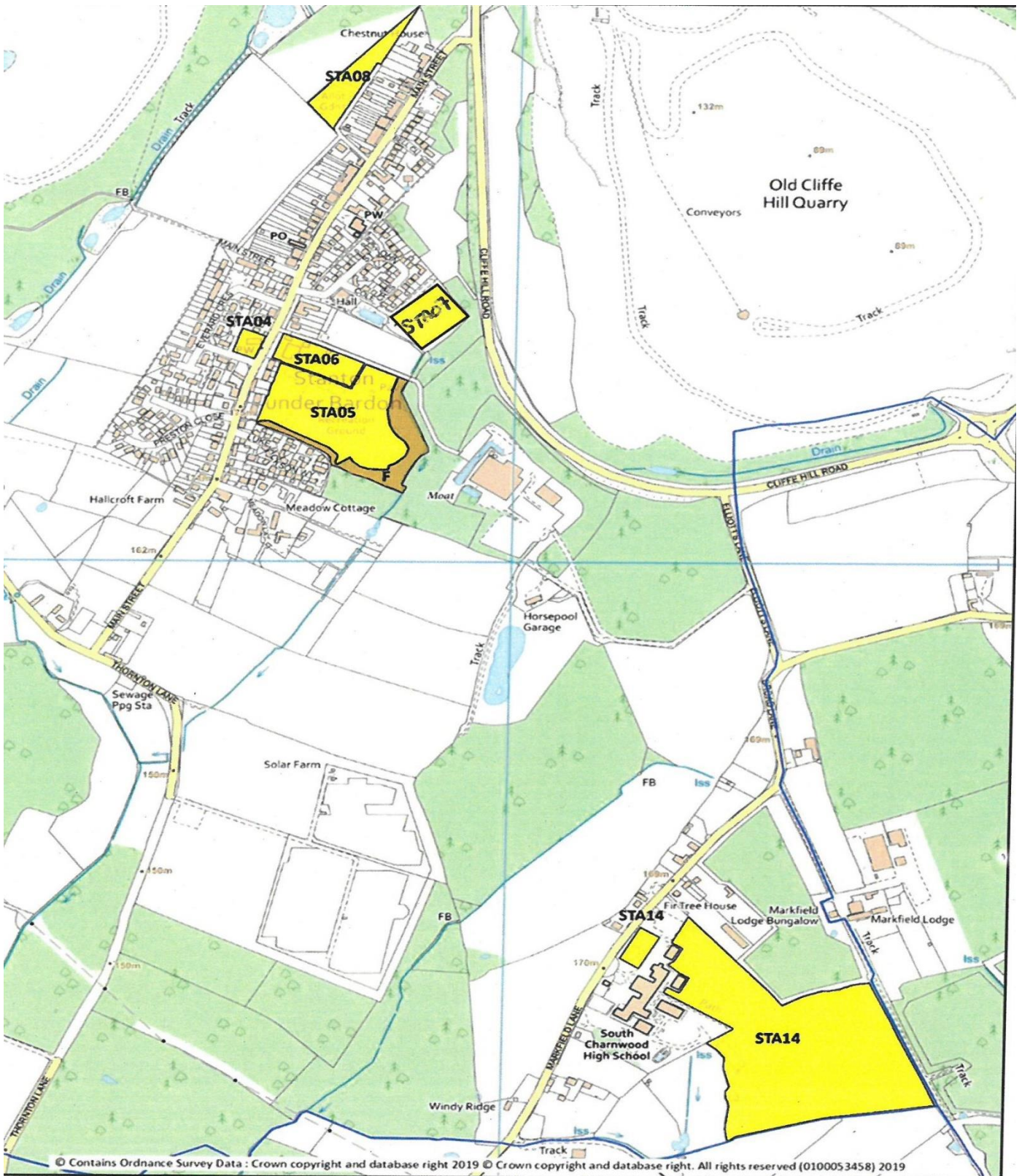
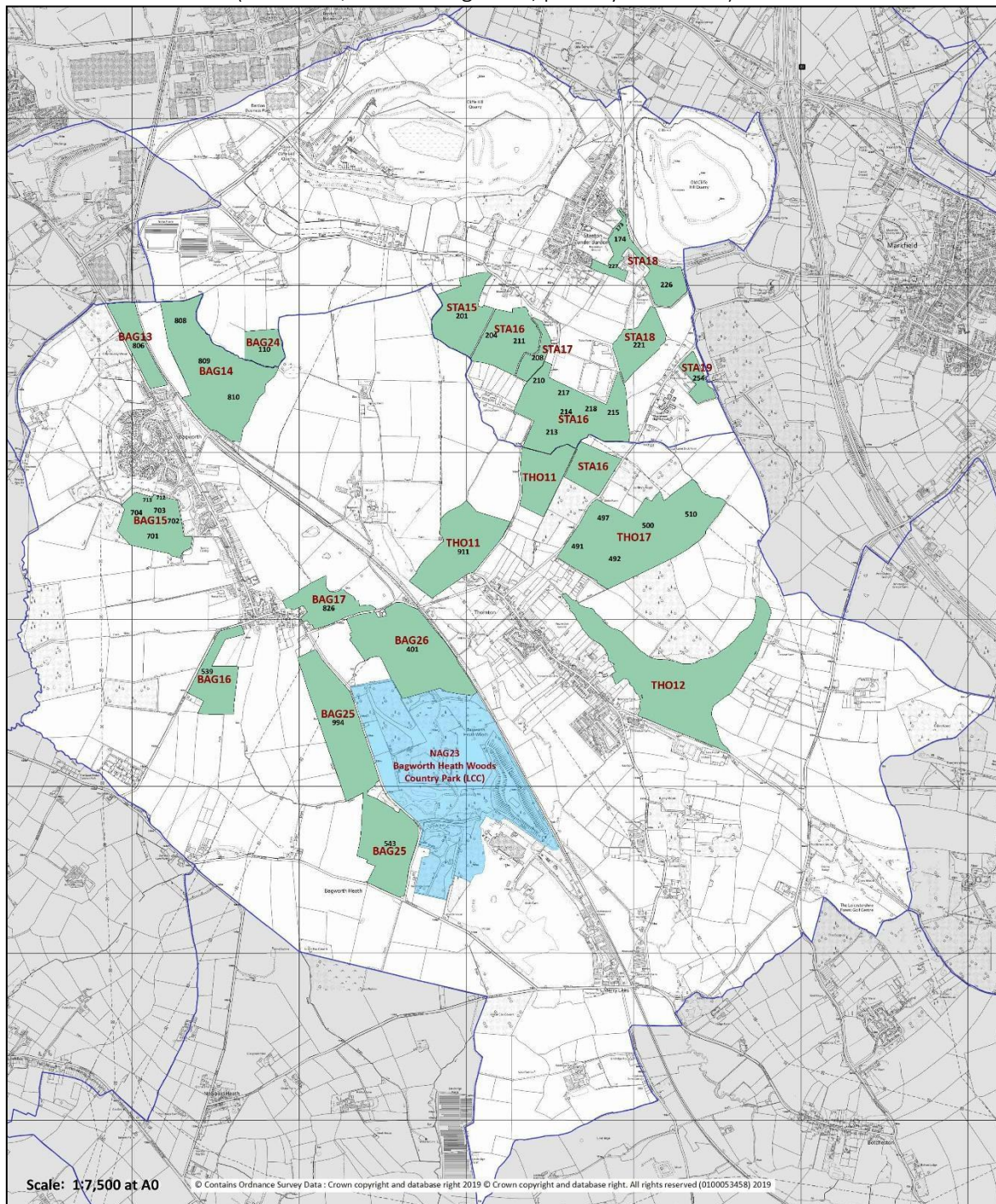


Figure 18: Semi-natural open space in the Plan area
(HBBC and/or LCC designated; publicly accessible)

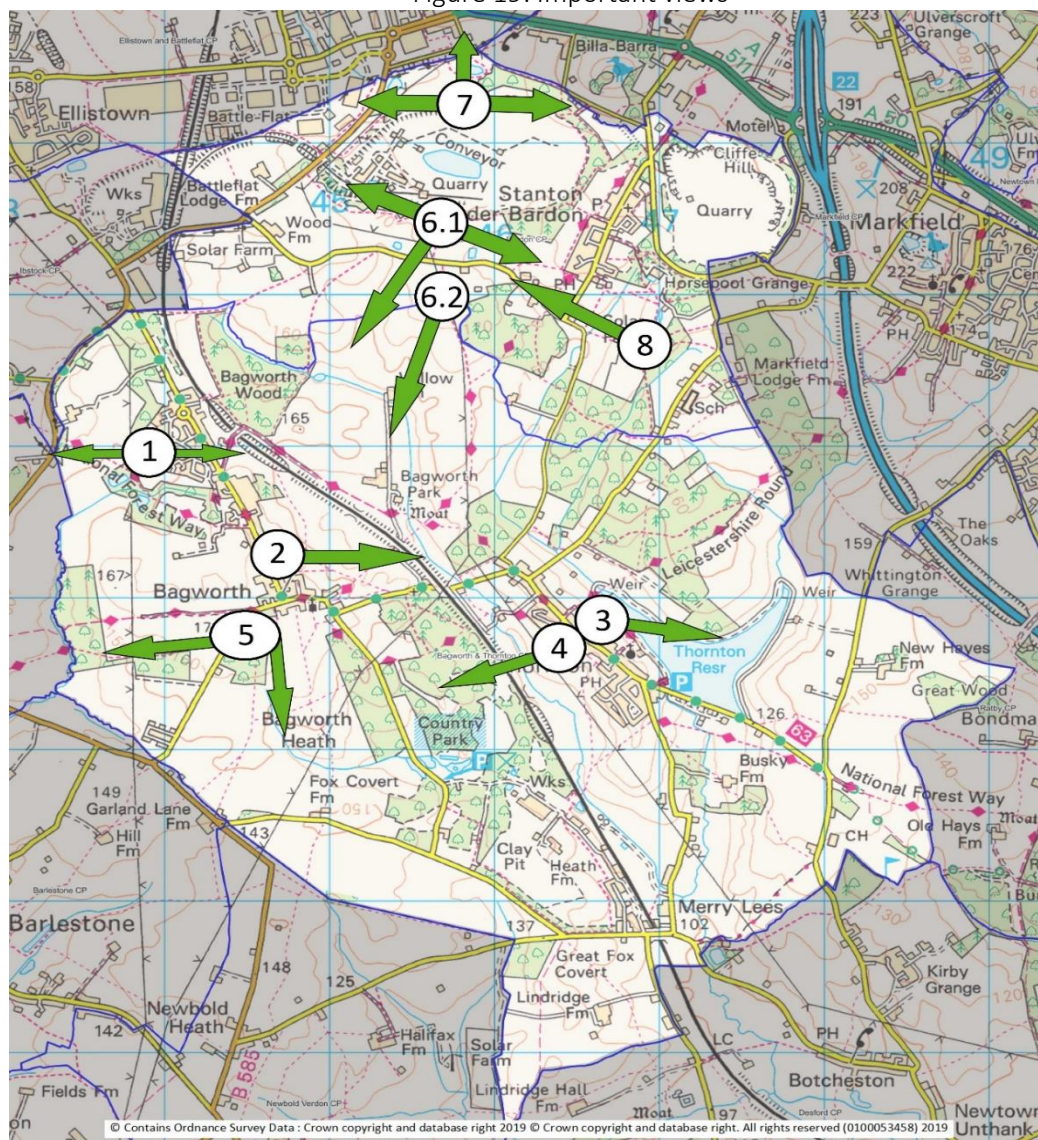


5.6 Important Views

Consultation during the Neighbourhood Plan's preparation identified a widely held wish to protect what remains of the rural settings of Bagworth, Thornton and Stanton-under-Bardon and their relationship with the surrounding landscape, in particular its hilly, wooded topography in the transitional landscape where the upland of Charnwood Forest meets the Midland Plain.

One of the main ways in which residents expressed this wish was by describing a number of highly valued views around the villages and toward the surrounding countryside from the several quite spectacular viewpoints. These consultation findings were supported by the environmental inventory, which although principally aimed at identifying sites of environmental significance, also confirmed the sightlines of the suggested views and mapped them (below, figure 19).

Figure 19: Important views



POLICY ENV 8: IMPORTANT VIEWS - Development proposals must consider, assess and address, with mitigation where appropriate, their impact on the important views listed below and mapped in figure 19, above.

1. From the summit of Bagworth Wood open space, east over the village of Bagworth and beyond toward Charnwood, and west over rural open countryside.



2. From the back of Bagworth community centre, east over the valley of Thornton Brook to high forested ground.



3. From Thornton recreation ground, east along Thornton reservoir in its bowl of hills.



4. From the west side of Thornton village, west over the Line of the historic Leicester & Swannington railway to Bagworth Heath country park.



5. From footpaths leading out of the high end of Bagworth village, south and west over rural open countryside.



6.1 On the perimeter footpath of New Cliffe Hill Quarry situated on the Southern side of Ellistown Lane there are panoramic views: - Southerly towards Bagworth, Westerly towards Ellistown and Easterly over the Southern end of Stanton-under-Bardon.



6.2 On the Northern side of Ellistown Lane the footpath crosses the parish boundary between Stanton, Thornton/Bagworth. As you cross over the boundary you have good views of Bagworth.



7. As you walk along the perimeter footpath on the Northern side of New Cliffe Hill Quarry you will reach its highest point. From here you have panoramic views, east towards Billa Barra Hill, north towards Bardon Hill (picture, right) and west over Beveridge Lane factory units towards Ellistown / Hugglescote.



8. From a viewpoint on the footpath south of Horsepool Grange, there are views to the West across the southern part of Stanton-under-Bardon.



6. Community Sustainability

6.1 Community Assets

6.1.1 Character and Histories of the Three Main Settlements

The Neighbourhood Plan area consists of two parishes and three main villages along with other outlying settlements. The three villages are Bagworth, Stanton-under-Bardon and Thornton.

Overall, the community facilities and amenities that exist in the Neighbourhood Plan area make a significant contribution to its vitality and sense of community. They have a positive impact on our sustainability, enhancing the quality of life for residents and providing the potential for social interaction.

To promote the on-going prosperity of the Parishes, it is essential that the existing community facilities and amenities are retained and continue to provide local services that sustain the vitality of the community.

At a national level, youth services over the last ten years have experienced reduced funding especially from the statutory sector. The Plan area would like to see support for youth clubs and activities targeted at young people. There are no statutory or voluntary youth groups in the Neighbourhood Plan area. There is a strong desire for greater support for young people's provision.

The importance of the existing facilities and amenities was highlighted in the community consultation questionnaire undertaken in June and July 2018. A total of 93 responses were received representing 29% of households in the Parishes. Respondents consider it of high importance to protect local heritage features, (86%), and village street scene and roadside boundaries, (78%). Good mobile and broadband services feature as the most valued aspect of community life, (75%). This is followed by more traditional aspects such as the pub, (68%), dog waste bins, (74%) and the defibrillator. A further survey was undertaken between August-October 2019. Some 292 residents were interviewed to represent the views across the three parishes. The results of these local surveys have been used to support the community aspirations set out in this document. The survey tool and summary of results is available in the supporting information.

6.1.2 Stanton-under-Bardon

Village Hall

Although it has only been open for six years or so, the hall is very busy with regular bookings throughout Monday to Friday, and especially popular for yoga, Pilates and numerous dance groups, and some mother and toddler groups. The kitchen is equipped to cater for large parties. The hall also accommodates the occasional bouncy castle for birthday parties and been hired out for several large weddings. Its proximity to the M1 makes it a popular choice for groups that come from out of the area.

The hall is managed by the Parish Council. The acoustic panels fitted in the hall by the Parish Council have helped to make it a particularly good venue for showing films and live music events, as the sound quality is very good. The Parish Council has also recently helped to fund some temporary staging and air conditioning units for the hall. The ethos is to provide a community facility and be a hub for the village so that villagers can meet up and get to know each other and feel part of the community. The Parish Council also aims to ensure the upkeep and maintenance of the hall whilst maintaining financial independence from the income received from bookings and events. There is a defibrillator in the village hall.

Medical Centre

There is no medical centre in Stanton-under-Bardon. With the exception of the newest road, over 91% of Stanton-under-Bardon residents said that they use Markfield Medical Centre. The rest use some 6 other local practices. There is a defibrillator in the Village Hall and at the Public House. Villagers use three main dental practices, all of which lie outside of the Parish. These are Coalville (30% of respondents) Loughborough (15%) and Leicester (12% of respondents).

The Old Youth Centre

The old youth centre has now been demolished, the land, previously owned by MQP quarry, has four executive homes constructed on the site.

The Village Shop

The shop is viewed as a vital resource for the village. There is a substantial percentage of the population who are elderly and unable to get to shops outside the village easily. When asked to prioritise developments likely to improve village life some 24% requested additional shops or

improving the local shop, with a further 18% requesting a local post office. Following the retirement of the previous shopkeeper, new owners have redeveloped the site. However, the Post Office are unwilling to open a post office in the village, and the mobile service has ceased.

St Mary & All Angels Church

Built in 1909, the Anglican Church is not a listed building. In addition to the area for worship it has a kitchen, toilets, car park and garden. The congregation is predominantly made up of elderly villagers although other villagers attend on occasions particularly the annual Christingle service. The survey showed that several villagers travel to churches outside the village (25% of those who responded in the survey).

The Old Thatched Inn

Stanton-under-Bardon now has one pub. The Old Thatched Inn, established in the 16th Century, has a garden, car park and upstairs living accommodation, is situated on the corner of Main Street and Meadow Lane and is owned by Marston's Brewery.

The Former Pub

The Old Plough public house is now a private dwelling, but there is still the original hand waterpump outside, which has historical significance, and is maintained by the Parish Council.

Stanton-under-Bardon Primary School

Established in 1909, the school is now an Academy which caters for children from Reception through to Year 6 and is rated 'Good' by Ofsted, (March 2020). It is situated on Main Street between the recreational ground and the newest housing estate. There is capacity for 120 children. The numbers increased 4 years ago when the school retained year 6 and South Charnwood School moved their intake to commence with Year 7. Children attend from Stanton-under-Bardon and other local villages.

The school is compact inside and has two outside classrooms (for which they apply for planning permission to keep every 5 years), a playground, a small play area with artificial grass and a small field. The school had hoped for some money from recent housing developments but has now been informed by the Parish Council that it is not eligible for any as there are still school spaces in Thornton and Markfield.

The school has tried to address parking concerns on Main Street and has seen improvements since staggering drop off and pick up times. There are breakfast and after-school clubs which

help, and a firm approach is taken to parking on yellow lines outside. Additional traffic has occurred whilst the road next to the school has been built and is now complete.

Broadband and mobile phone signal was a problem but has improved recently with only occasional difficulties. The school does not have its own kitchen and school meals are delivered from Ratby. The school runs on a tight budget but has a vision for improvements it would like to carry out. The outdoor classrooms have limited use due to lack of toilets. Among other things the school would like small toilets for the youngest children and a better use of space between the main school and the outdoor classrooms. They have currently decided against having a playgroup on site. The school shares premises maintenance management and IT support staff with other schools.

South Charnwood High School

South Charnwood is an academy high school, which admits pupils of all abilities from 11-16 years. The school is situated in twenty acres of open countryside and draws the vast majority of pupils from the nearby villages of Bagworth, Markfield, Thornton, and Stanton-under-Bardon. The school also welcomes a number of pupils from other areas and has educated several generations of local families since its opening in 1935. The most recent Ofsted Report (June 2019) judged the school to be 'Good' whilst recognising the Teaching and Learning & Assessment Outcomes as 'Outstanding'. It currently has 873 pupils on the roll, having received 302 applications for 174 places for September 2019. Local children are given priority.

Although Stanton-under-Bardon is only 1 mile away there is no recognised safe route for children to travel so pupils access a free bus service. Pupils from Markfield have access to pavements and need to pay for bus travel despite being further away.

The school considers itself part of the community, hiring the Sports Hall and Fields, the 3G Floodlit football pitch is hired out too, and rooms within the school. The school hosts SCUBA, (South Charnwood United Business Alliance group) an initiative linking the pupils with local business. Local survey indicates that for both High School and Community Colleges Stanton-under-Bardon students attend local designated schools.

The Recreation Ground

The recreation ground adjacent to the school is situated behind the school and is well used by the youth of the village and dog walkers. The Parish Council has installed a fenced multi-purpose games area, a zip wire and outside gym equipment, as well as play equipment and football posts. A new, larger, fenced multi-purpose games area has recently been constructed as there are often queues for the current one. The recreation ground is a crucial resource for the village and needs to be preserved.

Woodland

There is a wooded area at the rear of the recreation area. Not only is this used by dog walkers and public, but it also provides a wildlife habitat and creates a natural barrier to the noise and pollution of the main road and quarry. This is an important feature, as are the fields behind Everards Crescent and Preston Close, as they provide public footpaths, wildlife habitats, and a green barrier between the village and the quarry.

Allotments

There are two areas of allotments in the village - one on each side of the village. The land is owned by the Parish Council and the allotment holders pay a minimum rent. They are well used and well maintained and provide another important community resource, bringing together members of the community in a mutual and shared interest. The allotment holders are often generous enough to share their surplus produce with their neighbours and they have an annual get together.

Seating and Views

The view from the top of the village is outstanding and far-reaching and displays some spectacular sunsets. The bench placed on the corner provides a perfect resting place for walkers and cyclists, who often stop to enjoy the views and overlooks the nature reserve. Underneath this spot there is a hidden tunnel which links the two quarries. The nature reserve also conceals much of the old Cliffe Hill mineral narrow gauge railway line. There is new seating outside the primary school in front of the church provided by the Parish Council to commemorate the centenary of WW1.

Parishioners make a great deal of effort to provide a good display of fairy lights at Christmas, some even taking donations for charity, and the village is a sight to behold during the season, but families are also keen to participate in Halloween festivities and annual scarecrow competitions throughout the year.

Without Walls Christian Fellowship

Without Walls Christian Fellowship (WoW) is a Christian non-denominational church under the 'umbrella' of Together Trust, a worldwide charity (Togetherweb.net.) Together Trust own the building and land which was given in 2006 by Patricia Lines, whose family still live in the village. Without Walls is a separate charity, funding the activities of WoW.

The buildings comprise of a large meeting room, kitchen, toilets, a large room and outside space, an office room and living accommodation, currently let by a single member of the church. There is a car park at the front of the building which provides enough parking for the current use of the building. (approx. 25 spaces) Church members have been steadily renovating the building since 2006 and have received 50% Parish & Community Initiative Fund Grants from Hinckley & Bosworth Council to do so.

Church activities – The Church meets on Sundays and Tuesday evenings. Most of the congregation currently travel to the meetings from outside the village. One Sunday afternoon a month WoW host tea parties for elderly vulnerable people in connection with the local public health department (linked with social prescribing & Contact the Elderly). These events have been popular but limited to an average of 30-40 people due to taxi hire (paid for by Contact the Elderly). The events are open to people from Stanton-under-Bardon as well as other local villages. WoW run 4 singing cafes each week in community libraries, supporting and engaging with people with dementia and their families. WoW has links with St Mary's Parish Church in Stanton-under-Bardon and other local churches in Markfield and meet together monthly. WoW lead assemblies for the local school in the building 3 or 4 times a year. The buildings are hired for occasional use by churches and parties with a hire agreement. The Church car park may be used by people on Main Street, with permission.

War Memorial

Commemorating the men from the village who lost their lives in WWI (7) and WWII (6) is in front of the Church. Two Memorial benches stand in front of the school commemorating the Centenary of WWI and a further centenary monument stands in the grounds of the pub.

6.1.3 Stanton-under-Bardon - What Would Improve Life Within the Village?

Residents of Stanton-under-Bardon were interviewed and asked their top three priorities for improving the experience of village life. The top five in descending order are 1. Traffic concerns: including volume of vehicles, noise, pollution, speeding and HGVs. 2. Two issues tied: crime and anti-social behaviour, the other being broadband speed and mobile reception. 3. Improvements to community facilities and infrastructure, this being linked to the expected growth of the village. 4. Planning and future housing provision. 5. Parking. Other issues which scored well and deserve being recorded were elderly support, and public transport.

6.1.4 Bagworth

The few community facilities and amenities that exist in Bagworth area make a significant contribution to its vitality and shared sense of community. They have a positive impact on sustainability, enhancing the quality of life for residents and providing the potential for social cohesion and interaction.

To promote the on-going prosperity of the Parish, it is essential to retain and further develop the existing community facilities and amenities and to continue to provide local services that will sustain the vitality of the community.

Education

Primary

Bagworth did have its own primary school, but this is long gone. As a result, the Bagworth community lost a key element of village life. Most Bagworth primary children go to Dove Bank School in Nailstone. (52% of Bagworth residents who responded in the 2019 survey) with Thornton primary school taking 15%. The remaining respondents indicated that a further 11 other local schools are being used amounting to some 33% of the total. This demonstrates a wide dispersal of Bagworth pupils accessing local primary education. All these schools will require local transport arrangements. Children leaving Bagworth Preschool are often split from their village friends. The survey illustrates that of those parents in Bagworth who require pre-school facilities some 76% use it. Many parents access the Bagworth Family Hub, an adjacent building to the Bagworth Community Centre, to socialise and connect with village life. A long-term aspiration of Bagworth is to have its own Primary School. The recent development of housing units and future housing developments will contribute and drive a local request to reassess local education need of primary education. It is worth pointing out that most parents are required to transport their young pupils to school.

High Schools

The local survey indicates that some nine High Schools are accessed by Bagworth parents. The most popular is at Ibstock 58% followed by South Charnwood High School (Markfield) at 14%. The furthest high school used by parents is 9.5 miles from Bagworth.

Health

Bagworth does not have a dedicated GP Health Centre with access to primary care services. Currently access to Primary Care is either by public transport or by use of car. The parish is served by different surgeries with overlapping catchment areas. Access to appointments will require

transport. The local survey indicates that of those responses, 38% of residents accessed the Newbold Verdon Practice, 20% went to Ibstock Practice, followed by Hugglescote 14% and Barlestone 10%. The remaining 18% visited other practices as far away as Hinckley. The Bagworth Family Hub runs health clinic appointments to see a health visitor and Vitamins for a GP or self-referral.

Local housing developments will and have seen the number of residents who will require various treatment and preventative medical services rise and place a larger demand on local GP services. Bagworth age demography is changing in line with the national trend: medical services are required to serve an ever-increasing elderly population. Bagworth Sure Start has facilities (designated GP room) that could be offered to Primary Care. This would provide a basis for a part-time service. The Bagworth Community Centre has a community defibrillation unit.

Dentists

The result of the local survey indicates a large number of dental practices are being accessed for services. 28% of local respondents used a dentist in Coalville, followed by dental surgeries in Desford (23%) and Barlestone (12%). The remaining identified dental practices were some 11 in total and account for the remaining 37% of respondents who indicate their regular dentist.

Bagworth Community Centre

The Community Centre is very busy with regular bookings throughout Monday to Friday, and especially popular with local groups and societies. Some 17 local groups/societies use the centre on a weekly basis. The centre encourages local people to drop in for coffee, tea and home made food. Many village events are organized using the centre. The centre provides a focal point for the local community to meet and pursue social activities. There is a coffee bar available to visitors. The kitchen is well stocked for large parties. The hall also accommodates birthday parties, weddings, exhibitions and local craft shows. The proximity to the M1 makes us a popular choice for groups that come from out of the area.

The hall is managed by a small group of Trustees and employs two part time staff. The community centre has charitable status. The ethos of the Trust is to provide a community facility and be a hub for the village so that villagers can meet up and get to know each other and feel part of the community. The Centre is owned by the Parish Council and is supported by a reducing grant paid to the managing charity. There is a community automated external defibrillation unit installed.

Cross Hills Baptist Church

This church was established in the early 1800's by a group of dedicated Baptists that worshipped in Barton in the Beans together with local Baptists. It was for many years part of the Barton group, which had churches in Barlestone, Newbold, Barton, Congerstone as well as Bagworth. There have been several church buildings on the site of the existing church. A previous building had to be demolished because of mining subsidence. The existing building was funded largely by the local congregation with the help of various grants. It is a thriving group under the leadership of their own minister. Local survey results show that those respondents who, when asked about their place of worship, some 52% use this Baptist Church. Many other surrounding places of worship are also frequented depending on religious affiliation.

War Memorial

In the village there is a maintained War Memorial, which has a well-attended service of remembrance each year. The War Memorial is listed. The War Memorial has recently been restored with support from Bagworth and Thornton Parish Council.

Bier & Bier House

One of the few remaining historical buildings in Bagworth can be found on Main Street. The Bier House. Thomas Morton Bloxsom, a local farmer, donated a funeral bier to the residents of Bagworth in memory of his second wife Lucy. The Bier is for the use of all the inhabitants of Bagworth, at any place of worship or burial place within the Parish. Mr Bloxsom then built the Bier House to accommodate the bier in 1932. The land the Bier House stands on was given to the village by the Countess of Warwick.

The Bier is a movable frame on which a coffin is laid. It is hand pulled and has four wooden wheels with solid rubber tyres. It is steered by a front swivelling axle via the long handle.

The Village Shop (NISA)

The shop is a vital resource for the village. ATM is now available within the shop. There is now a Post Office facility within the shop. There is a substantial percentage of the population who are elderly and unable to get to shops outside the village easily. Bagworth residents would benefit from other retail outlets trading in the village. The Parish Council would offer support to such small-scale development. Bagworth residents travel outside the village to undertake their 'weekly shop'. This invariably means travelling to a supermarket. Most go to Coalville (68% of respondents) followed by Ashby -de-la-Zouch (16% of respondents). The remaining 19% use a further seven supermarkets, all out of area. Encouragement of a wider spectrum of local retail outlets would offset travelling mileage and support local niche businesses.

The Working Men's Club

Bagworth no longer has a classic country public house. The Working Men's club provides local employment as well as arts, entertainment, food and drink. The venue is a popular eating, drinking and meeting place for locals. Recent discussions aimed at improving the facilities and using some of the land site for development are currently on hold. The Parish Council is not involved in this potential development. Bagworth folk use a number of Public Houses with 22% of respondents using the Working Men's Club. In total some 16 Public Houses receive Bagworth patrons amounting to 78% of survey respondents. There are no restaurants or the like in Bagworth. The Community Centre has a thriving coffee bar offering food with some 26% of respondents using this facility. The survey also indicates a large number of out of area restaurants visited by Bagworth residents.

Allotments

There are allotments in the village. The land is owned by the Parish Council and the allotment holders pay a minimum rent. These allotments are well used, well maintained and provide another important community resource, bringing together members of the community in a mutual and shared interest. The facility is managed by a committee of volunteers.

Play Parks

There are several recreational parks, some of these having been created as part of the new housing developments in the village. These areas are well used by residents, are of good quality and have been specifically designed for children and younger teenagers. The Parish Council precept expenditure ensure these facilities are well maintained, safe and upgraded where necessary.

Football Pitches and other Recreational Facilities

Bagworth has a dedicated sports field with 5 football pitches. It runs teams for adults and young people. Additionally, there is a small public area near a park where informal football games are possible. The survey results show that some 88% of Bagworth respondents when asked, access their local recreation parks with a 95% having access to public footpaths. Other sports and leisure facilities outside Bagworth are also used with Hinckley and Coalville (Whitwick) accounting for 40% of survey respondents preferences. The Parish Council are always looking for partnerships with local football clubs to enhance the facilities available at the recreational ground.

6.1.5 Bagworth - What Would Improve Life Within the Village?

Residents of Bagworth were interviewed and asked their top three priorities for improving the experience of village life. The top three in descending order are: 1. Traffic issues, this included speeding, HGV and noise nuisance. 2. More retail outlets including shops and businesses to encourage local employment. This aspect to village well-being was often espoused in the context of improving the local infrastructure. 3. Access locally to GPs and primary care services tied with provision for young people.

Other recommended improvements which scored well and deserve being recorded were the need for local primary school, local transport, more community facilities. Planning and housing development were also in the forefront of many residents, with concerns and anxieties expressed about the impact of future development in Bagworth.

6.1.6 Thornton

Thornton Primary School

The school is an academy and is a member of the Symphony Learning Trust. The school was recently rated GOOD by Ofsted in 2023. It currently has 130 pupils aged four to eleven, with capacity for 140. Originally built in 1880, several permanent extensions have been added. In addition, there are currently two temporary mobile classrooms, and the library is also used as a classroom. Some classrooms are very small and the scope for further development on the small site appears to be limited. Some 86% of those who responded in the survey indicated that their children attended Thornton Primary School.

Children and Young People

The 2011 Census states that there are 213 people under the age of seventeen in the village (21.5%). The only organised activities currently available to them in Thornton are Brownies, who meet weekly, and the Play Group for children aged between two & five meeting on Monday to Friday. Both are held at the Community Centre.

Although Leicestershire County Council and Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council offer some youth services, these do not reach out to Thornton. The nearest youth clubs or specifically designated youth amenities (which are free to access) are in Coalville (North West Leicestershire). The survey indicates that those who responded to the question concerning Children and Youth Groups only 11% accessed clubs and activities within Thornton.

Hopefully the Thornton Community Development Project will identify and rectify some of these issues (see below).

Health

Thornton does not have a dedicated GP Health Centre. The parish is served by different surgeries with overlapping catchment areas. Access to appointments require transport. Thornton residents access six different GP Practices, of those who were included in the survey, 81% attended Markfield Medical Centre, 7% went to the Coalville Medical Centre, the remaining 13% attended their GP at Barlestone, Desford, Newbold Verdon and Ratby.

Dentists

There is not a dental practice in Thornton and most people use the practices in Desford, Barlestone and Coalville. The wide dispersal of Thornton residents accessing dental practices is worthy of record. In total some 14 different dentists were accessed by local residents.

Thornton Reservoir

The reservoir was originally built in 1854, has a surface area of 75 acres and a perimeter of 2.45 miles. When built, it was thought sufficient to serve Leicester's population of 58,000, and was the main source of water for the city until the opening of Bradgate Reservoir in 1871.

Thornton reservoir then served as a backup supply and was finally taken out of direct use in 1982. It is currently owned by Severn Trent and the water is now treated a few miles away at Cropston Reservoir to which it runs via Rothley Brook.

Since 1997 the reservoir and the surrounding land has been open to the public. Facilities include a small visitor centre, a sculpture trail, a woodland walk and a game fishery. Within the visitor centre is a small cafe and a bait shop which opens daily. Boats can be hired for fly fishing and the most common species of fish is trout. The National Cycle Network runs around the reservoir. There are also links with longer trails including the Leicestershire Round.



The reservoir was designated as a 'Wildlife Site' in 2005 due to its importance to local wildlife populations and is considered to be a major attraction by Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council.

Thornton Community Centre & Sports Hall

The Community Centre was built in 1973 and is the hub of village life with many groups using the facilities and holding events there. The main hall is ideal for all manner of events from private parties to concerts and is home to the Markfield and Thornton Theatre Group - the stage making it an ideal venue for local amateur dramatic productions.

Thornton Play Group uses the facilities each weekday morning. Thornton W.I. holds their monthly meetings there. The Brownies meet there weekly, as does an art class. The main hall is used as the venue for wedding receptions. More community events are being planned at the centre with quiz nights, folk concerts and, of course, the annual pantomime and plays. Outside the hall there is a large, grassed area leading to the children's playground and the footpath to the reservoir.

In addition to the main hall there is a self-contained sports hall with its own kitchen and toilets. In 2017 the trustees of the centre purchased sports equipment and started up a sports club. There are 4 table tennis tables and equipment plus a badminton court and equipment available. This has proved to be successful and enhanced the use of the centre. The Community Centre receives grant aid from Bagworth and Thornton Parish Council.

Thornton Meadows

These long-established meadows are currently being managed through an appropriate mowing regime. The south-east meadow is the richest in species and is reputed to be one of the finest types of wildflower grassland in Leicestershire.

The Leicestershire Round footpath cuts across the meadows. A playground and multi-use games area form part of the site - which is very well used by individuals and groups. A further section has been designated as a football area.

Thornton Village Shop

The Step-in convenience store (formerly known as Norm's) is on the corner of Main Street and Church Lane. The shop was destined for closure in 2012 as it struggled to find a buyer, but by 2014 it had completed a remarkable turnaround, being named Leicestershire's Village Shop of the Year. The shop sells everything you would expect from a local convenience store and has a Post Office.

The Fuchsia Centre (Thornton Nurseries)

This is a family run business that opened in 1963 and is located by the dam wall. The nursery grows over 85% of what is sold at the nursery and John Smith has been a panellist on Radio Leicester's gardening programme 'Down to Earth' since 1969. There is a popular café in the nursery.

Thornton Service Station

This too is a family run business and carries out repairs to a full range of vehicles although it no longer sells fuel.

St Peter's Church

The church and graveyard occupy an enviable position on the hillside overlooking the reservoir. Although there may have been an earlier church on this site, parts of the existing church, the aisle and nave, date from the 13th Century. The perpendicular style tower dates from the 15th Century. At the entrance is an impressive 14th Century wooden door, believed to be from the now derelict Lovecraft Priory.

Regular services are held at St. Peter's on most Sunday mornings, with a monthly mid-week communion service on the fourth Thursday morning of each month. The church also holds a Christmas Tree Festival during the weekend preceding Christmas. There is also a group called Little Angels, which is for babies, pre-school children and their carers.

The church is supported by the "Friends of St. Peter's", which was formed in 1995 by two parishioners. Almost twenty-five years later, the organization is thriving and, with the help of the community, has raised over £40,000 to fund many projects. These projects include the installation of water, toilets and kitchen facilities. Some 75% of local residents who answered, when asked, what place of worship they use, replied that they attend St Peter's Church.

The Thornton Club

The Thornton, formerly known as Thornton & District Working Men's Club is a social club offering a venue for various gatherings and social events. The club is very popular with locals. Live music events are held most weekends, live sports are shown on Sky and the club has pool & darts teams. During the winter the club is the weekly meeting place for Thornton Fly Fishers Club. The function room is available for private parties & catering can be provided.

The Bricklayers Arms

The pub is on Main Street in the heart of the village. It is a traditional country pub that serves food and has a large beer garden with children's play equipment. It is well run and very popular both with locals and visitors.

Allotments

The allotment sites, owned by the Parish Council, are located behind the terraced housing on Main Street, either side of the school. There are twenty-two plots in total, twelve are cultivated and the remaining ten are "allotment gardens". All are in use.

Public Footpaths

In addition to many local paths, there are three significant regional footpaths passing through the neighbourhood Plan area - The Ivanhoe Way, the Leicestershire Round and the National Forest Way.

6.1.7 Thornton - What Would Improve Life Within the Village?

Residents of Thornton were asked their top three priorities for improving the experience of village life. The top three in descending order are: 1. More community facilities and improving infrastructure to support the village. This included local shops. 2. Improve the provision of local public transport 3. Future planning developments saw number of views expressed. Some respondents wanted more social housing for local people, others did not want any further housing being fearful of over development.

Other adjudged improvements which scored well and deserve being recorded were keeping the essential countryside ambience i.e. don't spoil it with further development, organising village events, traffic congestion and local access to doctors' general practice.

6.1.8 Merry Lees

Merry Lees is a small settlement and industrial park. It forms a part of the Bagworth and Thornton civil parish. There are 2 housing groups: the old Merry Lees pit houses of the miners from the mine that was there until the early-1970s, and the private houses on Merry Lees Road on the road to Thornton. When the railway line used to take passengers (closed for passengers in 1964) there was a halt at the bridge in Merry Lees. Currently there are some 20 registered companies who trade from the Merry Lees Industrial Park. Local Parish residents are employed within the Park.

POLICY CA1: COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND AMENITIES - Development leading to the loss of existing community facilities in the Plan area will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that:

- there is no longer any need or demand for the existing community facility; or
- the existing community facility is, demonstrably, no longer economically viable or able to be supported by the community – such viability and support includes fundraising and volunteering by parishioners and others; or
- the proposal makes alternative provision for the relocation of the existing community facility to an equally or more appropriate and accessible location within the Parish which complies with the other general policies of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- proposals that improve the quality and/or range of community facilities, will be supported provided that the development:
 - will not result in unacceptable traffic movements or other disturbance to residential properties
 - will not generate a need for parking that cannot be adequately catered for
 - is of a scale appropriate to the needs of the locality and conveniently accessible for residents of the village wishing to walk or cycle;
 - takes into full account the needs of people with disabilities.

The communities in the Plan Area support the provision of new and improved facilities such as green community spaces, car recharging points, sports facilities, maintenance of the village halls and greater provision for young people.

6.1.9 Broadband and Mobile Phone Infrastructure

There is widespread recognition that mobile phone reception is inadequate, especially for 4G, and that this needs to improve. No service provider stands out as offering a superior reception. This situation also holds for Internet connections. Even in areas where fibre optic (i.e. fibre from exchange, copper to service user) connections are offered, the upload and download speeds are not what the service provider often claims. Many properties can now obtain superfast fibre broadband with download speeds of 70-80 mbps. There are weak spots within all local villages where subscribers get an inadequate phone signal. In Bagworth, areas around the new estate and shop are examples of poor mobile connection. This is known to impact negatively on the ability of people to work effectively from home. A new 4G mast has recently been erected in Bagworth and Stanton-under-Bardon has also had a new mast installed but this only benefits 59 users on the Three (3) Network. In Thornton, the mobile signal and broadband service is generally

good. All the 3 parish residents when asked to prioritise an aspect of village life that would be beneficial highlighted the need to improve mobile phone services and internet speeds.

Mobile phone masts for 5G are currently being rolled out across England. This is likely to improve reception but will focus attention on the appropriate location of new masts.

POLICY CA2: BROADBAND AND MOBILE PHONE INFRASTRUCTURE - Proposals to provide access to superfast broadband for all businesses and households in the Plan area will be supported.

- a. Improvements to the mobile telecommunication network that will serve all businesses and households within the Parishes will be supported. Where new masts are installed, these should be shared where possible by more than one provider.**
- b. Any infrastructure improvements, possibly requiring above ground network installations, must be sympathetically located, designed to integrate into the landscape and not be in or near to open landscapes.**

6.2 Transport and Traffic

6.2.1 Traffic Management

There are high levels of traffic in the Plan area as residential development has resulted in more domestic vehicles and more commuting to work and leisure pursuits. Meanwhile, the increase in employment development has generated more commercial traffic. The local survey returns from all three parishes yield strong positions on traffic speed, violations by HGV and concerns over the likely consequences of future planning with regards to traffic volume and parking.

As a consequence of these ongoing developments, traffic and road safety is of great concern to residents.

Parking is an inevitable issue as traffic increases and solutions would be greatly welcomed – such as a review of parking restrictions and the provision of additional car parking facilities. The provision of adequate parking for all new housing and commercial developments is also crucial in order to prevent a worsening of the issue.

Feedback from the Bagworth and Thornton Parish Plan 2008, showed that of greatest concern was speeding, (64% of respondents), volume of traffic, (54%), followed by issues of street parking, (50%) and HGV movement, (31%). Bagworth traffic data from its recent monitoring/traffic speed indicator indicates that all traffic arriving from Park Lane achieves a 36% speed violation (over 30 mph). In the opposite direction the % violation is 18.4%

There are a number of cycle lanes recently created and cycling is not considered to be an issue in the Plan area.

Stanton-under-Bardon

Traffic has significantly increased in recent years and is set to increase further as new developments are completed. Speeding vehicles are a concern of many residents. Some recall children being able to play games in the street as recently as 5 years ago. This is certainly not safe to do now. There are problems with traffic and parking on the school run and there are also problems with HGVs using the village as a cut through. Residents feel that traffic calming is required. In the local survey of Stanton residents, 24% rated traffic issues as important. These village problems included volume of traffic, parking and speeding. Many reported the need for traffic calming measures and HGV violations.

Bagworth

Traffic flow through Bagworth has been a vexed issue for many a year, with local parishioners, due to the village having a straight “main drag” of some $\frac{3}{4}$ mile (1.2 kilometres). Some years ago Leicestershire County Council conducted a traffic speed survey resulting in the installation of chicanes. The reduction in drivers who exceed the speed limit is disappointing. For chicanes to be effective they rely on flowing traffic from both directions. Without this, speeding drivers have a straight line through the chicanes rendering them ineffective. HGV lorries are often witnessed passing through the village. The imposed weight restrictions are regularly ignored. This is an issue of enforcement. Bagworth & Thornton Parish Council’s speed monitoring sensors provides regular data on passing vehicle speed (see above 6.2). The survey of Bagworth residents indicates that some 14% of respondents when asked the 3 most important issues that would improve the life in the village, cited traffic issues including speeding and noise.

Thornton

Traffic, access, and parking are major concerns for parishioners. Historically this matter has been a frequent concern at Parish Council meetings and concerns have been expressed to the local Highways Authority.

Thornton has a number of on-going parking problems surrounding the reservoir and Main Street. There are many terraced houses in the village, none of which have off road parking spaces. In some instances, bus and other large vehicle passage through the village is hindered.

There are no easy or quick solutions to parking capacity, indeed some solutions may impact on other party’s current rights and interests. For example, yellow lines may be of benefit to through traffic but make local parking even more difficult. Thornton reservoir has a car park and Severn Trent Water has already indicated that enlarging car park capacity is not in their current capital

expenditure plans. However, Severn Trent has indicated that they wish to meet and work with concerned residents to discuss parking and access to the Reservoir.

Parking around the school during drop off and pick up times is a particular problem. Potential parking solutions could include the following and will be taken up by Parish Council as appropriate:

- stipulating the number of car parking spaces per residence.
- developers to wholly mitigate for their own traffic generation and impact.
- small access roads to residences off the main road.
- review of parking restrictions.
- a defensible parking strategy with clear recommendations for planning departments.
- Thornton has no current parking restrictions in place. This needs to be reviewed with the relevant authorities.

POLICY TT1: TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT - With particular regard to the rural highway network of the Parishes and the need to minimise any increase in vehicular traffic all housing and commercial development must:

- a) be designed to minimise additional traffic generation and movement through the village;
- b) incorporate sufficient off-road parking;
- c) not remove or compromise the use of any existing off-road parking areas unless a suitable equivalent alternative is provided;
- d) provide any necessary improvements to site access, communal parking and the highway, network either directly or by financial contributions; and
- e) make provision for the improvement and where possible the creation of footpaths and cycleways to key village services.

6.2.2 Electric Vehicles

The UK government has recently announced its intention to ban sales of new petrol and diesel cars from 2040 to combat rising levels of air pollution and address climate change concerns. The implication is that the number of electric vehicles on the road will certainly increase rapidly during the lifetime of this Plan.

This raises the crucial question of battery recharging. Residential charging is a current norm. It is important to include requirements for home charging in all new developments within the Parishes.

However, residential charging is only possible where off-road parking is available. It does not help residents of houses without on-site parking in the Plan area. Commercial/communal rapid charging facilities are growing across the country making use of 3-phase supply not possible at the domestic level and reducing the 7KW re-charge time by a factor of 3. These should be utilised in the Neighbourhood Plan area.

POLICY TT2: ELECTRIC VEHICLES - Residential development of one dwelling or more should provide 7kW cabling, or better if feasible, to the most practical point in the home to facilitate subsequent installation of a home electric vehicle charging point.

The provision of communal vehicular charging points within the Plan area will be encouraged so long as there is universal access and they do not impact negatively on the availability of existing parking.

6.2.3 Bus service

Bagworth and Thornton have a regular hourly service between Coalville and Leicester which is generally felt to be good. Stanton-under-Bardon has a two-hourly service between Coalville and Leicester, which is therefore less satisfactory and doesn't enable residents to get to work on time. Consequently, car use is the only suitable means of transport for many. The survey of Stanton-under-Bardon residents indicated that local transport was an issue. In Stanton-under-Bardon when a survey sample of residents were asked what would improve village life, some 17% of respondents cited local transport links. Some 60% of these respondents in Stanton-under-Bardon were in the age group 55-65+

6.2.4 Rail Service

The Neighbourhood Plan area is not served by a railway station although a railway line passes through the NP area which is currently only used for freight. As recently as June 2009, the Association of Train Operating Companies recommended reopening the line to passenger services with stations at Kirby Muxloe, Bagworth, Coalville, Ashby-de-la Zouch, Moira and Church Gresley. This development has local support given by local business leaders for the reopening of the line to form part of Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership's (LLEP's) Growth Plan. Bagworth & Thornton Parish Council would support the reinstatement of this local railway link. Bagworth still has a disused railway station, which could also be reinstated. The future development and the revival of this railway link remains uncertain.

6.3 Business and Employment

For a community to flourish, good employment opportunities are essential. There are limited local employers and businesses within the Neighbourhood Plan area but significant employment centres, such as Hinckley, Coalville and Leicester are nearby. For example, several residents of the area work at Amazon in nearby Ellistown. Additionally, the area is very close to the motorway network, making possible commutes to cities such as Coventry and Birmingham. Taken as a whole, by aggregating the survey results across the three parishes, some 25% (291) indicated that they would support improvements in infrastructure and developing local facilities. Respondents did not always specify what community development they would support, but in many cases local employment, local retail businesses and local services were mentioned e.g. doctors, dentists etc. However, some local priorities are strongly viewed. Respondents indicated that they wanted to keep the unique integrity of their villages, and that there would need to be careful and appropriate planning in any proposed developments.

6.3.1 Support for Existing Businesses

It is important therefore to protect the small business and employment opportunities that exist within the area. These currently include Forterra, the brick making company, at Merry Lees business park; there is a nationwide landscaping company; Flowgas; truck dealership; a dance school along with over a dozen other businesses. Elsewhere in the parish there is injection molding, engineering, chicken produce, motor engineers, a film prop company, a blacksmith, pub refurbishers, heating engineers and joiners.

POLICY BE1: SUPPORT FOR EXISTING BUSINESSES & EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES - There will be a strong presumption against the loss of commercial premises or land that provides employment or future potential employment opportunities. Applications for a change of use to an activity that does not provide employment opportunities will only be supported if it can be demonstrated that:

- a. the commercial premises or land in question has not been in active use for at least 12 months with no realistic potential for reoccupation or redevelopment for employment generating uses; and
- b. the commercial premises or land in question has no potential for either reoccupation or redevelopment for employment generating uses, as demonstrated through the results both of a full valuation report and a marketing campaign lasting for a continuous period of at least six months.

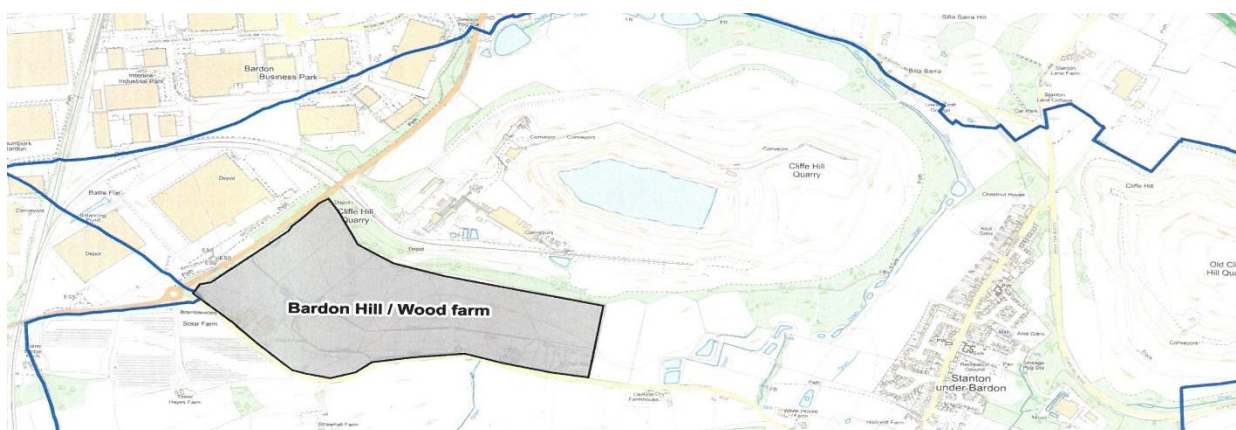
6.3.2 Support for New Businesses and Employment

There is also a strong desire to encourage new local businesses of an appropriate scale to set up and be sustained in the Neighbourhood Plan area. To achieve this there is a desire to encourage a wide spectrum and diversity of small businesses through the enabling small business units, designation of land within the area suitable for business development, conversion of property for business use, charities offering services to local residents, retail outlets and home working.

It is, however, very important that businesses are appropriate to the area. For example, residents of Stanton-under-Bardon in particular feel that the rural/agricultural nature of the village and its surrounds is being seriously threatened by developments. For example, despite empty warehouse units very nearby, more are planned.

The Bardon Hill Industrial Estate, although predominantly within Northwest Leicestershire, has a large extension into Hinckley & Bosworth and within the neighbourhood area

Figure 19: Bardon Hill Business Park (HBBC Policy DM19, Neighbourhood Plan policy BE2)



Proposals should only be approved if they avoid harmful impacts on other matters of locally importance, such as increased traffic flows, parking, residential amenity, the preservation of historic/heritage assets and the local environment.

POLICY BE2: SUPPORT FOR NEW BUSINESSES AND EMPLOYMENT - In supporting additional employment opportunities, new development will be required to:

- a) fall within the settlement boundary, or the Bardon Hill Industrial Estate (see figure 19) unless it relates to small scale leisure or tourism activities, or other forms of

commercial/employment related development appropriate to a countryside location or there are exceptional circumstances;

- b) where possible, development should be sited in existing buildings or on areas of previously developed land;
- c) be of a size and scale not adversely affecting the character, infrastructure and environment of the village itself and the Neighbourhood Plan area, including the countryside; and
- d) not involve the loss of dwellings

6.3.3 Home Working

There is an increasing national trend to home working. This trend is reflected in the Neighbourhood Plan area – types of homeworking include driving instructors, furniture making, upcycling, builder, author, tutoring, dog trainer, cake making, aerial engineer, pony parties, rare chicken breeder, service engineers, holistic healing, and printing.

Therefore, as the area develops and grows, it must increasingly accommodate and support the needs of residents who are working from home. This will include good internet and mobile phone infrastructure and opportunities within the area to allow businesses to develop and grow. The provision of meeting spaces and workshops would create opportunities for residents and potentially enhance their business and employment opportunities.

Residents who wish to move to home working may need to make adaptations to their homes. Therefore, some construction of extensions, the conversion of outbuildings and the development of new freestanding buildings in gardens from which businesses can operate will be supported. This is intended to maximise the opportunities for entrepreneurial activity and employment in the Neighbourhood Plan area. It is also important that any future housing development within the villages should include accommodation that can promote home working.

POLICY BE3: HOME WORKING - Proposals for the use of part of a dwelling for office and/or light industrial uses, and for small-scale free-standing buildings within its curtilage, extensions to the dwelling or conversion of outbuildings for those uses, will be supported where

- such development will not result in unacceptable traffic movements and that appropriate parking provision is made.
- no significant and adverse impact arises to nearby residents or other sensitive land uses from noise, fumes, light pollution, or other nuisance associated with the work activity; and
- any extension or free-standing building shall be designed having regard to policies in this

Plan and should not detract from the quality and character of the building to which they are subservient by reason of height, scale, massing, location or the facing materials used in their construction.

6.3.4 Farming and Farm Diversification

The Neighbourhood Plan area seeks to retain its essentially rural area and to protect a green buffer zone between itself and the urbanised areas beyond. Farming is important, in part, because farms represent open rural spaces in an area that is becoming increasingly urbanised.

The area still contains much agricultural land, some of which is Parish Council owned and rented to farmers in both Stanton-under-Bardon and Bagworth, some is owned by the nearby quarry and some is owned and farmed by parishioners. Local farming is diverse: including arable, livestock and equestrian. Some farms have benefited from the opportunities provided by the National Forest and another has diversified into coppicing for biomass boilers.

Farming must be sustainable and therefore the opportunity for farmers to diversify is to be encouraged so long as the rural setting is maintained.

POLICY BE4: FARM DIVERSIFICATION - The conversion of existing agricultural and commercial buildings will be supported subject to:

- a. the use proposed is appropriate to the rural location;
- b. the conversion/adaptation works respect the local character of the surrounding area;
- c. the development will not have an adverse impact on any archaeological, architectural, historic or environmental features;
- d. the local road system can accommodate the traffic generated by the proposed new use and adequate parking can be accommodated within the site;
- e. there is no significant adverse impact on neighbours through noise, light or other pollution, increased traffic levels or increased flood risk.

7. Monitoring and Review

The Neighbourhood Plan will last up to 2039. During this time, it is likely that the circumstances which the Plan seeks to address will change.

The Neighbourhood Plan will be regularly monitored. The policies and measures contained in the Neighbourhood Plan will form the core of the monitoring activity, but other data collected and reported at the Parish level relevant to the delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan will also be included.

Each Parish Council proposes to formally review the Neighbourhood Plan regularly to coincide with the review of the Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan if this cycle is different.