

# TWYFORD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

2018 – 2038

## Referendum Plan

PUBLISHED BY

Twyford Parish Council under the Neighbourhood  
Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

**MAY 2023**



# GUIDE TO READING THIS PLAN

Of necessity, this Neighbourhood Plan is a detailed technical document. The purpose of this page is to explain the structure and help you find your way around the plan.

## 1. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

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This section explains the background to this Neighbourhood Plan.

## 2. THE NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA

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This section details many of the features of the designated area.

## 3. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

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This rather technical section relates this Plan to the National Planning Policy Framework and the planning policies of Wokingham Borough Council.

## 4. COMMUNITY VIEWS ON PLANNING ISSUES

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This section explains the community involvement that has taken place.

## 5. VISION, OBJECTIVES & LAND USE POLICIES

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This key section firstly provides a statement on the Neighbourhood Plan Vision and Objectives. It details Policies which are proposed to address the issues outlined in the Foreword and in Section 4. These Policies are listed in Table 1. There are also Policy Maps at the back of the plan.

## 6. IMPLEMENTATION

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This section explains how the Plan will be implemented and future development guided and managed. It suggests projects which might be supported by the Community Infrastructure Levy which the Parish Council will have some influence over. Finally, it deals with a number of issues which although relevant are outside the scope of a Neighbourhood Plan.

FOREWORD

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## FOREWORD

We resolved in 2018 to develop a Neighbourhood Plan.

The Planning Committee chairman organised a public meeting to explain the process to write a plan and asked for volunteers to join the Council's working group.

This working group, led by the Parish Council, met to develop a questionnaire, which was delivered to every house in Twyford. The results were presented and discussed at a well attended public meeting in 2019.

Based upon this information the working group produced the draft plan, albeit with a delay due to Covid. This draft plan is now out for consultation.

The final Plan will then be subject to a further consultation carried out by Wokingham Borough Council, an examination and finally a referendum. If successful the Plan will be 'made' (adopted) by Wokingham Borough Council to use in determining planning applications in Twyford.

I hope many residents will read and respond to the public consultation. The Neighbourhood Plan is one of the most important documents produced by the Parish Council in recent times. It forms a set of policies that, we expect, will shape future changes in a way that means Twyford retains its identity as a welcoming and supportive community, for many years to come.

Roy Mantel

Chairman

Twyford Parish Council

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## 1. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

1.1. Twyford Parish Council is preparing a Neighbourhood Plan for the area designated by the local planning authority, Wokingham Borough Council (WBC), on 6 August 2018. The area coincides with the parish boundary (see Plan A on page 4). The plan is being prepared in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations of 2012 (as amended).

1.2. The purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to set out a series of planning policies that will be used to determine planning applications in the area in the period to 2038. The Plan will form part of the development plan for the Wokingham Borough, alongside the adopted Wokingham Borough Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (MDDLDP) 2014, which will eventually be replaced by the emerging Wokingham Borough Local Plan 2038 and will cover the same period.

1.3. Neighbourhood Plans provide local communities with the chance to manage the quality of development of their areas. Once approved at a referendum, the Plan becomes part of the Council's statutory development plan and will carry significant weight in how planning applications are decided in the neighbourhood area. Plans must therefore contain only land use planning policies that can be used for this purpose. This often means that there are important issues of interest to the local community that cannot be addressed in a Plan if they are not directly related to planning. Although there is scope for the local community to decide on its planning policies, Neighbourhood Plans must meet all of the relevant basic conditions (see Figure 1 below).

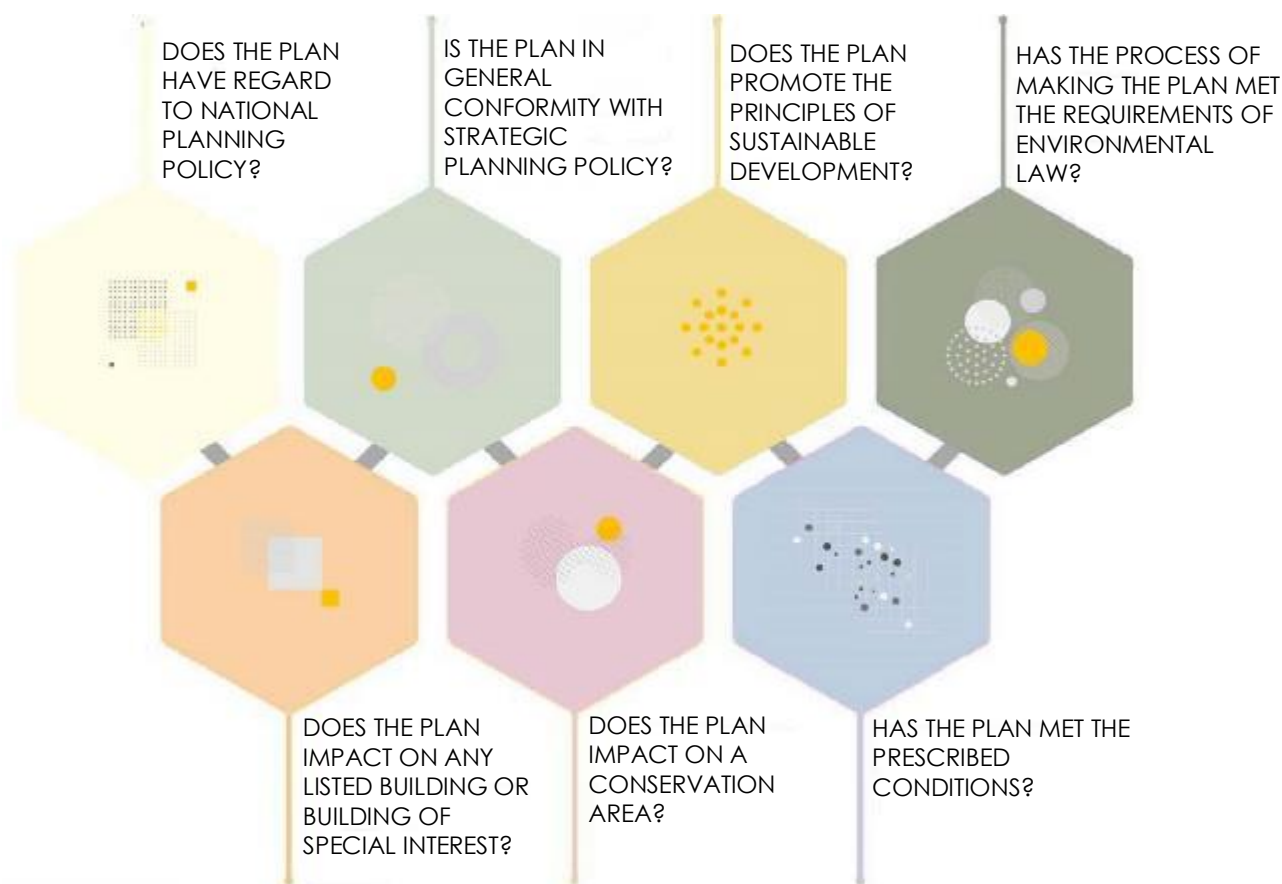
1.4. In addition, the Parish Council will need to demonstrate to an independent examiner that it has successfully engaged with the local community and stakeholders in preparing the Plan. If the examiner is satisfied that it has, and considers the Plan meets the above conditions, then the Plan will go to a referendum of the local electorate. If a simple majority (over 50%) of the turnout votes in favour of the Plan, then it becomes adopted as formal planning policy for the neighbourhood area.

### THE LEVELLING UP AND REGENERATION BILL

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1.5. The Government has recently consulted on proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill (LURB) is currently passing through Parliament. It expects to publish a new NPPF and enact the LURB in spring 2023, but there are further changes to the NPPF proposed by the end of the year in relation to the LURB. The proposed amendments continue to indicate that there remains a future for neighbourhood planning.





#### 1 Neighbourhood Plan Basic Conditions

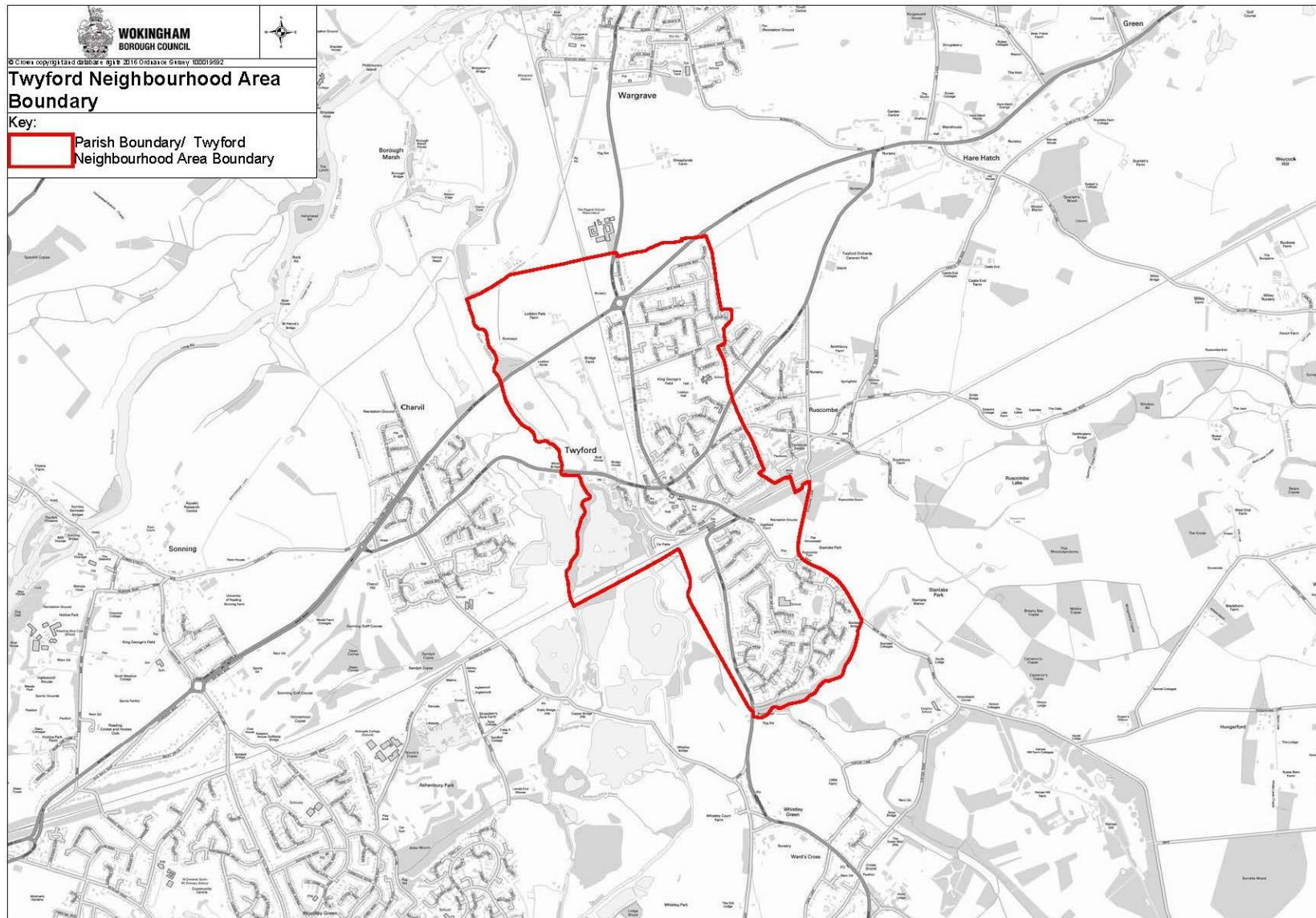
### THE PRE-SUBMISSION PLAN

1.6. A draft ('Pre-Submission Plan') was published for consultation in April – May 2022 in line with the Regulations. The Parish Council has reviewed the comments received from the local community and other interested parties, including Wokingham Borough Council, and have made changes to this final version, as well as updating some of its own evidence and reports published separately in the evidence base. A Consultation Statement setting out more details on consultation is published alongside this final version, in line with the Regulations.

### STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT & THE HABITATS REGULATIONS

1.7. WBC issued a formal screening opinion which states that the proposals of the Neighbourhood Plan do not have the potential for significant environmental effects and therefore no strategic environmental assessment (SEA) is necessary. This has been confirmed following consultation with the statutory consultees, in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans & Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended).

1.8. The statement also confirmed that the designated Neighbourhood Area does not include, or is in close proximity to, the National Site Network (formerly Natura 2000 sites) and so no habitats regulations assessment (HRA) would be required as per the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).



**Plan A: Twyford Designated Neighbourhood Area**



## 2. THE NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA

2.1 The name Twyford indicates two places where the original Bath Road crossed the River Loddon. Before Brunel's Great Western Railway arrived in 1839 the village supplied services to travellers between London and the West. Today, Twyford is largely a dormitory village with excellent connections by road and rail. The mainline rail services from Twyford station are very popular with many residents who travel to Reading and particularly to London. Similarly, many rail-users from outside the village also come to Twyford station, including some from Henley on the branch rail line. London is about 32 miles east and Reading is five miles west. Road connections to all parts of the country are easy via the motorway network. The M4 and M40 are close and M25 gives access to all the remaining strategic routes. Heathrow, London's main airport, is about 18 miles towards London on the M4.

2.2 Twyford, with about 7,000 residents, is compact; nowhere is much more than one mile from the station or from the village centre. Our close neighbouring parishes of Ruscombe, Charvil and Hurst have smaller populations and their residents rely on Twyford for local shopping and services. Some Wargrave residents similarly come to Twyford.

2.3 Woodley, about three miles westwards, and very close to Reading, is a town much larger than Twyford. It has a greater range of shops and services including banks, but significantly it does not have a station. Hence, rail-users from Woodley come to Twyford station.



Plan B: Borough Map

2.4 Wokingham Borough is the unitary authority for Twyford. It has been named as the most prosperous place to live in the country with the best living conditions, including health, and conditions for business. Wokingham town centre is about five miles south but is poorly connected with Twyford by public transport.

2.5 Reading is the nearest large town to Twyford and an easily accessible key centre for shopping, services and leisure as well as employment. Royal Berkshire Hospital, near the town centre, is one of largest general hospital foundation trusts in the country and serves a population of more than 500,000 people in West Berkshire.

2.6 The River Thames, at its nearest point, is only 1.5 miles to the north-west of Twyford. There are just two bridges close to Twyford - in Sonning village and in Henley. Both are over 200 years old and there are frequent traffic queues, as Sonning bridge is single file and Henley bridge is adjacent to the busy town centre and its crossroads.

#### THE IMPACT OF LOCAL DEVELOPMENTS - PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE.

2.7 Twyford today is a compact domestic and commuter village. It is almost fully developed with housing and is constrained from further major development by physical and parish boundaries. It retains its identity as a village as there are still significant belts of rural land North and South and to the East side the small urban fraction of Ruscombe merges seamlessly into Twyford with a large expanse of greenbelt beyond. The western side is protected and limited by the River Loddon and associated flood plains. The village itself, which directly abuts the developed part of Ruscombe, could now be described as an urban village with a modern supermarket and other personal services alongside the traditional artisan shops. The village known as Twyford has existed for several hundred years, but the civil parish only came into being in 1895, formerly having been part of Hurst.

2.8 Until the second half of the twentieth century, Twyford had grown slowly initially as a coaching stop on the Great West Road largely in an east-west direction. The arrival of the railway had a major impact first as service point in the construction of the Great Western Railway, and then with the Henley branch line starting in Twyford, and thus requiring a station to service the line. A significant part of the northern part of the village was built in the Victorian era. This has left a legacy of a narrow High Street with very narrow pavements, extending into the southern approaches to the crossroad.

2.9 The railway was effectively the southern boundary of the village until the early 1960s. Beginning in the late 1950s, an expansion began which would triple the size of the village in 20 years, changing the village from a mix of semi agricultural and cottage industries to the almost the wholly domestic residential area as we know it today.

2.10 The village has expanded southwards with approximately one third of the village south of the railway, with the A321 road bridge being the only convenient crossing of the line.

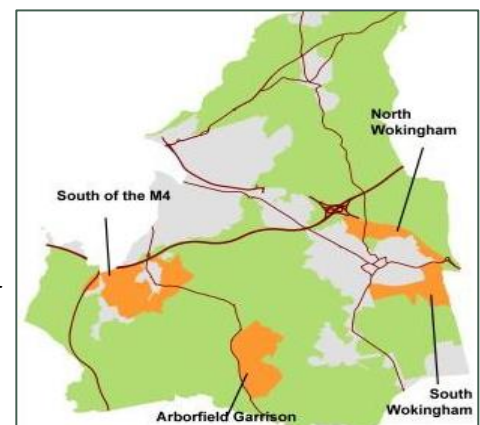
2.11 Twyford itself is now a dormitory village, with most residents travelling to work outside of the parish. Twyford does not have any secondary schools, so there is significant traffic created by the movement of children. At the same time Twyford has become an important commuter station particularly for travel to London and other centres to the east, the station is the most accessible and has the best and fastest services into London for any resident of Wokingham and other local areas.

2.12 Towns around Twyford have also developed massively over the same period, Reading to the west has become a major centre, developing its own satellite suburbs. To the East, there has been great development in Maidenhead, Slough, and the western suburbs of London. This was encouraged initially by the railway, and then the development of the Great West Road (A4) also east–west passing through the centre of the village, finally complemented by the M4. The situation in the 1920s was such, that the A4 was moved to the North of the village by the building of an east-west bypass, often called the Floral Mile because of adjoining market gardens.

2.13 Development to the North has been limited, with the River Thames forming a natural barrier. To the South, there has been significant urban development, Bracknell Newtown and Wokingham Town and Rural District has become Wokingham Borough, with other major developments further south, on the line of the A321 which runs from Henley to Blackwater. The Twyford A321 railway road bridge is the only A classified bridge for 5 miles in either direction, the situation for northbound traffic is particularly difficult to the west as traffic has to pass through the centre of Reading over congested bridges. As a result, a significant amount of traffic chooses to pass through Twyford, and specifically through the Crossroad located in the oldest part of the village (a declared Air Quality Management Area since 9 December 2015), with consequential noise and other environmental pollution. Prior to the abolition of Berkshire County Council in 1998, a county plan existed which included a north-south bypass to the east of Twyford. Whilst this remains an aspiration of WBC, there are no discernible plans for its implementation. Mitigation and other possibilities are discussed throughout the plan, notably in Section 7.

## RECENT MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS IN WOKINGHAM BOROUGH

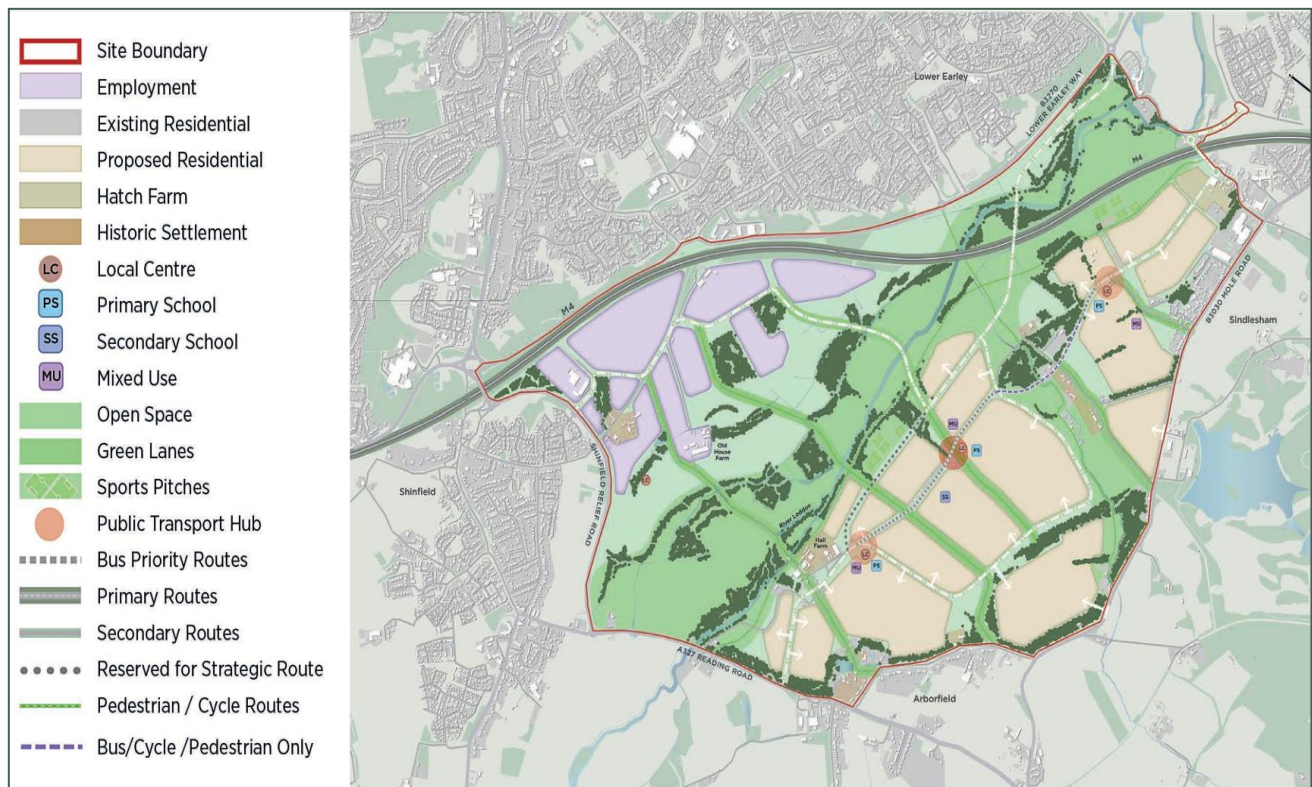
2.14 The 2010 WBC Core Strategy local plan identified four strategic development locations (SDLs) for new housing as Arborfield Garrison, South of M4, North Wokingham and South Wokingham, as shown in Plan C. These major developments will eventually accommodate a total of about 10,000 homes in carefully planned new or extended communities, by 2026.



**Plan C: Four current Strategic Development Locations (SDLs) under construction**



2.15 Planning for longer term sustainable growth requires additional land to be identified for new housing. A proposed new garden town of about 15,000 homes at Grazeley is no longer deliverable due to legislative changes to the emergency planning requirements around AWE Burchfield. Instead, a new garden village on land to the south of the M4 between Shinfield, Arborfield and Sindlesham, known as Hall Farm / Loddon Valley (see Plan D) with 4,500 dwellings has recently been proposed as a possible new strategic development location and has been the subject of a consultation as part of a Revised Growth Strategy for the Local Plan, which closed in January 2022.



**Plan D: Proposed new SDL - Hall Farm/Loddon Valley**

2.16 In 2009, WBC identified the need for a major regeneration of Wokingham Town Centre to counteract a failing retail and leisure offer, lack of town centre living and competition from nearby centres such as Bracknell and Reading. A masterplan was adopted in 2010 which identified a clear, distinctive and deliverable vision for Wokingham Town Centre to 2026, including shops, a hotel, supermarket and new homes. The £113 million redevelopment is now largely finished.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE SURROUNDING REGIONS

2.17 The “M4 Corridor” is an area in the UK adjacent to the M4 motorway. Its eastern end especially is regarded as a technology hub and is sometimes described as England's “Silicon Valley”; which includes Slough, Bracknell, Maidenhead, and Reading,

2.18 The “Thames Valley” region is an informally defined part of South East England, centred on the River Thames west of London, including Oxford as a major centre. Thames Valley is also regarded as a major technology hub.

2.19 Clearly, these designations overlap and Twyford is within both. Nearby Reading (once famed for biscuits) possesses many technology-based companies. For example, dating from the 1990s, Thames Valley Park (TVP), just four miles away on the edge of Reading, is a high-tech business park and is home to several international companies including Microsoft and Oracle.

2.20 Other examples are Winnersh Triangle and the more recent Thames Valley Science Park (UKSPA) built adjacent to the M4 at Shinfield and a subsidiary of the University of Reading. This site will also host Shinfield Studios which is currently being developed. One of the first clients to film here will be Disney in 2022.

2.21 The Thames Valley area and the M4 corridor, including Reading, have a particular advantage over other technology hubs because of their closeness to London and the easy access to Heathrow airport. Twyford residents are well-placed to benefit from the many successful advanced businesses in this part of SE England.

## MAJOR TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE CHANGES

### *Rail Developments including Crossrail*

2.22 Crossrail is a new underground railway line beneath Central London. It forms a key part of the new Elizabeth Line operated by TfL which will run from Reading and local stations to Paddington and then beyond to the City, Canary Wharf and Abbey Wood and also to Stratford and into Essex. These destinations will all be reached very conveniently without changing trains, and in many cases in less time than currently. The delayed completion is due in 2023.

2.23 A major new station, Old Oak Common, near Acton in West London, is planned to open in 2026. This will be an interchange with HS2; the second high speed rail line initially linking London and Birmingham. This is now expected between 2029 and 2033. The extension to Manchester may follow later.

2.24 The proposed £900 million Western Rail Approach to Heathrow is an additional rail link to connect the Great Western Main Line east of Slough to London Heathrow airport. Trains will run from Reading, Twyford, Maidenhead and Slough direct to Terminal 5. However, progress has been brought to a “controlled pause” by the impact of the Covid pandemic.

2.25 Twyford station is already the borough’s key gateway to the Great Western main line and all the changes described above will increase passenger numbers of both residents

and non-residents deriving from convenient and faster access to all the additional destinations. Twyford will be busier and will also become an even more desirable and better-connected place to choose to live for rail-users.

#### *Expansion of Heathrow*

2.26 The expansion of Heathrow to increase capacity, including a third runway, has been a much debated and challenged infrastructure project. The Covid pandemic has badly impacted the aviation industry; in addition to climate change considerations. The future need for the extra runway and the required investments are now uncertain.

#### *Roads*

2.27 The upgrading of the M4 motorway to become a smart motorway between Hayes and Theale (J3 - J12) is expected to be complete in 2022 at a cost of £848 million. The aim is to increase capacity by having at least four active lanes over the entire 32 miles length as well as to reduce congestion and improve journey time reliability.

2.28 The upgrading of the M4 is bound to enhance the desirability of the Thames Valley area for many companies who greatly value easy access to Heathrow and London such as those in high-tech industries (see 2.17 – 2.21). More investments, more well-paid jobs and continued regional prosperity are likely to result.

2.29 The limited capacity of the two bridges over the Thames in Reading and the one in Sonning has been an issue for at least 20 years. A New Thames Crossing East of Reading has been proposed. This will connect the Thames Valley Business Park roundabout south of the river with A4155 Henley Road/Caversham Park Road junction (via Caversham Lakes access road) north of the river. It seems that support for the proposed new bridge is greater on the south side of the river than on the north. The cost is estimated at ca £110 million but a decision is not expected in the short term. If eventually built, it will provide an alternative to Sonning bridge and it may partially relieve Twyford Crossroads too.



### 3. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 The Parish lies within the Wokingham Borough area.

#### NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

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3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published by the Government is an important guide in the preparation of local plans and neighbourhood plans. The following paragraphs of the latest NPPF version published in July 2021 are considered especially relevant:

- Neighbourhood planning (§28 - §30)
- Housing Type and Tenure (§62)
- Healthy and Safe Communities (§92)
- Community facilities (§93)
- High quality design (§128)
- The Natural Environment (§174)
- Biodiversity (§179)
- The Historic Environment (§190)

3.3 The Government has also set out a requirement for the provision of First Homes in a Written Ministerial statement on 24 May 2021. These requirements were subsequently incorporated into National Planning Practice Guidance, and it is noted that the Wokingham Local Plan Revised Growth Strategy (RGS) requires the provision of First Homes in the mix of homes coming forward. A First Homes Interim Policy Statement was published by WBC in January 2022<sup>1</sup>. For those parts of the Parish which lie within the Green Belt, First Homes Exception Sites are unable to come forward. For that part of the Parish outside of the Green Belt, First Homes Exception Sites can come forward and the Neighbourhood Plan therefore contains policies regarding First Homes and First Homes Exception Sites as provided for by Planning Practice Guidance and WBC's First Homes Interim Policy Statement.

#### STRATEGIC PLANNING POLICY

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3.4 The Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of Wokingham Borough. The development plan primarily comprises the Core Strategy (CS) adopted in 2010, the Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (MDDLDP) adopted in 2014. Its key policies applying to the Twyford designated neighbourhood area are:

##### Core Strategy

- General Principles of Development (CP3) – requiring high quality design
- Managing Travel Demand (CP6) – encouraging a modal shift
- Biodiversity (CP7) – protecting designated nature conservation sites, such as the Loddon Nature Reserve in Twyford

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/EasySiteWeb/GatewayLink.aspx?allId=619714>

- Scale and Location of development (CP9) – defines Twyford as a “major development location” and excludes Rural Exception sites from such locations
- Improvements to the Strategic Transport Network (CP10) – lists the Twyford Eastern Relief Road as an improvement
- Proposals outside Development Limits (CP11) – to protect the separate identity of settlements
- Green Belt (CP12) – protecting the Metropolitan Green Belt from inappropriate development
- Town centres and shopping (CP13) – listing Twyford village centre as suitable in principle to accommodate town centre uses to protect and maintain its role as an existing retail centre
- Housing Delivery (CP17) – committing to the release of allocated sites through subsequent DPD

#### Managing Development Delivery Local Plan

- Development limits (CC02) – defines the development limit for Twyford (the built-up area boundary)
- Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping (CC03)– defines Green Routes and Green Route Enhancement Areas in Twyford
- Safeguarding alignments of the Strategic Transport Network & Road Infrastructure (CC08) – protecting routes for the improvement of the Strategic Transport Network
- Development and Flood Risk (CC09) – reflecting national policy on development in Flood Zones
- Development within the Green Belt (TB01) – protecting the Metropolitan Green Belt from inappropriate development
- Development adjoining the Green Belt (TB02) – protecting the visual amenity of the Green Belt
- Housing Mix (TB05) – requiring an appropriate housing mix and a proportion of Lifetime Homes
- Major Town, and Small Town/District Centre development and Development for Town Centre Uses (TB15 & TB16) – defining primary and secondary shop frontages for Twyford village centre and guiding uses within these frontages and the sequential text application for retail uses outside of primary shopping areas
- Landscape Character (TB21) – requiring the retention or enhancement of landscape character
- Biodiversity and Development (TB23) – protecting designated nature conservation sites, including Loddon Nature Reserve in Twyford
- Designated Heritage Assets etc (TB24) – protecting designated heritage assets, including two Conservation Areas in Twyford alongside a number of listed buildings
- Allocated Housing Development Sites (SAL02) - Land west of Hurst Road, Twyford for the delivery of around 20 dwellings

3.5 The CS policies predate the publication of the NPPF (2021), originally in 2012, hence the provisions of the NPPF are especially important in shaping how the Neighbourhood Plan will consider its policies, until the emerging Wokingham Borough Local Plan 2038 advances

towards adoption and replaces any current policies not in accordance with the NPPF. Its reasoning and evidence base have therefore been taken into consideration during the preparation of this neighbourhood plan.

3.6 A consultation on the emerging Wokingham Local Plan Revised Growth Strategy (RGS) concluded in January 2022. The RGS makes significant changes to the Draft Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update 2036 (DLP) published in February 2020 including:

- Removal of the proposed garden town at Grazeley;
- A new proposed garden village at Hall Farm/Loddon Valley;
- Additional allocations for housing across the Borough;
- Additional Local Green Space designations across the Borough; and it
- Extends the plan period to 2038.

3.7 In Twyford, the RGS proposes to pursue a higher density than that sought in the previous iteration of the Draft Plan at the retained proposed allocation of Land at Bridge Farm, from 150 new homes to 180 new homes (see Plan C) and sets out specific development guidelines for the site. There is also currently an outline planning application for up to 200 homes (212720) and WBC has made a resolution to grant planning permission. The RGS also proposes to designate eight Local Green Spaces in Twyford, including:

- Open area adjacent to Colleton Drive;
- Twyford Parish Council Burial Ground and Millenium Garden, Station Road;
- Orchard Estate open space;
- Malvern Way open space;
- King George V Field, Loddon Hall Road;
- Stanlake Meadows, Waltham Road;
- Hurst Park, Hurst Park Road; and
- Broad Hinton open space.

Land is also being promoted at land to the east of Twyford and Ruscombe – Twyford Gardens – as an alternative growth strategy to that proposed by WBC and the Parish Council continues to engage with these processes.

3.8 WBC has confirmed an indicative housing requirement figure, as per §67 of the NPPF, of approximately around 271 dwellings is considered to be appropriate for Twyford Parish over the plan period. This is based on a proportion of the borough wide housing requirement, using the Bridge Farm proposed allocation as a starting point and applying an historic windfall rate of 4 dwellings over 20 years.

3.9 Whilst acknowledging the requirement for housing development, given that Neighbourhood Plans are not obliged to allocate land for housing; the emerging RGS proposes to make allocations in the Parish; and, the number of constraints on the remaining land within the parish boundary; this Neighbourhood Plan does not make any housing allocations and has focussed its attention in preparing other development management

policies. The emerging Local Plan 2038, or the current planning application, will address the requirement for housing development in the Parish and the Parish Council will continue to engage with these processes and has also confirmed that it will commit to a review of the Neighbourhood Plan should this position change.

3.10 There are other development plans that apply in Twyford, such as the Joint Central and Eastern Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan adopted in January 2023.

3.11 The Plan safeguards the Sheeplands Sewerage Treatment Works adjacent to the northern boundary of Twyford in the parish of Wargrave to be maintained by the Authorities. Parts of Ruscombe Business Park in the adjacent parish of Ruscombe has also been identified as part of the Preferred Waste Areas within the plan. Almost the entire parish is identified as a safeguarded resource for sand and gravel and land outside of the built-up area falls within the Area of Search for Sand and Gravel (see Plan E).

3.12 WBC's Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2026 also holds some relevance to the content of this Neighbourhood Plan. Policy PT1 on Improving rail services and facilities commits WBC to working with Network Rail and Train Operating Companies to improve rail services and station facilities. Policy SCDM9 on Car Parking commits WBC to suitably locate, price and enforce car parking to improve traffic management, promote more sustainable travel and enhance the viability of town centres. Whilst Twyford is classed as a Village Centre the policies' supporting text specification refers to Twyford.

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#### NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING POLICY

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3.13 The adjacent parishes of Ruscombe, Hurst and Charvil are also in the process of preparing Neighbourhood Plans but none have yet been made.

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#### TWYFORD CONSERVATION AREA

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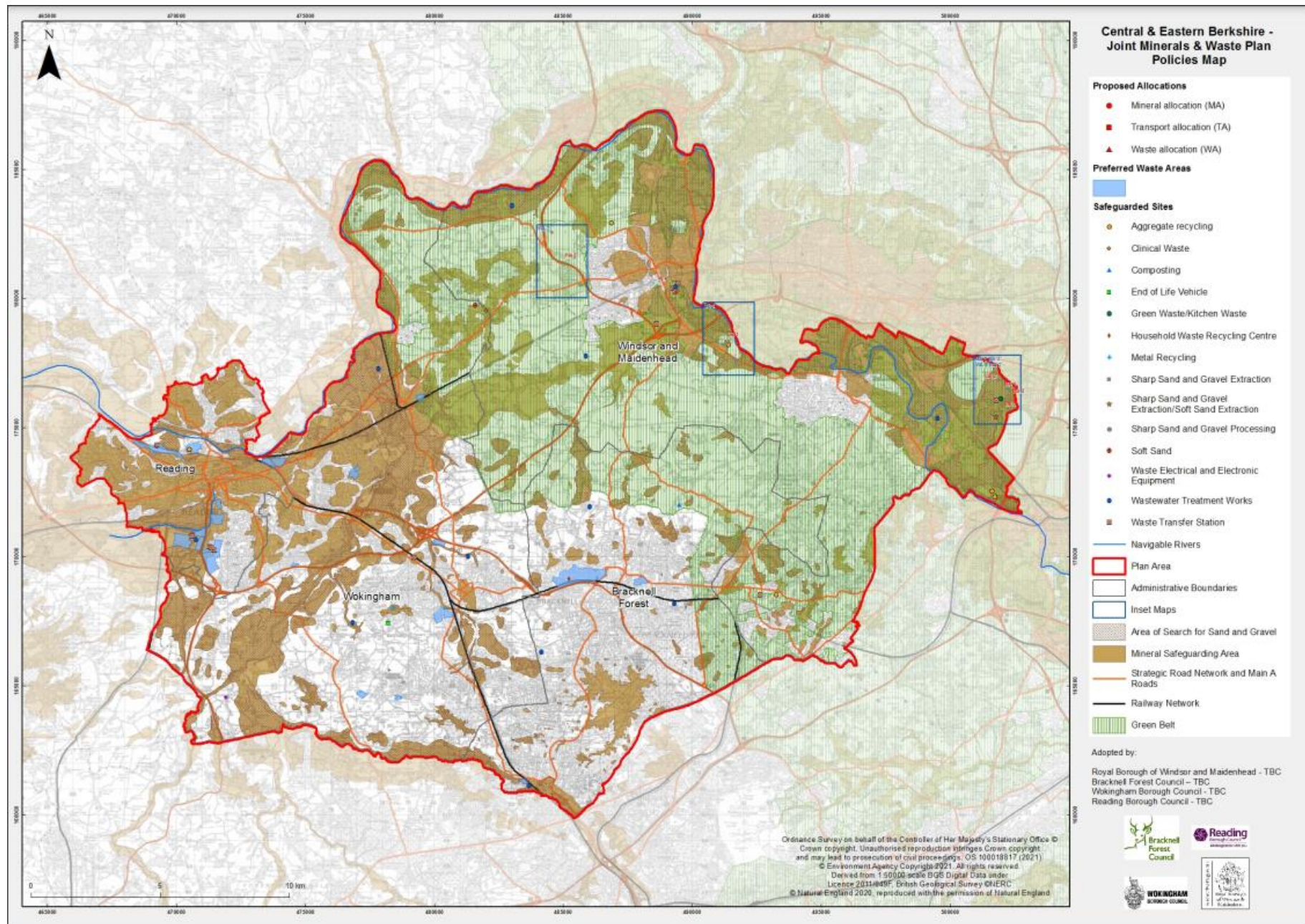
3.14 There are two Conservation Areas in Twyford, the Twyford Village Conservation Area designated in December 1977 with revisions adopted in June 1996, and the Twyford Station Conservation Area designated in June 1996. The boundary for both Conservation Areas are shown on the Policies Map. Conservation Areas were introduced by the Civic Amenities Act of 1967, to protect areas of special interest as opposed to individual buildings. Since 1967 some 8,000 conservation areas have been designated in England. Under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 local authorities have a duty to designate conservation areas and from time to time to review the boundaries. Such areas are defined as 'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'.

3.15 The main attributes that define the special character of an area are its physical appearance and history, i.e. the form and features of buildings and the spaces between them, their former uses and historical development. Where there are a number of periods of historical development, the character of individual parts of the conservation area may



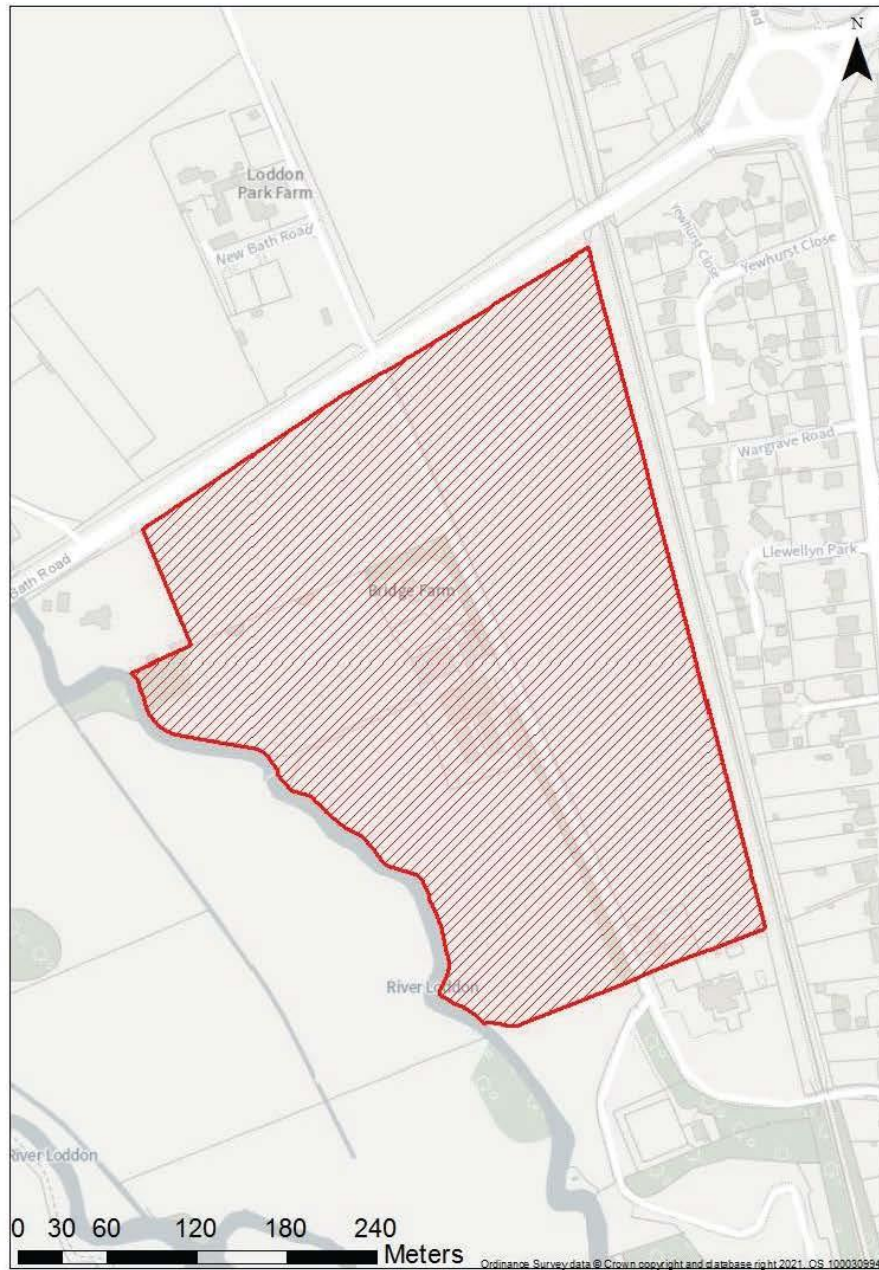
differ. Contrasts between the appearance of areas and the combination of buildings of various ages, materials and styles may contribute to its special character. The characteristics of the Twyford Conservation Area and Twyford Station Conservation Area, as well as other heritage assets, are set out in the Twyford Design Guidelines and Codes attached at Appendix A.

Plan E: Joint Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals & Waste Plan Adopted Policies Map January 2023





Land at Bridge Farm, Twyford



92  
106

**Plan F: Proposed development area allocation for Twyford in the RGS**

## 4. COMMUNITY VIEWS ON PLANNING ISSUES

4.1 A full account of consultation is set out in the Consultation Statement published alongside this Plan. The development of the Neighbourhood Plan started towards the end of 2017 in response to Parish wide opposition to a proposed development on green belt land to the east of Twyford in the neighbouring parish of Ruscombe. Given the age of the then current Wokingham Borough Local Plan and the ongoing issues with the 5-year land supply rules it was clear to the Parish Council that the village needed another level of protection beyond the Local Plan that could expose and highlight the main issues facing the village. This was especially important if significant development took place in the wider area, which would inevitably impact the Twyford hub.

4.2 A working group was formed at the beginning of 2018 after a kick-off village meeting and consisted of roughly 30 volunteers, including 2 Borough councillors, whose brief was to engage with the village residents and develop themes for the plan.

4.3 We quickly developed 3 themes around Mobility (transport, parking, commuting and safety of pedestrians and cyclists), Housing (tenure, housing stock, affordability, ability to remain in Twyford) and Environment (green spaces, facilities, climate change, flood risk, education etc). From this, the group developed a Parish wide survey that asked for the views of residents. Fieldwork took place between March and May of 2019. The response was good with a 23% household response rate and thousands of comments from residents. We delivered the results to the residents in a village meeting in October 2019.



1 2019 Survey Meeting Flyer

4.4 Throughout this period, we held several events in the village to explain the neighbourhood plan process. We took the opportunity to host stalls at the Donkey Derby. The Village Fete, the Christmas Fair and events such as the Twyford Beer Festival and Horticultural Association shows. We used the local free newspaper RG10 and Twyford Parish's social media to keep in touch with the residents. Also, during this period we displayed banners throughout the village advertising the neighbourhood plan.

4.5 2 major factors impacted the development of the plan. First, the slow progress on the Wokingham Borough Local Plan meant that we had little information about the likely housing impacts on the parish. The Borough Council staff however were supportive of our efforts and did help us as much as they could with guidance, which we thank them for.

4.6 Second, the emergence of the pandemic in March 2020 bought our policy forming process to an abrupt halt. The Parish Council took the decision to resume the Neighbourhood Plan in November 2020 but from then on most of the interaction was by remote working through Zoom meetings.



4.7 We engaged consultants in January 2021 and developed draft policies but our first opportunity to present these to the village was October 2021 at the Twyford Tree Planting festival, as several planned opportunities were cancelled due to Covid emergency measures. The Christmas Fair and a village wide meeting at the end of March 2022 to launch the Regulation 14 consultation followed.



**2 Twyford Tree Festival 2021**

4.8 The Parish Council would like to thank past and present members of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group who have worked on so many aspects of the plan. From community outreach through survey design to policy formulation people have given freely of their time and wisdom. Expertise in skills such as town planning, survey design, graphic design, environmental consultancy and data science have been invaluable to the process of producing this Neighbourhood Plan and we are profoundly grateful to those who have contributed.

## 5. VISION, OBJECTIVES & LAND USE POLICIES

*Vision Statement prepared by the Neighbourhood Plan Team*

5.1 The parish wide survey, conducted in 2019, generated thousands of comments. We asked Twyford's residents many questions regarding housing, transport and infrastructure. But we also asked why people came here, why they stayed and what they value most about the village.

5.2 Most respondents came here from other places. Most were drawn by employment opportunities in the wider area and the great transport links to London and elsewhere. The reason people stayed though were much more to do with personal values, the strength of the community and the excellent environment for raising their families. The most important theme that emerged was that the village environment, both its physical space but also its social aspects, should be retained and strengthened in the future.

5.3 Twyford is in an extremely favourable position in terms of transport links and employment opportunities. The pressures that this brings to communities like ours have been alleviated to an extent by its physical position between the Loddon flood plain to the west and the metropolitan green belt to the east. Twyford along with its neighbouring parish Ruscombe still retains a cohesive built envelope and this has helped retain the sense of community. Major development has not taken place in or around the village envelope for nearly 3 decades. This situation is likely to change as the emerging local plan may well seek to rebalance development to the north of the Borough.



**3 Wild Flowers at Hurst Rd Allotments**

5.4 Good transport links mean that through traffic and commuting to the station have grown. The retail centre, facilities and good schools attract people from across the centre and north of the Borough and has made Twyford a hub. This has led to pressures on parking in the village, over stretched roads during rush hour, pollution problems and unsafe pathways for pedestrians and non-motorised road users. Twyford crossroads is congested with busy traffic. The lack of good public transport to the north and south means that these axes are congested too. As the roads become busier, walking and cycling to school declines.

5.5 Looking forward 15 years our plan must balance the area's need for more development with the need to retain a cohesive village community. To do this we must foster policies that accommodate development whilst mitigating its worst aspects. This means seizing opportunities to reduce car journeys, to ensure that development is affordable for those leaving the family home, for those who wish to downsize, those who

are raising a family and that the infrastructure keeps pace with the population whilst at the same time being sustainable.

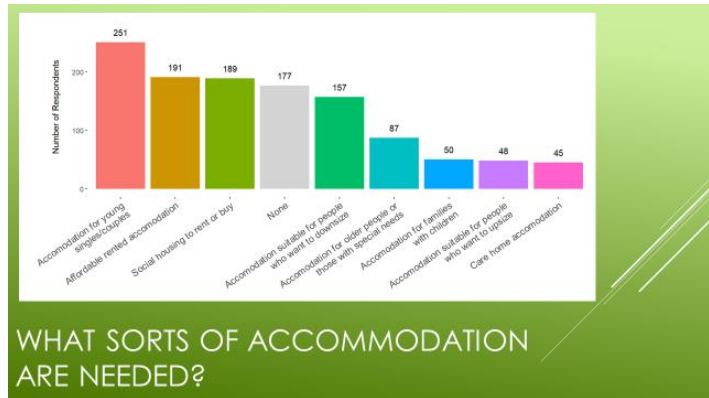
5.6 We found great support for facilities that keep pace with the changes in people's lives. For example, even before the pandemic, residents felt that more support for home working was needed both in terms of technical infrastructure but also a community business hub that could help people connect across the village whilst providing professional quality services. Indeed,

we see a major aim of the Neighbourhood Plan is to help people to stay in the village not just over the course of their lives but during the course of their day. This in turn will help businesses to develop in the village as footfall increases.

We see sustainability as an opportunity to work locally, to live in a carbon neutral and negative way and a means to reduce resident's

reliance on the car. This means safer routes for pedestrians and cyclists, with special emphasis for those who have mobility challenges.

5.7 Our vision for the future is one where people will say, as they did in the past, that they came for the great opportunities but stayed because of the wonderful community they found here.



4 Example of Survey Results

# VISION

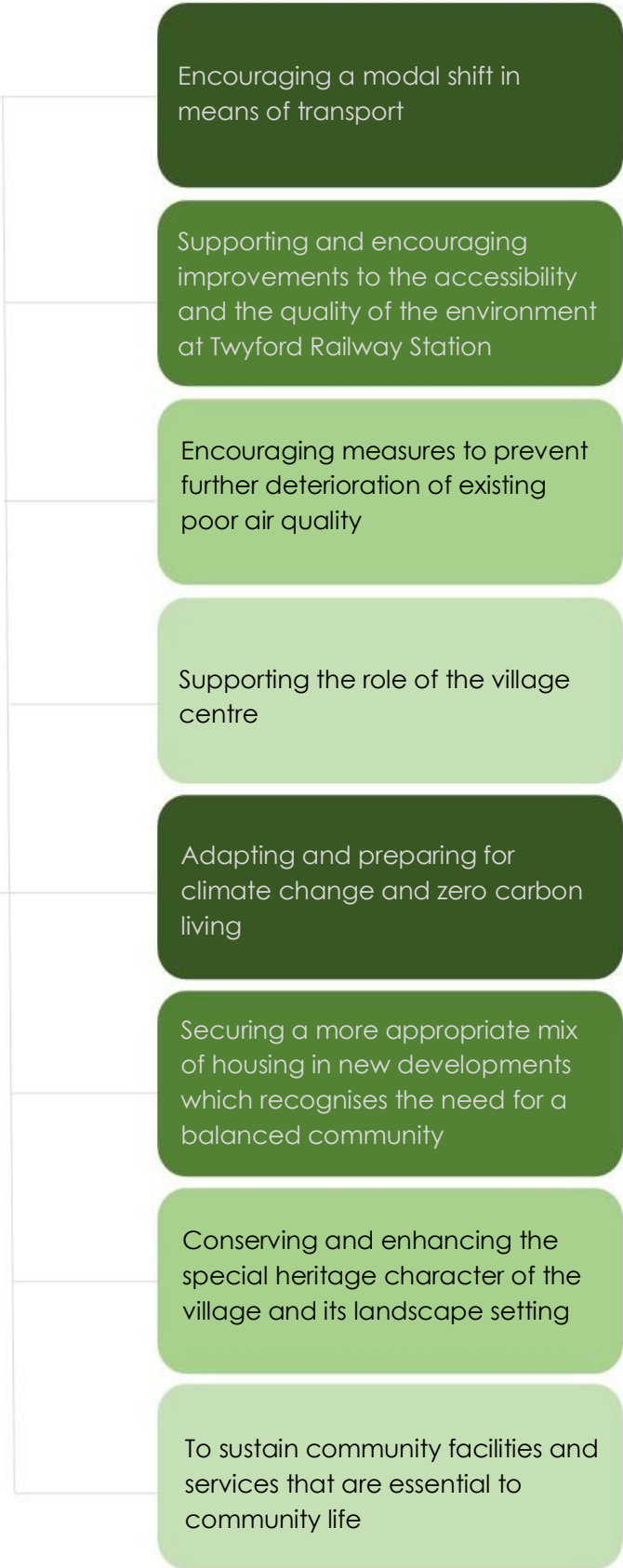
In 2038: “The quality of life for both present and future generations have been improved by encouraging the right type and mix of well-designed new homes, protecting and enhancing our services and facilities, the historic and natural environment.

New homes have helped address local need and their design respects the local character of the village.

Safer routes for pedestrians and cyclists have reduced the reliance on cars. Good transport links have been maintained and improved and technological changes alongside the provision of supporting infrastructure, has resulted in increased use of fuel-efficient and electric models of transport. These changes are benefiting the environment, the thriving village centre and the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors.

With the vision realised, Twyford has retained a cohesive village community and continues to act as a thriving hub for the community and those travelling from the surrounding areas.”

# OBJECTIVES





## INTRODUCTION TO THE LAND USE POLICIES

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5.8 The following policies relate to the development and use of land in the designated Neighbourhood Area of Twyford Parish. They focus on specific planning matters that are of greatest interest to the local community.

5.9 There are many parts of the Parish that are not affected by these policies, and there are many other policy matters that have been left to the adopted and forthcoming Wokingham Borough Local Plan to cover. This has avoided unnecessary repetition of policies between this Neighbourhood Plan and the adopted development plan, though they have a mutual, helpful inter-dependence.

5.10 Each policy is numbered and titled, and it is shown in bold. Where necessary, the area to which it will apply is shown on the Policies Map attached to the document. After each policy is some supporting text that explains the purpose of the policy, how it will be applied and, where helpful, how it relates to other development plan policies.

## THE LAND USE POLICIES AND SUPPORTING TEXT

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### **POLICY TW1: ENCOURAGING SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL**

- A. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies the existing Sustainable Travel Network and opportunities for improvements, as shown on the Policies Map, for the purpose of prioritising active travel and encouraging the use of public transport in the Parish.**
- B. Development proposals on land that lies within or adjacent to the Network should sustain, and where practicable, enhance the functionality of the Network by virtue of their layout and means of access and landscape treatment.**
- C. Proposals that avoid harm to the functioning or connectivity of the Network, or opportunities for improvements to the Network, will be supported.**

5.11 The policy seeks to encourage safe, accessible, convenient and enjoyable means of walking and cycling in the parish. It refines CS Policy CP6 Managing Travel Demand by providing a local element to its provisions. It is also in line with DLP Policy C3 Cycling and Walking which promotes sustainable transport through prioritising walking and cycling and

the RGS objective of ensuring that options for walking, cycling and public transport are attractive. There are also other initiatives encouraging sustainable travel already operating within the Borough, such as the MyJourney initiative and school travel plans. There may also be other opportunities for improvement to the network which have no spatial consequence, such as a wayfinding project.

5.12 However, the lack of cycle paths and narrow pavements, particularly in the core walking zone as shown on Plan G, mean that walking and cycling in the parish is difficult. Twyford Railway Station is an important asset however other public transport services are limited and parking for users of the railway station has been, and continues to be, a long-standing issue. See Policy TW3 Twyford Railway Station for more on the railway station specifically.



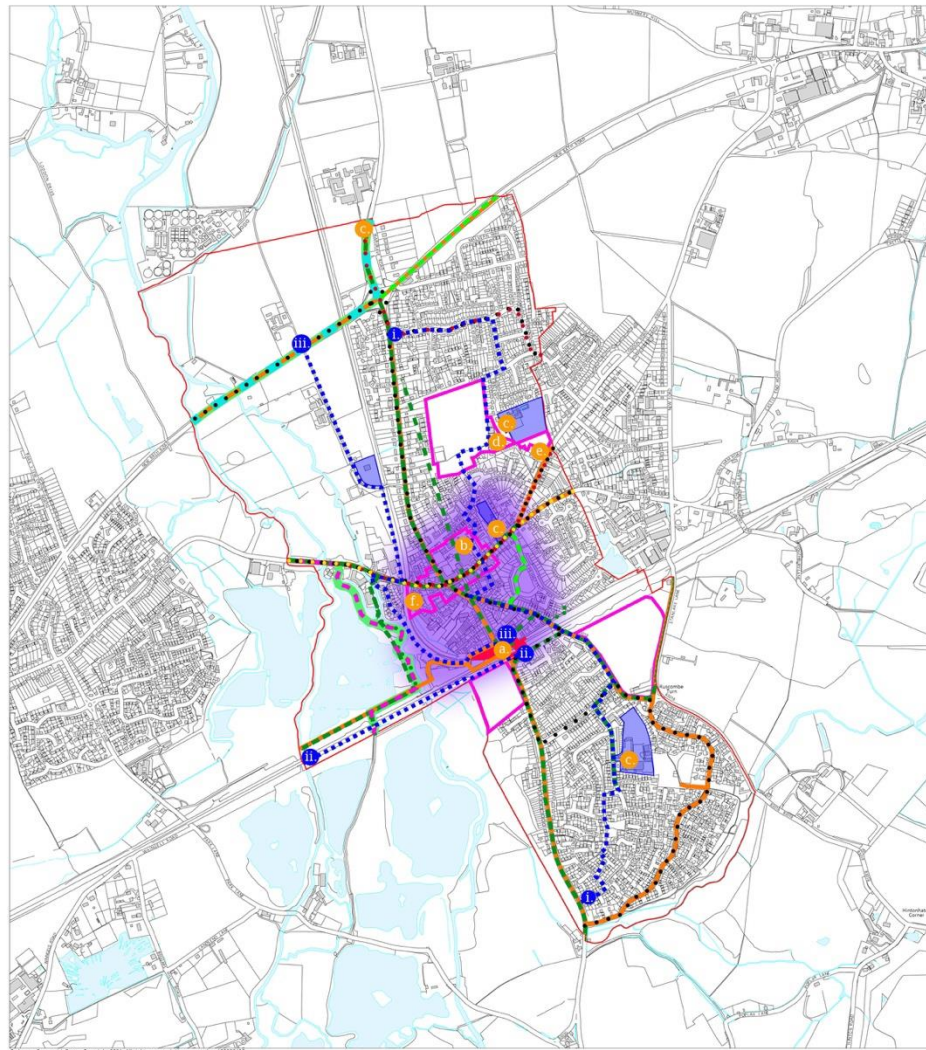
**5 Narrow Pavements in Church Street**

5.13 The policy therefore seeks to start to deal with these issues by identifying the existing walking, cycling and public transport routes. The Policies Map shows the full extent of the Network, which allows applications to determine if their proposals should take this policy into account. A more detailed plan (see Plan G) is shown below. The policy requires all development proposals that lie within or adjacent to the Network to consider how they may improve connectivity, or at the very least do not undermine the existing value of the Network, or the opportunities for improvement.

5.14 Where proposals include provision for amenity spaces, landscaping, new means of access or new layouts, there may be an opportunity to relate the land better to the Network and/or improve the attractiveness and connectivity of routes. Proposals should therefore consider this in the design of schemes without undermining other planning policy objectives.

5.15 The Policies Map at the end of this document also shows the location of opportunities for improvement to existing routes which have a spatial consequence, such as opportunities for new connections to enhance the active and sustainable transport environment. This is set out in more detail on Plan G below. The Parish Council also

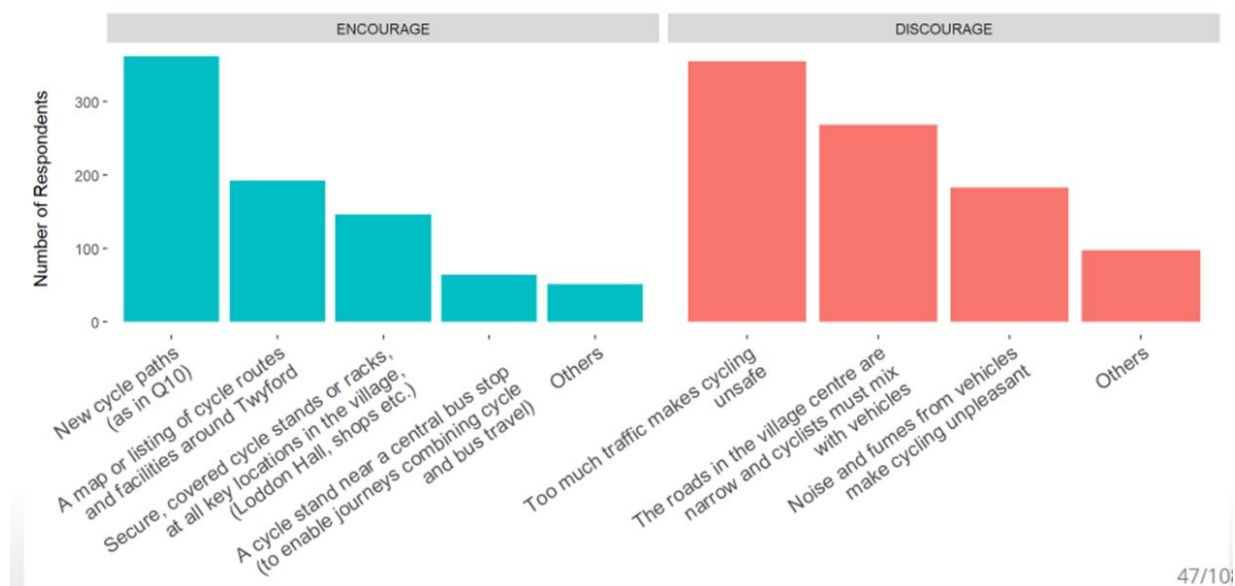
continues to liaise with Wokingham Borough Council on its Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and LCWIP proposals are also identified on the Policies Map and Plan G below. These are considered to form part of the Network and its opportunities. In some cases, proposals will enable the creation of new connections and/or the delivery of opportunities for improvement that extend the benefits of the Network. They will be supported provided they are appropriate in other respects. At the very least, the policy requires that proposals that will undermine the existing value of the Network, or opportunities for improvement, will be refused permission.



**Twyford Neighbourhood Plan (TNP)**  
**Policy TW1: Encouraging Sustainable Travel**

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="border: 1px solid red; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 2px;"></span> Parish Boundary</li> <li><span style="border: 1px solid orange; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 2px;"></span> Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP) Strategic Cycle Routes</li> <li><span style="border: 1px dashed green; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 2px;"></span> LCWIP Strategic Walking Routes</li> <li><span style="border: 1px solid green; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 2px;"></span> Greenways</li> <li><span style="border: 1px dashed pink; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 2px;"></span> Loddon Long Distance Path</li> <li><span style="border: 1px dashed blue; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 2px;"></span> National Cycle Network Route</li> <li><span style="border: 1px dashed green; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 2px;"></span> Other Easy Cycling Routes</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="border: 1px dashed blue; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 2px;"></span> TNP Proposed Cycle Routes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Four Schools Route</li> <li>ii. Loddon Commuter Crossway</li> <li>iii. Bridge Farm Link</li> </ul> </li> <li><span style="border: 1px solid orange; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 2px;"></span> Improved secure cycle parking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Railway Station</li> <li>b. Waitrose</li> <li>c. Schools</li> <li>d. Loddon Hall area</li> <li>e. Bus stop at London Rd</li> <li>f. Community Hub</li> </ul> </li> <li><span style="border: 1px solid yellow; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 2px;"></span> Bus Route 127</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 2px;"></span> Bus Route 128/129</li> <li><span style="border: 1px solid red; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 2px;"></span> Bus Route 850</li> <li><span style="border: 1px dashed green; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 2px;"></span> Public Right of Ways</li> <li><span style="background-color: purple; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 2px;"></span> Core Walking Zone</li> <li><span style="background-color: blue; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 2px;"></span> Schools</li> <li><span style="border: 1px solid pink; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 2px;"></span> Community Uses &amp; Shops</li> <li><span style="background-color: red; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 2px;"></span> Twyford Railway Station</li> </ul> |
|--|---|---|

**Plan G: Twyford Sustainable Travel Network including opportunities for improvement**



## 6 2019 Survey Results - Cycling in Twyford

5.16 Twyford Cycling Together prepared a report, included in the evidence base, in which it explores, in detail, the opportunities available to encourage more people to cycle in and around the Twyford Area. The group also considered that these opportunities will reduce demand for station car parking, help reduce pollution at the Crossroads Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and provide safer (non-car dependant) routes to school. The local community has been supportive of the opportunities identified and these opportunities are therefore shown on the Policies Map including:

### Cycle Routes opportunities

- i. Four Schools Route;
- ii. Loddon Commuter Crossway;
- iii. Bridge Farm Link – specific route yet to be determined.

Secure cycle parking opportunities – ensuring these are secured and sheltered where practicable to make them more attractive to use. More cycle parking in Twyford village centre for those seeking to travel to other key destinations by bus will also be supported.

- a. Railway Station
- b. Waitrose
- c. Schools
- d. Loddon Hall area
- e. Bus stop at London Road
- f. Community Hub



## **POLICY TW2: SUSTAINABLE ACCESSIBILITY AND MOBILITY**

- A. Proposals that deliver new charging infrastructure to accommodate sustainable travel needs will be supported provided this would not result in any adverse impact on highways or pedestrian and cyclists' safety.**
- B. Proposals for major development should have full regard to the Sustainable Accessibility and Mobility Framework (see below) and demonstrate how the framework has been applied. The layout design must have full regard to the Manual for Streets and the Living Streets: A Highways Guide for Developers in Wokingham best practice principles and create a permeable network of streets and spaces that connect to key destinations in the Parish such as local schools, new and existing community facilities and the railway station.**
- C. Proposals for major development should demonstrate through an agreed travel plan, that an appropriate range of measures will be implemented to promote and improve active travel for all users, including people with visual impairments. Where appropriate, the travel plan should include making appropriate contributions to the borough wide My Journey initiative or any successor scheme.**



## **7 Access to Twyford Centre from the West**

5.17 Traffic and travel are challenging issues facing most communities, and Twyford is no exception. The emphasis in recent years has been on minimising the need to travel and promoting alternative modes of travel to the private car – ‘active travel’. It is recognised however, that a number of commuters drive to Twyford to access the station leading to cars being parked all day on residential roads. Improvements to the accessibility and quality of the environment at Twyford Railway Station (as per Policy TW3) would encourage use of the rail network for longer journeys without compromising traffic flow on local roads.

5.18 The Parish Council is currently investigating whether there are any opportunities for accommodating sustainable travel needs, such as charging for electric bicycles and cars and secure cycle parking for example. There may also be opportunities to explore communal parcel drop areas in the Parish. Whilst the Parish Council's land ownership is limited and much of the land is already well used for other valued community facilities, there may be opportunities for small and underused parcels of that land that can accommodate these types of proposals which would also benefit users of the existing valued community facilities. The Parish Council is currently investigating such opportunities, particularly on areas of land in its ownership close to the railway station. The policy therefore supports proposals of this nature coming forward in the Parish. Whilst this won't be the standalone solution to traffic and parking issues in Twyford, the Parish Council intends to lead by example and encourage other stakeholders to consider the provision of realistic and deliverable sustainable first-mile/last-mile solutions in Twyford.

5.19 Equally, whilst all opportunities must be taken to manage traffic growth and plan for sustainable travel, it is recognised that the private car and commercial vehicle trips, together with the requirement for good pedestrian and cycle routes, particularly those arising from the allocations in the emerging RGS, will need to be managed. Clauses B and

C of the policy therefore requires that the 'Sustainable Accessibility and Mobility Framework'<sup>2</sup> should be adopted for all major development to encourage the concept of a '15 minute neighbourhood' and deliver solutions that support a healthier and more resilient community. This approach calls for measures that first focus on reducing the need for trips, before considering how to increase the proportion of the remaining trips that are taken by active, public and shared forms of transport. This hierarchy is summarised in the SAM framework (see Figure 8 below), a tool created to help planners and designers prioritise appropriate local interventions.

5.20 The SAM framework accords with the Vision and all development proposals should embrace best practice 'place making' principles to create a coherent network of streets and spaces that contribute to the delivery of safe multi-user pedestrian and cycle routes to key destinations to maximise travel choice. In regard to the final tier of the SAM hierarchy, the Government have recently introduced new requirements in the Building Regulations to ensure that where appropriate every new home, or building undergoing a material change of use to create a new dwelling, has an electric vehicle (EV) charging point with a dedicated car parking space within the site boundary<sup>3</sup>. The impact assessment published alongside the consultation<sup>4</sup> confirmed that requiring the installation of a charge point in new dwellings would result in a retrofit cost saving to homeowners of £1064 per charge point, and unnecessary disruption within the lifetime of this Plan when the sales of new petrol/diesel vehicles are phased out in 2030. The DLP Policy C5 Technology and innovation in transport also seeks to ensure that new development provide and retain EV charging facilities.

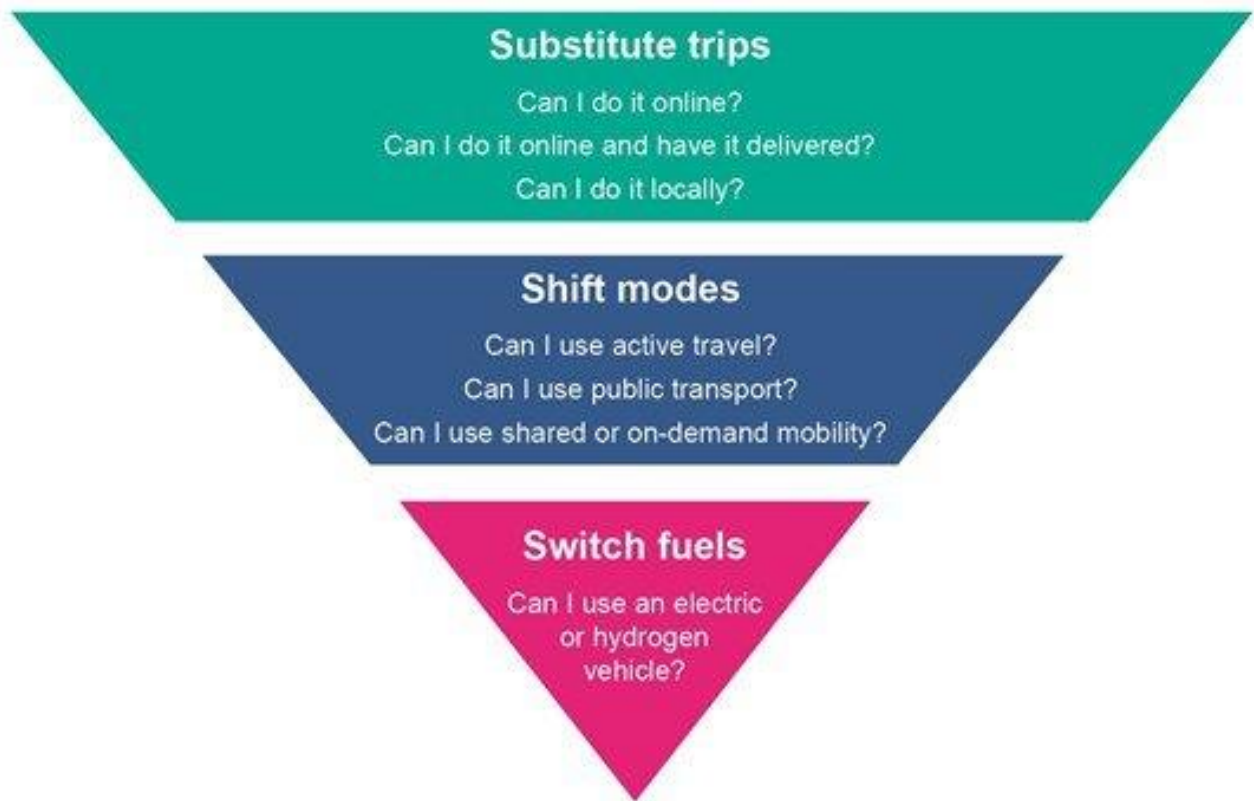
5.21 The Neighbourhood Plan recognises that the only major development proposals that is likely to come forward in the Parish during the plan period is the proposed allocation of Land at Bridge Farm, as the parish boundary is tightly drawn, and the remaining land is heavily constrained. It is therefore likely that the effect of Clauses B and C of the policy is going to be limited unless WBC incorporates similar measures in the emerging Local Plan. The Parish Council will continue to engage in the emerging Local Plan process and willingly offers the policy to WBC to help frame a Borough-wide policy in the emerging Local Plan.

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<sup>2</sup> Net Zero Transport: The role of spatial planning and place based solutions ([RTPI, Jan 2021](#))

<sup>3</sup> Infrastructure for charging electric vehicles: Approved Document S ([GOV.UK, Feb 2022](#))

<sup>4</sup> Electric Vehicle Charging in Residential and Non-Residential Buildings ([HMG, July 2019](#))



8: Sustainable Accessibility and Mobility (SAM) Framework Credit: Vectos



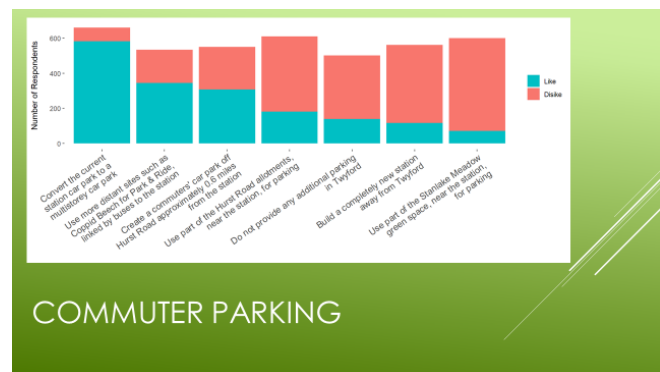
## **POLICY TW3: TWYFORD RAILWAY STATION**

- A. Development proposals which result in improvements to the accessibility and the quality of the environment at Twyford Railway Station, as a key element in the Borough's public transport network, will be supported, particularly:**
- i. where they increase and accommodate the use of public transport at the station, and**
  - ii. accommodate sustainable travel needs at the station.**
- B. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location development proposals that would directly generate an increase in journeys to and from the Twyford Railway Station will be required to make appropriate contributions to the cost of measures to improve the accessibility and quality of the environment at the Station.**

5.22 The policy refines the adopted CS Policy CP10 Improvements to the Strategic Transport Network in terms of its application to 19 – Improvements to the quality and frequency of public transport services along any part of the network; 20 – Improvements to increase the use of bicycles, including cycle paths; 21 – Enhancements to footpath and cycle networks to improve access to services and facilities by ensuring that allocated funds are directed to improvements to the accessibility and quality of the environment at Twyford Railway Station, for example increased secure, sheltered and accessible cycle storage and parking or other measures to maximise the use of sustainable and public transport to the station. The Twyford Railway Station site is shown on the Policies Map. It also carries forward recommendations from the 2015 Commuter Parking Task and Finish Study recommendations that all parties work together to ensure access to rail services at Twyford.

5.23 Wokingham Borough has one station on the Great Western Main Line which is Twyford Railway Station, and it is therefore considered that there should be a focus on the railway station as part of the Borough's vision for the area. DLP Policy SS12 Improvements to Transport Routes is due to carry forward the improvements and enhancements sought through CS Policy CP10 however, the Parish Council believes that contributions should specifically be sought for improvements to the accessibility and quality of the environment at Twyford Railway Station. The Wokingham Bus Services Improvement Plan (Oct 2021) also notes that transport connections at Twyford Station may have the potential to be enhanced.

5.24 Twyford Railway Station is popular with commuters and investment in new train services is likely to continue as expected in WBC's latest Infrastructure Delivery Plan February 2020 which anticipates national and regional funding to deliver Great Western Main Line improvements. The Wokingham Provisional Integrated Transport Study of 2018 also acknowledges in paragraph 5.22.2 the future challenge of increased demand for rail travel at Twyford Railway Station. The use of the station has had considerable impacts on the local area and whilst this has long been recognised by the key stakeholders, no deliverable solution has been agreed. Development proposals for improvements to Twyford Railway Station should be developed in conjunction with the Borough Council, Great Western Rail, Twyford Parish Council, Network Rail and other interested parties as appropriate, to ensure that enhancements proceed in a co-ordinated fashion.



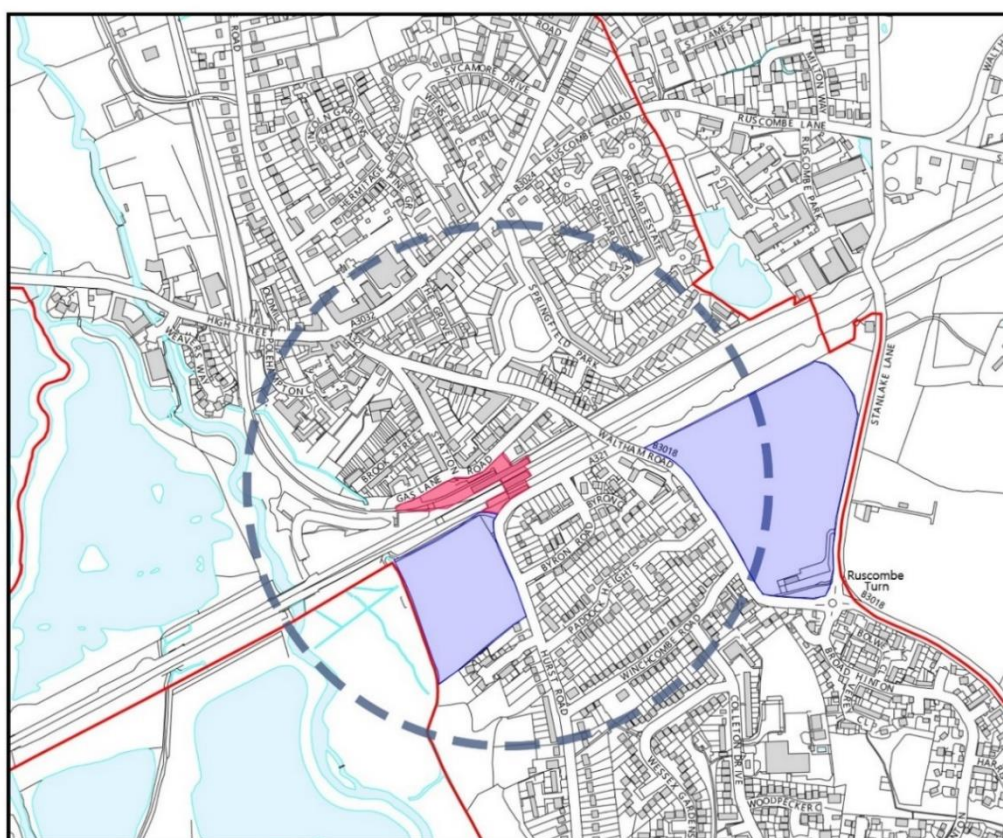
9 2019 Survey - Commuting

5.25 Wokingham's long-term plan for Twyford Railway Station as part of the latest Air Quality Action Plan of March 2018 continues to seek solutions at the station in terms of parking, improved public transport services, and making provision for sustainable transport solutions. Policy SCDM9 of WBC's Local Transport Plan 2011 - 2026 also commits WBC to strategically manage car parking provision to tackle congestion. Whilst the neighbourhood plan won't be the solution on its own, the policy seeks to bring the significance of this issue to the forefront once again.

5.26 The Neighbourhood Plan recognises that developments in the wider WBC area, not just in the designated neighbourhood area, are very likely to generate journeys to Twyford for commuting (and other purposes). For example, there are additional homes currently under construction in Hurst & Charvil. The Parish Council will continue to engage in the emerging Local Plan process and willingly offers the policy to WBC to help frame a Borough-wide policy in the emerging Local Plan.



10 Station Forecourt



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**Twyford Neighbourhood Plan**  
**Policy TW2 Encouraging Sustainable Travel**  
**Policy TW3 Twyford Railway Station**

Parish Boundary
  Twyford Railway Station
  Five minute walk
  Parish Council land

11 Visual representations of potential solutions for accommodating sustainable travel used in community engagement

## POLICY TW4: A THRIVING VILLAGE CENTRE

- A. The Neighbourhood Plan defines the Twyford Village Centre and the essential core of the Primary Shopping Area on the Policies Map.**
- B. Proposals to create livelier and more active street frontages and an improved public realm in Twyford Village Centre will be supported.**
- C. Proposals for a change of use that will result in the loss of an active commercial, business or service use of a ground floor frontage in the Village Centre will only be supported where the existing use is demonstrated to be no longer viable through evidence that genuine sustained efforts to promote, improve and market the facility at a reasonable value have been undertaken.**

5.27 The village centre is well used by local people for shopping and other services on the doorstep and it also serves a wider rural hinterland including the surrounding parishes of Ruscombe, Charvil, and Hurst, and to a lesser extent to Wargrave, Hare Hatch and Knowl Hill.

5.28 A number of retail premises have been lost over the years, notably along the High Street, and it is locally known that this has been due to heavy traffic and narrow pavements. The current centre is concentrated around the Crossroads, with some outliers on Waltham Road and Station Road. There are two residential houses within the centre and a number of flats over retail units. The original trading area extended further to the west along High Street, and there were more shops along Station Road.



12 Twyford Village centre

5.29 With changes to shopping behaviour, the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to protect the village centre from losing any remaining shops and services. The policy, and Policies Map, defines the extent of the existing Village Centre and indicates within that the Essential Core of the Primary Shopping Area. The policy resists proposals for change of use that will result in the loss of an active commercial, business or service use of a ground floor frontage in the Village Centre. Where planning permission is still required, evidence will need to be submitted to demonstrate why an existing commercial, business or service use of a ground floor frontage in the Village Centre is no longer viable alongside marketing evidence that shows genuine and sustained efforts to promote, improve and market the property at a reasonable value. The policy also supports proposals that will create livelier and more



active street frontages as well as an improved public realm. Such proposals might include visual narrowing of the roads where the pavements are narrow, attractive pedestrian and cycle crossings, the introduction of shared space and parklets (small parts of streets providing more space for people using the street to stop, rest and enjoy), street planting and junction improvements.

5.30 It is acknowledged that some changes of use do not require planning permission and new permitted development rights enables changes of use from what are now Class E (commercial, business and service) uses to residential uses. The Parish Council hopes that WBC will make an Article 4 Direction (which removes permitted development rights) for the essential core of the Primary Shopping Area to remove those rights with effect from August 2023, enabling such changes to remain in planning control and the Parish Council will submit a formal request for this following the referendum of this Neighbourhood Plan.

5.31 In the meantime, proposals made in the Village Centre will require Prior Approval from WBC. As the essential core of the Primary Shopping Area lies entirely within the Twyford Village Conservation Area, such approval will require the consideration of any harmful effects to the character of the Conservation Area from the loss of such a ground floor use. Although the Neighbourhood Plan policy (as part of the development plan) will not be engaged in a Prior Approval determination, together with Policy TW13 it has identified the High Street commercial uses as playing an important part of its distinct function and character and could therefore be a legitimate reason for refusing approval for proposals that will harm the centre.



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### **Twyford Neighbourhood Plan** **Policy TW6 Thriving Village Centre & Policy TW7 Improving Air Quality**

- |                           |                                   |                             |                   |                      |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Parish Boundary           | Village Centre Boundary           | Core Primary Shopping Area  | Existing Parklets | Parklets Opportunity |
| Twyford Conservation Area | Twyford Station Conservation Area | Air Quality Management Area |                   |                      |

### **13 Visual representations of potential solutions for Twyford Village Centre used in community engagement**

## POLICY TW5: VILLAGE CENTRE REGENERATION AREA

- A. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies the Twyford Village Centre Regeneration Area, as shown on the Policies Map, for the purposes of supporting regeneration opportunities that will deliver public realm improvements and traffic mitigation measures that are required to enhance the active travel environment and improve air quality, residential amenity and highway safety for all users.**
- B. Any development proposals that will generate an increase in traffic at the Crossroads will be required to make a direct and proportionate contribution to delivering the Twyford Village Regeneration Scheme.**

5.32 In 2016 the Twyford Village Centre Crossroads was declared an AQMA by Wokingham Borough Council due to the higher than recommended amount of nitrogen dioxide in the air around the Crossroads. Wokingham's latest Air Quality Action Plan of March 2018 considers that the areas prioritised for action at the Crossroads are to reduce the number of cars and encourage sustainable travel with the feasibility of alternative traffic routes to be investigated. It also suggests that the Local Plan update will make recommendations for development and supporting infrastructure.



14 Twyford Crossroads

5.33 The adopted Core Strategy Policy CP10 – Improvements to the Strategic Transport Network for a Twyford Eastern Relief Road has made no impact on this matter and the Local Plan update continues to be under preparation in the meantime, however the development of a Twyford Eastern Relief Road has not advanced in any way as shown in the RGS and DLP Policy SS12: Improvements to Transport Routes. The Twyford Eastern Relief Road has been an aspiration of WBC for a number of years and the latest Infrastructure Delivery Plan of February 2020 notes a costing of approximately £10-20 million. Early investigations for the DLP assessed a series of larger more complex areas which included Land to the east of Twyford – largely in Ruscombe. The option would have offered a means to deliver a relief road. The RGS has chosen to pursue an alternative spatial strategy which has meant that there will be no solution, in the form of alternative traffic routes, at the Crossroads.

5.34 With no realistic prospect of the Twyford Eastern Relief Road to be delivered in the plan period, the policy establishes an alternative traffic mitigation measures and public realm improvements project in the Village Centre Regeneration Area to the Relief Road, which is shown on the Policies Map, to provide relief from heavy traffic if it is not possible to deliver a Relief Road. WBC has confirmed that no developer contributions have been collected towards the Twyford Eastern Relief Road to date, despite it being an aspiration for over 50 years and relied on as forming part of the solution to address air quality issues in this location. Throughout negotiations with the Borough Council, it has been recognised that there is no real prospect of a Twyford Eastern Relief Road being delivered within the plan period.

5.35 Wokingham Borough Council's current policy position on the Twyford Eastern Relief Road is set out in the adopted Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery local plans, where existing planning policy recognises the need to protect the route for the future delivery of the scheme. The emerging Local Plan Update also proposes to carry forward existing planning policy, and with respect to identifying future improvements to key transport routes, the Twyford Eastern Relief Road is included in Policy SS12 of the Draft Local Plan.

5.36 As part of preparing the Local Plan Update, a series of development scenarios have been considered, including development to the east of Twyford (within Ruscombe Parish) for strategic scale development which is currently designated Green Belt. In absence of any current capital funding or budget assigned to deliver the Twyford Eastern Relief Road, the only mechanism for delivery would be strategic scale development.

5.37 The emerging spatial strategy for the Local Plan Update directs strategic scale development elsewhere within the borough. In particular, an alternative strategy for the Local Plan Update was consulted on in November 2021 and identified a new garden village on land to the south of the M4 between Shinfield, Arborfield and Sindlesham as the preferred option for accommodating long term development needs. Currently, exceptional circumstances are not therefore considered to exist for altering the boundaries to the Green Belt for strategic scale development at Twyford / Ruscombe. This is recognised as the only feasible and appropriate mechanism for delivering a Twyford Eastern Relief Road.

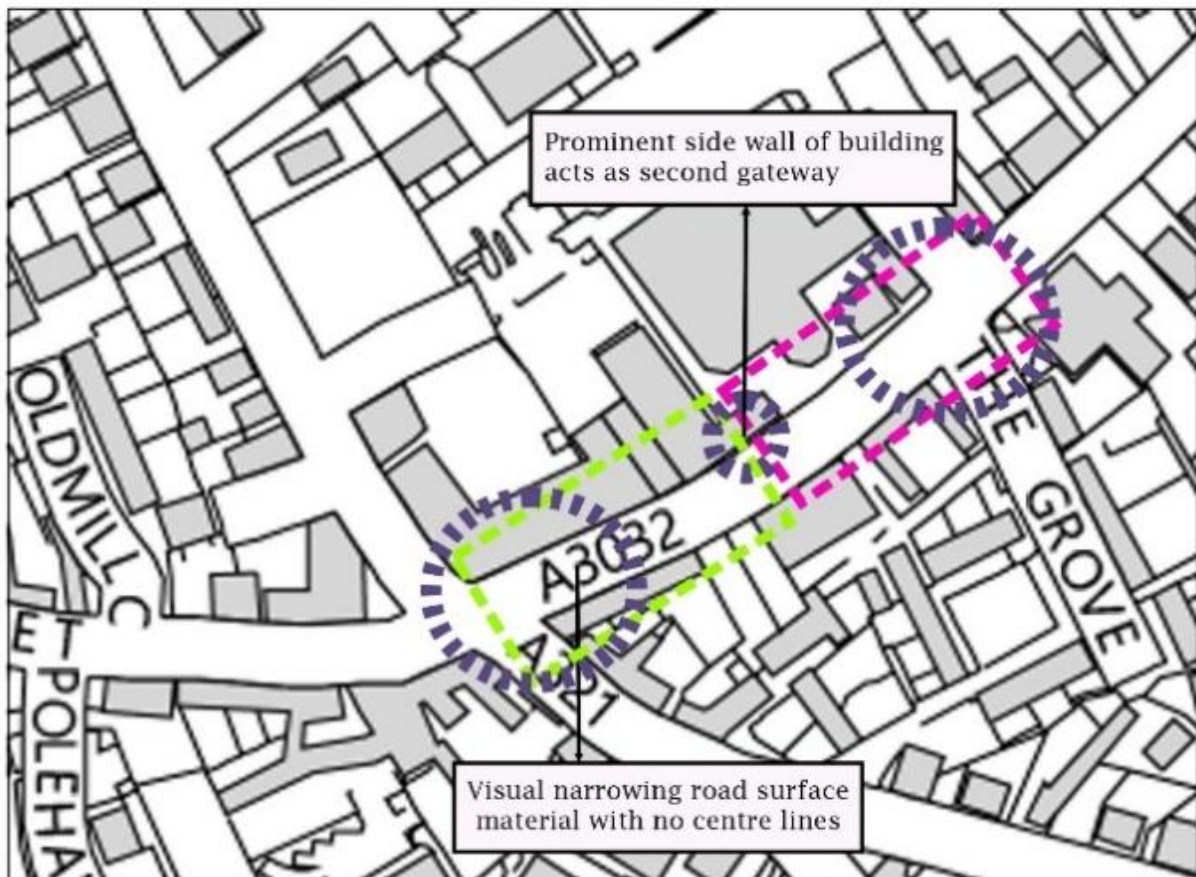
5.38 Local Transport Plan 3 is the most up-to-date transport plan for the borough, though the Climate Emergency Action Plan and emerging any national guidance for preparing the new Local Transport Plan would suggest the need to consider carbon as a major consideration in any future transport schemes. The future direction of transport and aspirations to support net zero carbon mean that active travel and sustainable transport measures are likely to be a focus of future schemes, and as such any mitigation and public realm improvements are likely to be viewed favourably in line with Policy TW5.



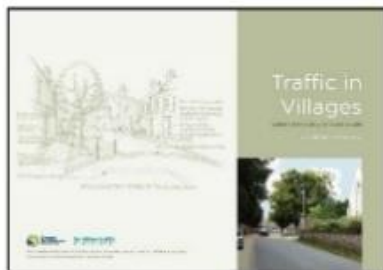
5.39 The Neighbourhood Plan initiated an exercise to apply Traffic in Villages: A toolkit for communities prepared by Hamilton-Baillie Associates and The Dorset AONB partnership, successfully applied in other villages, which has resulted in a vision for improvements at the Crossroads. The exercise involved seeking ways to improve the relationship between people, places and traffic and includes:

- Changes such as visual narrowing of the roads where the pavements are narrow in order to slow vehicles, highlighting of distinctive features such as Bell Corner, using varied road surface material and fewer road markings to influence through traffic in the village centre and lessen its impact on people;
- Making London Road more pedestrian-friendly and cycle-friendly by:
  - creating a notable entrance gateway to a Lobby area close to Jubilee Corner and a Shopping Zone beyond;
  - visual emphasis of, and creative links between, the distinctive features of the Lobby area. Alternatively, a road surface design to link the Grove and Waitrose entrance;
  - a second gateway signifying transition from the Lobby to the Shopping Zone near Waitrose;
  - additional measures to encourage low-speed in this short stretch of street such as visual narrowing and removal of the centre line.

5.40 With these, or similar changes, the Shopping Zone (and possible the Lobby area too) might constitute a new village focal point. There have been other suggestions on solutions for this area, see 7.20 – 7.24. The fundamental aim of the Twyford Village Centre Regeneration Scheme is to shift the balance back from vehicular traffic to people.



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### **Twyford Neighbourhood Plan** **Policy TW4 The Crossroads**

- Parish Boundary
- Gateways
- Shopping Zone
- Lobby Area

15 Visual representations of potential solutions for Twyford Village Centre used in community engagement

5.41 The Parish Council is actively pursuing options to realise the aim of the Twyford Village Centre Regeneration Area and has recently been successful in securing grant funding from the High Street Regeneration and Social Infrastructure Support Fund through the Neighbourhood Planning Programme, funded by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to commission high level option testing that will enable a preferred option to deliver the aim of the Twyford Village Centre Regeneration Scheme. A report was received in January 2023. WBC is



**16 Part of London Road Retail Area**

supportive of the approach and engagement with WBC on this matter is ongoing. In the meantime, the Plan sets out a vision for the area and shows its extent on the Policies Maps. The policy requires that schemes do not harm the delivery of regeneration opportunities that deliver public realm improvements and traffic mitigation measures in the Twyford Village Centre Regeneration Scheme Area. The policy also seeks additional developer contributions for the Twyford Village Centre Regeneration Scheme where appropriate. If the Twyford Village Regeneration Scheme has not yet been costed and approved by the relevant stakeholders, contributions to deliver public realm improvements and traffic mitigation measures in the Twyford Village Centre Regeneration Area will continue to be sought where appropriate.

5.42 The Neighbourhood Plan recognises that developments in the wider WBC area, not just in the designated neighbourhood area, are very likely to generate journeys to Twyford for commuting (and other purposes). For example, there is currently a proposal for additional dwellings in Hurst. The Parish Council will continue to engage in the emerging Local Plan process and willingly offers the policy to WBC to help frame a Borough-wide policy in the emerging Local Plan, including the deletion of the 50+ year aspiration, for which no developer contributions have been collected to date, of a Twyford Eastern Relief Road.

## POLICY TW6: IMPROVING AIR QUALITY

- A. In addition to existing planning policy provisions on the requirement to submit air quality assessments, development within or adjacent to the Twyford Crossroads Air Quality Management Area, as shown on the Policies Map, should demonstrate how they contribute towards the aims and objectives set out in the latest version of Wokingham Borough Council's air quality action plan.**
- B. Where applicable, development proposals should aim to be at least 'Air Quality Neutral' and not cause or contribute to worsening air quality, including in the Twyford Crossroads Air Quality Management Area. Development proposals that would result in a significant increase in air pollution within or adjacent to the Twyford Crossroads Air Quality Management Area will only be supported in exceptional circumstances. This should be demonstrated through an air quality assessment, and if necessary, proposed mitigation measures.**

5.43 As indicated at Policy TW5, in 2016 the Twyford Village Centre Crossroads was declared an AQMA by WBC. There are currently no adopted planning policies regarding air quality specifically and the Borough Council relies on the adopted Core Strategy Policy CP1 – Sustainable development that requires development to minimise the emission of pollutants into the wider environment and the existing provisions of the NPPF. The policy is in line with the objectives of DLP Policy HC6 Air Pollution and Air Quality which is currently being prepared. In the meantime, the Borough Council requires Air Quality Assessments to be provided with planning applications submitted within or adjacent to an AQMA.

5.44 The policy therefore identifies the presence of the AQMA and requires development within, or adjacent to the AQMA, to contribute to the actions and objectives set out in the latest Air Quality Action Plan.

5.45 There is clear evidence that poor air quality has a significant impact on human health. People typically spend about 90% of their time indoors. The 2010 edition of Approved Document F (ADF) of the building regulations was intended to provide satisfactory indoor air quality in new homes, however recent research shows that this mechanism has not been implemented well<sup>5</sup>. The Neighbourhood Plan is seeking to address air quality through a number of its policies but given the severity



17 Congestion at Twyford Crossroads

<sup>5</sup> Ventilation and indoor air quality in new homes, [AECOM Sept 2019](#)



of air quality issues at the Crossroads, the policy seeks to manage and prevent further deterioration of existing poor air quality. The policy has taken inspiration from leading edge practice in the London Plan as well as Local Plans – Milton Keynes– and neighbourhood plans – Knightsbridge.

5.46 The policy requires Air Quality Assessments where they are required (within, or adjacent to the AQMA) to demonstrate at least Air Quality Neutral standard during both construction and operation. This should be demonstrated through an air quality assessment and, where necessary, propose mitigation measures. Developments that require a Travel Plan or Transport Assessment will also be required to submit an Air Quality Assessment with their planning application and the policy makes this a requirement.

5.47 Air Quality Neutral (AQN) standard means development which avoid any increase in nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter emissions across the parish. All on-site measures will need to be explored before suitable mitigation measures are considered as an alternative. Following the publication of the Government's Housing Standards Review in March 2015, AQN standards cannot be required for developments that are residential only, but in these cases, the policy strongly encourages developers to ensure that emissions meet the AQN standard.

## **POLICY TW7: NATURE RECOVERY AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

- A. The Parish contains a variety of green and blue infrastructure that provides an environmental support system for the community and wildlife. The Neighbourhood Plan designates this as a Network, as shown on the Policies Map, for the purpose of promoting nature recovery and for mitigating climate change. The Network comprises the Loddon Nature Reserve, Local Wildlife Sites, areas of priority habitats, nominated Local Green Spaces which play a role in the Network, green routes, rivers, other water bodies and other land of biodiversity value.**
- B. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals that lie within or adjoining the Network are required to have full regard maintaining and improving the functionality of the Network, in particular by delivering a minimum of 10% net gain in biodiversity, and integrating existing green and blue infrastructure assets in the overall design of their layouts and landscaping schemes where practicable to do so.**
- C. Proposals that will lead to the loss of land lying within the Network and that will undermine its integrity will not be supported. Development proposals that will lead to the extension of the Network will be supported, provided they are consistent with all other relevant policies of the development plan.**
- D. Existing trees, hedgerows and other landscape features should be retained, and where possible enhanced, as an integral part of development proposals. This includes appropriate measures to secure their protection during any construction works.**
- E. Where new green and blue infrastructure is provided, proposals will be required to include legally binding provision for its long-term management and maintenance as part of the development.**

5.48 The policy defines the presence of green and blue infrastructure assets in the Parish which have multiple roles including carbon sinking, flood alleviation and biodiversity net-gain) and highlights opportunities for its recovery. By doing so it supports MDDL Policy CC03 Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping, and DLP Policy C8 Green and Blue Infrastructure and Public Rights of Way and is in line with CS Policy CP7 on Biodiversity, and DLP Policy NE1 Biodiversity and Nature Conservation. The Policies Map shows the full extent of the Network, which allows applications to determine if their proposals should take this policy into account. A more detailed plan (see Plan H) is shown below.

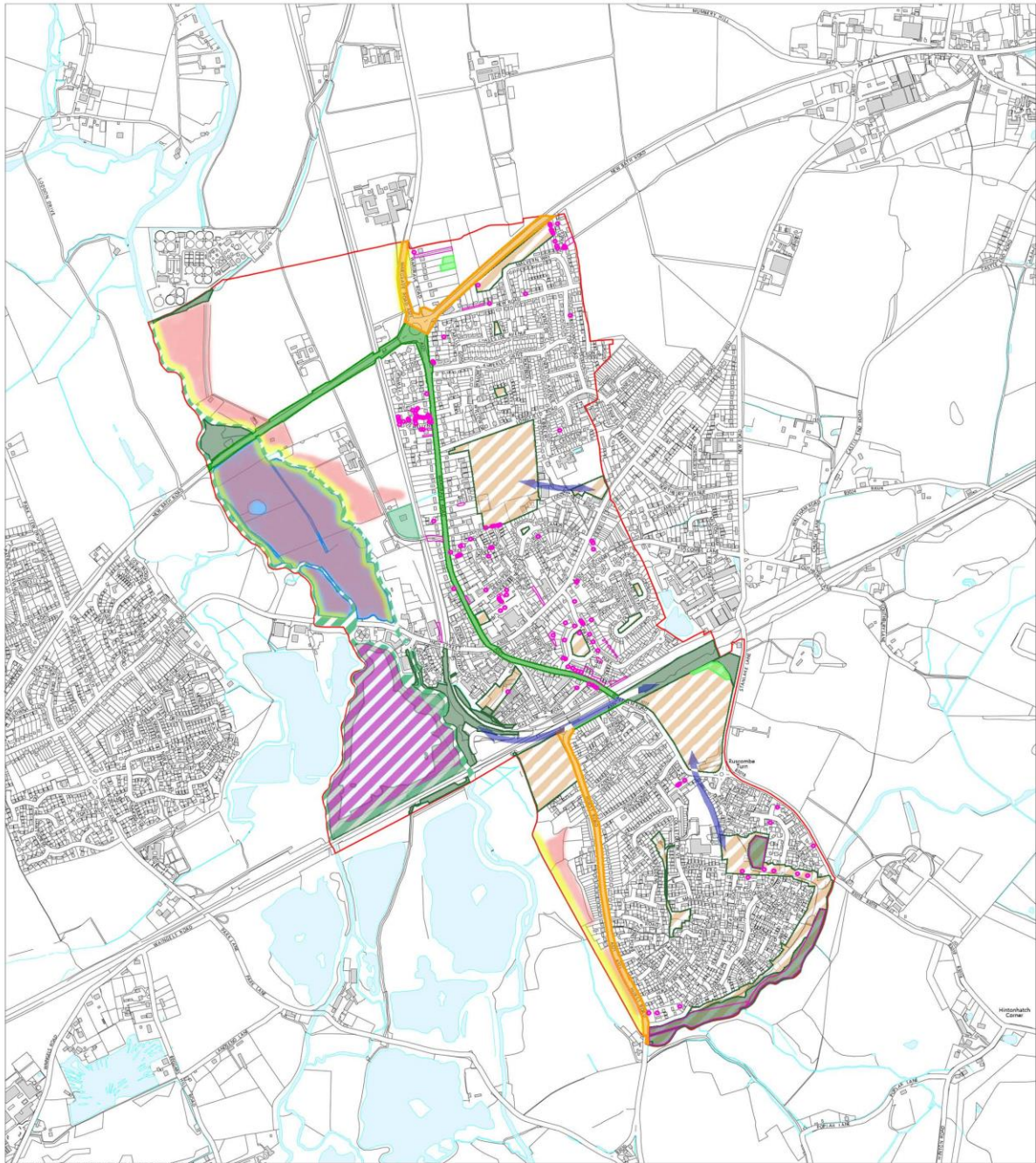
5.49 The policy requires that all development proposals that lie within the network, or that adjoin it, should consider how they may improve it, or at the very least do not undermine its integrity of connecting spaces and habitats. This may mean that development layouts are designed to contribute to the network's effectiveness. The policy also requires a minimum of 10% net gain in biodiversity to be delivered. Net gain will be measured using DEFRA's latest biodiversity metric.



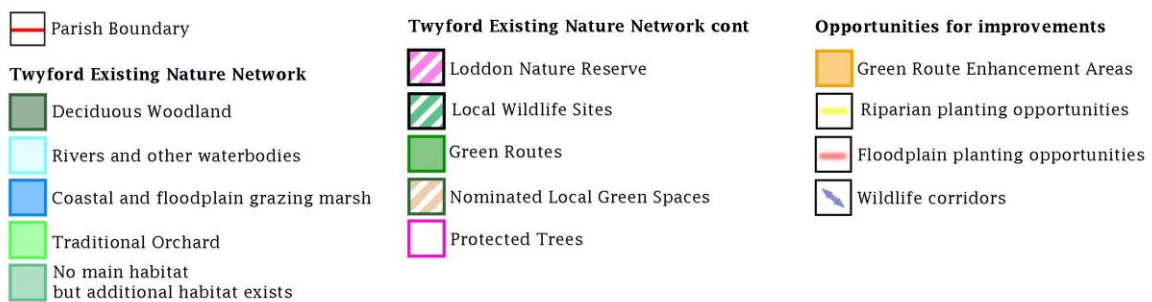
18 Broad Hinton by Twyford Brook

5.50 The importance of green spaces to Twyford residents was clearly demonstrated in the 2019 Resident's Survey, in which 94% of respondents said they would miss the recreational and green spaces if they were gone and, when asked if particular areas should be protected from development, 57% mentioned green fields. The Neighbourhood Plan therefore seeks to protect its green spaces, utilising their functions as valued recreational areas, flood prevention, increased biodiversity and carbon sequestration. In doing so, the health and wellbeing contributions of green infrastructure is also recognised. It is also important to connect green spaces, through the use of green corridors. This helps protect wildlife from population collapses and allows for natural increases in the biodiversity of an area.





### Twyford Neighbourhood Plan Policy TW7 Nature Recovery and Climate Change



### Plan H: Twyford Nature Recovery Network



5.51 Blue infrastructure (water) in Twyford lies exclusively to the west of the Parish where the western branch of the River Loddon (it splits in two in Hurst Parish before reaching Twyford) forms the western boundary of the Parish north of the railway line. To the south of the railway line, the lower lying land though predominantly in Hurst Parish does regularly flood and therefore development on the Twyford side of the boundary has reached its logical limit. To the north of the railway line, past gravel extraction has resulted in two large man-made lakes, one of which lies within Twyford Parish, with the two branches of the River Loddon running on each side of this lake. This 14-hectare lake and site, now known as Loddon Nature reserve, has been managed successfully for many years by the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) as a Nature Reserve. The lake and surrounding shallow fringes create ideal conditions for wintering birds, such as gadwall, tufted duck, pochard and snipe.



**19 The Loddon at the Silk Mill**

5.52 As well as being an important nature habitat this area is widely regarded by local residents as an important walking, educational and recreational area which connects directly with a similar fishing lake in the adjoining Charvil Parish area which also supports many examples of wildlife.

5.53 To the north of this area, across the Old Bath Road, the Loddon is very prone to flooding. Although much of this is to the Charvil flood meadows, called Charvil Meadows, to the west of the Loddon and in Charvil parish, regular flooding still occurs to the east of the Loddon in the lower areas of Bridge Farm and Riverways Farm land which needs to be taken into account in any planning considerations. It is recognised that green and blue infrastructure knows no boundaries and that there are valuable assets adjacent to the designated neighbourhood area boundary, for example Local Wildlife Sites Whistley Mill Farm Copse, Charvil Country Park West, and Charvil Meadows. It is expected that WBC's Local Plan and/or Neighbourhood Plans being prepared in neighbouring parishes will acknowledge assets beyond the Twyford neighbourhood area.

5.54 In the early part of the 20th century there is photographic evidence that the River Loddon was navigable by skiffs and canoes up to the Old Bath Road bridge by Bridge House. Indeed, bathing took place. Although navigation by an intrepid kayaker is still apparently possible a reopening of the river accessibility by the Environment Agency or another would be a good addition to Twyford's leisure profile and recreational facilities.

5.55 A national Nature Recovery Network is a major commitment in the government's 25 Year Environmental Plan and the Environment Bill requires Responsible Authorities (RA) to prepare Local Nature Recovery Strategies. The policy therefore anticipates this and signals to the RA that it should consider the role of this Network as part of its future Local Nature Recovery Strategy which will cover a much wider area and relate the Network with the Biodiversity Opportunity Areas either side of the parish (Loddon Valley Gravel Pits and Waltham Woods and Parklands).

5.56 It has also been identified that the priority habitats in the Parish form part of the Core Zone of the BBOWT Nature Recovery Network. Outside of this Core Zone there are still opportunities to better connect spaces for nature through wild verges and wildlife gardens for example. The purpose of this policy is to identify existing green and blue infrastructure and opportunities to better connect them which may also play a part in delivering the aims of the BBOWT Nature Recovery Network.

5.57 Whilst there is land in the Parish which already have Countryside Stewardship Agreements, additional planting opportunities have been identified using the 'Working with natural processes to reduce flood risk' evidence base by the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Research and Development Programme and Environment Agency in February 2021. Specifically, opportunities for additional riparian woodland planting along our water corridors. This type of planting can slow flood flows, help reduce sediment delivery to the watercourse, and provide shading. Much of the remainder of our open countryside lies within a flood zone and is suited to additional floodplain woodland



planting. This type of planting provides benefits across most ecosystem services, the greatest being habitat and climate regulation. Floodplain woodland opportunities as shown on Map H may also have potential to be restored to a fen habitat of high biodiversity and carbon storage potential. These opportunities are all shown on the Policies Map and the Parish Council will seek to work with landowners to realise such opportunities where possible avoiding the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land. Floodplain woodland planting will only be acceptable where modelling shows that it will not conflict with Policy TW10 on flooding.

## **POLICY TW8: TREE CANOPY COVER**

- A. Development proposals on sites of 0.5 ha or more outside the Village Centre as defined in Policy TW4 and on the Policies Map, should achieve a future canopy cover of 25% of the site area principally through the retention of existing trees and the planting of new trees. Where such an approach would be impracticable for viability, layout or design reasons, the use of other green infrastructure (such as green roofs and walls) should be used where they can offer similar benefits to trees.**
- B. Development proposals in the Village Centre as defined in Policy TW4 and on the Policies Map, and on sites of less than 0.5 ha, should maximise the opportunities available for canopy cover, including tree retention and planting or the provision of other green infrastructure (such as green roofs and walls).**



20 Community Tree Planting - Stanlake Meadows

5.58 The Canopy Cover of England's Towns and Cities: baselining and setting targets to improve human health and well-being (Trees People and the Built Environment 3, 2017)<sup>6</sup> records a canopy cover of 27.4% (+/-1.99) for Wokingham Borough. The i-Tree Canopy tool was created by Forest Research as part of this baseline study. Forest Research is currently undertaking a mapping exercise to build an urban canopy cover map of the UK. It indicates that Twyford currently has <20-25% of canopy cover.

5.59 Canopy cover is the layer of leaves, branches and tree stems that cover the ground. Trees help mitigate the environmental and social challenges our built-up areas, especially our Village Centre, face in a quantifiable way. This is supported by the Government's Net-Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener October 2021<sup>7</sup> which recognises the role of green and blue infrastructure, including trees, in providing an opportunity to benefit local economies and bring about long-term improvements in people's health and wellbeing. The policy therefore draws inspiration from others, like Wycombe District Council and Cornwall Council who are operating planning policies which require new development (excluding householder applications) to achieve a quantifiable future canopy cover, with many others in the process of developing this type of policy.

5.60 The policy refines the anticipated DLP Policy NE3 Trees, woodland and hedgerows which seeks to avoid the loss of trees unless suitable mitigation measures, including equivalent scale canopy cover, are incorporated. Doick et al suggests that "towns and cities with at least 20% cover should set targets to increase cover by at least 5% within ten to twenty years"<sup>8</sup> and given that Twyford's canopy cover is below the Borough's baseline of 27.4% the policy requires new development to achieve a minimum of 25% canopy cover of the site area to start to bring Twyford's canopy cover in line with the Borough. In doing so, a wide range of benefits are expected including storing carbon, reducing the urban heat island effect and improving air quality. The policy has been designed to be applied in a flexible way. In specific terms it acknowledges that issues such as commercial viability, site layouts and design may make the expectations of the policy impracticable on a site-by-site basis. This will be a matter for WBC to consider based in the evidence provided with each development proposal. In addition, matters such as site layout and commercial viability may also be affected where development proposals would also need to provide open space and landscaping to meet other policies.

5.61 As WBC does not currently have guidance for applicants to calculate canopy cover, the adopted Wycombe Tree Canopy Cover Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) provides a Canopy Cover calculator, developed in partnership with Treeconomics,

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<sup>6</sup> See Appendix A of The Canopy Cover of England's Towns and Cities: baselining and setting targets to improve human health and well-being (Trees People and the Built Environment 3, 2017) ([Link](#))

<sup>7</sup> See Paragraph 34 of the Net-Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener October 2021 ([Link](#))

<sup>8</sup> See Results of the study on page 11 in The Canopy Cover of England's Towns and Cities: baselining and setting targets to improve human health and well-being (Trees People and the Built Environment 3, 2017) ([Link](#))



Forest Research and Wycombe District Council<sup>9</sup>. This guidance will assist applicants in calculating how their proposed scheme should seek to meet the requirements of the policy, until such a time that WBC adopts its own guidance.



**21 Malvern Way Open Space Tree Cover**

**22 Tree Cover Beside the Mainline**



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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-development-plans/local-planning-guidance/>

## **POLICY TW9: ZERO CARBON BUILDINGS**

- A. Development proposals which would be 'zero carbon ready' by design by minimising the amount of energy needed to heat and cool buildings through landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping will be supported. Consideration should be given to resource efficiency at the outset and whether existing buildings can be re-used as part of the scheme to capture their embodied carbon.**
- B. Proposals for a Passivhaus or equivalent standard buildings, with a space heating demand of less than 15KWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year will be supported. Schemes that maximise their potential to meet this standard by proposing the use of terraced and/or apartment building forms of plot size, plot coverage and layout that are different to those of the character area within which the proposal is located will be supported, provided it can be demonstrated that the scheme will not have an unacceptable effect on the character area.**
- C. Proposals for major development should be accompanied by a Whole-Life-Cycle Carbon Emission Assessment, using a recognised methodology, to demonstrate actions have been taken to reduce embodied carbon resulting from the construction and use of the building over its life.**

5.62 The policy context for encouraging higher energy efficiency standards at the Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan scale is complex. The policy may also appear rather technical, but it is a temporary measure as in due course, it is expected that the new Local Plan, if not national policy itself, will make such provisions across the Borough.

5.63 Policy TW9 of this Plan will result in a situation where the neighbourhood plan would offer a supportive context for development proposals in the parish to achieve more sustainable solutions than those required by national policy. Plainly the wider situation may be affected by changes to national or local planning policies on these matters in the Plan period.

5.64 The policy offers support for the development of zero carbon ready buildings. It also offers support for buildings which are designed to Passivhaus or equivalent standards.

5.65 The third part of policy comments that proposals for major development should be accompanied by a Whole-Life-Cycle Carbon Emission Assessment, using a recognised methodology, to demonstrate actions have been taken to reduce embodied carbon resulting from the construction and use of the building over its life. This will ensure that development proposals are implemented as intended.

5.66 Every new build or redevelopment project in the Neighbourhood Area, however modest, provides an opportunity to make a difference and a contribution towards meeting our climate change targets for 2050. This new information requirement need not be an unreasonable expectation of even the smallest schemes for new buildings. Land values in the area are high relative to build costs and ought to be sufficient to ensure requirements to tackle improving energy and carbon performance are viable.

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## **POLICY TW10: WATER INFRASTRUCTURE AND FLOOD RISK**

- A. Development proposals will be supported, provided it can be demonstrated that, where appropriate:**
- a. The sewer network can accommodate the additional demand for sewerage disposal either in its existing form or through planned improvements to the system to ensure sufficient wastewater treatment is in place in advance of the first occupation of the development;**
  - b. The Water Efficiency Standard of 110 litres per person per day as set out in the National Technical Standards will be achieved in new development to reduce the volume of wastewater entering the foul sewer;**
  - c. Any development proposed in either flood zone 2 or flood zone 3, on sites over 1ha in flood zone 1, or in a dry island, must be accompanied by a site specific Flood Risk Assessment that demonstrates that proposals will not increase flood risk from fluvial flooding or any other form of flooding and takes opportunities to reduce flood risk where possible in accordance with national requirements; and**
  - d. Managing flood risk must take account of the impacts of climate change over the lifetime of the development and have full regard to the requirements of Policy TW13 on Sustainable Drainage Systems.**



**23 Bridge Farm**

5.67 The River Loddon runs through the west side of Twyford and approximately one quarter of land in Twyford lies within a flood risk area. Climate change has been shown to increase the likelihood of floods in the future. The Wokingham Borough Council Water Cycle Study – Phase 1 Scoping Study (2019) identifies that the Borough is classified as an area of serious water stress and justifies the higher optional standard for water efficiency of 110 litres per person per day. Given these characteristics, the policy serves a number of purposes. Firstly, it requires all proposals to demonstrate that there is sufficient sewage capacity to accommodate an increase in demand. This will involve early liaison with Thames Water ahead of the submission of any planning application to discuss water requirements to serve their developments to ensure that any necessary upgrades to the water network are aligned with development. Where necessary, Thames Water will seek phasing conditions to ensure that development is not occupied until any necessary sewerage network upgrades have been delivered. It should be noted that local upgrades can take 18 months to 3 years to complete with 3-5 years for more strategic upgrades. In addition, Thames Water provide a free pre-planning service to discuss and advise on water and wastewater infrastructure requirements.

5.68 Due to the risks associated with development on flood risk areas, the policy requires proposals to be accompanied by a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment which must demonstrate that the development will be safe for its lifetime taking account of climatic factors and vulnerability of users, without increasing flood risk elsewhere. This is in line with the requirements of national policy and advice. The policy is intended to draw greater attention to these issues given the characteristics of the designated neighbourhood area when determining planning applications.



**24 Flooding at Charvil Meadows**



## POLICY TW11: NEW HOMES – TENURE AND MIX

**A. In general terms development proposals for new housing should provide affordable housing on the following basis:**

- **25% First Homes;**
- **12% shared ownership;**
- **8% rent to buy; and**
- **55% affordable housing for rent.**

**The precise tenure mix of affordable housing will be determined on a site-by-site basis.**

**B. Proposals for residential development, which address local need in Twyford, and are based on the most recent evidence available, will be supported. Development proposals will be expected to provide a mix of dwelling types and sizes to address the nature of local needs and contribute to the objective of creating a mixed and balanced community. To achieve this, schemes of ten dwellings or more should include provision of smaller dwellings (1-2 bedrooms) in at least equal numbers to larger dwellings (3 bedrooms and above).**

5.69 There is currently no local plan provision for First Homes as the product was only introduced by the Government in summer 2021. It is noted that the RGS requires the provision of First Homes in the mix of homes coming forward. First Homes are a specific discounted market sale housing product that meets the definition of

'affordable housing' for planning purposes. Planning Practice Guidance now requires that a minimum of 25% of all affordable housing units secured through

developer contributions should be First Homes and that they (and the mechanism securing a discount in perpetuity) will be secured through section 106 planning obligations.



**25 Flats above Longfield Road Shops**

5.70 In the first instance, Clause A of the policy therefore makes provision for First Homes and requires a specific tenure mix for affordable housing provision on qualifying sites as recommended by the Twyford Neighbourhood Plan Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) December 2021, included in the evidence base. The policy adopts the flexible approach of

the DLP to use the evidence in the HNA as a starting point for affordable housing tenure split allowing for flexibility where there are site specific issues.

5.71 The DLP also proposes a flexible approach to housing mix in emerging Policy H3. The objective being to create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities. Clause B adopts this approach refining it to respond to the identified demand of Twyford's housing needs.

5.72 The HNA demonstrates that Twyford's housing stock is made up of significantly larger dwelling sizes, with 61% made up of over three bedrooms and less than 10% made up of 1-bedroom dwellings. The HNA also indicates that Twyford has a higher-than-average proportion of one-person households when compared to Wokingham as a whole and there are signs of significant under occupation which validates the local desire for downsizing properties in Twyford. Population projections for Twyford indicate an increase in households with younger populations and in older groups with a moderate decline in those aged 25-34.



5.73 Clause B therefore requires this weighting towards smaller 1-3 bedroom dwellings whilst acknowledging that it is important not to exclude certain dwelling types. The starting point for addressing the need for a more balanced community in the neighbourhood area is for new developments to be made up of at least equal numbers of 1-,2-bedroom homes to 3-bedroom and above homes. This will facilitate downsizing and continue a supply of larger homes to accommodate growing families. While over the lifetime of the plan this policy will only marginally influence the balance of the housing stock, it is considered to be

a necessary step to secure a more balanced community in the longer term and provide opportunities for younger people and 'downsizers' to be able to access housing which otherwise the market would not deliver.

5.74 The Plan encourages developers to consider delivering some of the affordable housing element through a Community Led Housing model. The Parish Council is keen to see a proportion of new homes come forward through community-led schemes involving housing, small business units and other appropriate community uses, which may involve a community led housing model such as a Community Land trust, or equivalent body. There is strong local community support for such an approach and the Parish Council is actively investigating this delivery model.

## **POLICY TW12: FIRST HOMES EXCEPTION SITES**

### **A. Proposals for First Homes Exception Sites (excluding land within the Metropolitan Green Belt) will be deemed appropriate if:**

- i. The site is outside the existing development limits of Twyford but adjoins, or is well related to, the existing settlement pattern, is in keeping with the surrounding character, and within safe and reasonable walking distance of Twyford village;**
- ii. No other proposal for a First Homes Exception Site has been approved or implemented in the plan period;**
- iii. The gross site area is no more than 1 Ha; and**
- iv. It can be demonstrated that the scheme will;**
  - b. Avoid areas at risk of flooding;**
  - c. Not cause unacceptable harm to any heritage assets; and**
  - d. Accords with all other relevant development management policies of the development plan.**

5.75 Historic delivery rates of Affordable Housing in the Parish suggests that the evidenced affordable housing need will not be met over the Plan period. As a consequence, the HNA recommends that exception sites could be explored. Affordable Homes can currently come forward in the Parish as Rural Exception Sites. These developments will be guided by DLP Policy H6 for Rural Exception Sites in due course and is currently guided by the NPPF.

5.76 Planning Practice Guidance now requires at least 25% of all affordable housing units to be First Homes. A First Home is defined as discounted market housing that must be discounted by a minimum of 30% against the market value in perpetuity and its first sale must be at a price no higher than £250,000. Whilst some of the affordable housing contributions from Land at Bridge Farm may contribute to the delivery of First Homes,

Planning Practice Guidance also allows for First Homes Exception Sites to come forward on unallocated land outside of a development plan but only within those parts of the Parish which do not lie in the Green Belt. For those Green Belt areas only Rural Exception Sites can come forward. The policy therefore sets out spatial criteria of where such development may be suitable outside of the Green Belt and defines the proportionality of First Homes Exception Site proposals as provided for by Planning Practice Guidance.

5.77 In essence the policy reflects the spirit and intention of DLP Policy H6 for Rural Exception Sites which allows for small-scale schemes to meet local rural needs in the parish and will continue to operate in the parish in addition to First Homes Exception Sites guided by Policy TW12. The policy is also broadly in line with Entry Level Housing Schemes set out in the NPPF which it is anticipated the First Homes product will effectively replace. Whilst the HNA demonstrates a greater need for affordable homes for ownership, the acute shortage of affordable housing means that a focus on affordable homes for rent should be reinforced to ensure provision is provided for those most in need. Proposals may therefore be supported which deliver other types of affordable housing for rent which meet local need as provided for by Planning Practice Guidance.

## **POLICY TW13: DESIGN CODES**

### **A. Development proposals should demonstrate the way in which they have responded positively to:**

- i. the essential design considerations relevant to the character area typologies within which they are located (as shown on the Policies Maps, and**
- ii. the general design principles set out in the Twyford Design Guidelines and Codes Report.**

### **B. Development proposals should demonstrate how they will sustain and enhance the historic environment and have full regard to the special architectural and historic significance of the features identified in the Twyford Design Guidelines and Code Report as positive characteristics of the designated Twyford Conservation Areas and their immediate settings.**

5.78 There are distinctive features of Twyford that shapes its character. These features are set out in the Twyford Design Guidelines and Codes attached as Appendix A. The content of the Code forms part of the policy but has been attached as an Appendix purely for practical presentational reasons. The Code encapsulates the key design principles within the Conservation Areas, their settings and beyond. The policy places additional local



emphasis to the design quality principles of the Wokingham Borough Design Guide complementing CS Policy CP3 by highlighting the particular characteristics of the Parish.

5.79 The policy requires that applicants should demonstrate that they have regard to the design principles and guidance the Code contains as relevant to the location of their proposals. The policy does not advocate pastiche or historic solution; however it is important that any new development demonstrates a connection with local character and place making.

## **POLICY TW14: BUILDINGS OF TRADITIONAL LOCAL CHARACTER**

**A. Development proposals affecting non-designated heritage assets, which include Buildings of Traditional Local Character, should demonstrate how they will sustain or enhance their significance or how the public benefits outweigh any identified harm to their significance.**

5.80 The Neighbourhood Plan had envisaged that the Twyford Design Guidelines and Codes Report attached as Appendix A would identify buildings having some local architectural and/or historic interest to the extent that they can be defined as 'non-designated heritage assets'. The NPPF (§203) gives weight to such 'assets' in decision making in accordance with the nature of their interest, as does MDLP Policy TB26. This is in addition to, but separate from, those properties which are Grade I, II, or II\* listed which are designated by Historic England. As this exercise has not been undertaken as part of the neighbourhood plan, the Parish Council will seek to pursue this matter using the process set out by WBC ([Link](#)).

5.81 In the meantime, the policy reflects the requirements of national and local policy and advice. The policy is intended to draw greater attention to this matter given the characteristics of the designated neighbourhood area when determining planning applications.

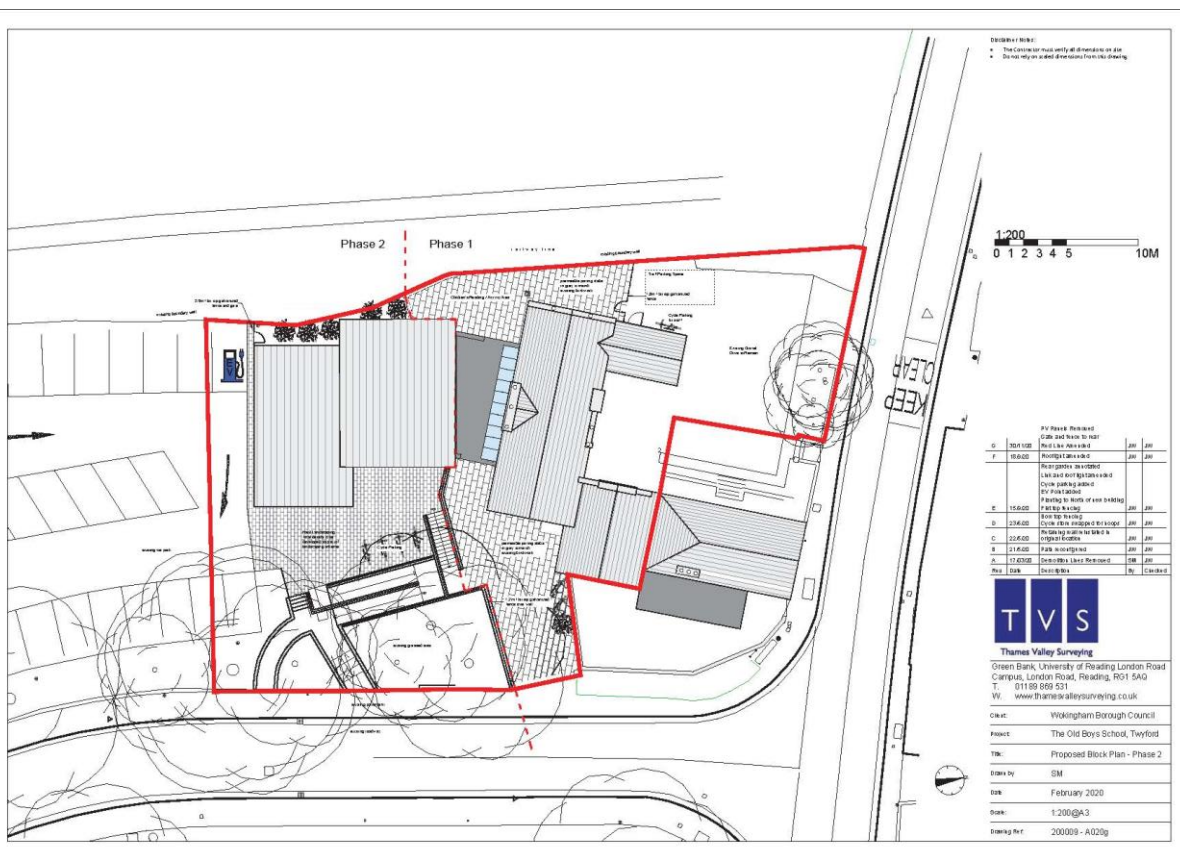
**28 Almshouses**



## POLICY TW15: TWYFORD COMMUNITY HUB (THE OLD POLEHAMPTON SCHOOL)

- A. The development of the Old Polehampton Boys School, as shown on the Policies Map, to deliver a new Twyford Community Hub will be supported.**
- B. Development proposals within the neighbourhood area which would increase the demand for community facilities will be required to make financial contributions towards the delivery of the new Twyford Community Hub.**

5.82 Whilst planning permission has already been granted for these proposals, the Neighbourhood Plan supports the delivery of the scheme. Phase 1 of the scheme will move the library from its current position to the redeveloped Old Polehampton Boys School with Phase 2 delivering additional facilities.



29 planning permission 201022 approved plan

5.83 The delivery of the scheme is currently being considered by WBC. The budget for the project and a suitable lease is due to be considered by WBC in the near future. It is understood that there is currently a 40% funding gap in the budget provided for the scheme and estimated costs to complete the scheme. The policy therefore seeks developer contributions, where appropriate, to help fund this much needed approved scheme which will serve Twyford and the wider rural hinterland.



**30 The Old Polehampton Boys School**

## POLICY TW16: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

- A. The Neighbourhood Plan identifies the properties listed in Appendix B as community facilities.**
- B. In addition to the provisions of relevant Local Plan policies which safeguard community facilities from unnecessary loss, proposals to change the established use of a facility and ancillary land must demonstrate that the use is no longer viable (through the production of evidence that genuine and sustained efforts to promote, improve and market the facility at a reasonable value have been undertaken) or that the use can be satisfactorily re-located for the benefit of the local community.**
- B. Proposals to change the use of part of a community facility that is shown to be surplus to requirements will be supported where they will not undermine the overall viability and importance of the primary community use.**
- C. Proposals to extend a community facility will be supported, provided the design of the scheme and the resulting increase in use are appropriate and is consistent with other relevant policies of the development plan.**

5.84 The policy identifies community facilities (buildings and land) in the Parish that will be protected from a change of use in line with CS Policy CP3 General Principles for Development and refines the emerging DLP Policy HC2 Community Infrastructure by encouraging proposals to enable the facilities to remain viable community assets.

5.85 The Use Class Order of September 2020 now deems such uses as either Class F2 ('Local Community Uses') or in the case of the Churches, F1 ('Religious institutions'). Pubs are now deemed 'sui generis' (i.e. not included in any class of uses). The Neighbourhood Plan has identified



31 Twyford Churches



a wide range of facilities in the Parish that the local communities, and the wider rural hinterland, enjoy and cherish.

5.86 On occasions, some facilities will struggle, but this will more often be related to the economic viability of the use, rather than the limitations of the premises, land or location. As finding new land for such uses is often difficult, it is important that established land is retained in that use, even if the current occupier is not viable. The policy therefore allows for the partial change of use of a facility in those cases, but only where a financial contribution is made to sustain the community facility.

5.87 The policy also takes the opportunity to support proposals for extending existing community facilities providing such schemes are consistent with other relevant policies of the development plan.



**32 Twyford Surgery**

## **POLICY TW17: EARLY YEARS PROVISION**

**A. Proposals to retain and improve early years provision facilities listed below, and shown on the Policies Map, will be supported, where they accord with other relevant policies of the development plan:**

- i. Starlings Children's Centre;**
- ii. Cedar Park Day Nursery and Preschool;**
- iii. Little Acorns Preschool;**
- iv. Happy Hours Preschool.**

5.88 The policy is intended to protect early years provision uses in the Parish from unnecessary loss. Primary Schools in Twyford offer early years provision uses in the form of Preschools, which are not attached, managed, or funded by the respective schools. The Starlings Children's Centre offer some early years provision and the Cedar Park Day Nursery and Preschool facility is the only nursery in the Parish. All of these facilities provide an important service to the community and surrounding areas.

5.89 These uses now form part of Class E of the new Use Class Order and permitted development rights allow a change of use to residential use without the need for planning permission. In an area with very high land values for housing, such premises are therefore coming under increasing pressure.

5.90 The Parish Council therefore hopes that WBC investigates the need for an Article 4 Direction for some or all of these sites, but especially in the case of Cedar Park Day Nursery as the only nursery in the Parish, to remove those permitted development rights to enable any changes of uses here to remain in the planning control. The Parish Council will submit a formal request for this following the referendum of this Neighbourhood Plan. In the meantime, Prior Approval still requires the loss of such services to be considered as part of the determination. Although Neighbourhood Plan policy (as part of the development plan) is not engaged in a Prior Approval determination by way of S38(6) of the 1990 Planning Act, the policy has identified the important role of these services to the community and surrounding areas.

## 6. IMPLEMENTATION

6.1 The Neighbourhood Plan policies will be implemented through the determination of planning applications for development in the Parish by WBC.

### DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

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6.2 The planning authority will use a combination of the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan policies to inform and determine its planning application decisions. The Parish Council is a statutory consultee on planning applications made in the Parish and it will be made aware of any future planning applications or alterations to those applications by WBC. It will seek to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan policies have been identified and applied correctly by applicants and by officers in their decision reports.

6.3 Where necessary, the Parish Council may seek to persuade the Secretary of State to call-in a planning application that it considers is in conflict with the Neighbourhood Plan but which the planning authority has deemed to consent. Similarly, it may also seek to persuade the Secretary of State to recover an appeal of a refused application, where the conflict with one or more Neighbourhood Plan policies has been important in the reasons for refusal. In both cases, the Parish Council will do so if it considers matters of national policy significance (for neighbourhood planning) are raised.

### LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

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6.4 Although the scale of development likely to be consented in the Parish during the plan period is likely to be very limited, there may be opportunities through S106 agreements (or through the Community Infrastructure Levy) to secure financial contributions to invest in improving local infrastructure. Should an opportunity arise, the Parish Council will review the evidence base and community consultations for the neighbourhood plan to inform its view in liaising with WBC. A preliminary list has been set out below:

- Twyford Village Centre Regeneration Area Project
- Sustainable Travel Network Enhancements and Infrastructure Projects
- Twyford Railway Station Enhancement Project
- Nature Recovery and Climate Change Network Enhancements Projects
- Twyford Community Hub Project
- Improving health and education services

### MONITORING AND REVIEW

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6.5 The Parish Council will monitor the effectiveness of the policies in the Plan through the development management process. Where necessary it will engage with the Borough Council to understand decisions made on planning applications or planning appeals.

6.6 The success or otherwise of the policies will feed into the assessment of the need for a review of the Plan (paragraph 6.5).

6.7 The Parish Council will also assess the need or otherwise for a full or a partial review of a made Plan throughout the Plan period. Such assessments will be made:

- within two years of the making of the Plan;
- within six months of the adoption of the emerging Local Plan;
- if changes to national policy are so significant that they make the policies in the Plan ineffective or out of date; and
- at the end of the Plan period.



## 7. OTHER NON-PLANNING MATTERS

7.1 During the process of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan, there have been many ideas for improving or addressing current problems in the parish that either lie outside the scope of the land use planning system to control or needs a multi-parish approach. The Parish Council has noted these issues and will take them forward through its day-to-day business and in partnership with the local community and relevant parties. These include:

### RENEWABLE ENERGY AND WASTE MANAGEMENT

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7.2 As interest in renewable energy continues to grow, there are many opportunities to increase the amount of renewable energy used by and/or generated within Twyford. Potential projects include a weir on the Loddon. A community project to install the Reading Hydro at the Caversham weir has been constructed and its' results could be used in a case study to understand the benefits and costs of a weir on the Loddon.

### TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

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#### BACKGROUND

7.3 Traffic is a major issue in Twyford. Much of the feedback from the 2019 Village Survey concerned traffic and the topic regularly arises at the TPC Annual Parish Meetings. In particular, pollution around the Crossroads, long vehicle queues at the traffic lights at peak times and noise, commotion and vehicle movements making the village centre unattractive to pedestrians are well-known problems. Reducing traffic volume, and/or reducing its impact will constitute big improvements for residents of the village.

7.4 Low air quality (see TW6), especially in the High Street, has attracted most attention because remedial action is a requirement. However, this cannot be regarded in isolation; many traffic-related factors are involved:

- The only A-class road running north-south and crossing the Great Western railway line between the centres of Reading and Maidenhead is in Twyford. Hence the obvious route for travel between Bracknell, Arborfield and Wokingham in the south and Sonning, Wargrave, Henley and Oxfordshire in the north crosses the A321 Waltham Road rail bridge here in Twyford and unavoidably also passes through the crossroads. The volume of this through traffic is detrimental to the village environment.
- The scale and layout of the crossroads and its approach roads date from the era of the horse-and-cart so there is no scope for conventional means to increase capacity such as road widening or right-turn only lanes. Hence, long traffic queues form at peak times and emissions from all such queueing vehicles intermittently shuffling forward are responsible for the low air quality around the crossroads. Especially in the High Street, the narrow carriageway and the long

runs of buildings with few gaps constitute a “canyon” which captures and retains the pollutants.

- The narrow roads and narrow pavements generally around the crossroads mean that pedestrians are very close to passing traffic and experience the constant and unpleasant movement, noise and fumes. Those with prams, pushchairs and wheelchairs are particularly affected. Also, cyclists must perilously mingle with all the other traffic.
- Any future developments within Twyford or in our neighbouring parishes will lead to even more traffic movements in the village.

7.5 The ideal solution to Twyford's traffic issues would be a bypass taking through traffic around the village rather than straight through it. This is unlikely, but see section 5.24 – 5.25 for information on the Twyford Eastern Relief Road.

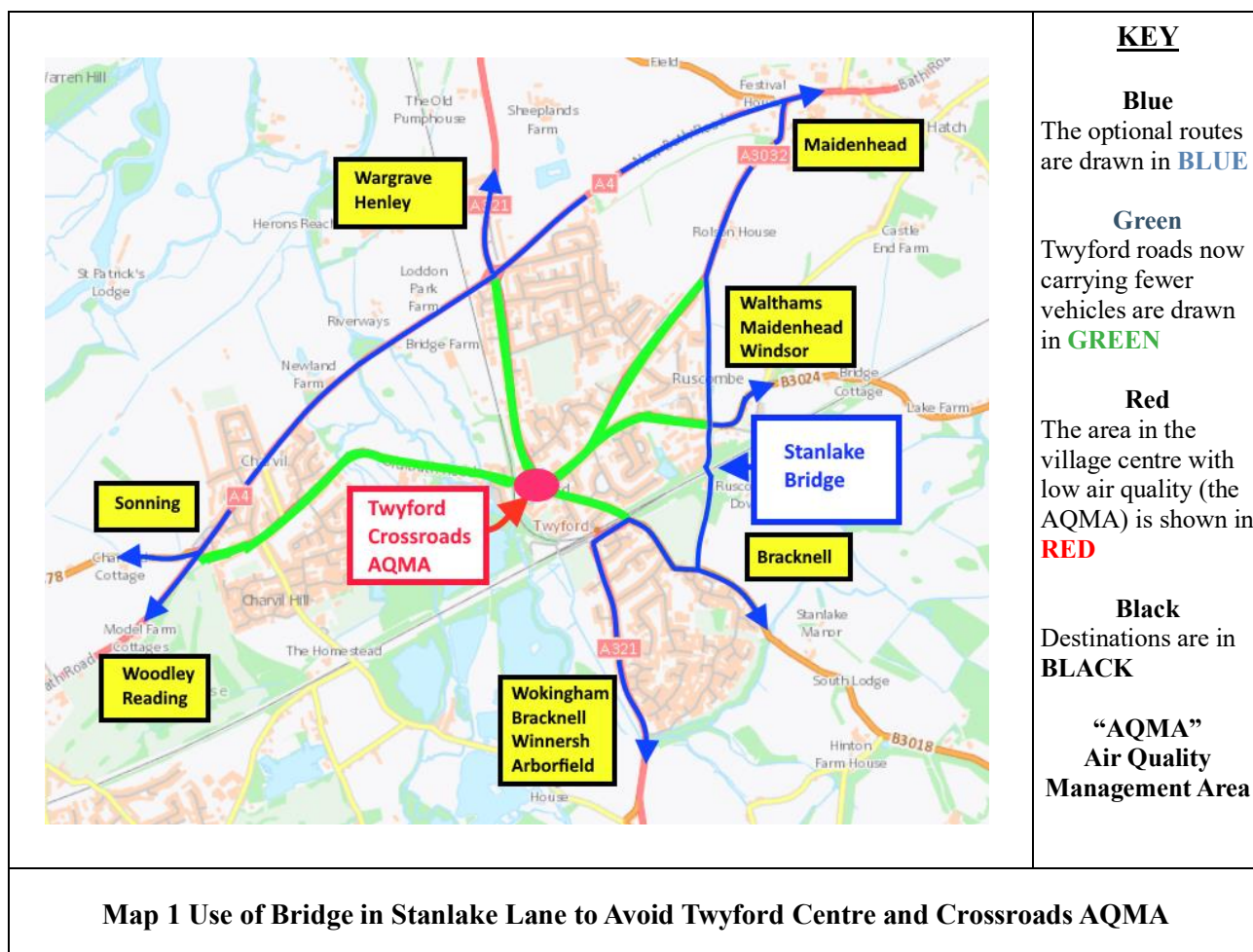
7.6 A number of ideas have arisen within the Neighbourhood Plan Team which aim to make improvements to traffic management in Twyford for the benefit of residents. These are described below:

#### MAKE MORE USE OF THE BRIDGE IN STANLAKE LANE FOR THROUGH TRAFFIC

7.7 To reduce the volume of through traffic passing over the crossroads, more use could be made of the bridge in Stanlake Lane. This would take some of the through traffic on a route around the village rather than through the centre. Sharing the north-south traffic flow between the crossroads and the Stanlake bridge more evenly will certainly reduce (and may even eliminate) congestion, queues and pollution at the crossroads. It will be very much cheaper than a bypass - just a few signs are required. The route is suitable for all vehicles except for those longer than 32.5 feet. See map 1. Charvil will benefit too by having reduced through traffic on A3032 Old Bath Road.

7.8 Using the Stanlake bridge will be optional for drivers. Although it will slightly increase the distance travelled (eg an extra 1.8 miles when travelling between Wokingham and Wargrave/Henley; say 3.6 minutes at 30mph), drivers may have an easier journey, save time overall, use less fuel overall and create fewer total emissions by avoiding the queues at the crossroads.

7.9 The bridge in Stanlake Lane is not currently subject to a limit on vehicle weight. However, the carriageway is narrow, the footways are very narrow and there are bends at each end. Hence, there is a prohibition on vehicles longer than 32feet 6inches using all of Stanlake Lane.



7.10 The bridge in Stanlake Lane carries alternating, single-file traffic, controlled by lights. Twyford crossroads has four phases, each with traffic flowing in a single direction. So, other things being equal, traffic approaching the Stanlake bridge from either direction will get a green light for almost half the time whilst that approaching the crossroads may only proceed for a mere quarter of the time. It suggests that using the Stanlake bridge could add significant extra capacity for through traffic.

7.11 There will be increased traffic on the A4 and at the junction of A4 with A3032 at Hare Hatch. This junction is busy at times, but any congestion here is much preferable to that in Twyford centre as (i) any pollution will rapidly disperse as the junction site is totally open (and there are few people to be affected anyway) and (ii) there is space for improvements to the junction by conventional engineering methods. A roundabout here was first suggested many years ago.

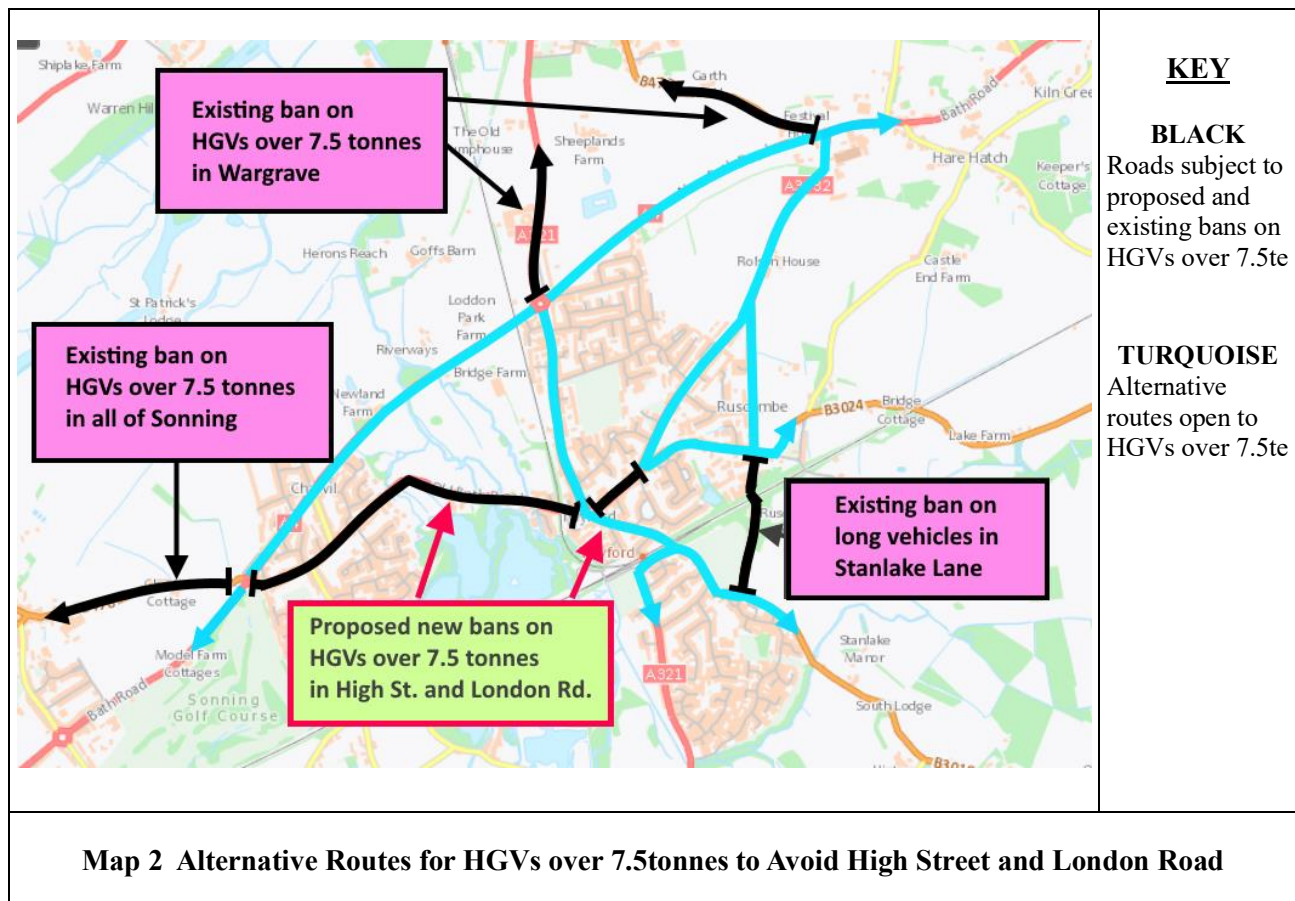
**BAN HEAVY GOODS VEHICLES OVER 7.5 TONNES FROM THE HIGH STREET AND LONDON ROAD**

7.12 Diesel HGVs produce lots of emissions and are especially undesirable in the High Street, not only because pollutants are retained by the “canyon” effect, but also because

pedestrians on the narrow pavements are intimidated and endangered by large, noisy lorries passing very close by. Similarly, cyclists and heavy lorries in close proximity are known to be dangerous. Two HGVs pass here only with difficulty.

7.13 Similarly, HGVs in London Road are unwanted in this key shopping area in Twyford. There is an ambition to make London Road into a much more pedestrian-friendly street for shopping and leisure (see 5.26 – 5.27). The presence of HGVs here is incompatible with the desire to create a relatively quiet, calm area with priority for people.

7.14 Thus a ban on HGVs in the High Street and in London Road (except for essential access) would improve both air quality and the pedestrian experience. See map 2. A TPC/WBC Highways Meeting in January 2020 discussed the aim “to discourage HGV's by setting weight/width restrictions within the village” for reasons of air quality, pedestrian safety etc.



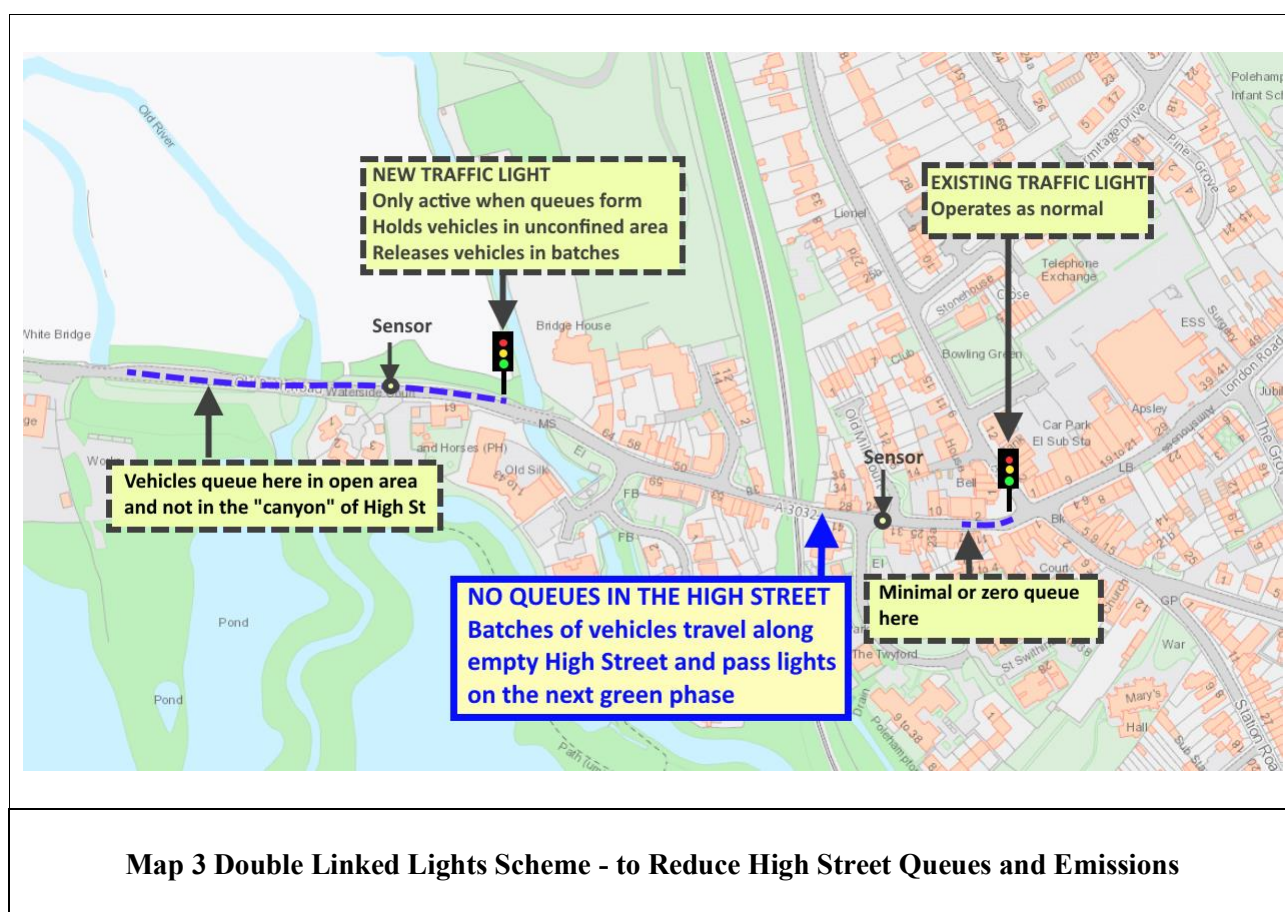
7.15 These suggestions for the High Street and London Road do not reduce the number of HGVs entering or leaving Twyford but, crucially, divert them to avoid the roads where lorries, and their emissions, are least acceptable. Complete removal of HGVs from within the village (except for essential access) would be an even greater improvement.



## RELOCATE TRAFFIC QUEUES IN THE HIGH STREET FURTHER WEST

7.16 Vehicle queues in the High Street are especially detrimental to air quality because emissions are retained by the "canyon" effect. The net result of the "Double Linked Lights Scheme" is to move the queues, including their emissions, from the confined High Street to nearer to Charvil where the pollution will readily disperse in the open. The scheme will only operate when traffic is heavy. It does not delay drivers and it does not involve any extra miles. The main requirement is for one extra traffic light (for inbound traffic only) somewhere near the Waggon & Horses pub. See map 3.

7.17 The key feature is an additional set of traffic lights controlling traffic incoming from Charvil and positioned west of Bridge House. When a queue starts to form at the crossroads these additional lights become active and hold incoming traffic. Thus the queue at the crossroads is prevented from growing. Subsequently, vehicles are released from the additional lights in batches. They will travel along the empty High Street to the crossroads where they will (nearly) all pass on the next green phase. Sensors under the road surface detect stationary vehicles and are linked to the two sets of lights. The phases are co-ordinated to ensure minimal numbers of inbound vehicles in the High Street at any time. At peak times drivers may still need to queue to reach the crossroads, but it will be in the unconfined Old Bath Road rather than in the "canyon" of the High Street. Any pollution will dissipate into the adjacent fields.



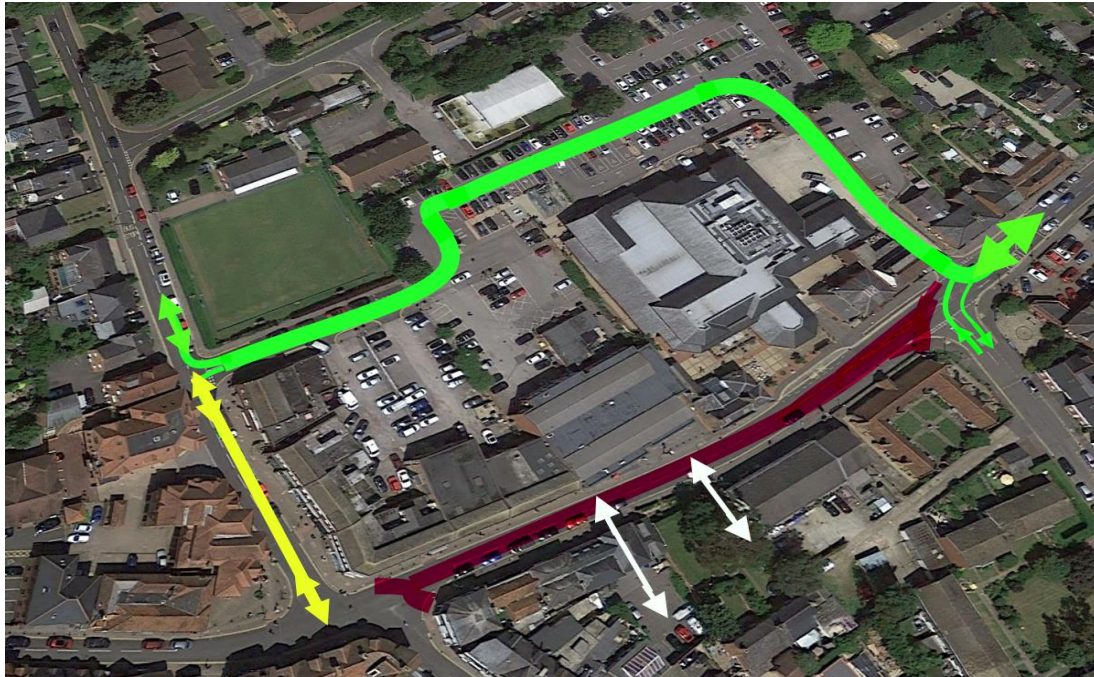
7.18 This solution has several advantages over alternative proposals which involve diverting inbound traffic along the A4 to Wargrave Road. It largely eliminates traffic queues and emissions within the High Street and transfers them to the Old Bath Road. Importantly, drivers do not change their route and do not experience any additional delay and there are no inconveniences to residents. Outgoing traffic in the High Street is unaffected and finally, the system will only operate when necessary; at other times the additional lights will be off or permanently green.

#### MAKING LONDON ROAD SHOPPING AREA MORE ATTRACTIVE AND PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY

7.19 Twyford's main shopping street, London Road, does not fulfil its potential because of intrusive traffic. This key part of the village centre is unattractive to pedestrians as vehicles queue westbound at the traffic lights and also travel in the opposite direction. The constant noise, fumes and commotion do not encourage shoppers to stroll or linger in the retail area. Policies TW4 "A Thriving Village Centre" and TW5 "Village Centre Regeneration Area" aim to improve this part of the village and halt the general decline in high streets seen elsewhere. Below are two additional suggestions involving changes in the use of the road itself.

7.20 London Road as a Pedestrian Precinct. For part of one afternoon and evening each year, London Road is closed to all traffic for the annual Christmas Fayre. The street is temporarily home to stalls and crowds. Is it possible that the closure of London Road could be made permanent to create a much more attractive and pedestrian-friendly retail and leisure space? The area in front of Waitrose would constitute a new focal point in the village centre.

7.21 One essential requirement will be an alternative route around the crossroads. The obvious option is through Waitrose car park. The route already exists as there are entrances/exits in Wargrave Road and London Road, although reconfiguring the parking spaces would be required. However, London Road could not be entirely vehicle free as there are premises with access onto London Road. Ensuring access for deliveries to the shops would also be essential if it could not be provided from the rear.



#### **KEY**

**Red:** New pedestrian area – no through traffic

**Green:** New route for through traffic

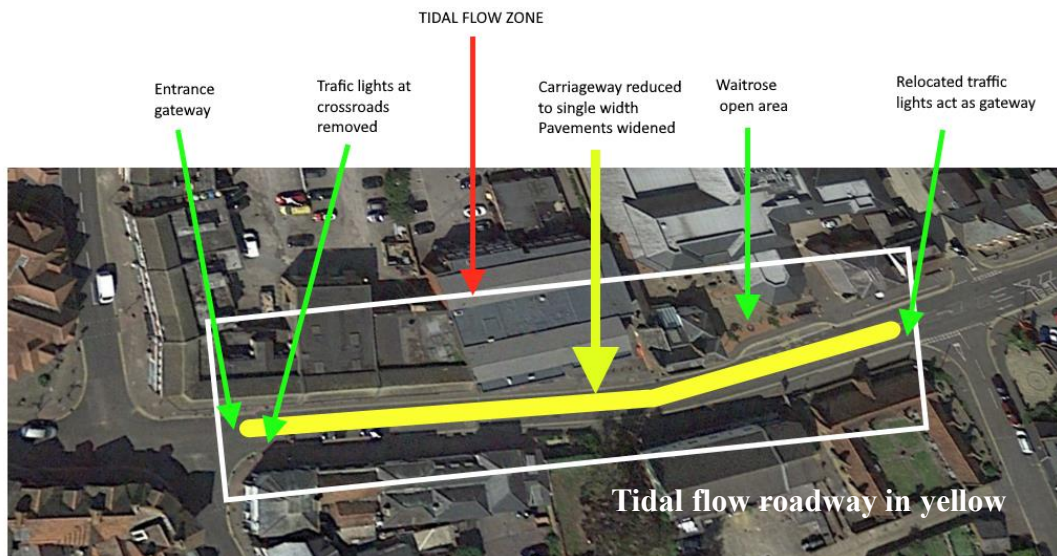
**Yellow:** This part of Wargrave Road will now have reduced traffic

**White:** Vehicle access required here from pedestrian area

#### **MAP 4: Create a Pedestrian Precinct in London Road**

7.22 Semi-pedestrianisation and Tidal Flow in London Road. If creating a full pedestrian precinct proves too ambitious there is a second option which will still markedly improve the experience for pedestrians by minimising the number of vehicles in the shopping area at any time. This involves relocating the traffic lights in London Road eastwards to a position near the Almshouses or Jubilee Corner. Consequently, firstly there will be no traffic queueing in front of the shops and secondly traffic will flow in one direction only at any one time. Such "Tidal Flow" allows the carriageway to be narrowed to a single width. There is an example in Wargrave south of the crossroads. The released space can then be used for wider pavements plus seats, plants, trees, noise barrier etc to link with the redesigned space in front of Waitrose to create a pleasant leisure area within our "Thriving Village". Deliveries to the shops would need to be ensured as above.





**MAP 5: Semi-pedestrianisation and Tidal Flow in London Road**

7.23 Moving the traffic lights further from the crossroads will require longer all-red pauses between the green phases to ensure no collisions of vehicles moving on different green phases. The outcome will be an overall reduced vehicle throughput. If implemented with pre-covid traffic levels the peak-time queues would grow even longer. Of course, this would be unacceptable. A reduced traffic flow compared with pre-covid levels is clearly a pre-requisite. Fortunately, the scheme (see 7.7 – 7.11) to make more use of the bridge in Stanlake Lane is aimed precisely at this outcome. These schemes are complementary; as is the proposed ban on HGVs in London Road (see 7.12 - 7.15). Collectively, they would result in a quieter, calmer crossroads plus a shopping area much more attractive to pedestrians.

#### PARKING FOR RAIL-USERS AT TWYFORD STATION: BACKGROUND

7.24 Twyford has the only station in the borough on the Great Western mainline and is a major asset to the village and beyond. Many residents have chosen to live in Twyford because the railway provides highly popular services into London. Twyford station serves rail travellers from a huge surrounding area in addition to its own residents. In particular, many from Woodley, our much larger neighbouring town, routinely commute from Twyford.

7.25 Some commuters from Wokingham, Wargrave and Henley, despite having their own stations with car parks, prefer to drive to Twyford and start their rail journeys here.

7.26 Many residents walk to and from the station as nearly all homes in the village are less than one mile from the station; whilst most non-resident rail-users currently drive to Twyford station and park in the station car park. However, train usage has grown and the number of intending car park users (pre-Covid) regularly exceeds the number of spaces available. Thus, rail-users are parking in residential streets, sometimes illegally and/or thoughtlessly.



Residents have complained. Indeed, parking for rail-users from outside the village is a common topic in the TPC Annual Parish Meetings and hence was included in the 2019 Village Survey.

7.27 Rail travel has increased nationally in recent years but the increase at Twyford has been significantly less. This suppression of demand for travel from Twyford station is attributed to limited parking provision and the absence of any recent increases. This is extremely undesirable if the alternative is to travel by car instead of using the train.

## PROGRESS TO DATE

7.28 The announcement of Crossrail in 2007 added greatly to the future appeal of the train services from Twyford. A guesstimate of 1,000 parking spaces being required at Twyford station for all rail-users intending to use Twyford as their gateway to the rail network, was made in 2015 or before. This number is about triple the current station car park capacity.

7.29 Parking provision has deserved, and has received, much attention over many years. WBC formed a "Commuter Parking Task and Finish Group" in June 2015 and TPC created a parking sub-committee in February 2017. However, there has been little progress. No specific solutions at Twyford have been identified, decided, agreed, planned or funded (see 5.16). Clearly, an answer to the parking issue in Twyford for rail-users is both urgently required and difficult to conceive, but is definitely a key concern of residents.

### **What do 1,000 cars look like?**

In a stationary queue 1,000 cars will stretch for about 5km or just over 3 miles. This is almost as far as Wargrave to Hurst.

7.30 Solutions to solving the problem of insufficient parking at Twyford station must obviously look beyond merely creating more parking in Twyford and seek a more strategic approach to enable easy and sustainable access to the station from all local areas, especially as new housing developments in WBC area will generate even more rail travellers wishing to access Twyford station.

## SOLUTIONS

7.31 The most liked solution in the 2019 Village Survey was to build a multi-storey car park on the current station car park site, despite the difficult access and visual prominence. Alternative sites either in the allotments or in Stanlake Meadow were markedly disliked. Several comments related to the conflicting interests of residents and of rail-users from outside the village. There was support for Park & Ride, local buses and cycling.

7.32 The NP team have comprehensively reviewed the options. It is clear that there is not a simple, easy, quick, obvious, low-cost solution which is popular both with Twyford residents and with rail-users from outside the village. Whilst cycling and walking will obviously be encouraged, the main options for the bulk of the increase in rail traveller numbers at Twyford station are just two: (1) Provide more parking at or near the station or (2) Bring intending rail-users to Twyford by bus, either on regular local services or from P&R sites.

7.33 Bringing rail-users from their homes outside of Twyford by bus, either P&R or local bus services, has many positive features such as helpful for climate change, less traffic through Hurst, Charvil and Twyford centre with reductions in congestion and pollution at the crossroads. Additionally, there is no requirement for new, costly parking structures on scarce land at or near Twyford station. Land near the station will be required for the buses to halt, wait, park and turn.

7.34 Using buses to come to Twyford will require a big change in drivers' views of buses. Local car ownership is high and going by car is obviously convenient, direct and quick and these advantages may overrule considerations of climate change and the cost of fuel and parking for some individuals. To persuade drivers to use buses rather than their cars to reach Twyford station, will be challenging. Bus services will need to be genuinely convenient and attractive.

7.35 Fortuitously timed, the government announced a strategy to massively improve local bus services from the current low base in early 2021. Subsequently, a local Bus Improvement Plan was published by WBC at the end of October 2021. In this plan, the council is "keen to enhance bus connectivity and frequencies at Twyford", there are mentions of bus links to/from Woodley, Wokingham, Earley, Wargrave and Reading as well as improved bus facilities at Twyford station. More details of implementation will be published at the end of March 2022.

#### PARKING FOR RAIL-USERS AT TWYFORD STATION: CONCLUSIONS

7.36 Building more parking at or near the station is not promoted mainly because many more cars entering Twyford is not consistent with policies on climate change and sustainable travel. It will also exacerbate the issues discussed in the Traffic Management section above (see 7.3 – 7.4), with increased traffic, congestion, queues and pollution whilst also making the village centre even less pedestrian-friendly.

7.37 Hence, the Neighbourhood Plan team concludes that the optimum strategy to bring intending passengers to and from Twyford station is by bus; either local services or from Park & Ride sites.

## INFLUENCING DRIVER AWARENESS

7.38 Wargrave road is in a built-up area, has houses along almost its entire length and is subject to a 30mph speed limit. However, the half-mile stretch immediately south of the A4 may be perceived differently by drivers. This length of road is perfectly straight and is neatly edged with yellow and white lines. The lampposts, hedges and trees add an element of tunnel vision. Houses are set back from the road and they, and their gardens, are mostly out of sight. All these visual elements encourage drivers to focus on the distance rather than on their immediate, residential surroundings and there is an obvious temptation to travel more quickly than appropriate. See pics 1 and 2 for drivers' viewpoints.

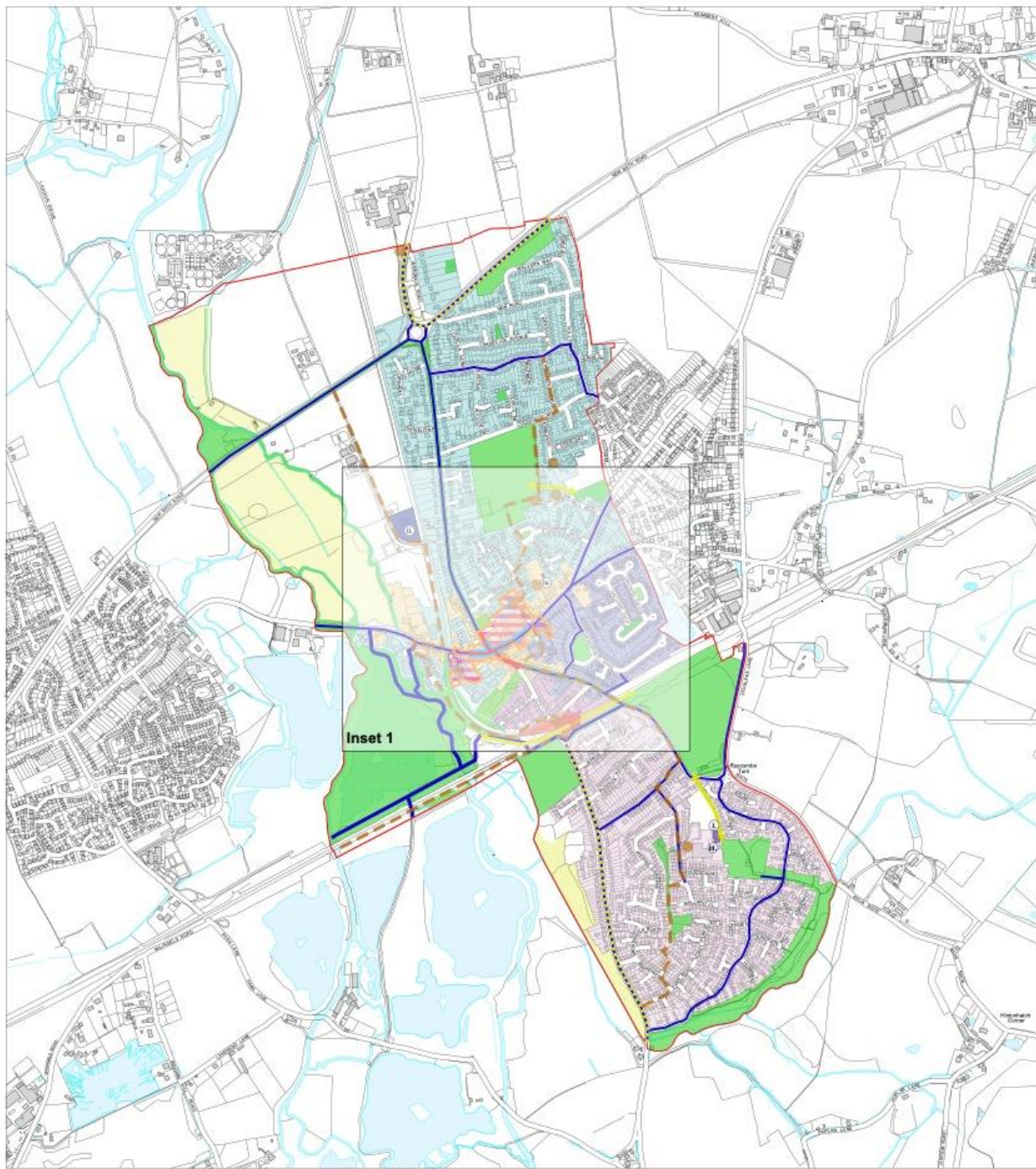
7.39 One way to counteract such perception and to make drivers more aware of their surroundings and so adapt their speed accordingly is to provide visual interruptions, dividing long stretches into a series of spaces. Such interruptions may usefully be at junctions with streets or paths and consist, for example, of changes in road surface material and texture or alternatively, different coloured road surfaces. Other ways are to add or emphasise roadside features. Having a sequence of notable places helps maintain low speeds and the interest of drivers.

7.40 Applying these techniques to Wargrave Road may be successful in reducing the impact of through traffic in Wargrave Road. Similarly, Hurst Road (see pic 3) may also benefit by being divided into a series of spaces.





## POLICIES MAPS & INSETS

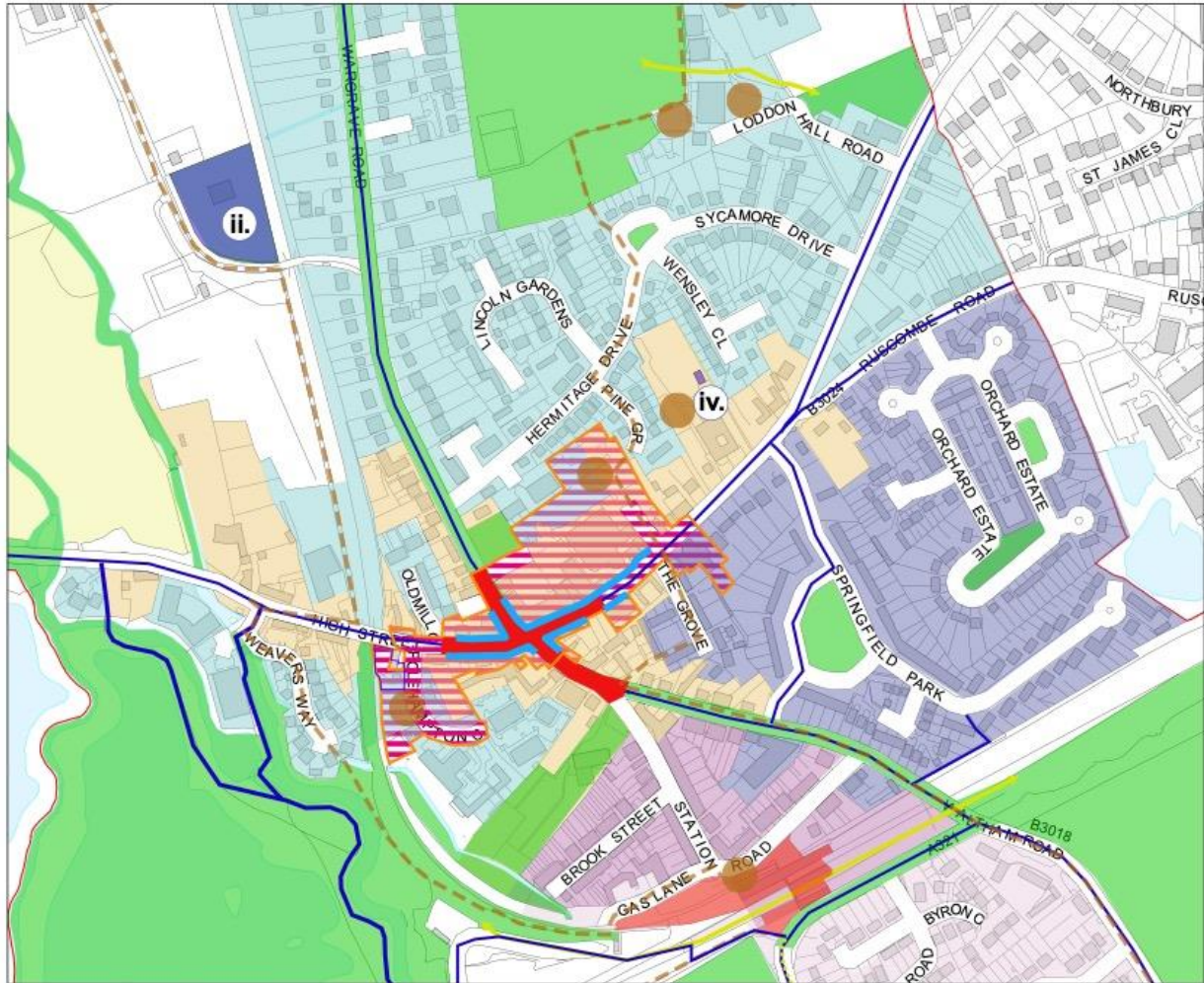


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**Twyford Neighbourhood Plan  
Policies Map**

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| Parish Boundary   | TW5: Twyford Village Centre Regeneration Area              | TW13: North of the village  |
| TW1: Sustainable Travel Network Existing Network              | TW6: Twyford Crossroads Air Quality Management Area        | TW13: South of the village  |
| TW1: Sustainable Travel Network Opportunities for Improvement | TW7: Nature Recovery Network Existing Network              | TW13: Springfield Park & Orchard Estate   |
| TW3: Twyford Railway Station                                  | TW7: Nature Recovery Network Opportunities for Improvement | TW15: Twyford Community Hub   |
| TW4: Twyford Village Centre Boundary                          | TW13: Twyford Village Conservation Area                    | TW17: Early Years Provision   |
| TW4: Primary Shopping Area                                    | TW13: Twyford Station Conservation Area                    | i. Starlings Children Centre<br>ii. Cedar Park Day Nursery and Preschool<br>iii. Little Acorns Preschool<br>iv. Happy Hours Preschool |





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**Twyford Neighbourhood Plan  
Inset 1**

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| Parish Boundary   | TW5: Twyford Village Centre Regeneration Area              | TW13: North of the village               |
| TW1: Sustainable Travel Network Existing Network              | TW6: Twyford Crossroads Air Quality Management Area        | TW13: South of the village               |
| TW1: Sustainable Travel Network Opportunities for Improvement | TW7: Nature Recovery Network Existing Network              | TW13: Springfield Park & Orchard Estate  |
| TW3: Twyford Railway Station                                  | TW7: Nature Recovery Network Opportunities for Improvement | TW15: Twyford Community Hub              |
| TW4: Twyford Village Centre Boundary                          | TW13: Twyford Village Conservation Area                    | TW17: Early Years Provision              |
| TW4: Primary Shopping Area                                    | TW13: Twyford Station Conservation Area                    | ii. Cedar Park Day Nursery and Preschool |
|   |  | iv. Happy Hours Preschool                |

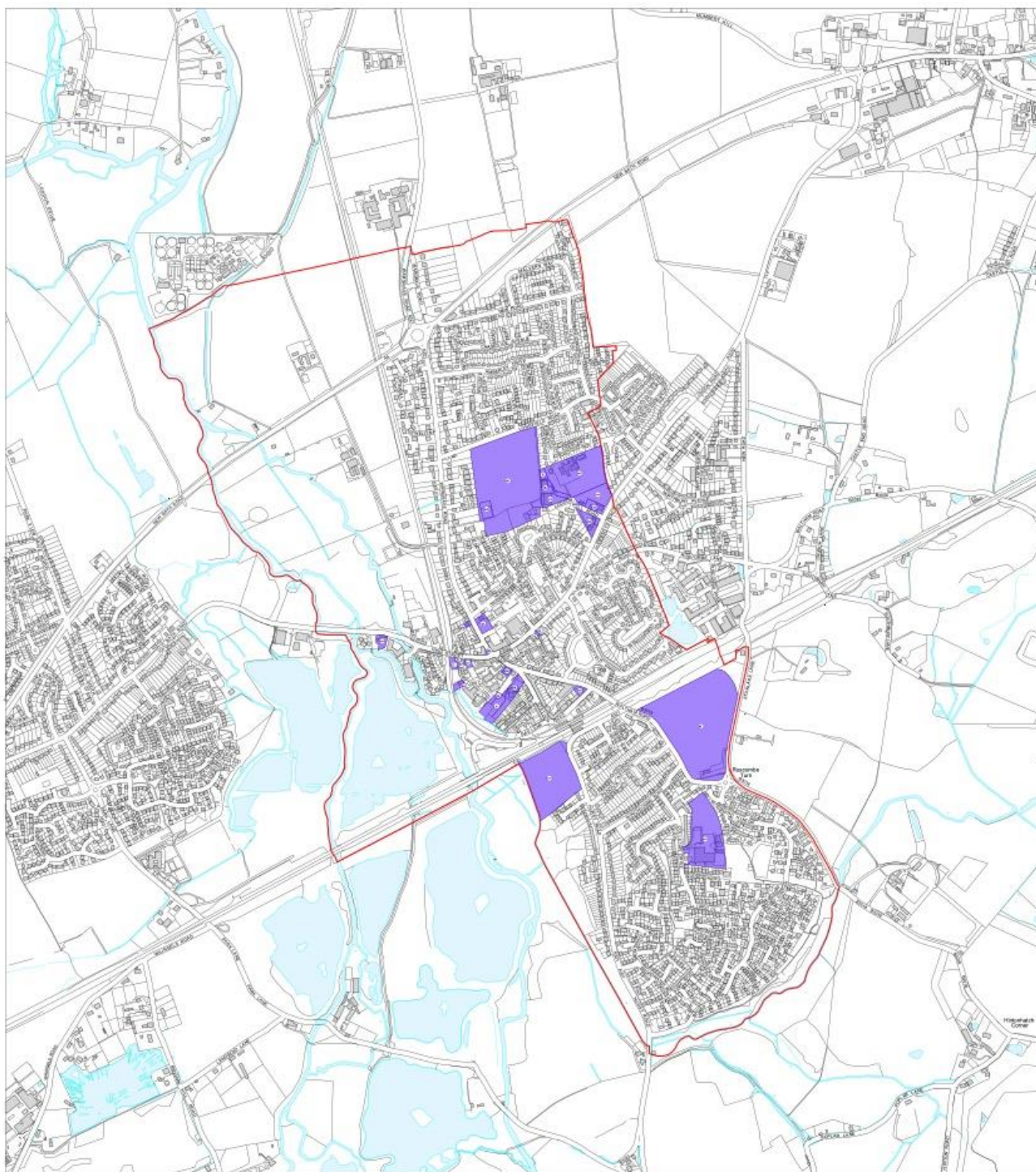
## APPENDIX A – TWYFORD DESIGN GUIDELINES AND CODES

## APPENDIX B – COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Community Facilities for the application of Policy TW16 Community Facilities.

- i. The Twyford Community Hub (The Old Polehampton Boys School)
- ii. Jubilee Corner
- iii. Bell Corner
- iv. Millennium Gardens
- v. Burial Ground
- vi. Twyford Bowling Club
- vii. Loddon Hall (including Twyford & Ruscombe Theatre Group)
- viii. Twyford Surgery
- ix. Twyford District Youth & Community Centre
- x. 1st Twyford Scout Headquarters
- xi. Stanlake Meadows Hall, Recreation Ground and Pavilion
- xii. King George V Recreation Ground (including Skate Park and Playground)
- xiii. Twyford and Ruscombe Horticultural Association
- xiv. Twyford Snooker Club
- xv. Twyford and District Age Concern Day Centre
- xvi. Twyford Tennis Club
- xvii. Polehampton C of E Infants & Junior School
- xviii. The Colleton Primary School
- xix. Twyford United Reformed Church
- xx. St Mary's Church and Hall
- xxi. Saint Thomas More's Catholic Church
- xxii. Duke of Wellington
- xxiii. The Golden Cross
- xxiv. The Waggon & Horses
- xxv. London Road Allotments
- xxvi. Hurst Road Allotments





**Twyford Neighbourhood Plan  
March 2023  
TW16: Community Facilities**



- i. The Twyford Community Hub (The Old Polehampton Boys School)
- ii. Jubilee Corner
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# **Twyford Neighbourhood Plan** **March 2023**

**TW16: Community Facilities vii. - x. ; xii. ; xiii. ; xvi. ; xvii. ; xxi. ; xxv.**

	Parish Boundary		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>vii. Loddon Hall (including Twyford &amp; Ruscombe Theatre Group)</li> <li>viii. Twyford Surgery</li> <li>ix. Twyford District Youth &amp; Community Centre</li> <li>x. 1st Twyford Scout Headquarters</li> <li>xii. King George V Recreation Ground (including Skate Park and Playground)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>xiii. Twyford and Ruscombe Horticultural Association</li> <li>xvi. Twyford Tennis Club</li> <li>xvii. Polehampton C of E Infants &amp; Junior School</li> <li>xxi. Saint Thomas More's Catholic Church</li> <li>xxv. London Road Allotments</li> </ul>
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### Twyford Neighbourhood Plan

March 2023

**TW16: Community Facilities i. - vi. ; xiv. ; xv. ; xix. ; xx. ; xxii. - xxiv.**

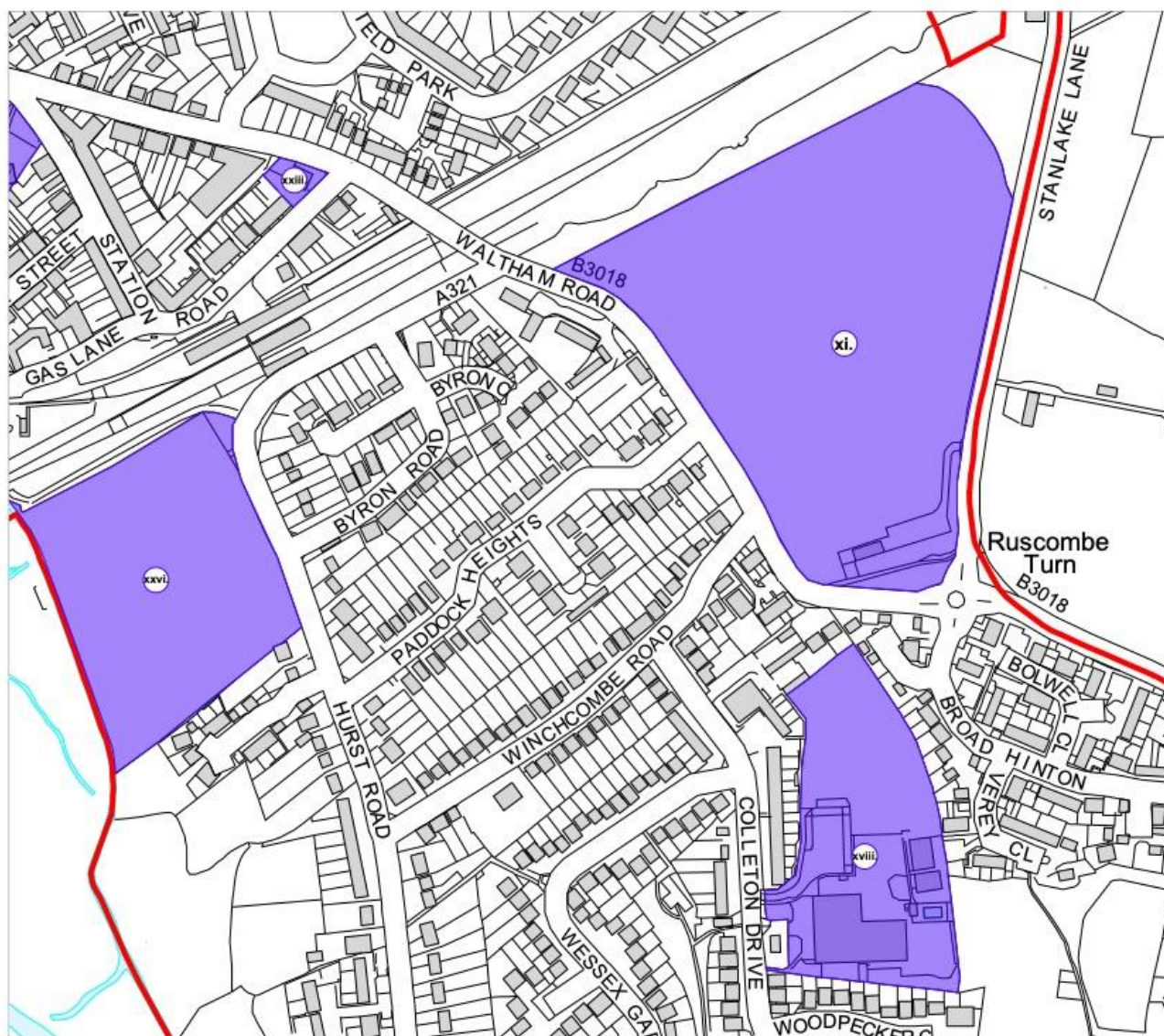


Parish Boundary



- i. The Twyford Community Hub (The Old Polehampton Boys School)
- ii. Jubilee Comer
- iii. Bell Comer
- iv. Millennium Gardens
- v. Burial Ground
- vi. Twyford Bowling Club
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- xv. Twyford and District Age Concern Day Centre
- xix. Twyford United Reformed Church and Hall
- xx. St Mary's Church and Hall
- xxii. Duke of Wellington
- xxiii. The Golden Cross
- xxiv. Waggon & Horses




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# **Twyford Neighbourhood Plan**

**March 2023**

**TW16: Community Facilities xi. ; xviii. ; xxiii. ; xxvi.**

 Parish Boundary

 xi. Stanlake Meadows Hall, Recreation Ground and Pavilion  
xviii. The Colleton Primary School

xxiii. The Golden Cross  
xxvi. Hurst Road Allotments