



Watercolour by Tricia

Odell Neighbourhood Plan 2031

REFERENDUM - 28 JULY 2022

PLAN MADE - 12 SEPTEMBER 2022

Visit the Odell Neighbourhood Plan website at www.odellvillage.co.uk

You can contact the Working Group by email: info@odellvillage.co.uk

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Appendix 1 – Non-Land Use Actions

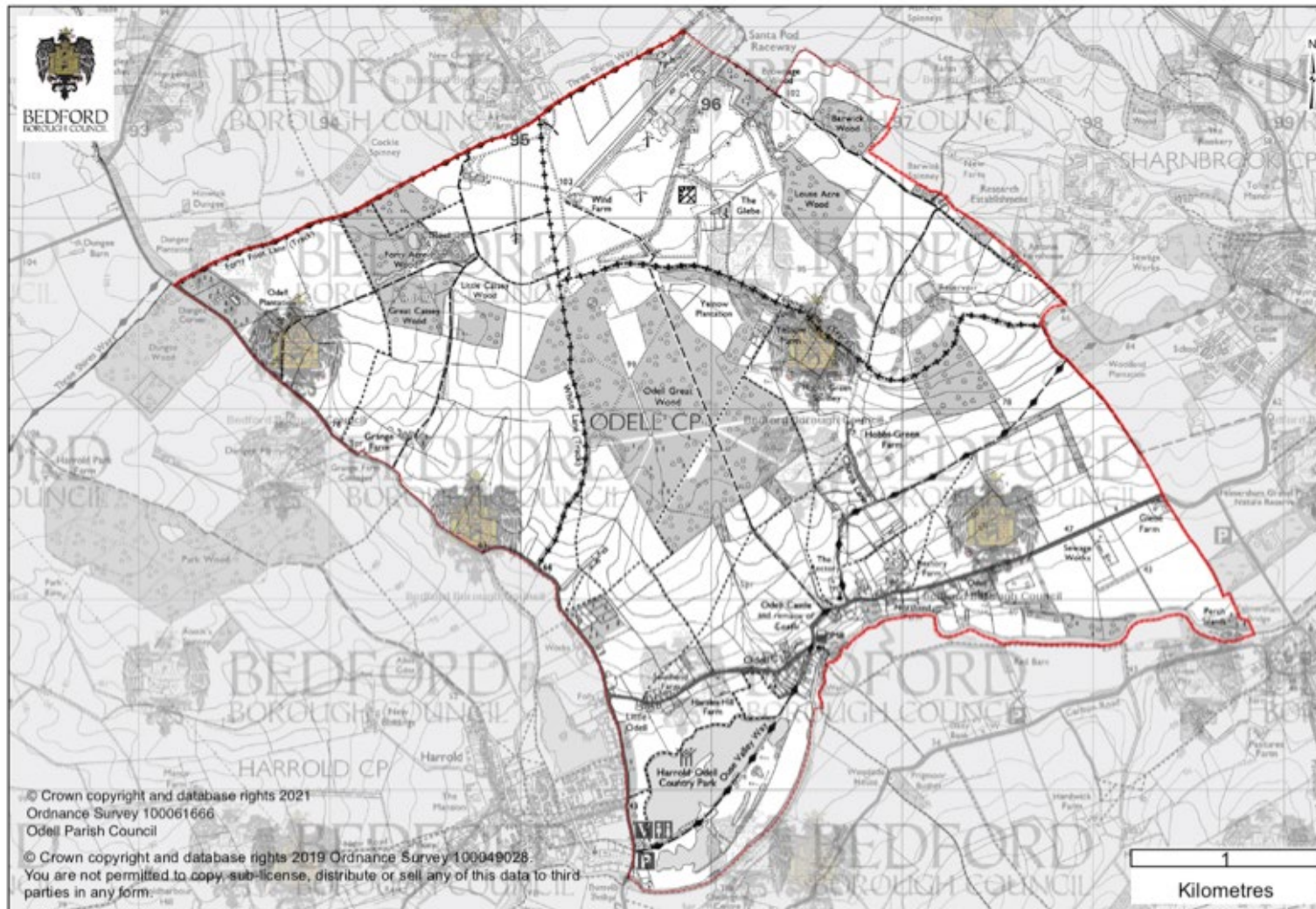
Appendix 2 – Village Character, Buildings and Heritage

Appendix 3 – Design Codes

Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1 Preparing the Plan

- 1.1.1 This document has been prepared by the Odell Neighbourhood Plan Working Group (ONPWG), directed by and accountable to Odell Parish Council.
- 1.1.2 The Odell Neighbourhood Plan (ONP) is designed to define and achieve a vision for Odell through to the end of 2031. Neighbourhood planning enables a community to play a much stronger role in shaping the area in which they live and work, and in defining the types of development it would support.
- 1.1.3 On 16 August 2019, Odell Parish Council applied to Bedford Borough Council for designation of the whole of the Parish as a Neighbourhood Planning Area. On 6 September 2019, Bedford Borough Council approved the Neighbourhood Plan Area as shown on the map on the next page (Figure1).
- 1.1.4 The ONPWG, comprising a Parish Councillor and several volunteers, was established in November 2019 to prepare the Plan and to lead the public engagement and consultation process. The process began with a public launch event at the village hall on 1st-2nd November 2019.
- 1.1.5 The ONP provides a vision for the future of Odell and sets out clear policies to help realise this ambition. These policies have regard to national planning policy as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and are in general conformity with the strategic policies of Bedford Borough Council's Local Plan 2030.
- 1.1.6 Odell's Neighbourhood Plan has been developed through extensive consultation with the residents, land owners and other stakeholders who have an interest in the community. It provides local people with the opportunity to have control over the type of development that should take place and where it should be located within the Parish, and to influence it for the benefit of the community.
- 1.1.7 It is intended that the Plan will assist not only in guiding future development, but also ensure that the Conservation Area, heritage assets, wildlife assets and existing designated Village Open Spaces and Views are protected. These give the Parish its special character.
- 1.1.8 A Neighbourhood Plan describes the area it serves and the developments, improvements and changes that local residents, community & voluntary groups, and service providers would like to see. This has been done by:
- Forming a Working Group.
 - Use of consultations to reach those whose voice is not always heard.
 - Use of consultations to identify the most important local issues.
 - Evidence gathering to inform the Plan and its policies.
 - Creating opportunities for residents to work out practical steps to improve issues identified.
- 1.1.9 From the evidence, the Working Group identified key themes it felt were particularly pertinent to Odell. These have guided both the process of the consultation and the reporting of the findings described in this document. It also reviewed the Borough's existing policies for Odell – Figure 2 below. The key themes identified are:
- Housing
 - Environment
 - Heritage
 - Footpaths & Bridleways
 - Facilities and Businesses



Odell Parish

1:25,000

Figure 1 – Odell Neighbourhood Plan Area

- 1.1.10 The ONP has been produced on behalf of the residents of Odell. It has been developed from the views of local people and organisations using a variety of consultation methods including:
- Consultation Events & Meetings, including Zoom, phone calls and socially distanced one-to-ones
 - Feedback from the Launch Event
 - Dedicated ONP website - www.odellvillage.co.uk
 - Residents' Survey Questionnaire sent to all households in Odell
 - Production of newsletters
 - Feedback via a dedicated email address – info@odellvillage.co.uk
 - Regular meetings of the Odell Neighbourhood Plan Working Group.
 - Regular updates to Parish Council meetings
 - A special meeting of Parish Councillors
 - Social Media Platforms (including Facebook)
- 1.1.11 A detailed summary of the public consultation carried out has been provided within the Consultation Statement which accompanies the Submission Version of the ONP.
- 1.1.12 Before deciding to produce the ONP, the Parish Council commissioned a feasibility study and consulted village residents via a newsletter and survey on whether Odell should have a Neighbourhood Plan. The Working Group commissioned a number of documents and expert advice which have formed the Evidence Base that supports the Plan. These are listed below:
- Resident's survey – data analysis
 - Housing Needs Assessment see www.odellvillage.co.uk/housing-needs-assessment/
 - Design Codes see Appendix 3 www.odellvillage.co.uk/design-codes-completed/
 - Advice from Bedford Rural Communities Charity
 - Advice from professionally qualified (MRTPi) planning consultants



1.2 What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

- 1.2.1 The Neighbourhood Plan is a plan for the community as a whole. It looks at a wide range of issues including:
- The development of housing (location, type, tenure etc.)
 - Transport, access and connectivity (roads, cycling, walking etc.)
 - The protection and creation of open spaces (country park, play areas etc.)
 - The protection of important buildings and heritage assets
- 1.2.2 Although the Localism Act 2011 aims, via the Neighbourhood Plan, to give local people the power to decide what happens in their community it also sets out a number of 'basic conditions' that must be met. These are to:
- Have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State
 - Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development

- Conform to the strategic policies contained in the development plan¹ for the area
- Be compatible with EU obligations
- Comply with 'prescribed conditions' related to European conservation regulations²

1.2.3 The production of a Neighbourhood Plan gives the local community the power to decide where any new housing, infrastructure and community facilities should be located and how the village should develop.

1.2.4 The ONP will be subject to an independent examination. An independent examiner will be appointed by Bedford Borough Council in consultation with the Parish Council. The appointed examiner will assess whether the Plan meets the 'basic conditions' and if it's found to meet these the Plan can proceed to the local referendum. The referendum will give all eligible voters in the Parish the opportunity to vote and decide if the ONP should form part of the development plan and be used in the determination of planning applications. The final ONP will be 'made' formally by Bedford Borough Council.

1.2.5 The ONP will be effective from the date it was made until the end of 2031 in accordance with the Borough Council's current Local Plan 2030. A revised Local Plan 2040 is being developed.

1.2.6 The ONP has been prepared to generally conform to the strategic policies of the Borough's Local Plan 2030. Neighbourhood Plans do not cover minerals and waste matters. Minerals and waste policies are contained in Local Plan 2030 and the Bedfordshire and Luton Minerals and Waste Local Plan.



1.2.7 Once 'made', the ONP will form part of the development plan for the Borough. Planning applications are determined in accordance with the development plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

1.3 Odell Neighbourhood Plan and the Bedford Borough Development Plan Context

1.3.1 The Basic Conditions Statement will map the various policies in the submitted ONP against the policies in the current development plan for Bedford Borough. Bedford Borough Council's Policies Map for Odell is shown (Figure 2) on the next page.

¹ Development plan is defined in Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and includes adopted local plans, neighbourhood plans that have been made and published spatial development strategies, together with any regional strategy policies that remain in force. Neighbourhood plans that have been approved at referendum and 'made' by the local planning authority are also part of the development plan.

² The prescribed condition is that the 'making' of the neighbourhood plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2012) or a European offshore marine site (as defined in the Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 2007) (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects).

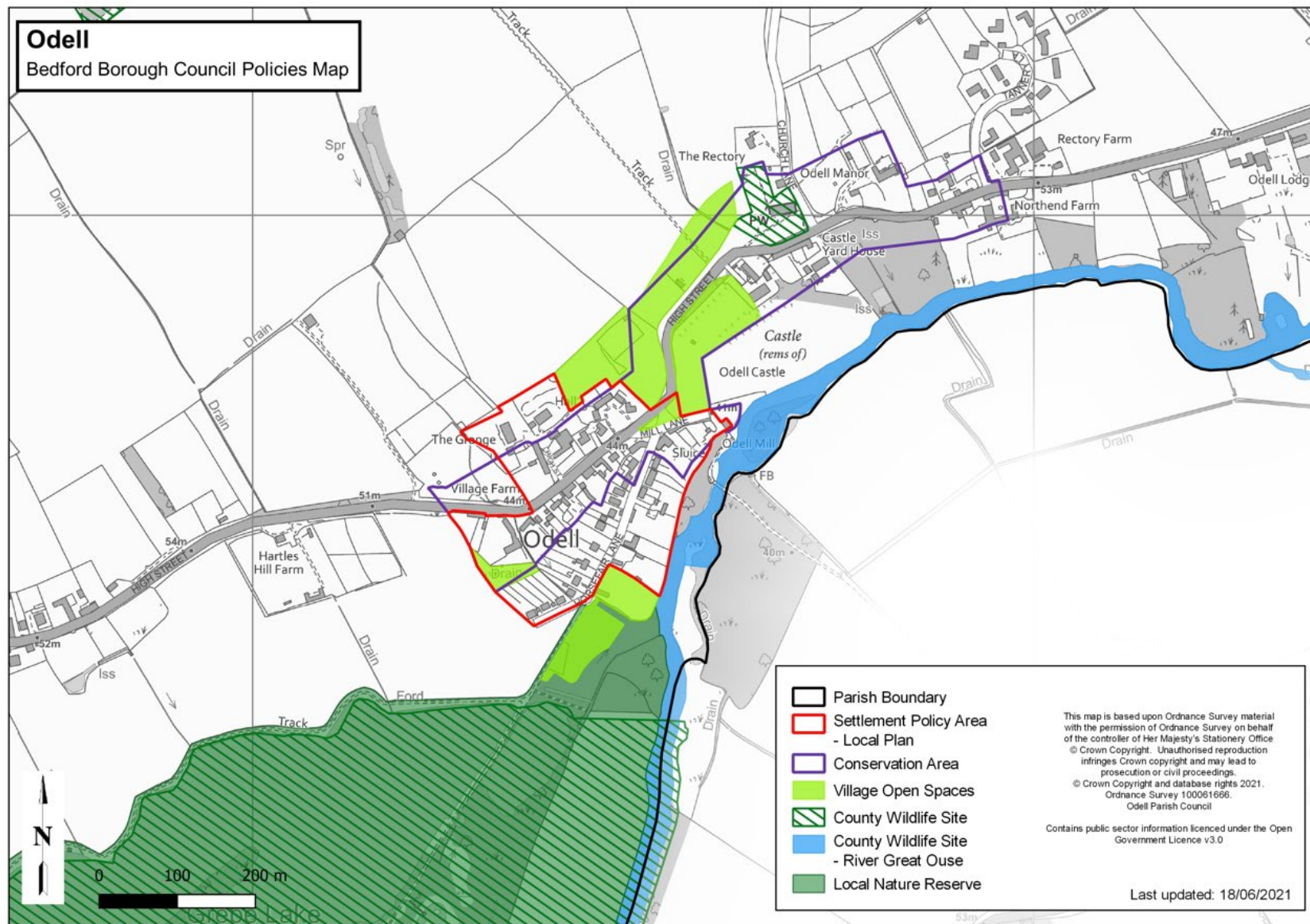


Figure 2 – Bedford Borough Council Policies Map

- 1.3.2 In summary, the following policies have been particularly important and have been taken into account in forming the ONP policies:

Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013

- AD1 Sustainable Development Policy
- AD24 Green Infrastructure Opportunity Zones
- AD40 Village Open Spaces and Views

Borough Council Policies Local Plan 2030

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2S Healthy Communities• 3S Spatial Strategy• 4S Amount and distribution of housing development• 5S Development in villages with a Settlement Policy Area• 7S Development in the countryside• 28S Place making• 29 Design quality and principles• 30-33 The Impact of development• 35S Green Infrastructure• 37 Landscape character• 38 Landscaping in new development• 39 Retention of trees• 40 Hedgerows• 41S Historic environment and heritage assets• 42S Protecting biodiversity and geodiversity• 43 Enhancing biodiversity• 44 River Great Ouse• 45 Local Green Space• 46S Use of previously developed land & use of undeveloped land• 50S Water resources• 51S Climate change strategic approach• 52 Water demand• 54 Energy efficiency• 58S Affordable housing | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 59S Housing mix• 65 Reuse of rural buildings in the countryside• 75 New employment development in the countryside• 86S Delivering infrastructure• 87 Public transport• 88 Impact of transport on people, places and environment• 90S Transport infrastructure and network improvements• 92 Flood risk• 93 Sustainable drainage systems (SUDS)• 94 Broadband• 97 New sports and leisure facilities• 98 New community facilities |
|--|---|



- 1.3.3 The ONP has been prepared taking account of the Borough's existing development plan, which includes the Local Plan 2030, the emerging Local Plan 2040 and the evidence base supporting it to reflect key elements within the Planning Practice Guidance on this matter.

1.4 Community Engagement and Consultation

- 1.4.1 Extensive consultation has been undertaken to give stakeholders an initial opportunity to raise issues for the ONP. We worked closely with Bedford Borough Council and have taken account of their comments. The consultation activities included a launch event in November 2019, a website to share information and take feedback and a residents' survey in February 2020. During the Covid-19 lockdowns, further meetings and consultations with residents took place online and through socially-distanced one-to-one meetings outside. A series of newsletters were distributed to homes in the village, on the website and through briefing emails. A further consultation event for residents and stakeholders was held on 2nd-3rd July 2021, to share the proposed policies and seek feedback. The main issues were: -
- The natural environment in the parish is highly valued and should be conserved
 - The character of Odell and Little Odell, including its open spaces, listed buildings, Conservation Area and Scheduled Monuments and their settings should be preserved
 - There is no support for any development outside the existing built-up areas, and local demand for additional homes should be met by small developments within Odell and Little Odell.
 - The local facilities including the country park, village hall and The Bell are highly valued.
 - The volume and speed of traffic through the village is a major concern.
- 1.4.2 The Pre-Submission Version of the Plan was discussed at a meeting with Parish Councillors on 3 June 2021. The Parish Council resolved on 1st September 2021 that the Plan be subject to the statutory 6 week "Pre-Submission consultation" in accordance with Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The consultation took place with residents and bodies, such as neighbouring parish councils, Government Agencies and utilities, whose interests it considers may be affected by the draft Plan.
- 1.4.3 A Consultation Statement detailing the consultation process has been produced as a statutory requirement to accompany the Submission Version of the ONP.



Chapter 2 - About Odell

2.1 Odell's Heritage

- 2.1.1 The Parish is located 9 miles north west of Bedford in gently rolling countryside north of the River Great Ouse. It covers an area of 2,902 acres of which 370 acres are woodland. The central part of the village is designated as a Conservation Area and has many distinctive buildings and features. The Parish has 28 listed buildings and structures (one is Grade 1 listed) as well as two scheduled monuments, which together influence the history and character of the village. The Parish is mostly open farmland and woodland north of the built-up village community. There are several outlying farms and there's recreational and commercial activity on a former WWII airfield that straddles the Parish's northern boundary.
- 2.1.2 Odell and Little Odell were two early medieval settlements, with associated field systems, in the parish of Odell. The two settlements are probably associated with the two separate manors listed in the Domesday Survey and were unified before the C13. Both villages are built in a landscape that slopes gently down to the River Great Ouse. The castle occupied strategically high ground overlooking the river and the valley. Originally a Norman motte-and-bailey castle, it was replaced in the C17 with a new building incorporating the remains of the keep and the oval motte of the old castle. This building burned down in 1931 and was replaced with a new manor house in 1962. The old stones were used in the construction of the new house but otherwise there is little left of the original castle although cropmarks and earthworks have survived.
- 2.1.3 The castle remains at the heart of the village and its neighbours to the east on High Street and along Church Lane are mostly the buildings that grew up following its decline as a stronghold: farms and estate buildings, the Parish Church and the Rectory - now Odell Manor. More humble dwellings – hovels and cottages for farm workers, lace workers and leather workers - were sited west of the castle, surrounding the Green and alongside businesses including the corn mill (driven by the mill race), leather works, a baker's, a smithy and The Bell public house. These ancient, tumbledown dwellings that had defined the scale and grain of the village for centuries were deemed unfit for human habitation in the pre- and post-war period and were demolished to make way for new housing: the Lord of the Manor, Lord Luke, replaced The Old Row on the north side of the High Street, the council rebuilt west of The Bell in Horsefair Lane and the cottages and smithy west of the Green were replaced with flats now run by bpha (previously Bedfordshire Pilgrims Housing Association). Some of the historic buildings survive to the west on the High Street. One of Odell's two Scheduled Monuments is Wold Farm moated enclosure, with a complex of ponds, moat, causeway and an island.
- 2.1.4 All these historic low-rise buildings were built from a similar palette of materials: coursed limestone rubble walls with steeply pitched roofs, low eaves, brick chimneys and modest painted timber windows and doors. Many were thatched, perhaps historically with longstraw but today the thatch is mostly reed with folded longstraw ridges. Tying the High Street together are stone boundary walls of coursed limestone rubble, topped with Cock & Hen capping. There is much modern infill set back from the road and built in a mix of stone, brickwork, rendered walls and tiled roofs but where older houses survive the High Street narrows to its former width.
- 2.1.5 The Jefferys County Map of 1765 shows another lane north of the High Street and roughly parallel with it. The lane had disappeared by the time of the 1882 Ordnance Survey but it was important in defining the built extent of Odell north of the High Street.
- 2.1.6 South of the High Street, Mill Lane and Horsefair Lane are very different in character. The buildings on Mill Lane are all surviving historic buildings although they were converted from storage buildings

to dwellings in the post-war period by Lord Luke. The lane is narrow, there is no pavement and the buildings directly abut the roadside. By contrast, Horsefair Lane has been largely redeveloped and accommodated most of the growth of the village until Tannery Lane was developed at the turn of this century. The 1765 map shows Horsefair Lane looping back to the High Street but this connection was abandoned and the lane now terminates at the Odell entrance to Harrold Odell Country Park. The old route survives as a Public Footpath.

- 2.1.7 High Street connects the villages of Odell and Little Odell. Between the two settlements is a stretch of open countryside divided into fields and pastures bounded by hedgerows and mature trees. Hedgerows and trees also line the road and give it a different character to the village streets. The only dwellings on this stretch of road are Holliwell Farm and Hartles Hill Farm.
- 2.1.8 Opposite Hartles Hill Farm is what was once a cart track connecting the High Street with Yelnow Lane via the Parish Field, Odell Great Wood and Yelnow Farm. The cart track has gone but the route is preserved as a Public Footpath.
- 2.1.9 The settlement of Little Odell has grown up alongside a medieval village, the remains of which are a Scheduled Monument. The late C17 and early C18 Grade II Listed Buildings on the High Street are considered to have “group value” with the monument. The site of the monument is a field on the south side of the junction of High Street and Odell Road, in the hamlet known until the 1960s as Folly. The current grain and character of Little Odell was established following the decline of the medieval village and is essentially ribbon development along the High Street. The buildings were predominantly farms, farmworkers’ cottages and what was The Mad Dog public house. All the historic buildings share the same materials as Odell and the same distinctive boundary walls line the road. On the north side of the High Street the wall is almost complete save for a section that was demolished in the late C20. The absence of a pavement on the north side underlines the rural nature of the road and several older houses directly abut the roadside. The monument field is bounded along the High Street with another stretch of local stone walling.
- 2.1.10 The east side of Odell Road is largely undeveloped: north of the “T” junction Greystones is flanked by pasture and open farmland which is, in turn, bounded by hedgerows and mature trees. The only structure on this land is a modern agricultural building clad in sheet steel in the field adjoining the plant nursery at Westwood.
- 2.1.11 South of the “T” junction, beyond the monument, the road is flanked with a belt of trees some 40m wide which are the subject of Tree Preservation Orders. This belt of trees forms the boundary of Harrold Odell Country Park which has its main entrance on Carlton Road. Harrold Bridge, a rare stone and brick medieval packhorse bridge, is a Grade II* Listed Building that marks the southwest corner of the parish. For further details of Odell’s buildings and heritage see Appendix 2.
- 2.1.12 **All Saints’ Parish Church** (Grade 1 listed) dominates the village and is the oldest surviving building. It is perpendicular in style with incumbents dating back to 1220 with the current building being 15th century and largely unaltered. See Appendix 2, page 3.



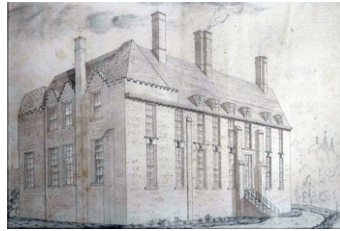
All Saints’ Church, Odell – 2020

- 2.1.13 **Odell Castle.** The original C11 building, standing in 11 acres, was the seat of the Barony of Wahall which was burnt down in the C12. In the mid-C16 it was described as ruins although Sir William Alston appeared to have built a new house in 1623 incorporating the keep and its retaining wall which is still intact today (listed). This burnt down in 1935 and a new house was built in 1962 using the old stones. See Appendix 2, page 4.



Odell Castle

by Thomas Fisher - 1811



Odell Castle – 1863



Odell Castle - about 1920

- 2.1.14 **Odell Manor.** The original manor, probably in Little Odell, was held by Walter the Fleming (noted in the Domesday book) and became part of the Odell Castle estate in 1632. The current manor house is of 17th or 18th century origin. It is built of coursed limestone rubble with a clay tiled roof. The garden wall is also listed and is 18th or 19th century. See Appendix 2, page 2.

- 2.1.15 **The Old Watermill.** A mill is listed in the Domesday Book but records do not show if the current mill is on the same site. The building had three floors constructed of stone and tile and in 1925 other slate and stone buildings are mentioned. In 1945 the area was drained and in 1947 permission was granted to convert it into a dwelling. See Appendix 2, page 15.



The Old Watermill - 2020

- 2.1.16 **Housing Development.** There has been limited housing development in the village over the last century. In the late 1930s and early 1940s, the Local Authority built twelve 3-bed semi-detached homes to rent on spacious plots in Horsefair Lane. These are now privately owned and many have been extended to provide 4/5 bed accommodation. In the 1960s, old stone-built farm buildings including a tithe barn overlooking The Green were demolished and a two-storey block of 6 flats was built, together with 4 bungalows originally intended for older residents.
- 2.1.17 In the 1960s, large quantities of sand and gravel were extracted from the Great Ouse river valley within the Parish, between the Odell and Harrold settlements. This area now forms the Harrold Odell Country Park with one large and several smaller lakes providing a nature reserve and recreational facilities.
- 2.1.18 In the 1990s, Odell Leather Company's works at the eastern edge of the village ceased trading and the brownfield site was used for new housing. Tannery Lane now comprises ten 4/5-bed homes stone-faced with most having slate roofs and sited on large plots.

- 2.1.19 **The Folly.** Part of Little Odell is known as the Folly. There is no record of a folly structure but the junction was known as a Folly corner, a splayed junction designed so that stage coaches and teams of horses pulling hay carts could negotiate the sharp turn more easily. Evidence of it is still there in the very wide verges either side of the T-junction, the very shallow soil under the grass with rubble beneath and visible in aerial photographs taken in the 1940s.



Folly T-Junction at Little Odell – 1940s

- 2.1.20 **Podington Airfield.** To the north of the Parish, straddling the boundary with Podington parish, Podington airfield was constructed in 1940-41 for the RAF and from 1942 it was used by the US Air Force. The main runway has been resurfaced with asphalt and used as a drag racing strip; Santa Pod is now a major European centre for drag racing. The airfield control tower is now a private home and some of the buildings house small businesses. The airfield and its surroundings now include 3 wind turbines and a large solar farm.

2.2 Odell's Demographics

2.2.1 The information provided below is a synopsis of the population and household characteristics, sourced from the 2011 Census.

Age Breakdown of Residents within Odell Parish



Odell



Bedford

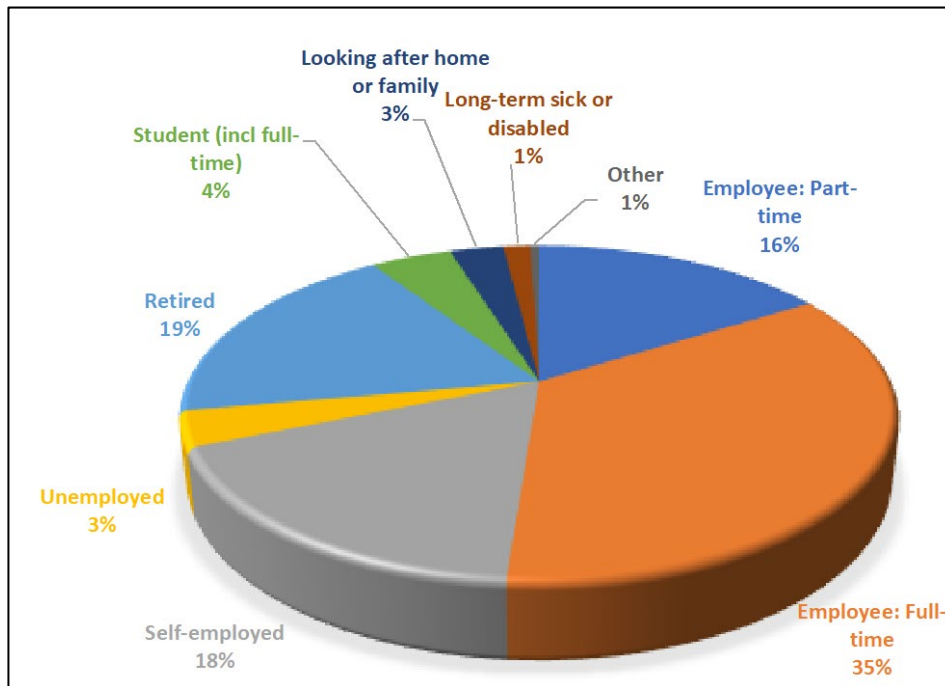


**England
& Wales**

Odell's population is significantly older than the average of Bedford Borough and of England & Wales.

	Odell		Bedford	England & Wales
Age	Number	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage
 Under 18	54	18.8	22.8	21.3
 18 to 24	12	4.2	8.7	9.4
 25 to 44	51	17.8	27.3	27.4
 45 to 59	71	24.7	19.6	19.4
 60 to 74	66	23.0	14.0	14.7
 75+	33	11.5	7.7	7.8
All usual residents	287	100.0	100.0	100.0
Mean Age	46.8		38.9	39.4
Median Age	49.0		39.0	39.0

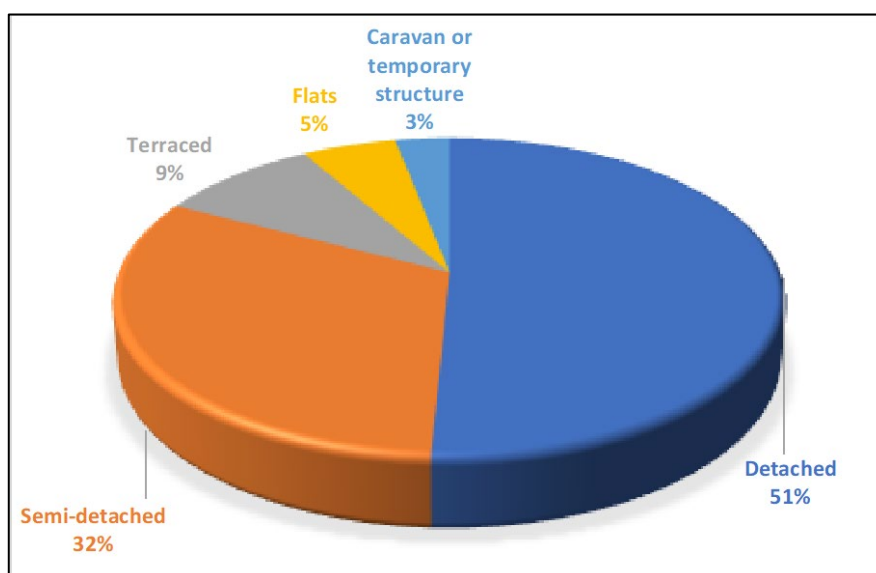
Economic Activity of Odell Residents



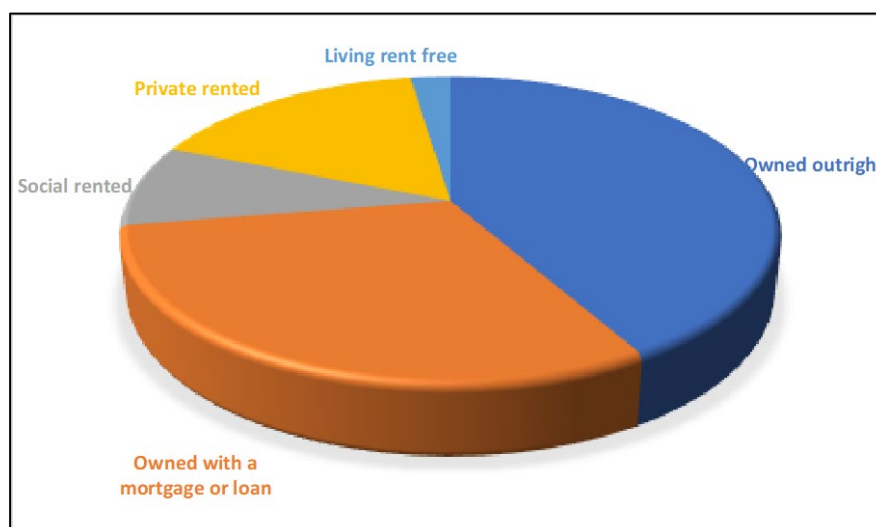
Economic Activity	Number	Percentage
Employee: Part-time	33	16.1
Employee: Full-time	72	35.1
Self-employed	36	17.6
Unemployed	7	3.4
Retired	38	18.5
Student (including full-time students)	9	4.4
Looking after home or family	6	2.9
Long-term sick or disabled	3	1.5
Other	1	0.5
All usual residents aged 16 to 74	205	100.0

Nearly one-in-five of Odell's population is retired and more people are self-employed with fewer in full-time employment than in Bedford Borough.

Types of Housing and Tenure within Odell Parish



Dwelling Type	Number	Percentage
Detached	67	50.8
Semi-detached	42	31.8
Terraced	12	9.1
Flats	7	5.3
Caravan or temporary structure	4	3.0
Total Dwellings	132	100.0



Tenure	Number	Percentage
Owned outright	53	41.7
Owned with a mortgage or loan	39	30.7
Social rented	11	8.7
Private rented	21	16.5
Living rent free	3	2.4
Total Households	127	100.0

2.3 Employment and Facilities

2.3.1 **Farming and Equestrian Activities.** Several farms and smallholdings across the Parish form an important part of the local economy. The larger farms are mostly arable, including Rectory Farm, Holliwell Farm, Yelnow Farm, Valley Farm, Granary Farm and Grange Farm. There is some small-scale rearing of sheep, goats and poultry, including at Village Farm House, and there's a horticultural business at Westwood Farm & Nursery. There are pastures and stabling for horses in several locations throughout the Parish.

2.3.2 **Village Facilities.** Odell is a typical, small linear Bedfordshire village with the following facilities, serving Odell residents and visitors.

- All Saints' Parish Church
- The Bell public house
- The village hall
- Harrold Odell Country Park
- The Dragonfly Café (in the country park)
- Public Transport
- Mobile Library
- Hairdresser
- Dog grooming

2.3.3 **School provision for the village**

- Sharnbrook, Carlton and Harrold Primary Schools provide education for 4 to 11-year olds, from their catchment areas
- Sharnbrook Academy, provides 11 to 19-year olds' education.
- Pre-school education is also provided in Harrold and Sharnbrook.



2.3.4 **Sport, leisure and play facilities.** There's a children's play area and football pitch in the Country Park and the 'scout field' in Horsefair Lane is privately owned but used for the village fete and dog show. There is an extensive network of footpaths, bridleways and byways open to all traffic (BOATs) for walking and providing access to the natural environment including Odell Great Wood and Yelnow New Wood.

2.3.5 **Odell Village Hall.** The village hall is the home of the Women's Institute (WI), the gardening club and also Pilates sessions. It is also the meeting place for the Parish Council and can be hired for special events. The village hall committee arranges ad hoc social entertainment including dances, comedy shows, tribute bands, playlets and the yearly Burns night event. It also serves as a polling station at election times.

2.3.6 **Other Facilities.** The Community Orchard is located between Horsefair Lane and the High Street. There is also a Villager Community Bus service which runs regular services to Olney, Milton Keynes, Bedford and Peterborough.



Chapter 3 - Vision and Aims 2022-2031

3.1 Our Approach

- 3.1.1 The knowledge and local data from recent engagement and consultation activities has been used to form Odell's Neighbourhood Plan. The residents' survey questionnaire and various consultation events have provided a significant quantity of data about the area which has been invaluable in establishing priorities, capturing issues and generating ideas. The following vision and aims have been identified and are covered by the Policies chapter in this plan, or are covered in the Non-Land Use Actions Appendix 1, to be addressed by the Parish Council as they are outside the scope of a neighbourhood plan.

3.2 Vision for Odell

- 3.2.1 To ensure that future development meets diverse local needs, is sustainable, and protects or enhances the historic and rural environment of the Parish of Odell. To achieve this the Plan has the following aims: -

3.3 Aims of the Odell Neighbourhood Plan

A Sustainable Place To Live

- 3.3.1 To ensure that Odell remains a good place to live in a sustainable way, with a good range of local facilities and housing that meets the diverse needs of the local community and supports varied life-work patterns, including home-based and remote working,

Design

- 3.3.2 To ensure that the character of the historic village and its street pattern is protected and all new development should meet local needs while adhering to design, quality and building standards that are in keeping with the character of the village.

Environment and Heritage

- 3.3.3 To protect and enhance Odell's historic and rural environment, including its biodiversity, natural habitats, the Great Ouse river valley, the wooded wolds and its Conservation Area.

Village Facilities and Businesses

- 3.3.4 To protect and ensure the continued availability of a range of local facilities and local economic opportunities.

Transport and Infrastructure

- 3.3.5 To ensure that development is supported by sufficient infrastructure including sustainable forms of transport and access for walkers.

Chapter 4 - Odell NP Policies

4.1 These policies have been written to meet the basic conditions for a Neighbourhood Plan. These are: -

- Having regard to national policy and guidance
- Helping to achieve sustainable development
- Being in general conformity with strategic local policy
- Not breaching EU obligations (and their equivalents in UK law)

4.2 Planning regulations include an additional basic condition relating to habitats. In addition, neighbourhood plans must not contravene human rights law.

4.3 The external documents that have provided evidence to support these policies are as follows: -

- Housing Needs Assessment – completed by AECOM in October 2020
- Design Codes – completed by AECOM in October 2020, revised October 2021 – Appendix 3 to the Plan
- Actions and Projects list – Appendix 1 to the Plan, completed in July 2021
- Heritage report – initial discussion paper released in June 2020, final version completed in July 2021
- Environment discussion paper – released in June 2020
- Facilities & Businesses discussion paper – released in June 2020
- Footpaths discussion paper – released in June 2020
- Housing discussion paper – released in June 2020
- 2011 Census data
- Bedford Borough Council’s strategic policy documents in relevant subjects
- National environmental analysis – including Odell Great Wood SSSI

4.1 Residential Development

Purpose

4.1.1 To support sustainable residential development, to meet local need.

Rationale and Evidence

4.1.2 A housing needs assessment (HNA) was prepared by AECOM, identifying a requirement for 18 new homes over the 10-year period. There was a particular need for 3-bedroom family homes with some 1-bed, 2-bed and 4-bed homes as well. A housing discussion paper was published on the Odell village website and publicised in the newsletter.

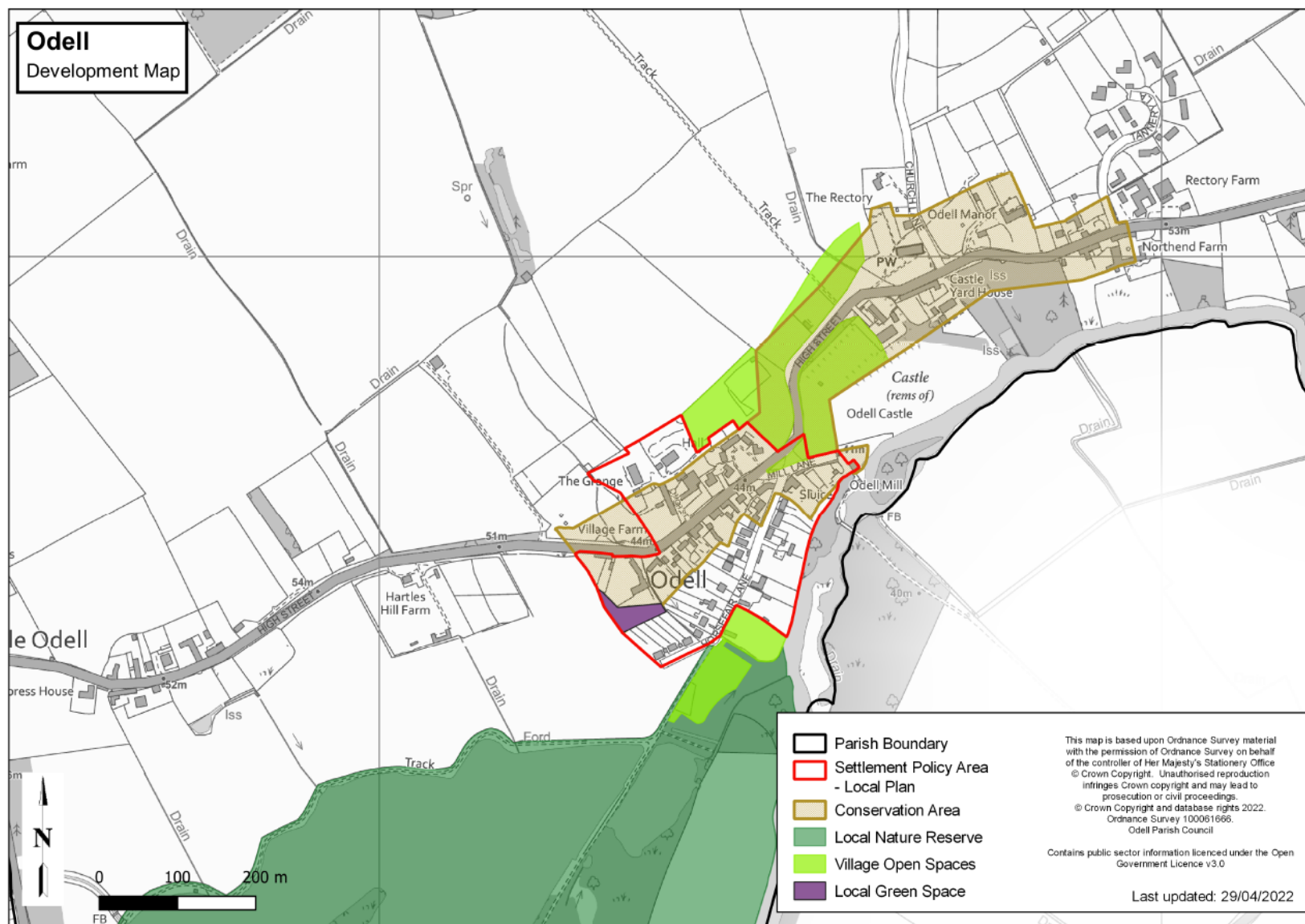
4.1.3 The existing Settlement Policy Area covers only the centre of Odell, yet there are built-up areas in the Eastern part of the village and in Little Odell where infill development may be appropriate. There are a number of farm buildings throughout the built-up area which may become available for development and would be suitable sites for infill homes or business premises. In the survey of residents and follow-up consultations there was no support for large-scale development anywhere in the Parish. The open countryside surrounding Odell village and Little Odell was greatly valued by residents and should be preserved, without any significant development. Any development in the Parish should be located within the existing built-up areas, designated by the Settlement Policy Area in the centre of Odell or in Little Odell and eastern Odell, in accordance with the Local Plan’s Policy 7S (Development in the countryside). There is a strong desire to retain open spaces between existing buildings in the open countryside, so that development doesn’t encroach on the natural environment.

Policy OD1: Residential Development

- 1. Residential development will be supported, subject to road safety considerations, within the Settlement Policy Area for: -**
 - a. Linear infill development of three or fewer properties along road frontages**
 - b. Small groups of three or fewer properties fronting a small driveway at an angle to the road frontage.**
- 2. Support for infill development is subject to the scheme meeting design and landscape requirements, as set out in other policies of the development plan.**
- 3. Infill housing should meet local need, including:**
 - a) Accommodation suitable for older people;**
 - b) Smaller accommodation suitable for first-time buyers and those looking to downsize**
 - c) Dwellings for families, in particular 3-bedroom houses**
- 4. All new dwellings should include screened storage for bins and recycling, where they're stored within the frontage of a dwelling.**

Interpretation and Guidance:

- 4.1.4 Support for development under this policy is subject to all other relevant policy requirements also being met. Infill development relates to gaps in built frontages, rather than wider spaces between frontages. Normally, an infill gap would comprise sufficient space for 1 to 3 typical houses. The policy supports development of one, two or three homes depending on the character, capacity and context of the site. Each development should have safe access onto the highway, in accordance with Borough and National policies. New buildings must complement the predominant style and layout of the village, including their height, density and positioning. They should complement what's already there in a high-quality way.



Plan 1: Odell Settlement Policy Areas

4.2 Business and Community Facilities

Purpose

4.2.1 To help create local economic opportunity and more sustainable life/work patterns.

Rationale and Evidence

4.2.2 A discussion paper on employment and facilities was published on the Odell village website and publicised in the newsletter. Local businesses and the services they offer make a valued contribution to community life. People should be able to live and work locally in a sustainable way if they wish to. The main facilities in Odell are Harrold Odell Country Park, with its Dragonfly Café, the village hall, The Bell and a number of services provided by home-based businesses such as hairdressing, property maintenance etc., the Community Orchard and the footpaths and bridleways providing access to the surrounding countryside, including Odell Great Wood and Yelnow New Wood. Where economically viable, facilities should be available within the village to reduce the need to travel to neighbouring villages and towns.

Policy OD2: Business and Community Facilities

1. Support will be given for new business development, local services or community facilities or development to support rural diversification, providing there is no significant detrimental impact on the amenities of any nearby residential properties or highway safety. This includes support for local enterprise, co-working or shared working space.
2. Development leading to the loss of existing, local services and community facilities, including The Bell, the village hall and Harrold Odell Country Park, will only be supported where:
 - a) A similar or better facility is provided in close proximity in the village; or
 - b) It can be demonstrated that the local services or community facility is no longer economically viable and that all reasonable attempts to market the facility have been tried and undertaken over a period of at least 12 months.
3. Provision of charging facilities for electric vehicles, on-street and in suitable public spaces, will be supported
4. Development within the site of Podington airfield will only be supported where it would complement and cause no harm to the existing renewable energy facilities and drag racing facility.
5. Development should enhance and must not compromise the community value and use of local facilities including:
 - The Village Hall;
 - The Bell public house.
6. Residential and commercial development must include the infrastructure for high speed broadband connectivity, including within the curtilage of all new houses and buildings, so as to be ready to use the upgraded full fibre optic broadband services presently, and in the future available in the village.

Interpretation and Guidance:

4.2.3 Support for development under this policy is subject to other policy requirements also being met.

4.3 Environment

Purpose

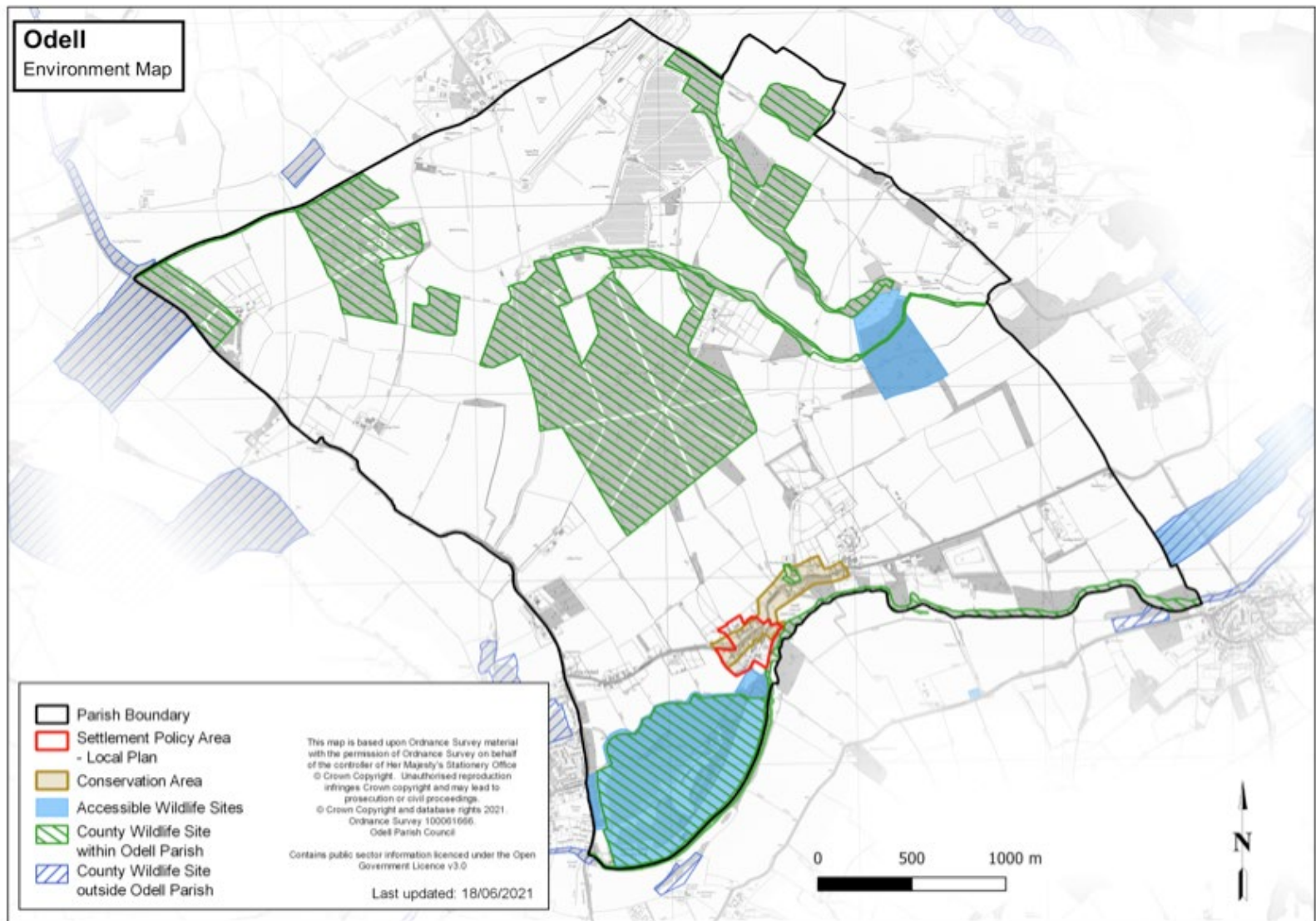
4.3.1 To protect or enhance the local environment and promote biodiversity.

Rationale and Evidence

- 4.3.2 A discussion paper on environmental matters was published on the Odell village website and publicised in the newsletter. Landscape designations, including SSSIs and County Wildlife sites, were part of the evidence used in formulating these policies, together with published information on Climate Change.
- 4.3.3 The natural environment surrounding the village includes the Great Ouse river valley and, to the North, Hinwick Wolds. See Map 2. It is highly valued by residents and visitors. There are a large number of woodland sites, river views and frontages that must be protected and sustained. The farmed environment is an intrinsic part of the rural fabric of the village and should be sustained and supported in ways that enhance the local ecology. The built environment includes a large number of heritage assets that are an intrinsic part of the village's character that should be preserved, while also ensuring they remain suitable for current purposes. Any development must be mindful of its impact on the environment, especially with regard to global warming, local flooding and rainwater run-off during storms. By considering these factors the wider environment will also be protected, notably the Natura 2000 sites downstream on the River Great Ouse.

Policy OD3: Environment

1. **Development must have no overall adverse impacts on, and should take opportunities to enhance, Odell's landscape character, its Conservation Area, non-designated heritage assets, farmed environment, ecology, and wildlife habitats. Development must achieve overall biodiversity net gain.**
2. **Development must retain trees and hedges and dry stonewalls and incorporate them into the design and layout of the scheme and, where the loss of existing trees and/or hedges and/or dry stonewalls is unavoidable, the scheme must include replacement trees and/or hedges using native species and replacement dry stonewalls to provide a similar level of amenity and character.**
3. **Development must preserve or enhance the character, amenity and environmental values of:**
 - **Odell's green and open rural landscape setting**
 - **The River Great Ouse, its banks and landscape setting**
 - **Odell's trees and woodlands, including Odell Great Wood SSSI and Yelnow New Wood**
 - **Harrold Odell Country Park**
 - **The Green and other open spaces within the village**
 - **The area's built heritage including Listed Buildings, Odell Conservation Area, the Scheduled Monuments and non-designated heritage assets**



Plan 2: Odell Environment Map

Interpretation and Guidance:

4.3.4 Features to support wildlife and ecology could include:

- Use of traditional hedges for boundary treatments
- Use of native species in planting
- Design features to support wildlife, such as bat or bird boxes, hedgehog gaps in fences

4.4 Design and Character

Purpose

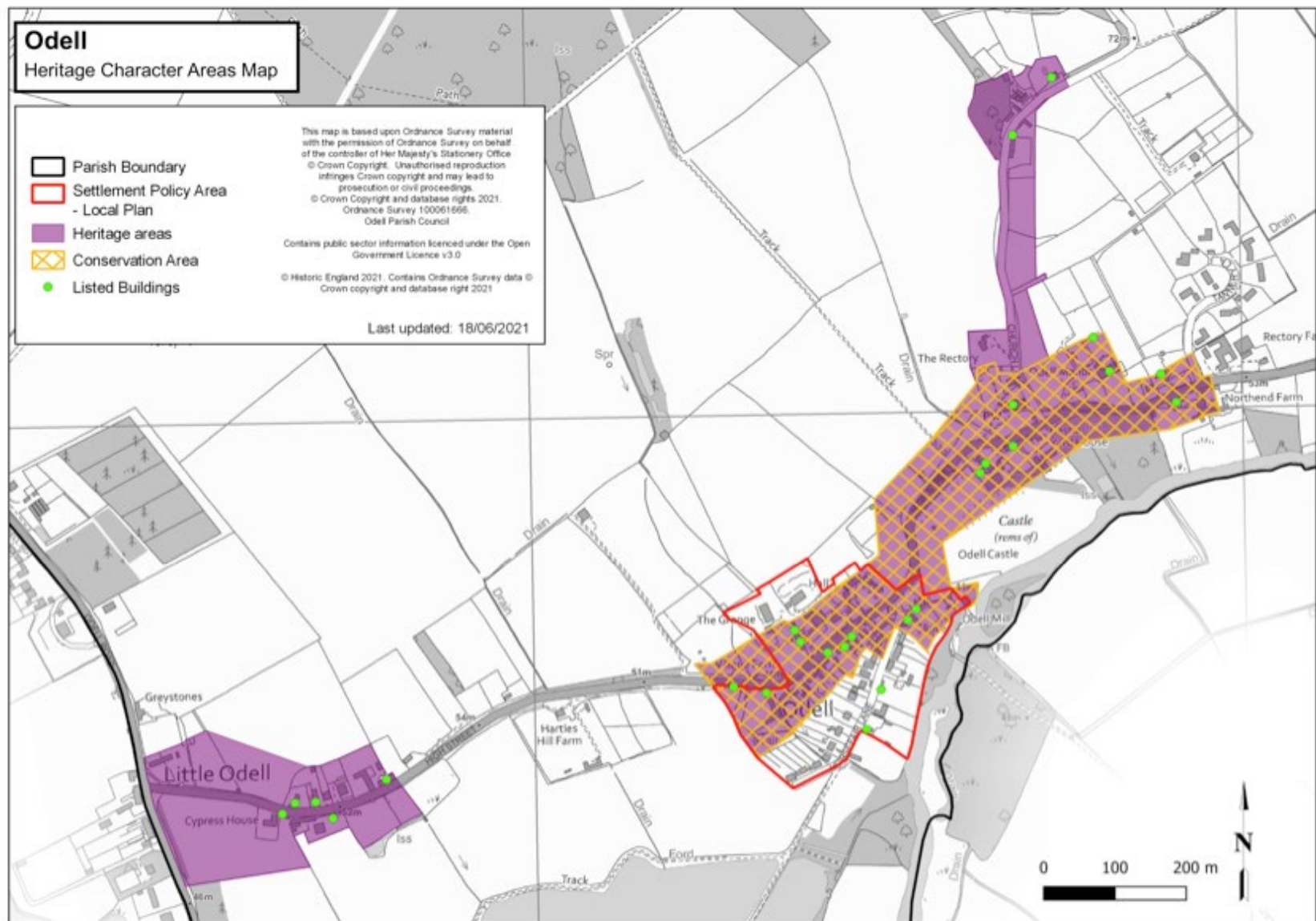
4.4.1 To ensure that development is sustainable and well-designed, reinforcing the distinctive local identity of the area.

Rationale and Evidence

- 4.4.2 A Design Codes document was prepared by AECOM, providing a comprehensive set of guidelines for any extensions and new development in the Parish. The Design Codes are included as an Appendix to the Plan. A heritage discussion paper was published on the Odell village website and publicised in the newsletter. The importance of design in addressing climate change has been carefully considered in preparing these policies.
- 4.4.3 Residents expressed their desire that any development should be in keeping with Odell's distinctive rural character. The lived environment, including any new housing, should enhance people's enjoyment of the village and its surrounding countryside. Any development should preserve the special interest of Odell's Conservation Area and the heritage areas identified in Plan 3, which may be designated in the future.
- 4.4.4 There's strong support for preserving or enhancing the Conservation Area, support to explore additional designated areas and to protect heritage assets, both statutorily listed and locally important. Impacts on the unique archaeology in the parish from the prehistoric remains in the Great Ouse valley to the medieval castle and the scheduled earthwork remains at Little Odell should be a key consideration in development proposals. The character of the historic village and its street pattern should be protected and there's a need to ensure that all new development meets design quality and building standards that are in keeping with the character of the village.

Policy OD4: Design and Character

- 1. Development must be sustainable and complement the locally distinctive character of Odell, including the Conservation Area, and its non-designated heritage assets. To achieve this, development must meet the following requirements of this policy, proportionate to the scale and character of the scheme.**
- 2. Development must be appropriate to its site and respect the immediate context in terms of height, scale, massing, spacing, set-back from the road, and layout pattern of building footprints and garden spaces. This includes complementing the predominant one or two-storey height of buildings, or two storeys with an attic storey in the roof-space.**
- 3. Development should avoid excessive uniformity and add to the architectural diversity of the area, including through variations in orientation, style, roofing, materials and form.**
- 4. Landscape infrastructure must be an integral part of the layout and design of development, including where appropriate tree planting using native species.**
- 5. Development should incorporate modern ecological design and/or landscape features to reduce its carbon footprint and environmental impact.**
- 6. Development should preserve or enhance the historic and rural character of roads, lanes and verges.**
- 7. Development should retain existing hedges, trees and stone walls where practicable. Use of hedges, trees and low stone walls in new boundary treatments will be supported.**
- 8. Materials must be of high quality and reinforce the local distinctiveness of Odell. Support will be given to schemes that use local traditional materials, recycled or recyclable materials, or materials and construction with low embodied energy.**
- 9. Development must present active frontages to streets and spaces, including building elevations with windows. Schemes that present blank elevations or high walls or enclosures to streets and spaces should be avoided.**
- 10. Development on the edge of the rural area or open spaces should include active frontages behind front gardens or courts, low-level boundary treatments and planting to create a transition between built development and landscape.**
- 11. There should be a clear separation between public streets and private gardens. Where possible, rear gardens should be set away from street frontages, to avoid the need for high walls or fences.**
- 12. Building conversions, refurbishment and extensions must complement the existing building and preserve or enhance any architectural or historic interest and features.**
- 13. The form and layout of development should respond to existing view corridors and reinforce views of existing landmarks, including views to All Saints' Parish Church, Odell Manor and of the River Great Ouse.**



Plan 3: Odell Heritage Areas Map

Interpretation and Guidance:

- 4.4.5 The policy requires that developments respond to local character, to reinforce the locally distinctive 'sense of place'. This should not be interpreted as requiring stylistic imitation or falsification of history. Indeed, contemporary interpretations of local forms are encouraged.
- 4.4.6 Variations in building forms are encouraged to add visual interest, such as altering eaves and ridge heights; variation of frontage widths and plan forms or placement of a building perpendicular to the street to show a gable end of a building to add variation to the streetscape.
- 4.4.7 Setback from the street, front garden landscaping and detailed architectural design should help in balancing privacy to front living spaces with the need for overlooking of the street (active frontages). External lighting should be appropriate to the rural location and designed to minimise light pollution.
- 4.4.8 The treatment of the edge of development is particularly important when facing open countryside and other open space. Buildings should face outwards, with a front garden and a street or footpath / cycleway between the home and the open space to create a more attractive edge. It is important to achieve a 'stand-off' or buffer between groups of dwellings and the open space. Planting should be used to soften the edge between village and countryside.
- 4.4.9 Local building materials include limestone, limestone rubble and red brick, used for buildings and boundary walls. Authentic traditional materials would meet the requirements of the policy, rather than imitations, such as reconstituted stone. Colours of building materials or paint should respond to the surrounding built environment.
- 4.4.10 Green building elements can include:
- Superior insulation properties and airtightness
 - Use of low-embodied energy materials
 - Built-in solar energy and renewable heating systems
 - Living (green or brown) walls or roofs
 - Rainwater capture, storage and reuse (grey water)
 - Porous driveways and paths
 - Flexible spaces and layouts to accommodate changing demands
- 4.4.11 Government policy and guidance sets out the requirement for heritage statements to be submitted with applications for development. Such statements provide an opportunity to explain how the scheme meets the requirements of the Environment policy and the Design and Character policy.
- 4.4.12 Having regard to the 'National Model Design Guide', as well as in the 'Manual for Streets' and 'Manual for Streets 2', may be helpful in securing compliance with policy OD4 and the Environment policy, OD3.

4.5 Transport, including Walking

Purpose

4.5.1 To support sustainable transport and walking.

Rationale and Evidence

4.5.2 A Footpaths & Bridleways discussion paper was published on the Odell village website and publicised in the newsletter. The network of rural footpaths, bridleways and byways throughout the Parish offer well-used access to the countryside and views along the Great Ouse river valley. Especially after the Covid-19 pandemic, the importance of access to the countryside for walking is increasingly recognised as an important contribution to physical health and mental wellbeing.

Policy OD5: Transport, including Walking

- 1. Development likely to generate additional journeys should provide for a balanced range of transport options including sustainable forms of transport, proportionate to the scale and nature of the development.**
- 2. There should be provision of a safe and convenient environment for pedestrians and cyclists within the design of new development, including ease of movement within the village and links to surrounding settlements, meeting the needs of people with a range of mobility.**
- 3. Secure and covered storage for cycling should be provided as part of parking provision in non-residential development. All new dwellings should include secure and covered storage space for cycles.**
- 4. Development must include sufficient on-plot parking facilities to avoid on-street parking.**
- 5. Development should provide electric vehicle charging points as part of parking provision.**
- 6. Development must not encroach onto existing footpaths, bridleways, byways or cycle paths or have any detrimental impact on their amenity, safety or accessibility. Opportunities should be taken to enhance the amenity, safety and accessibility of footpaths, bridleways or cycle paths.**

Interpretation and Guidance:

4.5.3 On-plot parking can include garages, car ports and/or driveway spaces at the front or the side of the building. The form of parking shall be visually attractive, combined with high quality and well-designed soft and hard landscaping, achieved by using elements such as hedges, trees, flower beds, low walls, and high-quality paving materials. Hard standing driveways must be constructed from porous materials to minimise surface water run-off. In achieving sustainable transport, the following things can be included: -

- Provision of additional bus stops within 400 metres
- Improved roadside footpaths and cycleways to nearby community centres
- Provision for electric vehicle charging

4.6 Local Energy

Purpose

4.6.1 To support local energy generation.

Rationale and Evidence

4.6.2 A discussion paper on employment and facilities was published on the Odell village website and publicised in the newsletter. Odell already has three wind turbines and a large solar farm. The wind turbines were highly controversial because of their large size and their visual impact on rural environment. Further renewable energy development would only be acceptable if it had no adverse impact on the local environment

OD6: Local Energy

1. Local renewable energy schemes will be supported, providing:

- a) There is no significant adverse impact on the local environment, including landscapes, ecology and wildlife, meeting the requirements of Policy OD3.**
- b) They are well-designed, meeting the requirements of Policy OD4.**
- c) There is no significant adverse impact on the amenities of any nearby residential properties.**

Interpretation and Guidance:

4.6.3 Adverse impacts on wildlife or residential properties could include noise, vibration, visual flicker. Care is required over the siting of any renewable energy scheme to ensure that this policy is met. Where the technology requires a tall structure then it may not be appropriate development in this locality.

4.7 Infrastructure Priorities

Purpose

- 4.7.1 This policy provides guidance on how any infrastructure funding, from Section 106 or Community Infrastructure Levy monies, should be spent.

Rationale and Evidence

- 4.7.2 Odell has heavy through traffic on its narrow and winding High Street. This has raised concerns amongst residents about road safety. There have been several road traffic accidents within the 30mph areas of Odell in recent years, at the Odell Road / High Street junction in Little Odell, on the sharp bend when entering Odell from the West and elsewhere in the village. Excessive speed is often a factor and additional measures are required to improve road safety.

OD7: Infrastructure Priorities

1. **The priorities for spending infrastructure monies in this Parish are as follows:**
 - **A safe crossing for pedestrians in the centre of Odell**

Interpretation and Guidance:

- 4.7.3 The policy seeks to influence future infrastructure spending decisions.

Chapter 5 - Non-Land Use Actions

5.1 A number of issues have been raised while preparing the ONP that are not directly related to land-use and development. These issues cannot be addressed directly by the policies in the Plan. However, they are important to the residents of the Parish, together with actions and projects for dealing with them. These issues are detailed in Appendix 1, a separate document that's not part of the statutory Neighbourhood Plan which is included to provide related information. It will be updated as required during the lifetime of ONP. If implemented, the non-land use actions and projects will help to achieve the vision and objectives of the Plan. The actions have been grouped into the following topic areas: -

- Traffic and Transport
- Infrastructure
- Village Facilities
- Environment
- Heritage

Chapter 6 - Monitoring and Review of the Plan

6.1 Monitoring

- 6.1.1 Odell Parish Council will ensure that the Plan is actively managed over the Plan period, reactivating the ONPWG as required. The Plan will be reviewed periodically to ensure that it addresses and considers any changes in both national and local planning policies. The continuing evolution of Bedford Borough's Local Plan may require future changes to the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 6.1.2 Responsibility for providing the leadership for the ONP will rest with Odell Parish Council. Each Annual Parish Council meeting, after the Plan's implementation, will include an agenda item and a detailed report in order to provide an update on the ONP. This will monitor the progress of the Plan in the previous year and the likely implications and impact of the Plan for the forthcoming year.
- 6.1.3 The Parish Council website www.odell-pc.gov.uk/odell-parish-council/ will carry an up to date report on progress with the Plan during its lifetime.

6.2 Review

- 6.2.1 There will be a mid-period review of the progress of the ONP in 2025/2026 by a Working Group which has a wider community base. The purpose of the review will be to guide the Parish Council in its stewardship of the Plan and to consider whether a review of or amendments to the Plan needs to be proposed to Bedford Borough Council.
- 6.2.2 In 2030, or a date consistent with the timetable set by Bedford Borough Council for the production of local development documents, the Parish Council will recruit a new Working Group to undertake a review and decide on the need for a subsequent ONP. If it is decided that a new Plan is required the Working Group will develop it so that it is effective from 2031, or a date consistent with Bedford Borough Council's timetable.

6.3 Abbreviations

ONPWG - Odell Neighbourhood Plan Working Group
ONP - Odell Neighbourhood Plan.

