

TNP2 - THAME NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

FORMAL REGULATION 14
CONSULTATION ON THE DRAFT PLAN



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WELCOME

The first Thame Neighbourhood Plan (TNP1) was successfully made in 2013. It is now being reviewed and a new draft Neighbourhood Plan (TNP2) has been prepared.

The material presented here summarises the policies, and projects, in TNP2. These seek to build on the success of TNP1 as well as reflecting comments and ideas put forward in previous consultation events.

TNP2 includes land use and development policies that will be used to inform and determine planning applications across Thame. It includes allocations for new development.

Your views are now sought on TNP2.

Consultation is open until Monday 7 August 2023.

Please do let us have your views by then.

All the documents you need can be found on the Town Council's website, along with latest news, and a link to the online response form for your feedback.



TNP2 seeks to build on the success of the first Neighbourhood Plan, strengthening Thame's character as a 'real market town'

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VISION AND OBJECTIVES

The vision is:

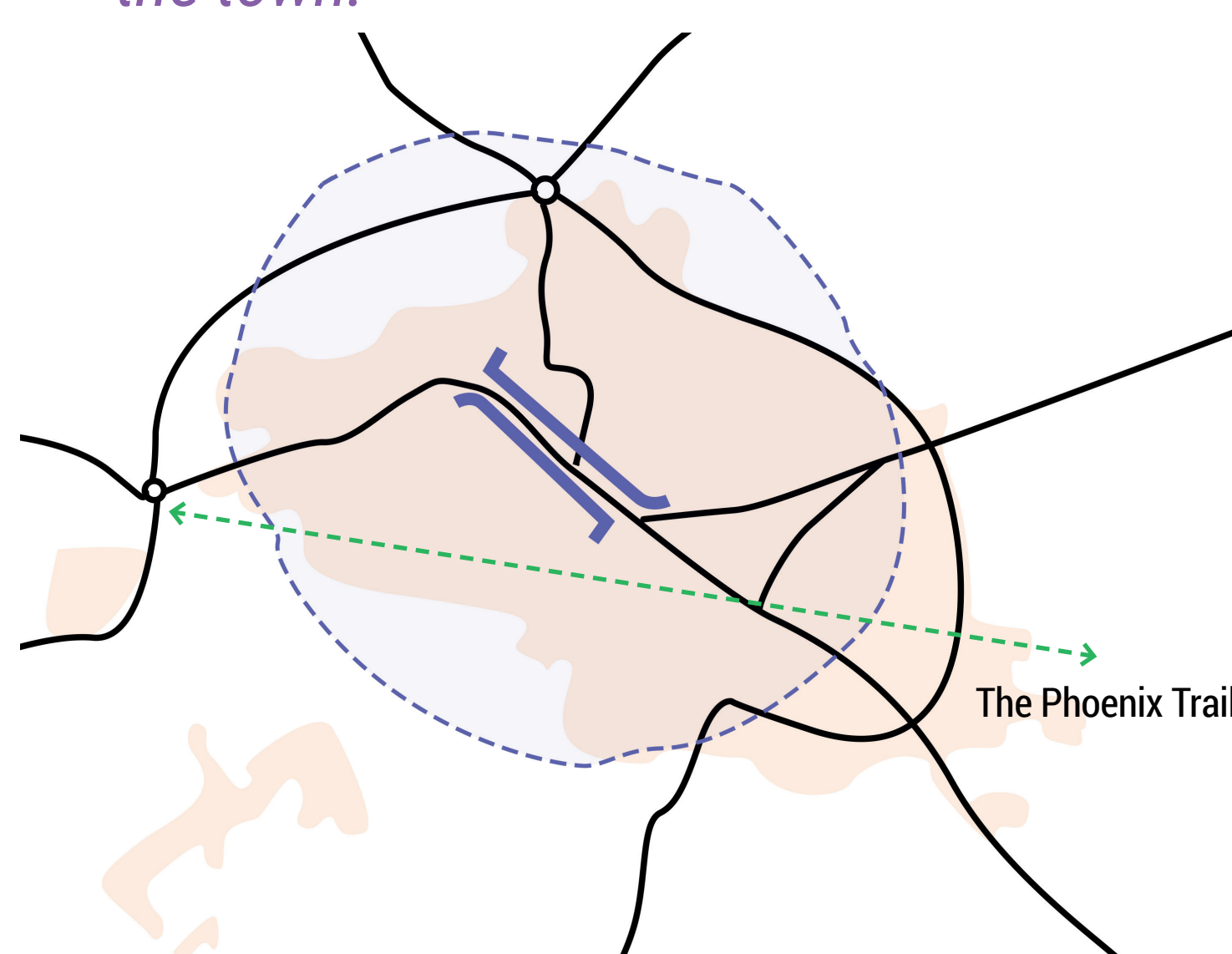
"Thame must maintain its character as a real market town"

This means:

- Thame must continue to feel compact.
- Thame must continue to have a close relationship with the open countryside around it.
- Thame must maintain its markets, festivals and events.
- Thame must continue to act as a centre for the surrounding area not just its residents.

The objectives in TNP2 inform the preferred directions of future growth and other interventions. They are:

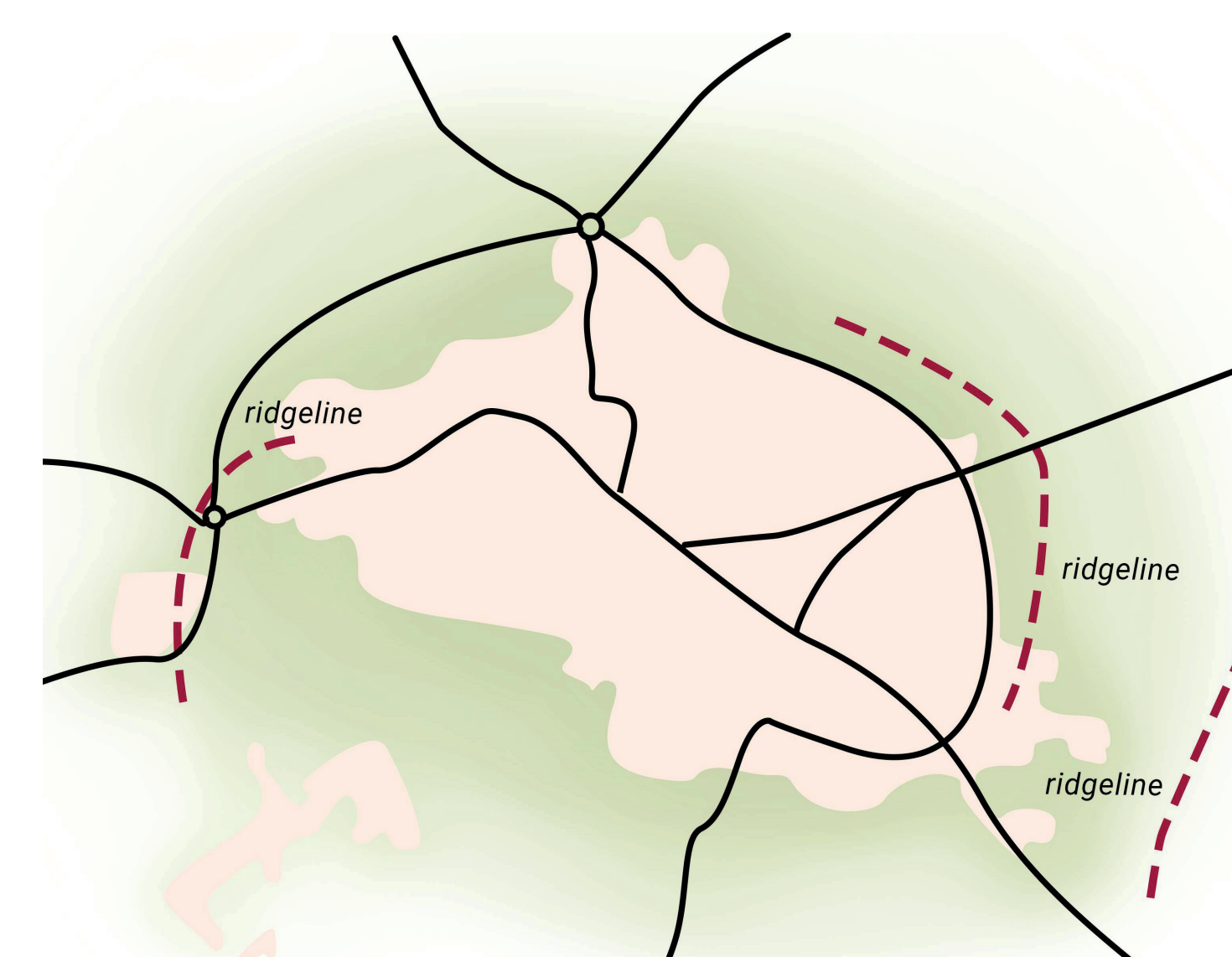
1. The compactness and walkability of Thame should be retained, with new homes within comfortable travel distance, by foot and by bike, from the town centre and other social and community facilities located around the town.



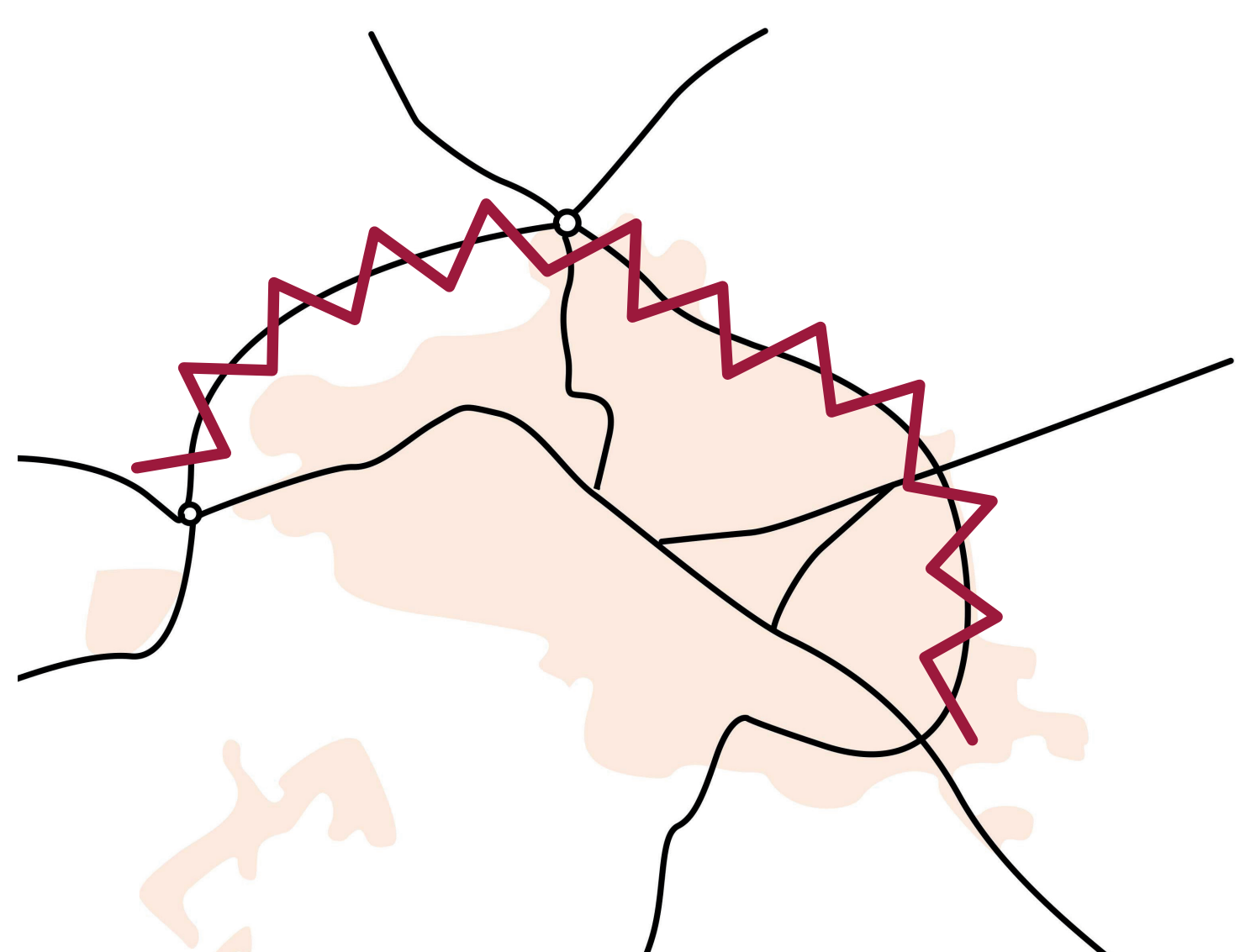
2. The sensitive environment around Thame should be respected, with areas of new growth avoiding areas of nature conservation and flood risk.



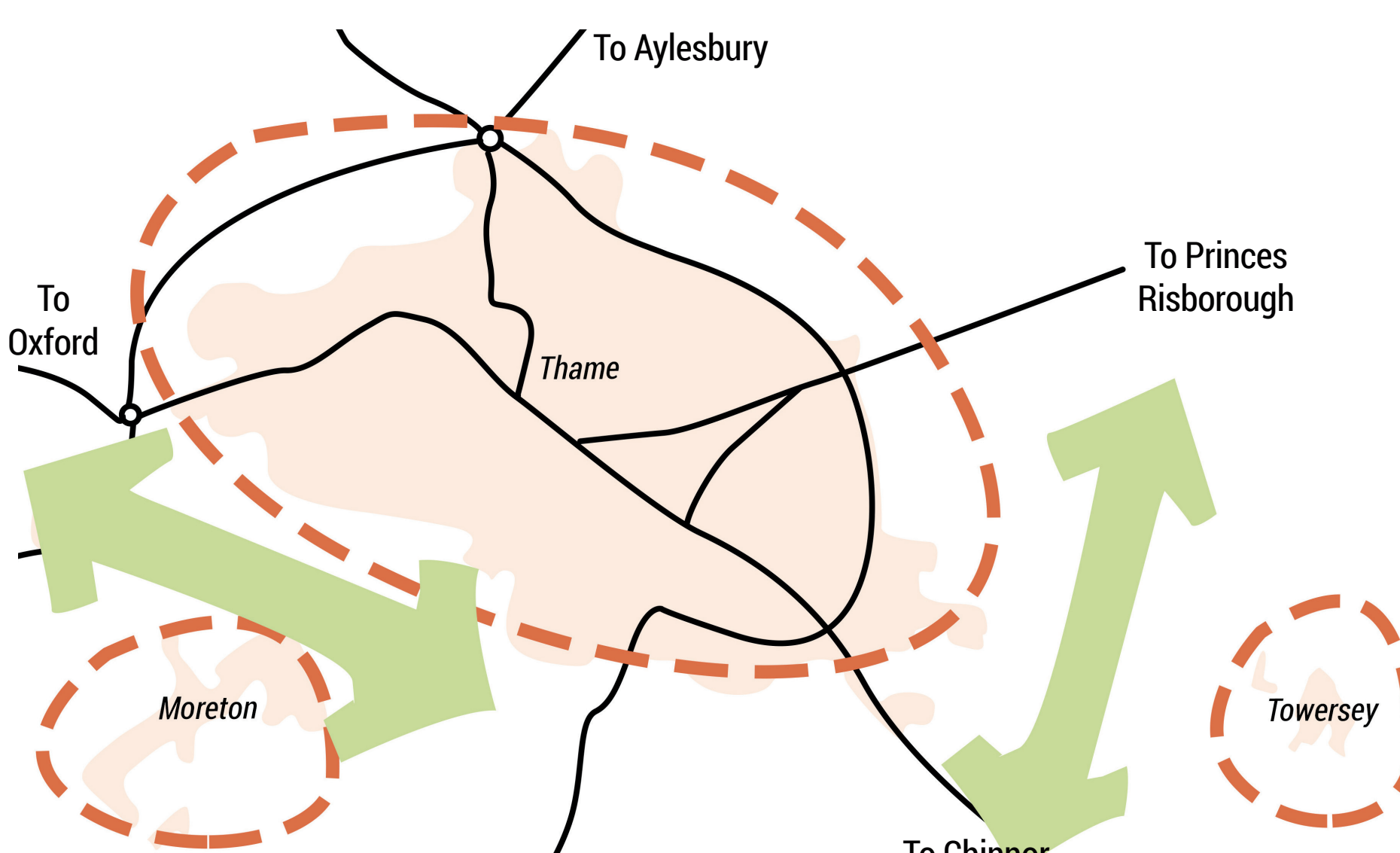
3. The landscape setting, quality of this and access to the green spaces and open countryside around Thame should be retained.



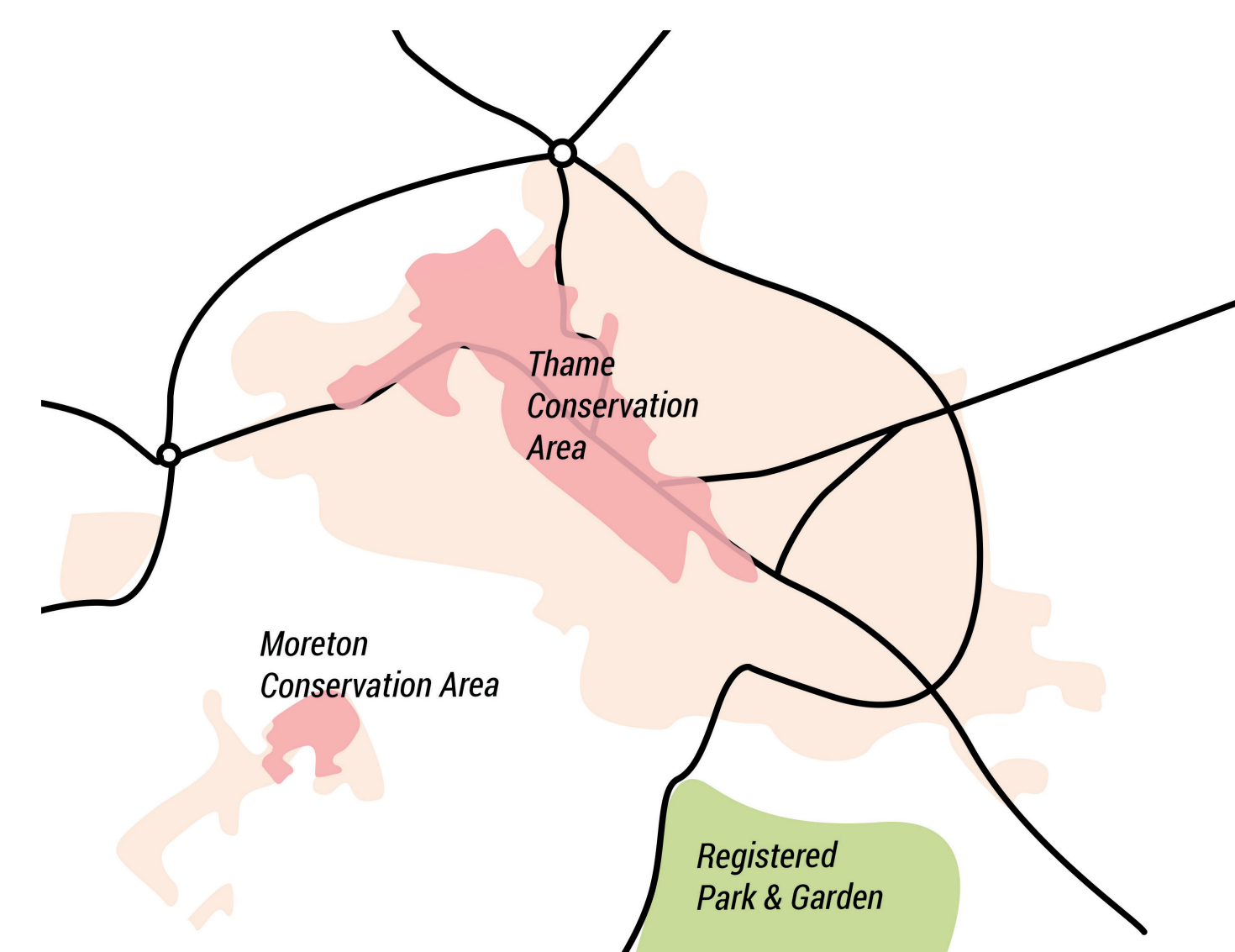
4. New housing development should help support social inclusion, being well integrated with the existing built-up area of Thame and avoiding barriers to movement.



5. The separate identity of Thame and outlying villages, including Moreton, to the south, and Towersey, to the east, should be retained.



6. New development should respect Thame's historic areas and past growth



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DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS

The South Oxfordshire Local Plan was adopted in December 2020. This establishes growth requirements that must be met in Thame, and states that land to accommodate future growth should be identified through TNP2.

The growth requirements are for:

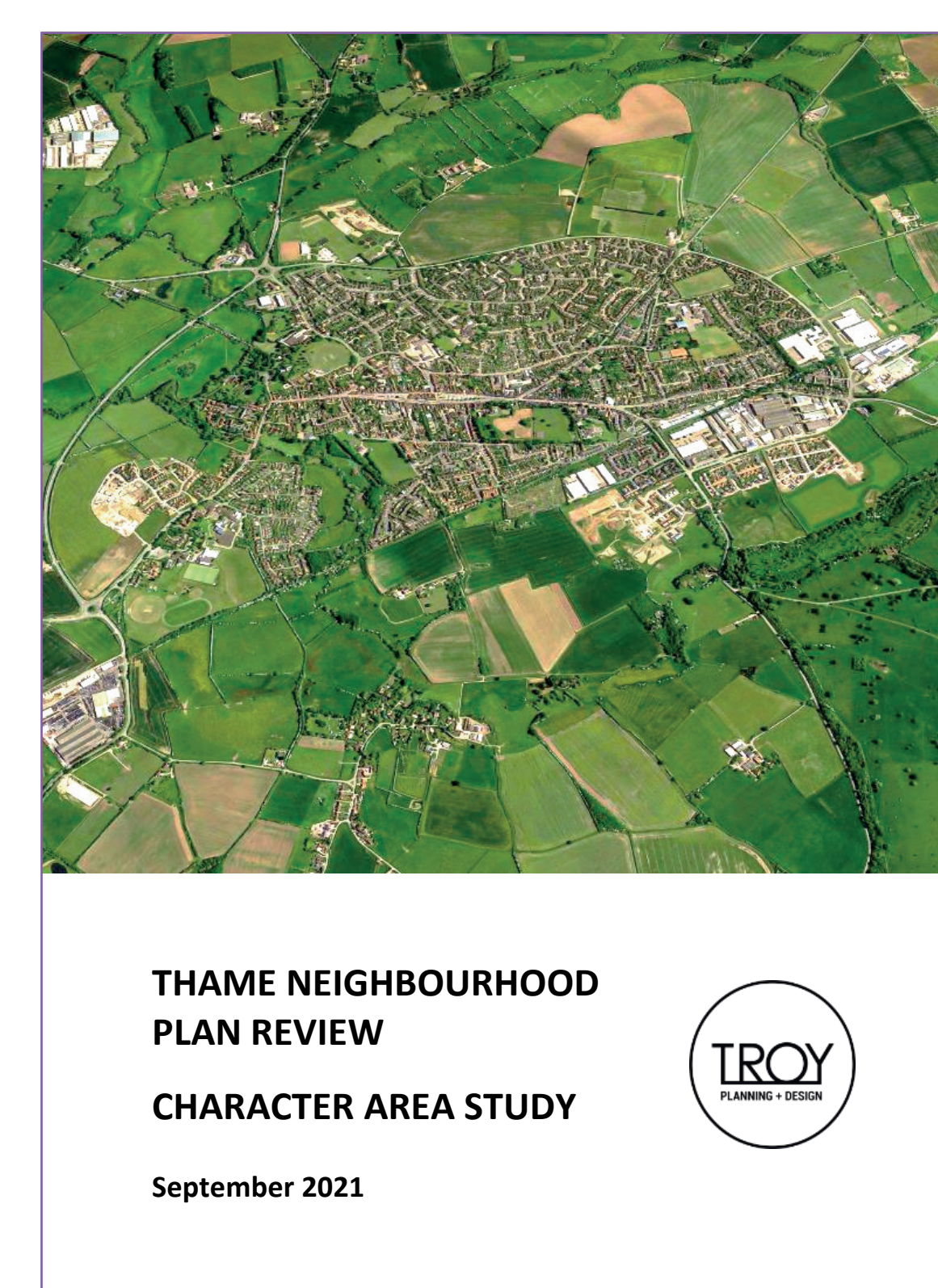
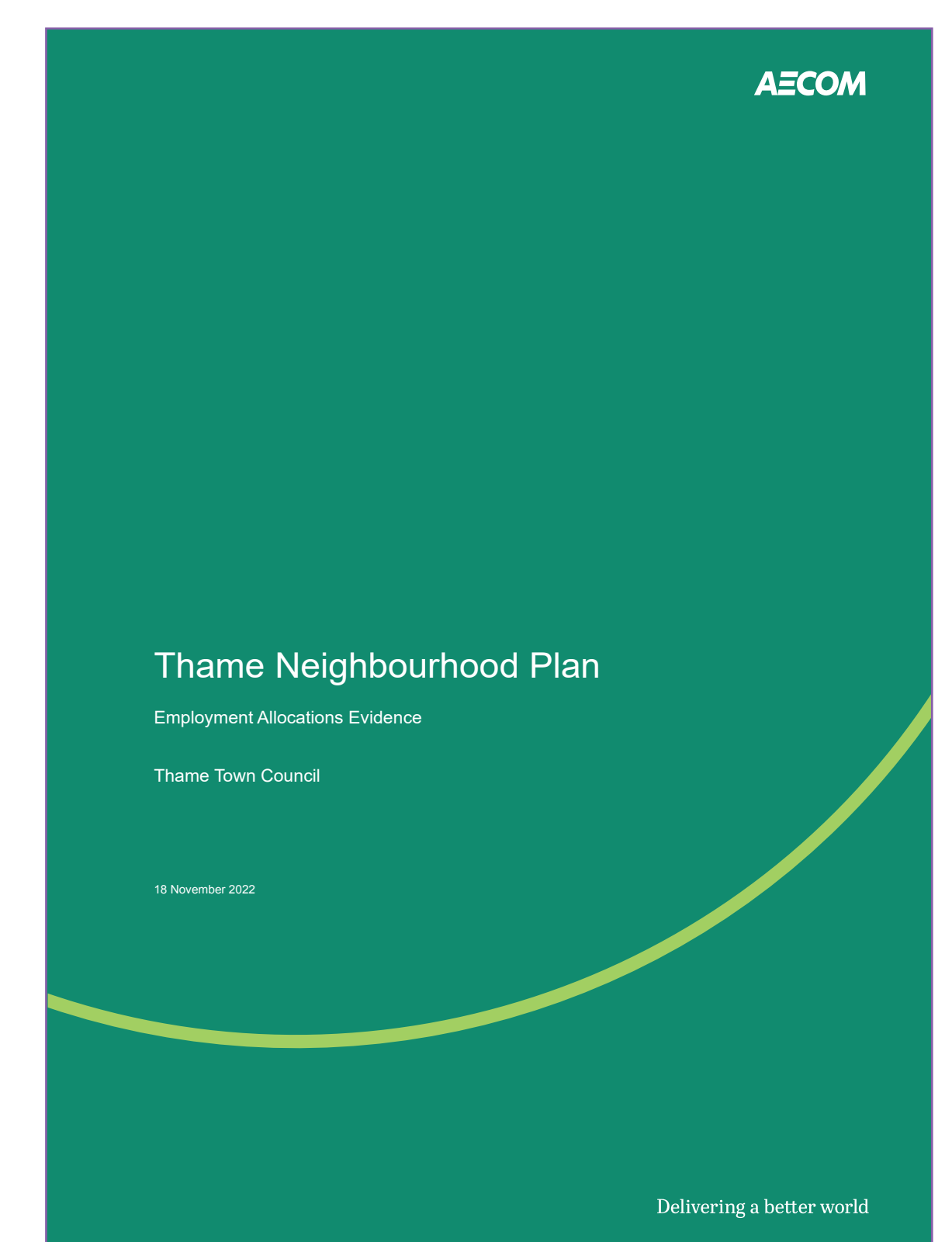
- A minimum of 339 new homes. A review of planning permissions and homes built has reduced this to 256 new homes.
- A minimum of 3.5 hectares of land for employment (e.g.: office, manufacturing and distribution). Further work indicates at least 5.5 hectares of land should be provided.
- An additional 1,500sqm of convenience retail floorspace (shops selling everyday essential items), taking a 'town-centre first' approach to provision.

Identifying the preferred sites to meet these growth requirements has involved examining any site in Thame suggested by landowners or developers. These were considered against the vision and objectives for TNP2, comments received during past consultations and an assessment of other ways of providing the developments.

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The preferred sites and policies are supported by a suite of material including:

- a review of employment land requirements;
- an assessment of the qualities and characteristics of the built environment;
- a design code and concept masterplanning to influence the design of development; and
- a housing needs assessment to shape the mix and tenure of future homes that should be provided.



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SITE ALLOCATIONS

Housing (Policy GDH1, and GDH1a - 1d)

TNP2 allocates land at the following locations for housing:

- Land south of Wenman Road (60 homes)
- Diagnostics Reagents site (25 homes)
- Land at Windmill Road (30 homes)
- Land at Oxford Road (150 homes)

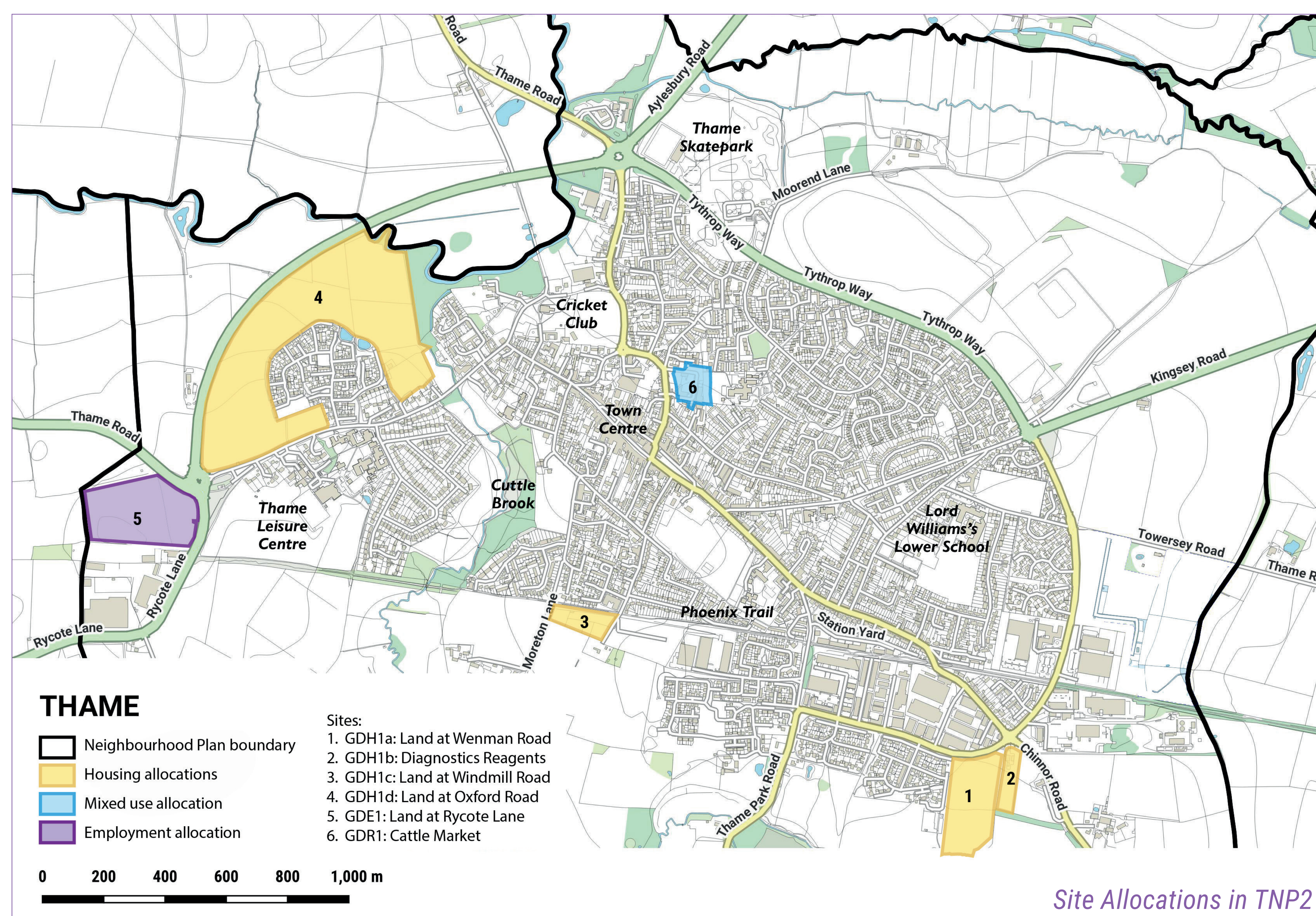
Employment (Policy GDE1)

TNP2 allocates land at Rycote Lane for employment floorspace, including space for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

Retail and Town Centre Uses (Policy GDR1)

TNP2 allocates land at the Cattle Market site for a mix of uses including retail, community uses, office floorspace, hotel accommodation and approximately 45 new homes.

The housing sites above amount to more than the requirement for 256 new homes in Thame. This recognises that the Local Plan figure is a 'minimum' and that a buffer is required to account for potential delays to site delivery that may arise.



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LAND SOUTH OF WENMAN ROAD

Housing

This site is allocated for approximately 60 homes. It benefits from a resolution to grant planning permission. It was identified as a 'reserve development site' in TNP1. It comprises an extension of the housing development to the west that was allocated in, and has been built since, TNP1 was prepared.

The layout of development, arrangement of space and provision of open space shall follow that established in development to the west.

DIAGNOSTICS REAGENTS

Housing

This site is allocated for approximately 25 homes. The form of development should reflect that on the adjacent sites south of Wenman Road.

Both sites shown here shall provide new tree planting and cycle routes along Wenman Road, including safer crossings on the Chinnor Road roundabout, connecting to adjacent homes and employment areas.

Open space to the south shall be retained, providing views across the Cuttle Brook corridor and to established woodland.



Concept masterplan for (1) land south of Wenman Road, and (2) Diagnostics Reagents

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LAND AT OXFORD ROAD

Housing

Land at Oxford Road is allocated for approximately 150 homes, split equally between development parcels to the East and North-west.

This would become an extension of the Thame Meadows housing scheme allocated in TNP1. The form and pattern of development should integrate well with that.

Development shall be sensitive to the setting of and views along the Cuttle Brook corridor, and retain land subject to archaeological interest as open space.

Landscape screening and noise mitigation measures are required along the A418 with new tree planting, green spaces, play areas and flood mitigation measures incorporated within the development.

Routes that support walking and wheeling shall be provided, connecting with open spaces, the town centre and other nearby facilities.



Concept masterplan for land at Oxford Road

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LAND AT WINDMILL ROAD

Housing

Land at Windmill Road is allocated for approximately 30 affordable homes. The site benefits from a resolution to grant planning permission for a Thame Community Land Trust scheme that would provide affordable homes for people with a local connection.

Development should be accessed via Windmill Road, be structured around a central street with homes fronting onto this, and with green space distributed across the site.



Concept masterplan for land at Windmill Road

LAND AT RYCOTE LANE

Employment

A gross area of 7.8 hectares of land is allocated for employment purposes and which includes areas of landscaping, new and retained tree planting.

Proposals for light industrial, manufacturing and distribution, as well as space for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) will be supported.

Development should be carefully sited to minimise the impact on views across the landscape, with buildings being no more than two storeys in height (or one storey for large footprint buildings).



Concept masterplan for land at Rycote Lane

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THE CATTLE MARKET

Mixed-use

The Cattle Market was allocated in TNP1 and is retained in TNP2. The exact mix of uses will be determined through the detailed masterplanning and planning application process. Suitable uses include:

- Convenience (everyday essentials) retail
- Civic / community facilities
- Office floorspace
- Hotel accommodation
- Homes

The layout of development shall allow for retention of the Racquets Club and successfully integrate this within the scheme.

Development must respond well to the scale and character of surrounding development, including the conservation area.

New homes may be provided on the upper floors of a mixed use development where they complement ground floor activities.

Streets and spaces within the development shall be well overlooked. Tree planting and new areas of greenery shall be incorporated within the layout of development.

Proposals that involve the loss of car parking will need to show that alternative space is available elsewhere.



- 1 1,500sqm supermarket with residential above
- 2 Ground floor retail with residential above
- 3 Residential
- 4 Residential
- 5 Community hub
- 6 Multi-functional square
- 7 Food growing space
- 8 Landscaping along North Street frontage
- 9 Flexible building space for civic or cultural uses
- 10 Commercial / retail car park
- 11 Visitor car park
- 12 Residential car park
- 13 Retention of Racquets Club
- 14 Walking routes to facilities and services

Concept masterplan for the Cattle Market

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GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

In addition to the site allocations TNP2 also includes the following policies:

GDH2:

Proposals for windfall housing development (sites not allocated) should meet a range of criteria, including proximity to local services and facilities.

GDH3:

New housing development should provide a range of house types, sizes and tenures that meet local needs, including affordable housing, prioritising delivery of 1-3 bed homes, and homes for an ageing population.

GDE2:

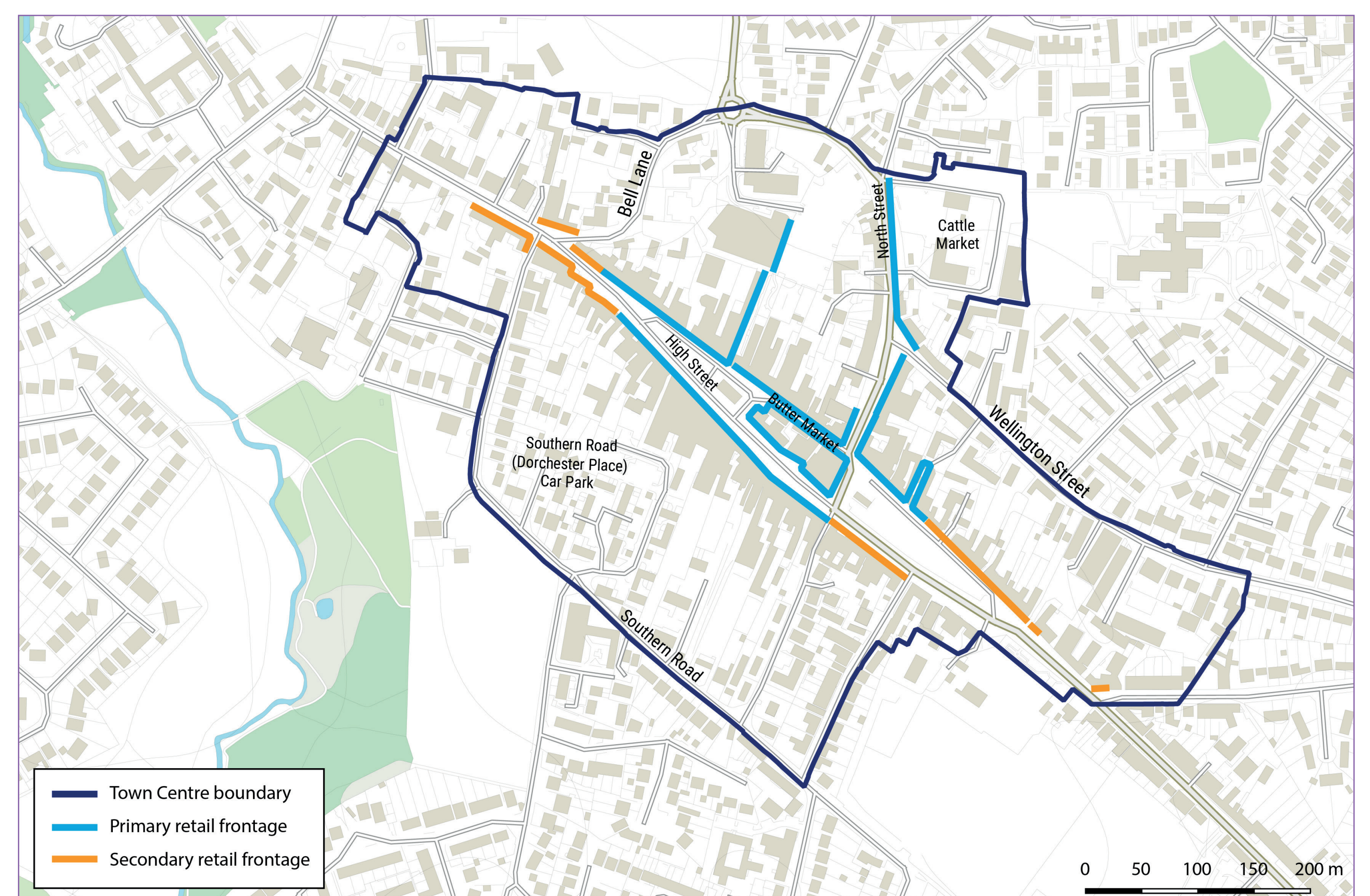
Proposals for windfall employment development should integrate well with the built form, complement neighbouring uses and minimise traffic impacts.

GDR2:

A range of retail and other supporting uses are encouraged in the town centre, with active uses at ground floor level. Mixed use schemes should be designed to avoid conflicts between uses.

GDV1:

Proposals for uses that support the tourism and visitor economy will be supported. The loss of existing uses will be resisted.



Proposals for new development and uses in the town centre should support the vibrancy and vitality of the High Street and reinforce the main retail areas.



New housing proposed in Thame should provide a mix of house sizes, types and tenures that reflect local needs

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CHARACTER & PLACE QUALITY

Draft policies include:

CPQ1:

Proposals for new development should reflect good design principles and the best qualities of the local area as set out in the Thame Design Code and Character Area Study.

CPQ2:

Proposals for new employment development should reflect good design principles in respect of access, frontages, arrangement of uses, parking and servicing areas, and relationship with surrounding uses.

CPQ3:

Proposals for development in the Town Centre should reflect the historic growth of the town, reinforce the quality of the High Street, and be designed with flexibility in mind, allowing for change over time.

CPQ4:

Proposals for self- and custom-build homes are supported where they are subject to an overarching masterplan and set of design guidelines establishing the parameters for development.

CPQ5:

Development should meet high energy efficiency standards.

CPQ6:

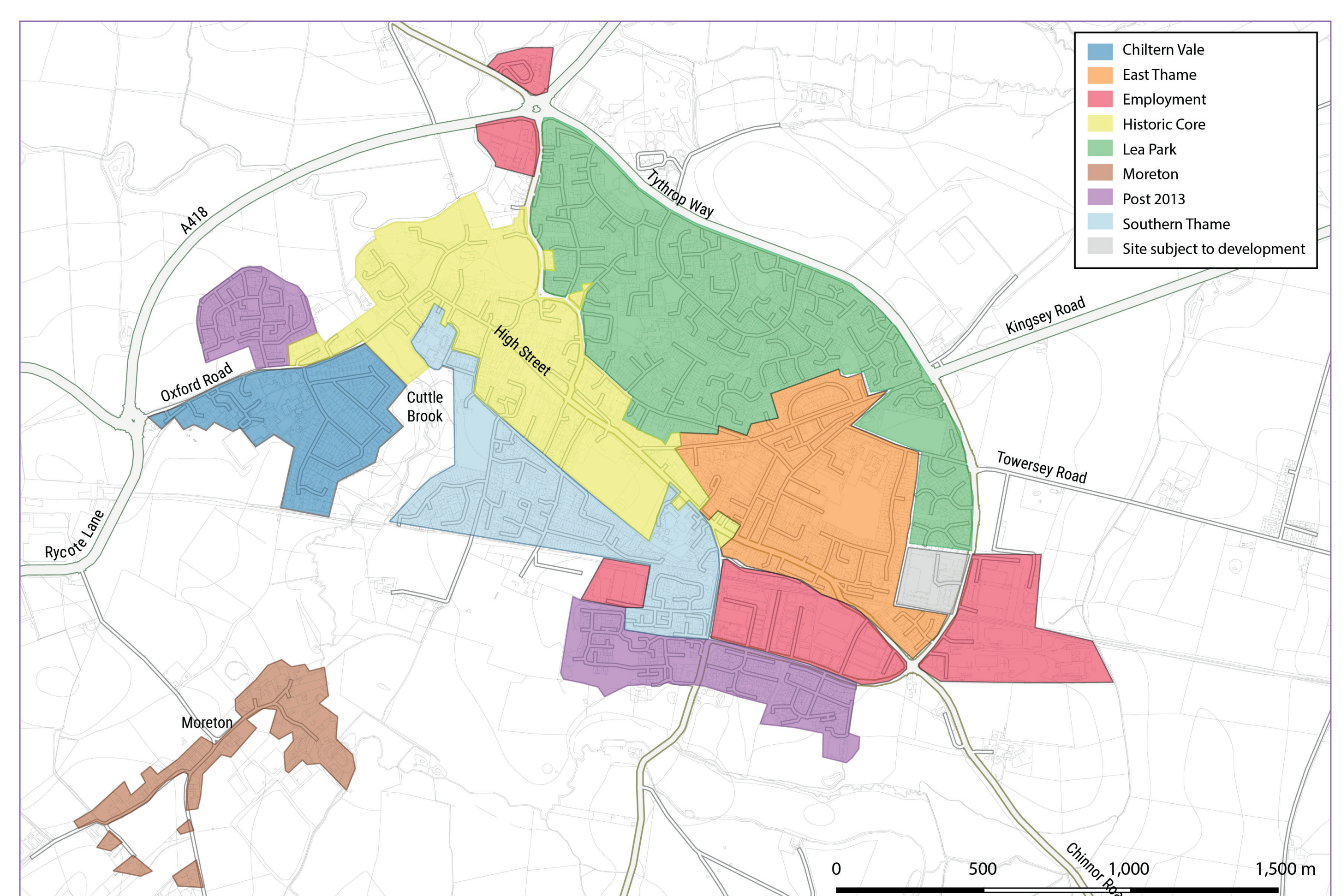
Where development includes new streets these should support safe movement for people of all ages who are walking or wheeling.

CPQ7:

Residential car parking should be well integrated within new development.

CPQ8:

Front gardens should retain areas of greenery.



A set of character areas have been identified across Thame, each with their own defining qualities and features. Proposals for new development should respond positively to the best qualities of each area.

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SERVICES & FACILITIES

Draft policies include:

SF01:

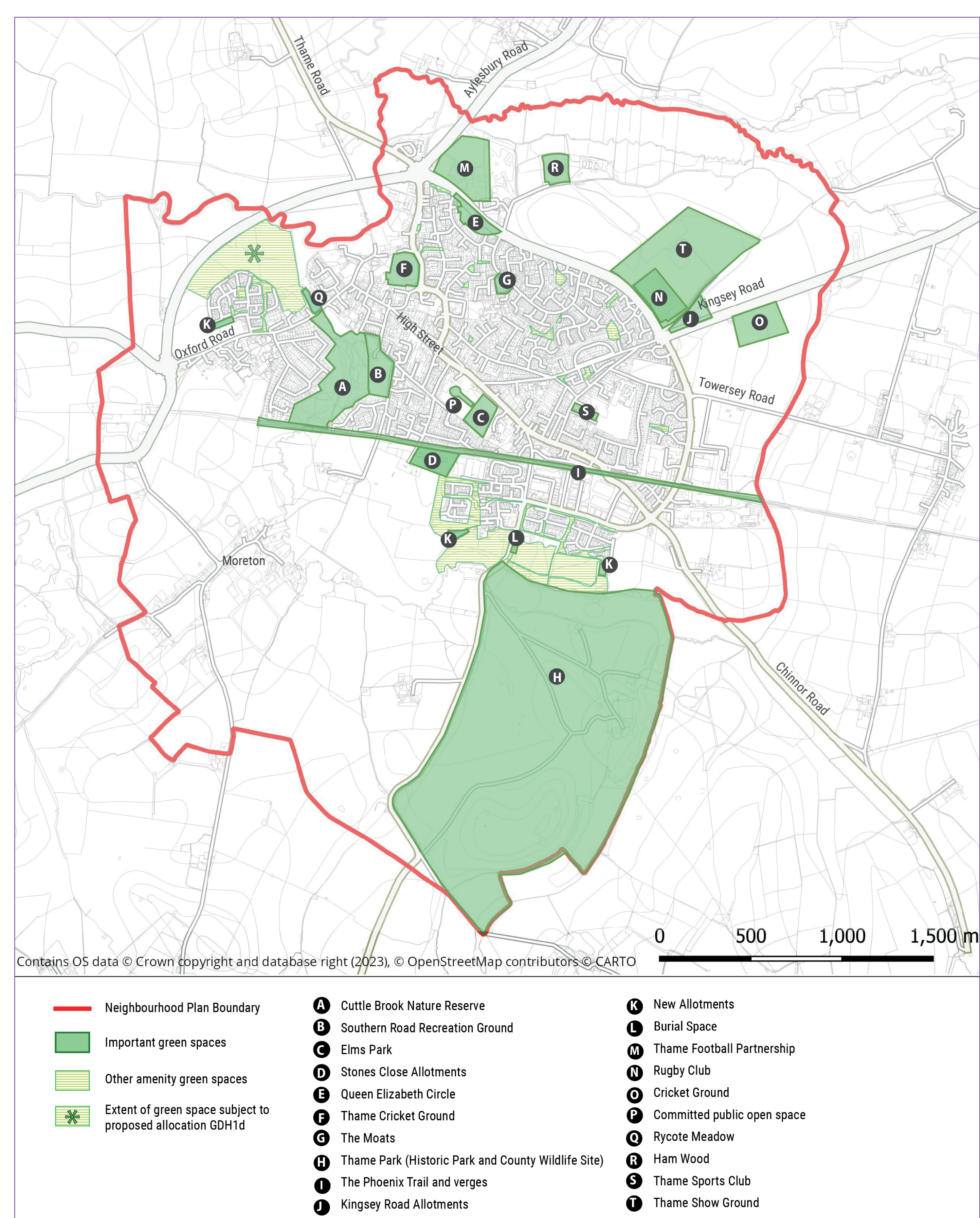
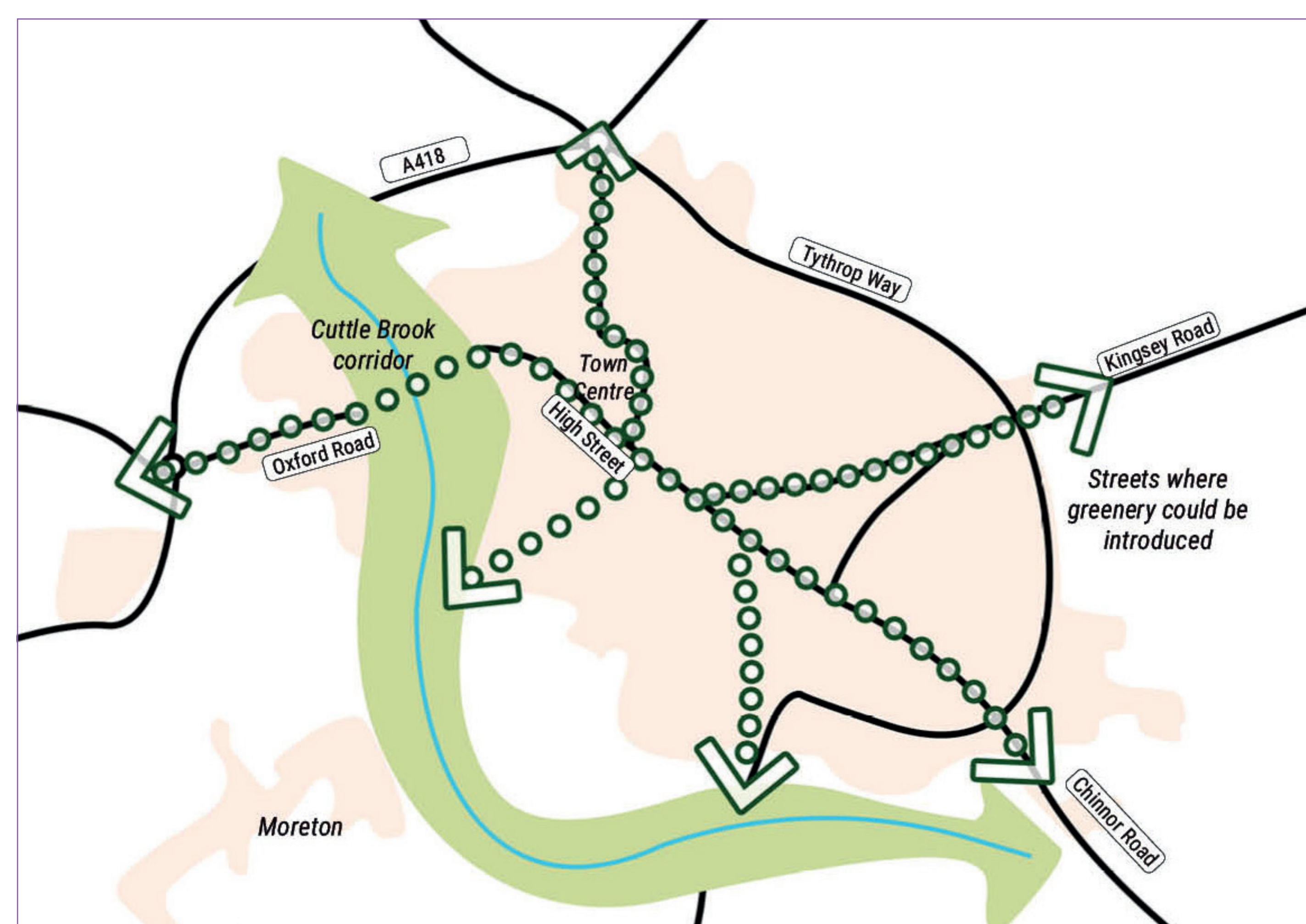
Support provision of new community facilities, resist the loss of existing facilities, and support improvements to these.

SF02:

Protect existing open spaces from loss and support diversification of these spaces to support opportunities for new areas of biodiversity.

SF03:

Provide new amenity green space in development and design this to enable use and enjoyment by all ages.



Above: Policies in TNP2 protect green spaces from development

Left: TNP2 supports a street tree planting and greening programme, making better use of street verges and unused space, and introducing raingardens and wildflowers that enhance biodiversity and help manage surface water flood risk.

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NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Draft policies include:

NEB1:

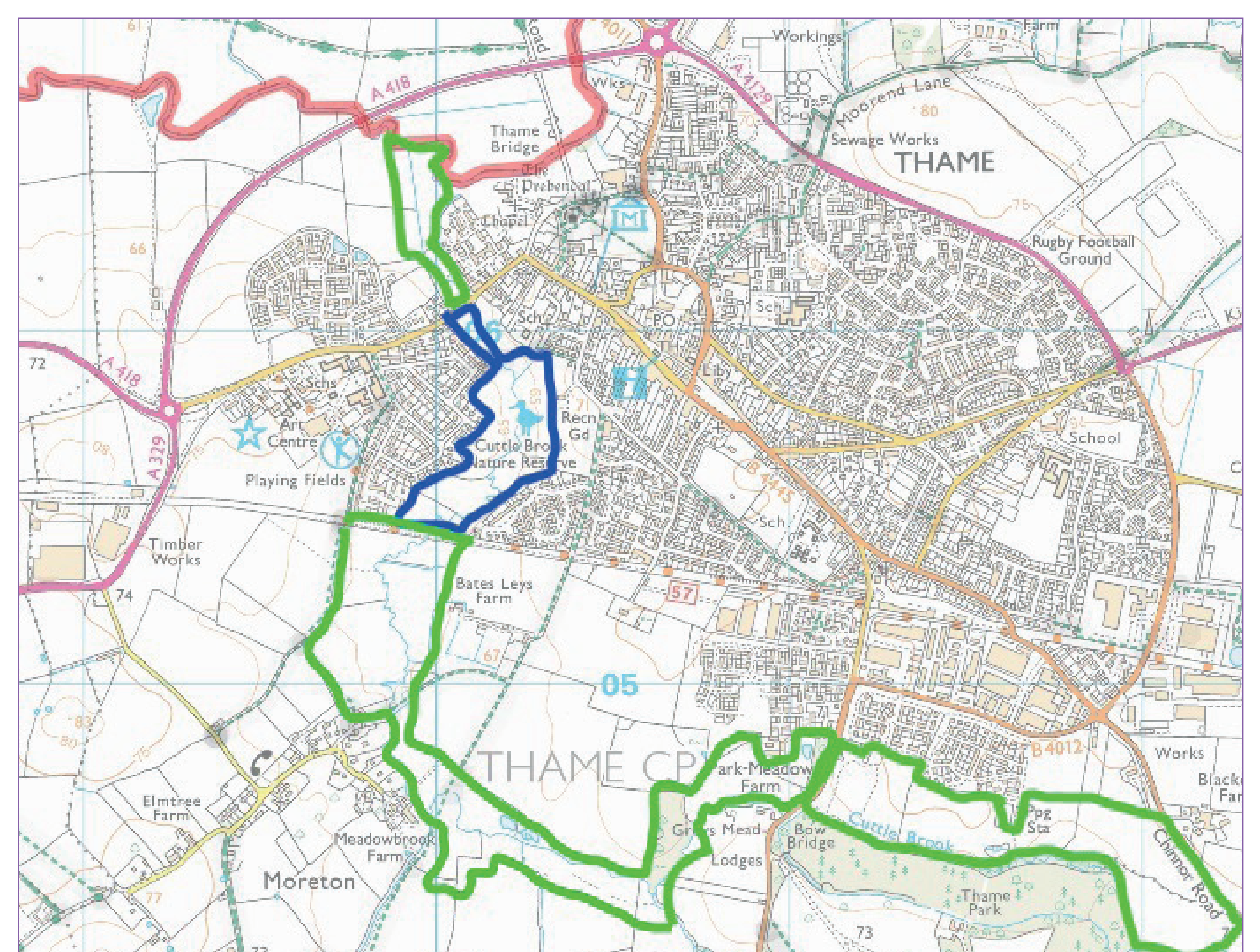
Retain and protect important habitats and support net gains in biodiversity.

NEC1:

Retain and enhance the Cuttle Brook Nature Reserve and wider corridor, supporting access for leisure and recreation.

NEF1:

Avoid development in areas of flood risk and require mitigation measures to new development, including sustainable drainage, to reduce the risk of flooding.



Policies in TNP2 seek to retain and protect the Cuttle Book Nature Reserve (outlined in blue) as well as the wider corridor (outlined in Green).

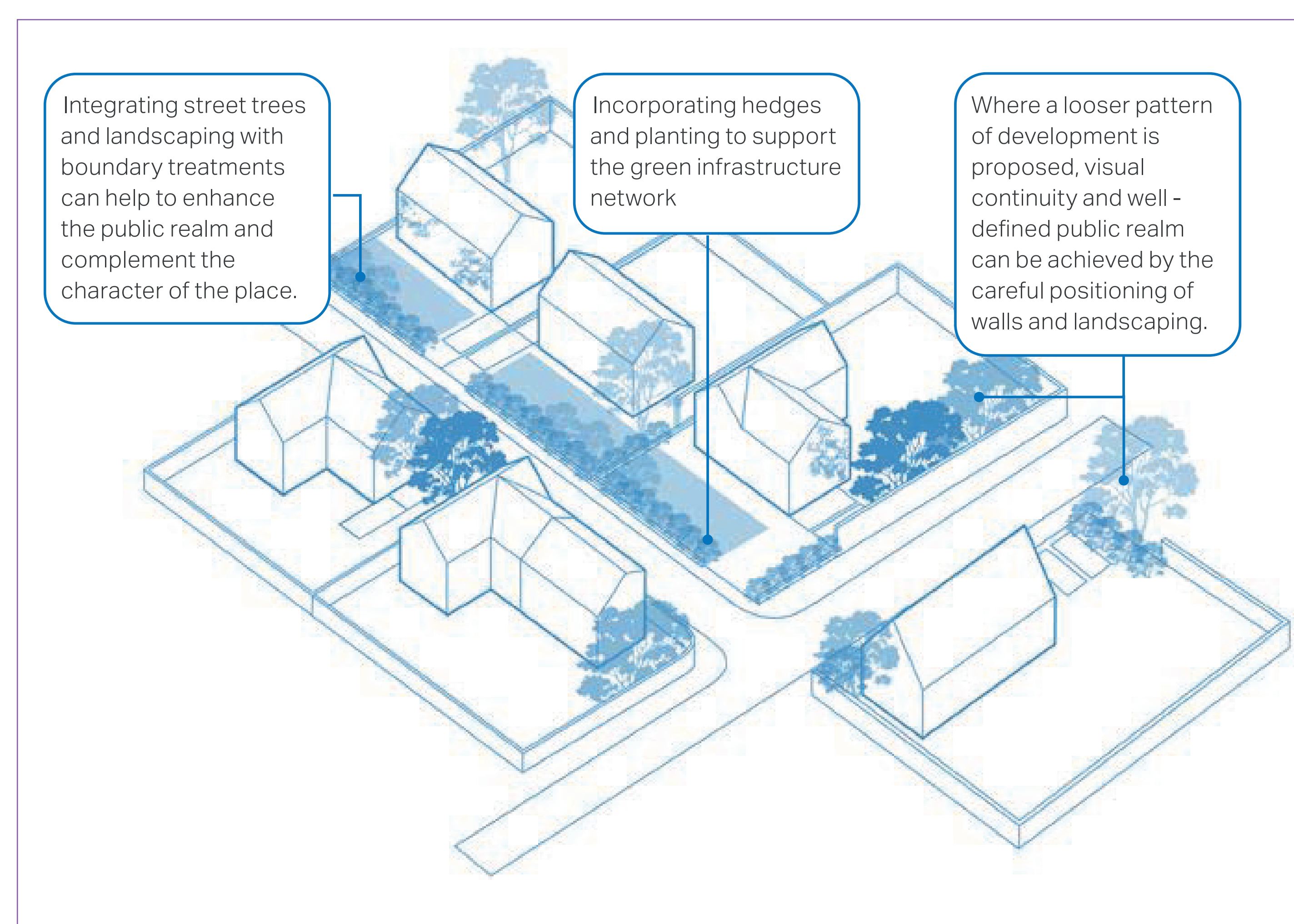


Image from the Thame Design Code (which sits alongside TNP2), showing trees and landscaping that complement the public realm and help create a sense of place



View looking north from the Cuttle Brook corridor at Oxford Road showing the green connection to the surrounding countryside.

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GETTING AROUND

Draft policies include:

GAAT1:

Development should be designed to incorporate safe, direct and convenient routes for people who are walking and wheeling.

GAP1:

Retain and enhance the Phoenix Trail, access to and use of it, and the natural character of the Trail.

GAA1:

Encourage improvements to the network of alleyways that support safe movement for all.

GAPT1:

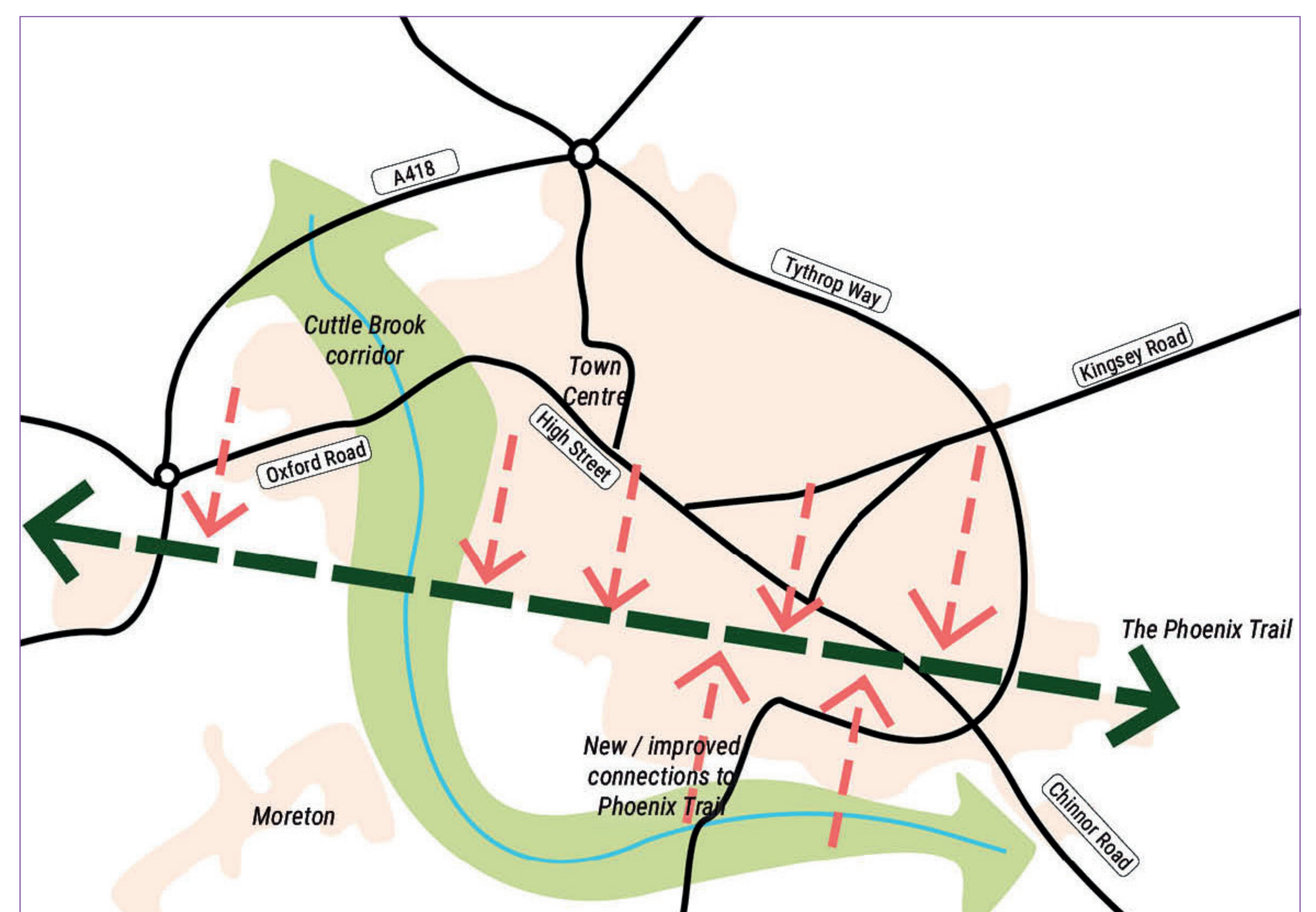
Development should be close to or incorporate bus routes and stops.

GAM1:

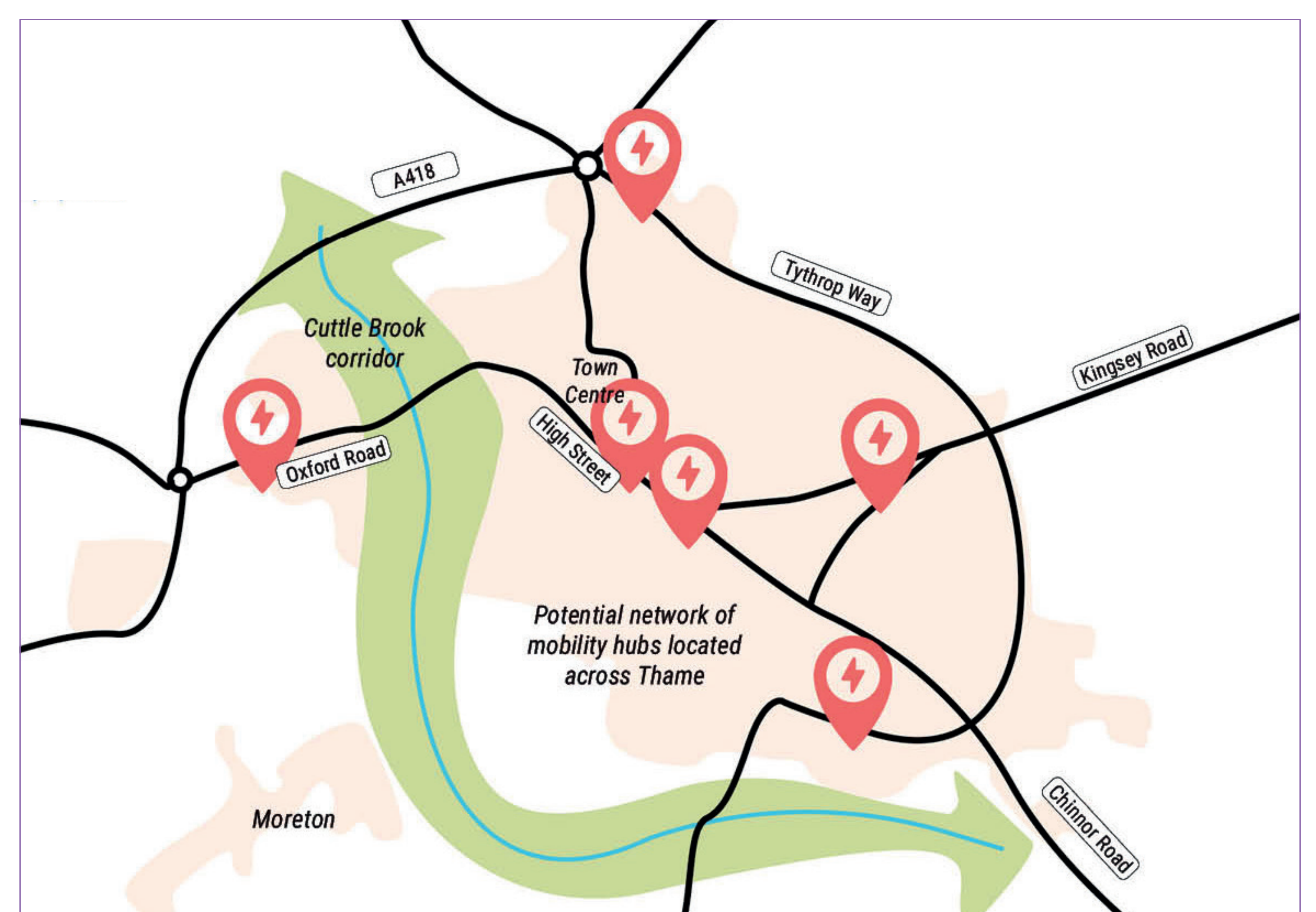
Encourage provision of a network of mobility hubs that supports use of cycling, public transport, car share and other micro mobility options, and which incorporate EV charging points.

GATCP1:

Support rationalisation of town centre parking, subject to utilisation, where it helps support street greening initiatives and helps facilitate non car-modes of transport.



TNP2 supports the provision of improvements to and new links to the Phoenix Trail, as well as improvements to the quality and attractiveness of the Trail, including new public art and unobtrusive lighting.



TNP2 supports the provision of a network of mobility hubs across Thame, where travel choices provide an alternative to the car for short journeys.

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NEXT STEPS

How to respond

Thank you for viewing the consultation material.
Please let us know what you think about TNP2 by completing the questionnaire.

The questionnaire can be completed online via the Town Council website:

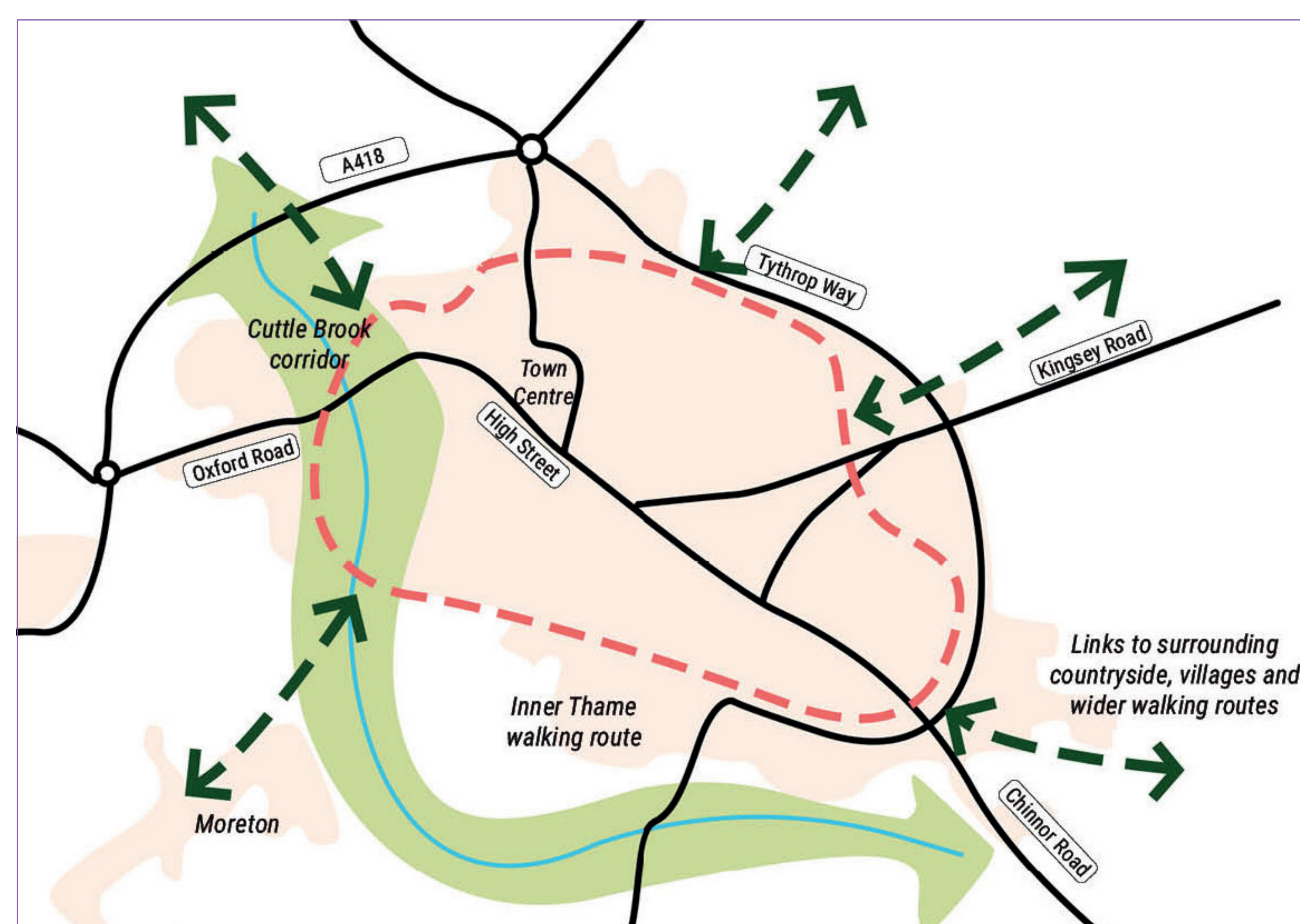
www.thametowncouncil.gov.uk

Alternatively, you can complete a paper version of the questionnaire and return to the Town Council:

Thame Town Hall

High Street, Thame, OX9 3DP

The consultation period runs until Monday 7 August 2023.



TNP2 supports the provision of a leisure and recreation walking route around Thame that connects green spaces with community facilities and extends out into the countryside, linking with surrounding villages.

Making the Plan

We will review all comments and prepare a revised Plan for submission to South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) later this year (see below).

SODC will then re-consult on the Plan and appoint an independent examiner to review it. They will advise whether the Plan should proceed to a referendum or not.

At the referendum, everyone of voting age living in the Plan area will have a chance to say whether TNP2 should be adopted ('made').

If more than 50% of people who turn out to vote are in favour of the Plan being made it can then be used to inform and determine planning applications as well as opportunities for future investment across Thame.

1. Consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan (the current stage)
2. Submission of the Neighbourhood Plan to South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC)
3. Consultation on the Submission Neighbourhood Plan (six weeks, by SODC)
4. Examination of the Neighbourhood Plan and receipt of Examiner's Report (possibly recommending modifications)
5. Referendum on the Neighbourhood Plan (which needs majority support)
6. Formal approval and 'making' of the Plan by SODC as a statutory development plan document