

THAME TOWN COUNCIL

**NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (TNP2)**

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CONSULTATION STATEMENT

FEBRUARY 2024

VOLUME 3a: REPORT OF  
CONSULTATION ON  
DEVELOPMENT SITES AND WIDER  
POLICY IDEAS

Thame Town Council  
Thame Neighbourhood Plan (TNP2)  
Consultation Statement: February 2024  
Volume 3a: Report of consultation on  
Development Sites and Wider Policy Ideas



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# **TNP2 Consultation Summary Second Consultation**

**March 2022**





**THAME**  
Town Council

**PREPARED ON BEHALF OF:**

**Thame Town Council**

**TNP2 Consultation Summary – Second Consultation**

**March 2022**



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# 1. Introduction

A second round of consultation on the revision to the Thame Neighbourhood Plan took place between Monday 20<sup>th</sup> December and Monday 7<sup>th</sup> February: a period of seven weeks.

The purpose of the consultation was to seek feedback on potential future employment and housing sites in Thame. The consultation was undertaken as a response to feedback received during earlier consultation undertaken in summer 2021. Whilst some smaller sites were broadly accepted through that process it was suggested that a larger site or sites might need to be allocated in Thame to meet future growth requirements and that a wider pool of sites should be presented for consideration. The consultation thus sought views on two options for future employment land and four options for future housing land. In addition, a selection of wider ideas were presented in response to suggestions received during the summer consultation, including those related to walking and cycling routes and introducing more greenery into Thame.

This report summarises the feedback received with subsequent chapters presenting feedback in respect of (a) employment sites, (b) housing sites, and (c) other ideas.

Consultation material was made available to view online and in person at a series of drop-in events held at the Town Council offices. The material comprised a series of summary display boards, set of frequently asked questions (FAQs) and a short video. A survey was made available online and in paper for completion. Respondents were also free to submit responses by letter or email to the Town Council. Copies of display material are presented in the Appendix of this report.

In addition to the drop-in events a series of meetings were held with the promoters of the sites being consulted upon. Feedback from these is incorporated within the summary report.

In total, there were 894 responses to the survey, with additional responses received from site promoters and others. More than 200 people attended the drop-in events, with the majority spending in excess of 30 minutes at the events.

Of those responding to the survey, the vast majority (87.5%) indicated they were residents of Thame. Others included visitors to Thame (6%), residents of settlements close to Thame, including Towersey and Moreton (4%), and a small number who indicated they worked in Thame, represented a business, organisation or landowner (2.5%).

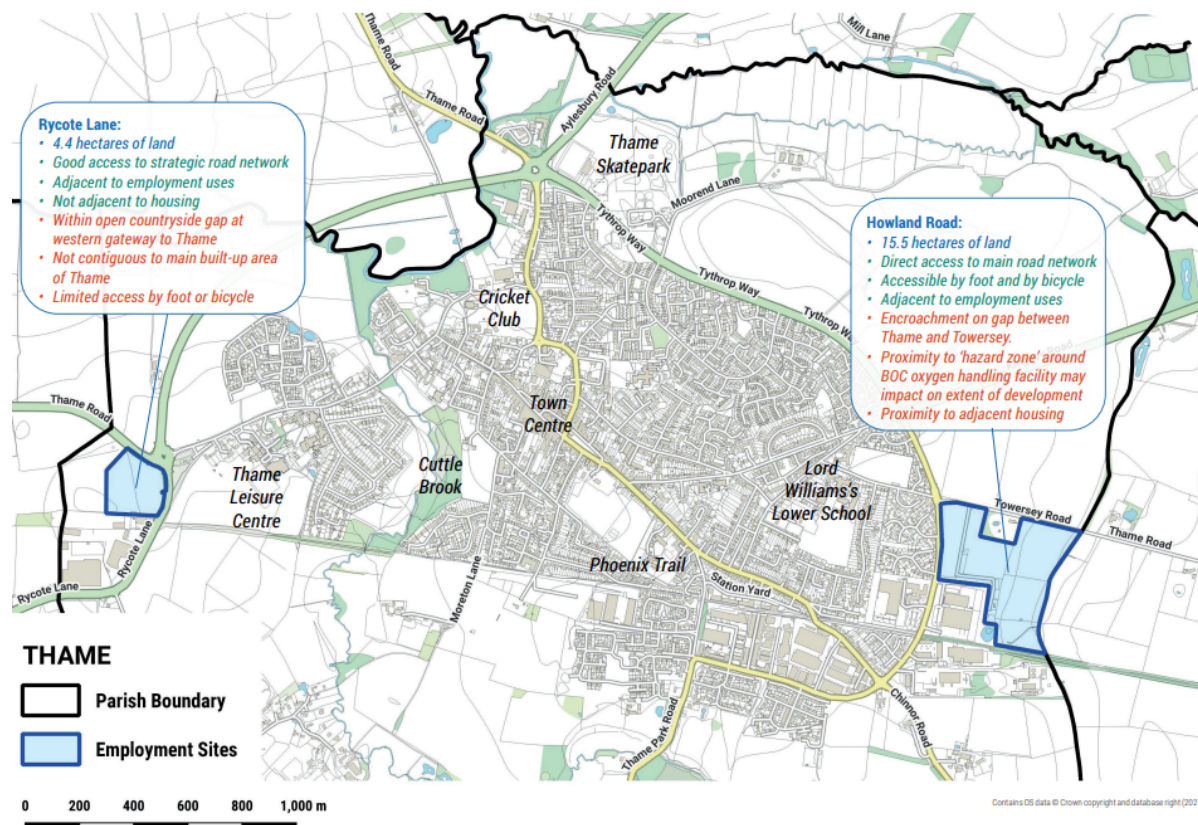
Of those who were inclined to respond, there was a fairly even split between males and females, and a good spread across all age groups, though with the greatest volume of responses (25%) coming from the over 65 age group. Conversely, those under 25 accounted for around 7% of the total responses received.

It is important to note that during the course of the consultation promoters of two of the possible housing sites also published material by way of a leaflet drop and website. It has not been possible to determine whether these have influenced views expressed through the Neighbourhood Plan survey.

## 2. Employment Sites

### 2.1 Sites

Respondents were presented with two potential employment sites – Rycote Lane and Howland Road. These sites, as shown below, were presented alongside a summary of key information about the site relating to its size, aspects in favour, and aspects against. Based on this information, respondents were asked which site they preferred for development.



Note: Aspects in favour of the sites are indicated with green text in the annotations, with those against in red text.

Figure 1. Extract from the consultation material, which presented respondents with potential employment sites

### 2.2 Preferences

821 responses were received to this question, with a preference expressed for Rycote Lane, as set out below:

Site	People expressing preference for this site	% of respondents expressing preference for this site
Rycote Lane	530	64.4%
Howland Road	321	35.5%
Total	821	100%

## 2.3 Commentary

Respondents were also given the opportunity to leave any comments they had on either of the sites. A summary of these responses for each site is provided below.

### ***Rycote Lane***

<i>For</i>	<i>Against</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The site is further away from residential areas, reducing potential impacts on existing residents.</li> <li>• Adjacent to existing employment space, therefore represents a suitable extension</li> <li>• Good access to strategic roads, including the M40</li> <li>• Respondents noted the site is well served by bus and cycle routes, despite consultation material suggesting limited access by foot or bicycle</li> <li>• Potential for the site to link to an extension of the Phoenix Trail, promoting better town-wide accessibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suggestion that as there has already been extensive industrial development here, then additional development should be provided elsewhere to balance growth around Thame.</li> <li>• Concern over impacts development would have on Moreton residents, particularly in terms of light pollution</li> <li>• Development would encroach on open countryside and the natural ridge line.</li> <li>• Disconnected from the rest of the town</li> </ul>

### ***Howland Road***

<i>For</i>	<i>Against</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More central location means development here would help keep Thame compact</li> <li>• The overall size of the site could cater for any future development pressure, and reduce the need for multiple sites to come forward for development</li> <li>• Site would represent a natural continuation of existing employment area</li> <li>• Better access by foot or bike for local workers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing traffic on roads nearby to the site would most likely be 'worsened'</li> <li>• Close to residential areas, meaning development could have adverse effects on the local residents.</li> <li>• Encroachment into Thame countryside; potential to spoil the gap between Thame and Towersey</li> </ul>



## 2.4 Other Responses

A number of responses were also received from site promoters, as well as from Oxfordshire County Council's Archaeology, Minerals and Waste, and Estates teams. These responses are summarised below for each site.

### ***Rycote Lane***

>> Savills, Site Promoters (Rycote Lane), on behalf of the JM Castle Trust

- The site would meet the employment needs of Thame whilst allowing the remaining space to be used for future expansion and complimentary uses plus landscaping.
- Agree with the listed 'pros' for the site, noting that the easy access to the M40 from the site also means no large vehicles would need to travel through the town to access the strategic road network.
- Connectivity: The site can be easily linked to the local public right of way network to encourage people to walk or cycle to the site, with the site featuring two natural crossing points where a new or upgraded crossing would lead directly into the site.
- Landscape and Archaeology: There is an ability to provide new buffer planting to the north and west of the site to assist in assimilating the new site into its surroundings. Suggestion that the site is not on the ridge line, which is to the north: the land drops off to the south and therefore no landscape impact is expected. This landscaping will also enhance the entrance to the Town and the views of the existing employment buildings to the south. Archaeological investigations are ongoing, and should the site be allocated a Landscape Architect is to undertake a Visual Appraisal of the site to inform future design work.
- Demand: Savills note that they have been marketing the existing employment site to the south of this site which is currently under construction. There has been exceptionally strong demand from a range of interested parties covering the former B1, B2 and B8 uses. Their view is that Rycote Lane would be equally, if not more attractive (due to its better prominence), than that site and as such would have no issues with take up.

>> Stofords, Site Promoters (Howland Road)

- Site Size: The site is only 4.4ha and given the South Oxfordshire Local Plan requires at least 3.5ha of employment land, this site is only marginally large enough to satisfy that requirement, once the net developable area is taken into account. Stoford considers that TNP2 should allocate at least 10ha of developable land. They note that this is also the verbal position stated by the Town Council at the SODC Local Plan Examination in 2020.
- Good access to the strategic road network: Stoford accept that the site has good access to A-roads (A418 to the west towards the M40 J8A and Oxford, the A329 to the south towards the M40 J7 and the A418 ring road to the north).
- Adjacent to employment uses: Stoford accept that the site is located adjacent to other employment uses/consented sites, all located west of Rycote Lane, and separated from the existing residential area.
- Not adjacent to housing: To encourage the use of non-motorised modes of travel, Stoford suggest that employment and housing should be located, where possible, within proximity that lends the developments to being 'walkable neighbourhoods'.
- Within open countryside gap within western gateway to Thame: The site is within the open countryside, and as demonstrated by advice from Potterton (Landscape Architects), with paragraph 4.2 of particular note:

*'In terms of short-distance views, the site is extremely visible from the A418 and the A329... Development on this site would be very visible and harmful'*

- Not contiguous to the main built-up area of Thame: The Rycote Lane site is not contiguous with the built up area, and remains somewhat isolated.
- Limited access by foot or bicycle: Stoford's Transport Technical Note note from BWB Consulting concludes at paragraph 3.13

*'Although the site would have good access to A-roads (A418 to the west towards the M40 J8A and Oxford, the A329 to the south towards the M40 J7 and the A418 ring road to the north), the surrounding roads also create a barrier for local residents who could be accessing the site on foot or by cycle.'*

>> Hallam, Site Promoters (East of Thame, Housing site)

- Allocation of this site would result in the consolidation of poorly or unplanned employment
- The development would focus employment in a location where there is little opportunity to gain access other than by private vehicle
- The development would always suffer from a range of incoherent neighbours – often focussed on roadside presence – which is more likely to detract from the image of, and potential for new investment at, Thame, than make any positive contribution.

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- Archaeology
  - It is likely that archaeological deposits related to Neolithic, Iron Age, Roman and Saxon periods could survive within the area of the proposed site. Further archaeological remains related to the Neolithic causewayed enclosure could be considered to be of equivalent significance to a scheduled monument which would need to be physically preserved as set out in the NPPF. This could cause a significant constraint to any development.
  - Historic Landscape characterisation (HLC) can be used to help secure good quality, well designed and sustainable places. It is a method of identification and interpretation of the varying historic character within an area that looks beyond individual heritage assets as it informs understanding of the whole landscape and townscape. The HLC defines the site as forming part of a wider pattern of reorganised enclosures that lie to the west of the urban settlement core. As such there are currently no known historic landscape constraints.
  - Whilst there are currently no significant known constraints to the principle of this site being included in the Plan, OCC would require a programme of archaeological evaluation, both invasive and non-invasive, in advance of determination of any planning application to ensure that an appropriate mitigation is recommended. Any such mitigation may require the physical preservation of any significant archaeological deposits identified within the site.
- Minerals and Waste
  - The site is in close proximity to a safeguarded waste operation, ASM Autos, and therefore Policy W11 Safeguarding waste management sites within the Minerals and Waste Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy would be applicable.

## **Howland Road**

>> Stoford, Site Promoter (Howland Road)

- Site size: The size of the site outlined within the TNP2 consultation is 15.03ha, however the net developable area is 9.7ha.
- Access to main road network: The B4012 Howland Road, forms part of a ring road around the north/east of Thame, providing a route towards Aylesbury via the A418, Chinnor via the B4445 and to various junctions of the M40 Motorway.
- Accessible by foot and bicycle: A significant benefit of the Howland Road site is its accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists, being adjacent to the Phoenix Trail. The former TNP1 allocation, that was developed by Stoford, included improvements to the trail and through this development similar opportunities are available and could be secured via a Section 106 contribution.
- Adjacent to Employment uses: The site is immediately adjacent to the current TNP1 allocation that was developed by Stoford and is now occupied by Windles and Groves. It is within an area that the TNP1 process identified for potential future development. In developing the Windles and Groves site, Stoford installed infrastructure that will facilitate the opening up of this site - the access junction already being in place, and power/utilities already connected to and serving the site.
- Encroachment on the gap between Thame and Towersey: Advice prepared by Landscape Architects Potterton on behalf of Stoford noted that there is no intervisibility between Towersey and Thame and therefore Stoford suggest that the TNP2 consultation boards were incorrect.
- Proximity of the Hazard Zone: The TNP2 Consultation Boards make reference to this potential constraint, but Stoford feel this is not evidenced. The material submitted by Stoford states:

*'In consideration of the Howland Road (Thame) Site, the proposed outline masterplan (i.e. developable built areas) and nature of the proposed development have been considered in accordance with the relevant HSE guidance. The proposed development, based on assumed operations (outlined in more detail in sections below), is understood to comprise Level 1 sensitivity (the lowest sensitivity of development). Therefore, using the HSE assessment methodology there would be no constraints at all from the off-Site hazardous facility.'*

- Proximity to adjacent housing: It is considered that the proximity of the site to housing west of Howland Road is not a factor that goes against the site. Rather, Stoford feel the proximity of housing reinforces an integrated approach to development, and can support walking and cycling, and reduced vehicle trips for those seeking local employment.
- Green Infrastructure: Allocation of the site within TNP2 can support almost 40% of the site area being green infrastructure: Stoford argue the alternative site at Rycote Lane cannot offer this.
- Stoford also note that the website of the East Thame Residents Association includes a series of statements about the site which Stoford does not agree with and which their response sought to clarify.

>> Hallam, Site Promoters (East of Thame, Housing site):

- The site would build upon the demonstrable success of this part of Thame in attracting high quality and modern employment uses – such as Groves and Windles;
- The site would build on the success of the TNP1 allocation in delivering not only employment for the town but in securing important improvements in the environment of Howland Road – avenue planting and the implementation of a dedicated footpath/cycle route transforming this part of Howland Road;
- Allocation of the site would result in the creation of a consolidated, coherent, employment location of high quality that delivers the jobs that the town needs, and raises the profile of Thame, thereby increasing the prospect of investment in the town as a whole;
- Allocation of the site would deliver further avenue planting and a substantial expansion of the footpath/cycleway northwards to Towersey Road (in the first instance) – thereby delivering on the TNP1 policy aspirations for transforming the environment of Howland Road;
- The site capitalises on a location well served by routes for all modes of transport, including public transport services and footpath and cycleways, adjacent to the site; and
- The site capitalises on the site infrastructure already in place serving Windles and the land to the north.

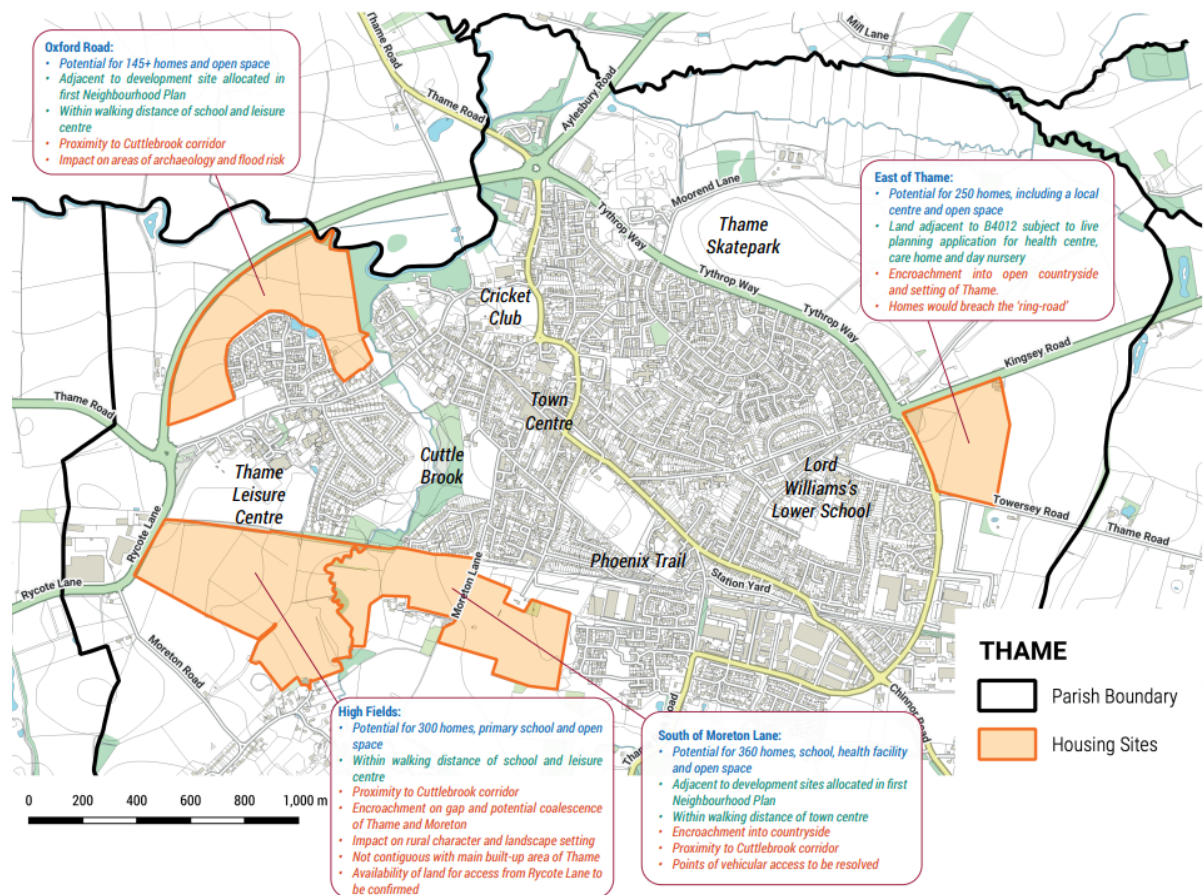
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- The site is located in an area of archaeological potential, being in close proximity to a Roman burial site and associated features comprising at least six cremation burials, some with associated grave goods.
- Further evidence for the presence of Iron Age and Roman settlement is recorded to the south of the site, whilst a probable Iron Age or Roman enclosure has also been identified from aerial photographs approximately 350m to the north.
- It is therefore likely that further archaeological features and deposits from the prehistoric and Roman periods could survive on the site.
- Cotmore Wells Farm itself, although not listed, is shown on the 1st edition OS map and recorded on the Davis Map of 1797 and archaeological deposits related to the 18<sup>th</sup> century farmhouse may also survive on the site. It is also possible that the farm itself may have been built on an earlier medieval farm and archaeological deposits related to this could survive on the site.
- HLC defines the site as forming part of a wider pattern of reorganised enclosures that lie to the east of the urban settlement core. As such there are currently no known historic landscape constraints.
- Whilst there are currently no significant known constraints to the principle of this site being included in the Plan, OCC would require a programme of archaeological evaluation, both invasive and non-invasive, in advance of determination of any planning application to ensure that an appropriate mitigation is recommended. Any such mitigation may require the physical preservation of any significant archaeological deposits identified within the site.

# 3. Housing Sites

## 3.1 Sites

Respondents were presented with four potential housing sites – Oxford Road, East Thame, High Fields, and South of Moreton Lane. Similarly, these were presented to respondents alongside a summary of key information regarding each site, including development capacity figures, aspects in favour, and aspects against. Based on this information, respondents were asked which site they preferred for development.



Notes: Aspects in favour of the sites are indicated with green text in the annotations, with those against in red text. All development figures based on information provided by site promoters, except for Oxford Road, where the figure is estimated based on the area of land outside areas of flood risk and archeological interest, with an average density of 30 homes per hectare then applied to this

Figure 2. . Extract from the consultation material, which presented respondents with potential housing sites

### 3.2 Preferences

1,128 responses were received to this question, demonstrating that many respondents expressed a preference for more than one site. The preferred site was for land at Oxford Road, as set out below.

Site	People expressing preference for this site	% of respondents expressing preference for this site
Land at Oxford Road	478	42.4%
South of Moreton Lane	268	23.8%
Highfields	198	17.6%
East of Thame	184	16.2%
Total	1,128	100%

### 3.3 Commentary

Respondents were also given the opportunity to leave comments they had on any of the sites. A summary of these responses for each site is provided below.

#### ***Land at Oxford Road***

For	Against
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would keep development within, and provide good access to the ring road</li> <li>• Would produce a sensible extension of the existing modern development on Oxford Road</li> <li>• Close proximity to Lord Williams’s Upper School</li> <li>• The development would not result in encroachment on the countryside, and the space is not currently used for agricultural or recreational purposes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flood risk on the eastern part of the site</li> <li>• Concern over impact on existing wildlife along river corridor</li> <li>• Archaeological concerns on western corner of site</li> <li>• In close proximity to a noisy road (A418), and this site might require noise buffers</li> </ul>

#### ***South of Moreton Lane***

For	Against
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Close to the town centre, ties into the objective of a compact Thame</li> <li>• Would represent a continuation of the pattern of development promoted in the first Neighbourhood Plan</li> <li>• Provides the opportunity to extend the Cuttlebrook Nature Reserve</li> <li>• The site would provide enough space for all development in one go, rather than requiring the splitting of development across multiple sites</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access arrangements: roads in Sycamore Rise immediately adjacent to the site are not suitable for additional traffic and concern over whether this has been confirmed</li> <li>• Would result in encroachment on the countryside and would negatively impact on the gap between Thame and Moreton</li> </ul>

### **High Fields**

For	Against
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Good pedestrian/cycle accessibility via Phoenix Trail</li><li>• Potential for expansion of Nature Reserve</li><li>• The site would provide enough space for all development in one go, rather than requiring the splitting of development across multiple sites</li><li>• Good access to Lord Williams's Upper School</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Would result in encroachment on the countryside and would negatively impact on the gap between Thame and Moreton</li><li>• Access arrangements not confirmed</li><li>• Site location means development would result in houses isolated from the rest of Thame</li></ul>

### **East of Thame**

For	Against
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Could represent a contiguous boundary with the existing built form if the site were to come forward together with the Howland Road employment development</li><li>• Well located for schools and health centre</li><li>• Least intrusive area on central Thame (outside of the ring road)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proposals would negatively affect the landscape of the area</li><li>• Health Hub application has not been determined</li><li>• Encroachment on countryside, and could impact on the separate identity of Towersey</li><li>• Development would breach the ring road, doesn't represent a compact Thame</li><li>• Not an easy walk into town centre</li></ul>

### 3.4 Other Responses

Similar to the employment sites, a number of responses were received regarding the housing sites from site promoters as well as the relevant departments at Oxfordshire County Council. Again, these responses are summarised below for each site.

#### ***Oxford Road***

>> Savills, Site Promoters (Oxford Road), on behalf of Regeneration Thame Ltd and Bloor Homes

- New housing on this site will build on the suitability of the site that was assessed under the Neighbourhood Plan 1 document without impacting on the settlement pattern, its compactness and appearance.
- The design work has concluded that, excluding land within the flood plain and other constraints the site can accommodate between 90 - 110 dwellings subject to a detailed layout and design.
- Also suggest that the adjoining land offers a sizeable open area which would provide an amenity in this part of the town. The promoters would be pleased to discuss this area further with the neighbourhood plan group.
- In combination with Reserve Site, the two sites could deliver around 165 – 190 new homes.
- Savills notes that they understand that the Council has sought confirmation from South Oxfordshire District Council regarding the housing need that it should be targeting in the new plan. They request that this information is made available and is subject to consultation/review given that it is a fundamental component of the new plan.

>> Hallam, Site Promoters (East of Thame, Housing site)

- The existing Neighbourhood Plan allocates most of the site as publicly accessible open space and landscape – a policy which would have to be reversed undermining the Neighbourhood plan process. The reserve site in this location was to accommodate only some 78 dwellings were it to have been necessary.
- Parts of the site are within Flood zones 2 and 3 and while development outside of the flood zone may be possible, the sequential test enshrined in national planning policy and guidance, does not support the allocation of a site with floodplain ahead of a site that does not;
- If development limited to some 70 homes then there remain issues such as the relationship with the setting of listed buildings and the conservation area and the separating effect of the Cuttle Brook corridor
- Noise and air quality concerns – which relate to this site alone – are vividly portrayed on Figure 3 of Site Assessment Report (July 2021)

>> Ridge and Partners LLP on behalf of Lucy Developments, Land at Moreton Road, Moreton

- The site along its northern and eastern extent sits within Flood Zones 2 and 3, and also near to the confluence of the River Thame and Cuttle Brook confluence. The western part of the site is also known for its archaeological issues warranting that part of the site as undevelopable



>> Ridge and Partners LLP on behalf of a resident adjacent to the Oxford Road and neighbours in Oxford Road, Cuttlebrook Gardens, Old Union Way and Town Farm Close

- This representation comments upon the undeliverability of proposed allocation 'Oxford Road', demonstrating it as an unsuitable site for residential development.
- The northern and eastern extent of the site being located within Flood Zones 2 and 3, areas at high risk of flooding as defined by the Environment Agency.
- The majority of the emerging allocation is proposed within the current Thame NP as Natural Green Space extending to the Cuttle Brook Nature Reserve that is publicly accessible, and landscape publicly accessible open space.
- The encroachment of development into the Cuttle Brook Nature Reserve and its impact on biodiversity
- The importance of the gap in which the site provides, affording views toward the open countryside, and its importance as a green corridor which runs along Cuttle Brook.
- The south eastern portion of the site lies within the Thame Conservation Area and within the setting of several Grade II listed buildings.
- The south western portion of the site is known to have archaeological interest.
- Impact on amenity of existing neighbouring properties.

>> Nexus, Site Promoters (Residual Site C – Land South East of Thame, Housing Site) on behalf of CEG and Taylor Wimpey (TW)

- It is accepted that the full extent of the Oxford Road site has the potential to deliver 145+ dwellings, but in doing so, land retained as agricultural land as part of the existing Thame Neighbourhood Plan Site F allocation (Policy HA1) would be required. On the basis that the 145+ dwellings is being put forward as a reasonable option as part of the Neighbourhood Plan process, Nexus question the basis for excluding the 'Residual Site C' land as a reasonable alternative option given that it comprises retained agricultural land<sup>1</sup>.

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- Archaeological investigation and mitigation in advance of consented development has been implemented within the site area. These investigations have revealed over 5000 years of human occupation to be present in this area, most significantly represented by the discovery of a triple ditched early Neolithic causewayed enclosure. Other Neolithic features such as a possible henge and a series of pits were also recorded as was considerable surviving remains of an Iron Age, Roman and Saxon settlement.
- HLC defines the site as forming part of a wider pattern of reorganised and planned enclosures that lie to the west of the urban settlement core. As such there are currently no known historic landscape constraints.
- Should this site be pursued then careful consideration will be required to establish which parts of the site could be suitable for inclusion given the existing requirements for the preservation of nationally important archaeological remains across its western extents. OCC would, should consent be granted, require a programme of archaeological investigation in advance of development to ensure that an appropriate mitigation is recommended.

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<sup>1</sup> See Section 3.5 for clarification of 'Residual Site C'

## ***South of Moreton Lane***

### **>> *CALA Homes (Land South of Moreton Lane)***

- CALA homes, through the provision of a Technical Note, carried out by RPS, has shown that a sustainable access strategy can be provided.
- Vehicular access would be taken from the east through the Sycamore Rise development.
- The appraisal concluded the following:
  - The access junction from Thame Park Road via Sycamore Rise is safe and suitable for access to Land South of Thame;
  - There is no policy or technical basis for requiring a second vehicular access; and
  - The route through Sycamore Rise along its streets is consistent with national guidance and the adopted OCC 'Street Design Guide'.
- However, CALA Homes has also confirmed that the original landowner (of the Persimmon Estate) has retained a ransom strip along the western boundary (as additional protection in the event that the roads and services are built right up to the boundary and then adopted) but that this is purely a financial issue that can be resolved and discussions are already in progress with the original landowners' agent.

### **>> *Hallam, Site Promoters (East of Thame, Housing site)***

- Parts of the site are within Flood zones 2 and 3 and while development outside of the flood zone may be possible, the sequential test enshrined in national planning policy and guidance, does not support the allocation of a site with floodplain ahead of a site that does not;
- There are significant access constraints if access is to be taken through Thame Park Road. The absence of a robust and permeable connection into the town is a significant problem in terms of movement, the environment of neighbouring development and the inability to serve the development with public transport (the site is remote from existing public transport routes). Fundamentally access is provided by an extension to the cul-de-sac albeit that there are pedestrian routes connecting north;
- The impact on the existing PROW which runs through the site, including visual impact,
- The visibility of the site from well-worn routes;
- The relationship with Moreton – the heart of which is just some 500 metres away and which is connected by key pedestrian and bridleway routes which would be fundamentally impacted visually and in terms of character – resulting in considerable coalescence – physically and as experienced by the many users of the public rights of way

### **>> *Ridge and Partners LLP on behalf of Lucy Developments, Land at Moreton Road, Moreton***

- The western part of the site sits adjacent to the Cuttlebrook corridor and consequently that part of the site lies within Flood Zones 2/3, making that area undevelopable. The emerging NP recognises this constraint and also considers the site would encroach into the countryside and that access into the site is difficult. It is therefore questionable whether that site can be delivered.

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- The site is located in an area where little formal archaeological investigation has been undertaken and therefore little is known regarding the potential of the site.
- Previous archaeological investigation conducted on land to the east of the site in advance of development produced limited evidence for any previous archaeological activity beyond its use as a brickworks in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries
- HLC defines the site as forming part of an area of post-medieval and later piecemeal and reorganised enclosures created out of former medieval open fields that lie to the south of the urban settlement core. As such there are currently no known historic landscape constraints.
- Whilst there are currently no significant known constraints to the principle of this site being included in the Plan, OCC would require a programme of archaeological evaluation, both invasive and non-invasive, in advance of any planning application being determined to ensure that an appropriate mitigation is recommended

>> Nexus, Site Promoters (Residual Site C – Land South East of Thame, Housing Site) on behalf of CEG and Taylor Wimpey

- Remain fundamentally concerned over the continued lack of clarity of any vehicular access to the South of Moreton Lane site. Land Registry information indicates there is a c. 2.5m strip of third party land between the eastern boundary of the South of Moreton Lane site and the adjoining Site D land.
- There also appears to be third party land associated with the designated Phoenix Trail cycle route along the sites northern boundary.
- Concerns regarding the promotion and need for land for a new primary school or satellite provision i.e. a new school is not necessarily required based on the latest Education Authority evidence, but if a new school or satellite provision is required, land has already been allocated as part of the Thame neighbourhood Plan Site F allocation (Policy H1). Any new housing allocations therefore do not need to make, or offer the provision of land for a new primary school.

## **Highfields**

>> Barton Willmore, on behalf of Rectory,

- **Sustainable Location:** The Site benefits from a sustainable location in close proximity to Thame and its higher order facilities, with good access to schools and shops. It is considered that a high-quality residential development on this Site would align with Objective 1 of the Thame Neighbourhood Plan Revision, which confirms that 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 around the town.
- **Infrastructure needs:** The Site includes land for an additional pitch/es for Lord Williams's Upper School and/or land and contribution for school use, a community health hub, an extension and upgrade to the Phoenix Trail and significant extension to the Cuttle Brook Nature Reserve.
- **Access Arrangements:** Rectory Homes have commissioned Glanville as Highways Consultant to review the proposed access off Rycote Lane. Glanville consider the proposed access arrangements are suitable to serve the site.
- **Proximity to Cuttle Brook corridor:** Whilst the existing Cuttle Brook Nature Reserve is outside of the land being promoted by Rectory Homes, it is proposed to provide further land and extend the Nature Reserve, to the benefit of the Reserve and also the health and well-being of the existing community of Thame.
- **Encroachment on gap and potential coalescence of Thame and Moreton:** The development of the Site would be sympathetic to the potential relationship between the Site and Moreton itself, as well as the location of Listed Buildings and Moreton Conservation Area. A significant gap is proposed to the south in order to maintain a clear separation between the settlements of Thame and Moreton.
- **Impact on rural character and landscape setting:** it is Barton Willmore's view that proportional growth in the right place, will not have a detrimental impact on existing and future residents' access to the open countryside, or other high quality public open space within Thame (such as the Cuttle Brook Nature Reserve). It could also make available currently non accessible parts of the countryside to the public by providing large parts of publicly accessible land were the land at Highfields allocated.
- **Not contiguous with main built-up area of Thame:** Whilst the Site may appear to be partially separated from the main built-up area of Thame, given the playing fields associated with Thame Leisure Centre to the north, in reality the Site forms a natural extension to the built up area and existing residential neighbourhoods located off Sycamore Drive/Maple Road to the north. The Site is only separated by the Phoenix Trail, which is proposed to be upgraded and extended as part of the proposals for Highfields to enhance connectivity.
- **Availability of land for access from Rycote Lane to be confirmed:** Barton Willmore admit It is not known if or when access could be agreed across the land. However, they suggest that they believe that if the Highfields Site was to be allocated, access could be delivered.

>> Ridge and Partners LLP on behalf of Lucy Developments (Land at Moreton Road, Moreton)

- It is suggested that this site presents a number of constraints including encroachment into the gap between Moreton and Thame, as well as its proximity to the Cuttlebrook corridor, impact on the landscape and issues with access into the site.

>> Nexus, Site Promoters (Residual Site C – Land South East of Thame, Housing Site) on behalf of CEG and Taylor Wimpey

- In direct contradiction to the key Site Selection objective 4, development on the site would fundamentally erode the visual and physical green gap between Thame and Moreton Conservation Area.
- In conflict to Site Selection objective 6, development within the area associated with the High Fields site is therefore also likely to have adverse impacts on the setting and character of the Moreton Conservation area.
- Question the availability of access, noting that Land Registry details would suggest that third party land is required to provide a suitable and safe vehicular access point.
- It is noted that the made Thame Neighbourhood Plan already allocates 2 hectares of land at Site F (Policy HA1) for provision of a new primary school. Two hectares being the area associated with a 2-form entry primary school. In view of this existing allocation, clarity would be welcomed as to why land for an additional primary school is being proposed as part of the High Fields site option, or indeed any alternative option as part of the Neighbourhood Plan review process.

>> Oxfordshire County Council

- Archaeology
  - The site is located in an area where little formal archaeological investigation has been undertaken and therefore little is known regarding the potential of the site.
  - HLC defines the site as forming part of an area of post-medieval and later piecemeal enclosures created out of former medieval open fields that lie to the south and north-west of urban and rural settlement cores. As such there are currently no known historic landscape constraints.
  - Whilst there are currently no significant known constraints to the principle of this site being included in the Plan, OCC would require a programme of archaeological evaluation, both invasive and non-invasive, in advance of any planning application being determined to ensure that an appropriate mitigation is recommended.
- Estates
  - The allocation of this site would need to take into account any safeguarding matters of the school playing fields to ensure appropriate boundary treatments and separation distances are implemented. This would be to maintain security of the OCC owned playing field from proposed dwellings.

## ***East of Thame***

### >> Hallam, Site Promoters (East of Thame, Housing site)

- The Land East of Thame site is the only one of the four housing sites being consulted upon that was identified as Green in the RAG Assessment contained in the Site Assessment Report
- Hallam suggests that the Site Assessment Report provides a fair assessment of the sites merit – in particular in the following regards:
  - there are no statutory environmental designations affecting the site;
  - there are no areas subject to any flood risk within or adjacent to the site;
  - there are no heritage constraints;
  - the provisions for access into the site are supported in principle by OCC (as evidenced in the current application in the north west part of the site);
  - there are no TPOs, nor contamination, nor significant woodland or vegetation (although there is some scrub in the very north west of the site);
  - the site has high quality access to bus stops, public transport routes, open space; with primary school, secondary school and town centre all assessed as being within the good accessibility thresholds included in the assessment – see Appendix C and additional commentary below;
  - access to Haddenham station significantly assists sustainable transport opportunities and outcomes.
- The positive attributes arising from the site opportunities and the development proposals are compelling and demonstrate a highly sustainable proposition East of Thame and for the town as a whole
- The placemaking principles that can be delivered on the site, including its relationship to employment to the south, enhancing existing as well as new sustainable transport infrastructure, and the delivery of community facilities are a compelling factor in the Council being able to demonstrate the sustainable outcomes of its policies and their deliverability.
- It is suggested that the East of Thame Option performs very strongly against the principles set out in Consultation 2. This is consistent with the evidence that the Council has assembled in the South Oxfordshire Landscape Capacity Assessment identifying the opportunity for the development of the East of Thame option, and the particular advantages of bringing forward the east of Thame option in a co-ordinate set of proposals with employment land to the south of Towersey Road.

### >> Nexus, Site Promoters (Residual Site C – Land South East of Thame, Housing Site) on behalf of CEG and Taylor Wimpey

- Serious concerns over the sites encroachment into the open countryside and impact on the rural setting of Thame, particularly from the east. This concern relates to any residential option that would breach the ring-road to the east.
- One of the key Site Selection objectives (objective 3) is to protect the town's landscape setting and retain the open countryside around Thame. Development to the east of the ring-road fundamentally conflicts with this objective.

>> Oxfordshire County Council

- The site is located in an area of archaeological potential
- The site has in part been subject to previous archaeological investigation in conjunction with application P20/S2593/O. These works to date have been undertaken within its north western extent only but have recorded no noted archaeological features or deposits.
- Further archaeological investigation over the remaining and currently un-investigated area of the site will need to be undertaken, given its closer proximity to recorded cropmark remains and inclusion of noted linear features as identified from Lidar imagery.
- HLC defines the site as forming part of an area of prairie and amalgamated enclosures that lie to the east of the urban settlement core. As such there are currently no known historic landscape constraints.
- Whilst there are currently no significant known constraints to the principle of this site being included in the Plan, OCC would require a programme of archaeological evaluation, both invasive and non-invasive, in advance of any planning application being determined to ensure that an appropriate mitigation is recommended.

### 3.5 Other suggested housing sites

#### ***Land at Moreton Road, Moreton***

A response was received from Ridge and Partners LLP in respect of land at Moreton Road, suggesting the site should be allocated.

The response confirms that the site is currently subject to a live planning application for five new homes. It will thus be determined ahead of the Neighbourhood Plan and, given the number of new homes proposed, would comprise an element of windfall should it be approved now or at a later date.

#### ***Cattle Market***

The Cattle Market site was consulted upon in earlier consultation and broadly accepted as a location for future development, potentially comprising a mixed use development scheme with some homes delivered as part of this. This is reflective of the support expressed for the site in the first Thame Neighbourhood Plan and the allocation of the site within that.

Although not being consulted upon in this round of consultation, officers at SODC confirmed that feasibility work is currently ongoing, exploring different layouts and mix of uses on the site, and which will be subject to ongoing discussion with District and Town Councillors.

#### ***Residual Site C - Land South East of Thame***

A response was received from Nexus in respect of 'Residual Site C' (Land South East of Thame), suggesting that the site should be reconsidered and allocated. This response sought to clarify how the site meets the objectives for the Thame Neighbourhood Plan and thus why it should be allocated.

For clarification, the response refers to land known as 'Reserve Site C' identified in TNP1, as well as additional land to the south of this and land allocated and now built-out at Site C. In total, it is considered that potential exists to accommodate 164 new homes across the area (which is inclusive of the 57 homes on Reserve Site C subject to the recent planning application to SODC).

The response suggests that the entire site performs well against the objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan and should have been considered in its entirety in the same way that land at Oxford Road has.

The response notes how the whole of the site responds to the objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan:

- **Compact and Walkable Thame:** new homes within Development of the site would retain the compactness and walkability of Thame as key existing community facilities and services and local employment opportunities are all within an easy and safe walking and cycling distance from the Site.
- **Environmental Setting:** The site is largely devoid of any significant tree cover, being restricted to a small number of randomly positioned specimens within field boundary hedgerows and occasional free standing examples. Any protected trees will be retained and their root protection area respected.
- **Landscape Setting:** The site is well contained in landscape terms. However, additional landscape planting along the eastern site boundary could help to reinforce the existing landscape buffer and further enhance screening effects.
- **Urban Identify and Character:** An extended positive built and landscaped frontage to Wenman Road could be provided, building upon the pedestrian and cycle provision delivered as part of the Site C scheme and further improving the character of Wenman Road. The site is contained and therefore would not lead to further incremental encroachment into the surrounding countryside. Development in this location would not physically to visually reduce the gaps between Thame and the outlying villages (namely Moreton to the south and Towersey to the east).
- **Social Inclusion and Integration:** Development on the site is within an easy walking and cycling distance from key existing social and community services, facilities and local employment opportunities. Furthermore the provision of 10ha. of fully accessible public open space would provide a clear social and community benefit to the existing residents of Thame.
- **Historic Character:** There would be no significant impact on the historic character of Thame through the development of this site. There is low potential for non-designated archaeological assets of all periods. Should undiscovered archaeological deposits be present, the available evidence suggests that they would not be of sufficient significance to preclude development

The Site Assessment work recommended that the part of the site comprising 'Reserve Site C' be taken forward as a potential housing site and this was consulted upon in the first round of consultation. It was broadly accepted as a housing site. It was not subject to the second round of consultation because (a) the principle of development was broadly accepted, and (b) the second consultation only sought to look at options associated with larger sites.

The remainder of the land was not recommended for further consideration in the Site Assessment Report. The Assessment noted that land to the north had been developed in line with the allocation in TNP1, and that as part of that, the remaining land was to be retained as publicly accessible open and natural green space.

No response was received to this during the first round of consultation.



***Land to the south of Wenman Road/Chinnor Road***

A response was received from Jake Collinge Planning Consultancy (JCPC) on behalf of the owner of land to the south of Wenman Road/Chinnor Road, questioning why the site was not presented in the consultation.

The site was consulted upon in Consultation 1 and received support. It was not included in this subsequent round of consultation as (a) the site had already received support, and (b) the second round of consultation only looked at options in respect of larger sites which might be needed to meet the Local Plan housing requirements.

## 4. Other Ideas

### 4.1 Ideas

In addition to consultation on potential development sites a series of further ideas were presented for comment, reflecting feedback and suggestions put forward in earlier consultation events:

- Improved connections to the Phoenix Trail
- A Thame walking route with connections to the countryside
- A town-wide network of mobility hubs
- A connected network of green streets and spaces

Each idea was illustrated and expanded upon with a set of explanatory bullet points. Respondents were asked whether the ideas were heading in the right direction. A strong 'yes' was received to all ideas, though this was lower for the concept of mobility hubs than for others, with a fairly high proportion of people saying they were 'not sure'. This may in part be reflective of this being a fairly new idea and concept. This is explored further in the following section, with overall responses presented in the chart below:

Are these ideas heading in the right direction?

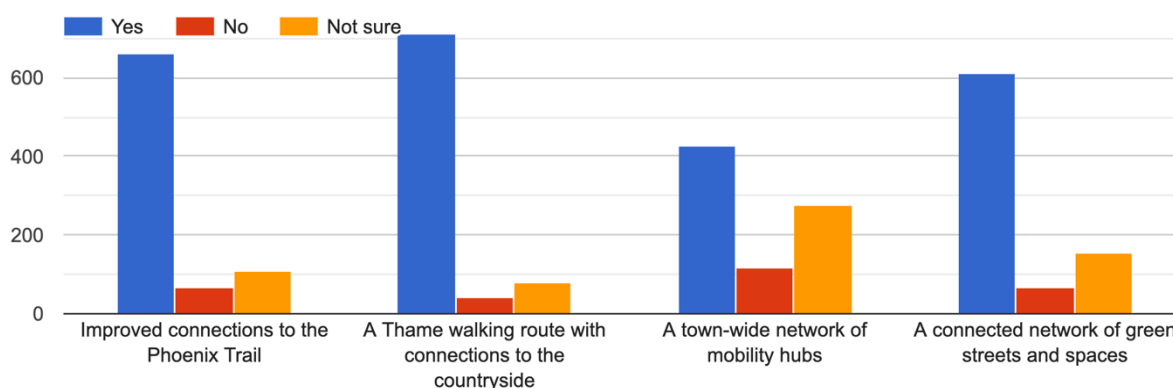


Figure 3: Responses to other ideas presented

## 4.2 Commentary

Respondents were given the opportunity to expand on their answer by responding to a question centred around each idea. The questions, and a summary of the key responses from respondents to each of these is presented below.

***Are there any existing routes to the Phoenix Trail that need improving, or new routes that should be created? If so, please say where***

- Opportunity to extend the Phoenix Trail to Rycote Lane through development of the current 'unofficial route'.
- Provide a wider connection to Haddenham Station, with the opportunity to incorporate a connection to the Phoenix Trail as part of it
- Access to the Phoenix Trail via Moreton Lane and Windmill Road should be protected and improved where possible
- The route from Sycamore Rise should be connected more directly to the Phoenix Trail, with respondents suggesting this formed part of original proposals but has not been delivered.
- Strong support for a traffic free route connecting the Phoenix Trail with the town centre
- Barton Willmore, for Rectory Homes, Highfields site, propose to upgrade and extend part of the Phoenix Trail as part of the proposed development, They are supportive of the concept idea to improve connections to the Phoenix Trail, which could be achieved as part of the Highfields development.

***Are there any existing routes to the countryside that need improving, or new routes that should be created? If so, please say where.***

- Improve access to the footpaths within Thame Park
- Support for a pedestrian route to Haddenham and Thame Parkway.
- A safer route is needed to Long Crendon
- Barton Willmore, for Rectory Homes Highfields site, note there is an existing Public Right of Way running through the centre of the Site from north to south, which they propose to retain, as well as extending trails and access to / adjacent to the Cuttle Brook Nature Reserve

***Where could mobility hubs be located in Thame?***

- Town Centre, in particular at Cattle Market
- In some of the larger car parks

***What streets and spaces might benefit from new greenery?***

- Town Centre
- Lea Park – has green space but isn't particularly well maintained or 'interesting' in its landscaping
- Oxford Road
- Cattle Market
- Wellington Street

### 4.3 Other Ideas

Respondents were asked whether they had any other ideas or priorities for change and development in Thame. A summary of some of the key responses to this question are presented below:

- Provision of a new Youth Facility in Thame
- Safe Cycle route to Haddenham Station
- A greener Town Centre
- Desire for the Health Hub to be in the town centre, with the suggestion that it could be located on the Cattle Market site

## 5. Summary and recommendations

### Employment

The Rycote Lane site was the preferred employment site among respondents, receiving support from 64% of all respondents. The most common reason for preference of this site from respondents was because it is situated further away from residential areas so development would be less likely to impact Thame residents. Responses also noted that the site had good connections to strategic roads such as the M40, meaning the impact of increased local traffic through Thame might be less than elsewhere, and that development on the site would be adjacent to existing employment sites thus representing a natural extension. However, those against the site suggested that it was disconnected from the rest of Thame, that there was concern from Moreton residents over light pollution, and concern over encroachment on the open countryside and ridgeline.

Comments on the Howland Road site, which only received 36% in favour, noted that the site is in close proximity to existing residential areas, which would have adverse effects on the local population both in the short term, during construction, and long term, for example through noise and light pollution. Respondents were also concerned over the impact development of the site would have on Thame's countryside. However, those in favour of the site noted that it is in closer proximity to the town centre, and its development would therefore tie into the objective of a 'compact Thame'. There was also support for the site because it was a larger size, and would thus be able to accommodate any future development pressure while reducing the need for multiple employment sites to be scattered around Thame.

### Housing

There were 1,128 responses to the housing preference question, meaning that a number of respondents expressed preference for more than one site.

The most popular housing site, which 42% of respondents expressed a preference for, was Land at Oxford Road. The key reason for this, based on respondent's comments, seemed to be because the site would deliver a suitable extension to the existing recent housing development at Oxford Road. Respondents also noted how the site meant development would stay within, and provide good access to, the ring road, as well as providing good access to Lord Williams's Upper School. However, there were still a number of concerns raised about the site's suitability due to its known flood risk and archaeological remains, as well as the issue of noise pollution caused by its proximity to the A418.

The least popular housing site was East of Thame, which only 16.2% of respondents expressed a preference for. The most common concern over this site was that it would produce a housing development that breached the ring road, and that this would set a precedent for further similar developments. Similarly, there were strong concerns about the impact this development would have on Thame's countryside and the gap between Thame and Towersey. While most saw the fact that the site would breach the ring road as a negative, some noted this as positive, suggesting it would have the least direct impact on Thame. Other comments suggested they preferred the site as it provided a good location for access to schools and the health centre.

The South of Moreton Lane and Highfields sites were preferred by 24% and 18% of respondents respectively. They also received similar comments, due to the sites being adjacent to one another.

Comments in favour, which applied to both sites, included the fact that development of either site would provide an opportunity for the Cuttle Brook Nature Reserve to be extended. It was also clear from those that expressed preference for the sites that the ability of them to accommodate development in one area, rather than being split across multiple sites, was considered a benefit. It was also noted that the both have relatively good pedestrian connectivity to the Town Centre and the Phoenix Trail. However, there were concerns over accessibility arrangements for both sites. For Highfields, this relates to the parcel of land that would allow access off Rycote Lane, and for Land South of Moreton Lane this relates to the suitability and availability of access via Sycamore Rise. Finally, there was concern over the negative impact the development of either site might have on the gap between Thame and Moreton.

For the majority of sites being consulted upon in this round of consultation, the site promoters submitted responses detailing why they felt their site was most suitable, and in some cases why other sites were not suitable.

In terms of other sites:

- A response was received from SODC to confirm that the Cattle Market has the opportunity to accommodate new homes as part of a mixed-use development and that option testing in regard to layout and mix is currently under way.
- A response was received in respect of a site on land in Moreton. This is a small site currently subject to a planning application and will be judged on its merits.
- A response was received by the site promoters for the Land to the south of Wenman Road/Chinnor Road site, a site which received strong support in the previous round of consultation and is to be carried forward as part of the emerging TNP2. The main issue here was over confusion as to why their site had not been included in this round of consultation. It should be clarified that the site was not consulted upon as it received clear support and, as a smaller site, was not subject to the second round of consultation which only looked at options associated with larger sites.
- A response was received by the promoters of the 'Residual Site C', including land at Reserve Site C which was consulted upon in the first consultation as well as wider land to the south of the allocated and now built-out housing at Site C. The site promoters argued that their site be re-considered for allocation within the Neighbourhood Plan. This was on the basis that their site, unlike the other options, was visually well-contained within the wider landscape. They also argued that their site supported each of the Plan's objective, something which the other sites could not offer.

## Other Ideas

There was strong support for all ideas presented, though as noted previously this was lower for the concept of mobility hubs than for others, with a fairly high proportion of people saying they were 'not sure'. It is assumed that this may in part be reflective of this being a fairly new idea and concept.

Respondents felt that the Phoenix Trail would benefit from an official extension stretching to Rycote Lane in place of the 'unofficial' trail that currently exists, and that a traffic free route linking the Phoenix Trail and the town centre would be supported. There was also strong support for the Phoenix Trail to link with any future pedestrian / cycle route which might connect Thame with Haddenham Station, as well as the need for the Moreton Lane and Windmill Road access roads to be maintained and improved wherever possible.

When asked whether any routes to the countryside needed improving, or if new routes needed to be created, the most common response was that access to the footpaths in Thame Park needed improving. Respondents also noted the need for improvements to routes going to Long Crendon, as well as the need for a safe pedestrian/cycle route to Haddenham Station. There was also support shown for the circular walking route concept around Thame.

Despite being a new concept, when asked for suitable locations for a Thame Mobility Hub, respondents seemed to lean towards Cattle Market most strongly. Large car parks were also mentioned repeatedly as suitable sites.

There were a range of suggestions on what spaces and streets might benefit from new greenery. There was general support for a greener town centre, including on the Cattle Market site, with specific streets mentioned that would benefit from new greenery being Wellington Street and Oxford Road.

When asked if they had any other ideas they felt should be included in the Neighbourhood Plan, respondent's responses indicated there was support for new and improved youth facilities and for a health hub to be located in the town centre (potentially on the Cattle Market site) as opposed to the current proposals for this to be on land to the east of Thame. It was also suggested, as per the idea presented, that the town centre should be greener and that there should be a safer cycle route to Haddenham Station.

### **Implications for next stages**

Through this consultation, a clear preference for the Rycote Lane employment site has emerged. This is most likely a reflection of the site's location, which is more separated from residential areas than the Howland Road site. However, the Rycote Lane site, at 4.4 hectares, is much smaller than Howland Road (15.5 hectares), and only just meets the minimum amount of land required for employment by SODC. If in the event that demand for employment land increases in the future, then this will need to be delivered elsewhere, potentially at Howland Road.

There was also a clear preference for the Oxford Road site for housing development: it is felt this is would be a logical extension of the existing housing development, and would not directly impact the majority of Thame residents.

There were strong levels of support for all ideas presented to respondents in this round of consultation. Although the Mobility Hub concept received a higher amount of 'not sure' responses, this is likely due to it being a fairly new idea, and not common in the UK. All of the ideas should be progressed and developed through the Neighbourhood Plan.

## Appendix: Consultation material

This appendix includes copies of the following:

- Display boards prepared for drop-in events and for viewing online
- Print version of survey accompanying the consultation. A separate electronic version was also made available for completion.
- Series of FAQ and 'fact checks' added in response to questions raised by the separate leaflet circulated to all households in Thame by the promoters of the Highfields site.
- Screen shots of the TNP2 Information Video produced and which could be accessed via the Town Council website or direct through Vimeo at the following link:

[https://vimeo.com/656922034?embedded=true&source=video\\_title&owner=44084494](https://vimeo.com/656922034?embedded=true&source=video_title&owner=44084494)



# TNP2 - THAME NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW



BOARD 1/5

## WELCOME

Thank you to everyone who responded to consultation on the review of the Thame Neighbourhood Plan over the summer. There was an excellent response rate with many ideas and suggestions made, including:

### VISION AND OBJECTIVES

There remains strong support for the vision of Thame maintaining its character as a 'real market town'.

The objectives were all strongly supported, particularly in terms of the compact, walkable nature of Thame, the importance of proximity and access to the countryside, and protecting the separate character of Thame from surrounding settlements.

It was suggested that the 'ring-road' forms a barrier to movement and a boundary around Thame, and that review of the Plan provides further opportunity to address the threat of climate change.

### CHARACTER

Comments and suggestions reinforced the findings of the Character Area Assessment, and which can be used to prepare design policies that respond to the qualities of the built and natural environment.

Some concern was expressed about the impact of car use on the setting of the town centre, congestion and parking across the town. It was suggested that the review of the Plan provides the opportunity to promote improved walking and cycling conditions.

## DEVELOPMENT SITES

There was in general agreement that the Cattle Market presents an opportunity for a mixed use development, potentially including new retail floorspace, community uses and some new homes.

There was broad agreement to some land coming forward for employment uses east of Howland Road. However, it was also suggested that additional land is required to meet employment needs.

Beyond the 'reserve development sites' identified in the first Thame Neighbourhood Plan feedback on other potential sites was mixed, with other sites being put forward for consideration.

## THIS CONSULTATION

Based on the feedback received last time round we are now presenting a range of sites that might have potential for employment and residential development. Please let us know what you think about these.



To find out more about the Neighbourhood Plan please visit the Town Council website:  
[www.thametowncouncil.gov.uk/thame-town-council/thame-neighbourhood-plan](http://www.thametowncouncil.gov.uk/thame-town-council/thame-neighbourhood-plan)

To comment on the Neighbourhood Plan please complete the survey on the website by 31 January 2022.

Alternatively, a paper copy can be downloaded and returned to the Town Council.



SCAN FOR MORE INFO

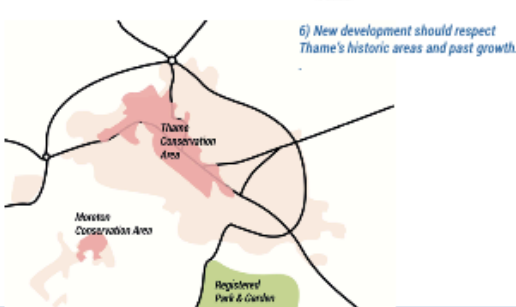
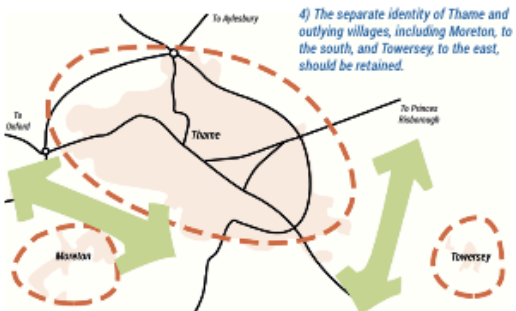
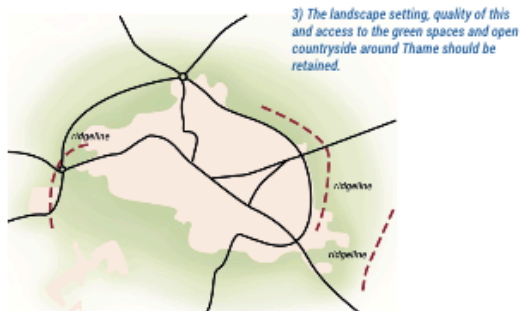
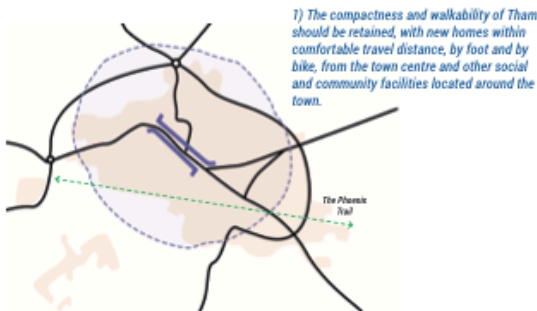
# TNP2 - THAME NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW



BOARD 2/5

## VISION AND OBJECTIVES

The vision and objectives present strong principles which inform discussions around the location and direction of future growth in and around Thame. These are presented spatially on this panel.



To find out more about the Neighbourhood Plan please visit the Town Council website:  
[www.thametowncouncil.gov.uk/thame-town-council/thame-neighbourhood-plan](http://www.thametowncouncil.gov.uk/thame-town-council/thame-neighbourhood-plan)  
 To comment on the Neighbourhood Plan please complete the survey on the website by 31 January 2022.  
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SCAN FOR MORE INFO

# TNP2 - THAME NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW



BOARD 3/5

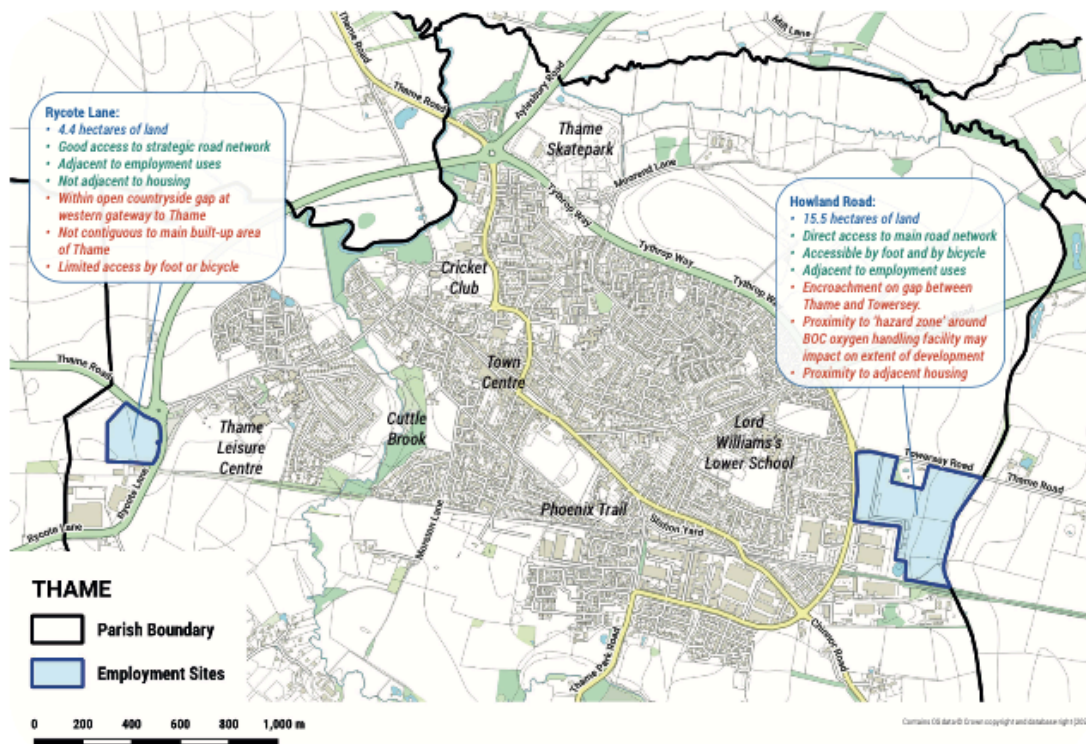
## EMPLOYMENT SITES

The South Oxfordshire Local Plan requires a minimum of 3.5 hectares of land for employment uses to be allocated for development in the Thame Neighbourhood Plan.

Land east of Howland Road was presented last time. Land adjacent to the road frontage was broadly supported.

However, it has been suggested that a wider area of land be considered appropriate, along with an alternative site at Rycote Lane. The site boundaries and areas shown are based on those submitted by site promoters for consideration. This does not necessarily mean that the entirety of that site will be allocated for development.

These are presented on this panel. Please tell us what you think about these sites.



Note: Aspects in favour of the sites are indicated with green text in the annotations, with those against in red text.

To find out more about the Neighbourhood Plan please visit the Town Council website:  
[www.thametowncouncil.gov.uk/thame-town-council/thame-neighbourhood-plan](http://www.thametowncouncil.gov.uk/thame-town-council/thame-neighbourhood-plan)

To comment on the Neighbourhood Plan please complete the survey on the website by 31 January 2022.

Alternatively, a paper copy can be downloaded and returned to the Town Council.



SCAN FOR MORE INFO

# TNP2 - THAME NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW

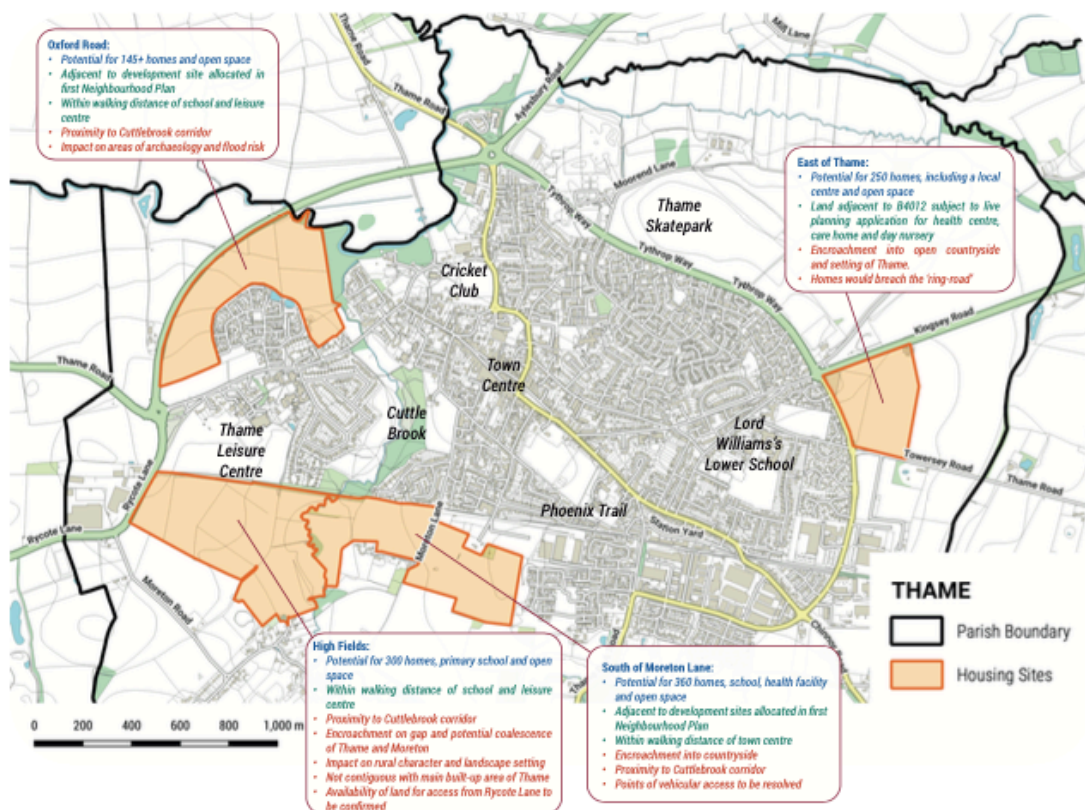


BOARD 4/5

## HOUSING SITES

The South Oxfordshire Local Plan requires land for at least 339 new homes to be allocated in the Thame Neighbourhood Plan. A number of smaller sites were presented and are now coming forward through the planning process and which may contribute towards this figure.

However, it is likely that a larger site or parts of larger sites may be needed to meet the requirements. Based on feedback from the last consultation, a range of sites are presented for consideration on this panel. Please tell us what you think about these sites.



Notes: Aspects in favour of the sites are indicated with green text in the annotations, with those against in red text. All development figures based on information provided by site promoters, except for Oxford Road, where the figure is estimated based on the area of land outside areas of flood risk and archeological interest, with an average density of 30 homes per hectare then applied to this

To find out more about the Neighbourhood Plan please visit the Town Council website:  
[www.thametowncouncil.gov.uk/thame-town-council/thame-neighbourhood-plan](http://www.thametowncouncil.gov.uk/thame-town-council/thame-neighbourhood-plan)

To comment on the Neighbourhood Plan please complete the survey on the website by 31 January 2022.

Alternatively, a paper copy can be downloaded and returned to the Town Council.



SCAN FOR MORE INFO

# TNP2 - THAME NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW



## WIDER IDEAS

In response to comments made about movement, climate change and relationship with the countryside, a series of concept ideas are presented below.

Please let us know what you think about these, and whether there are any other ideas that could be explored.

### 1) Improve connections to the Phoenix Trail

- Create new and improved links to the Phoenix Trail, integrated with safer walking and cycling routes for all across Thame.
- Where development opportunities arise, create new active frontages onto the Phoenix Trail, enhancing safety and security through natural surveillance.
- Improve attractiveness of the Phoenix Trail through general maintenance, unobtrusive lighting and new public art.



### 2) A Thame walking route with connections to the countryside

- A leisure and recreation walking route around Thame connecting green spaces and community facilities.
- Connected to routes that extend out into the countryside and link with the villages around Thame.
- Could be expanded to include safe walking and cycling routes to Haddenham & Thame Parkway station.



### 3) A town-wide network of mobility hubs

- Hubs providing a range of transport solutions including car share, EV charging points, bike and scooter hire, providing alternatives to the car for short journeys. Could incorporate Park and Ride at appropriate locations.
- Located around Thame at key destinations, such as the town centre, employment areas and community facilities.
- Potentially combined with bus stops and 'community kiosks', providing a point for collection of goods and sharing of equipment used for home maintenance.



### 4) A connected network of green streets and spaces

- Street tree planting and greening programme along verges or areas of unused space, at large junctions for example. Less parking in the town centre could create new amenity space.
- Introduction of wildflowers that enhance biodiversity.
- Introduction of 'raingardens' that manage surface runoff from heavy rainfall and reduce risk of flooding.



To find out more about the Neighbourhood Plan please visit the Town Council website:  
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SCAN FOR MORE INFO



**THAME**  
Town Council

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW  
QUESTIONNAIRE  
PLEASE RETURN BY 7 FEBRUARY 2022

## INTRODUCTION

Thank you for responding to consultation on the review of the Thame Neighbourhood Plans over the summer.

In response to feedback received during the last consultation we are now presenting a range of sites that might have potential for new employment or housing development.

Please let us know what you think about the sites by completing this survey.

The survey is open until Monday 7 February 2022.

All information can be viewed on the Neighbourhood Plan Review page of the Town Council website:

<https://www.thametowncouncil.gov.uk/thame-town-council/thame-neighbourhood-plan-revision/>

## VISION AND OBJECTIVES

When providing responses to the potential sites please consider these against the vision and objectives for Thame, which were strongly supported during the last consultation. These are:

VISION:

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

OBJECTIVES:

- 1/ Thame must continue to feel 'compact'
- 2/ Thame must continue to have a close relationship with the open countryside around it
- 3/ Thame must retain its markets
- 4/ Thame must continue to act as a centre for the surrounding area, not just residents
- 5/ Thame must remain attractive to residents and visitors



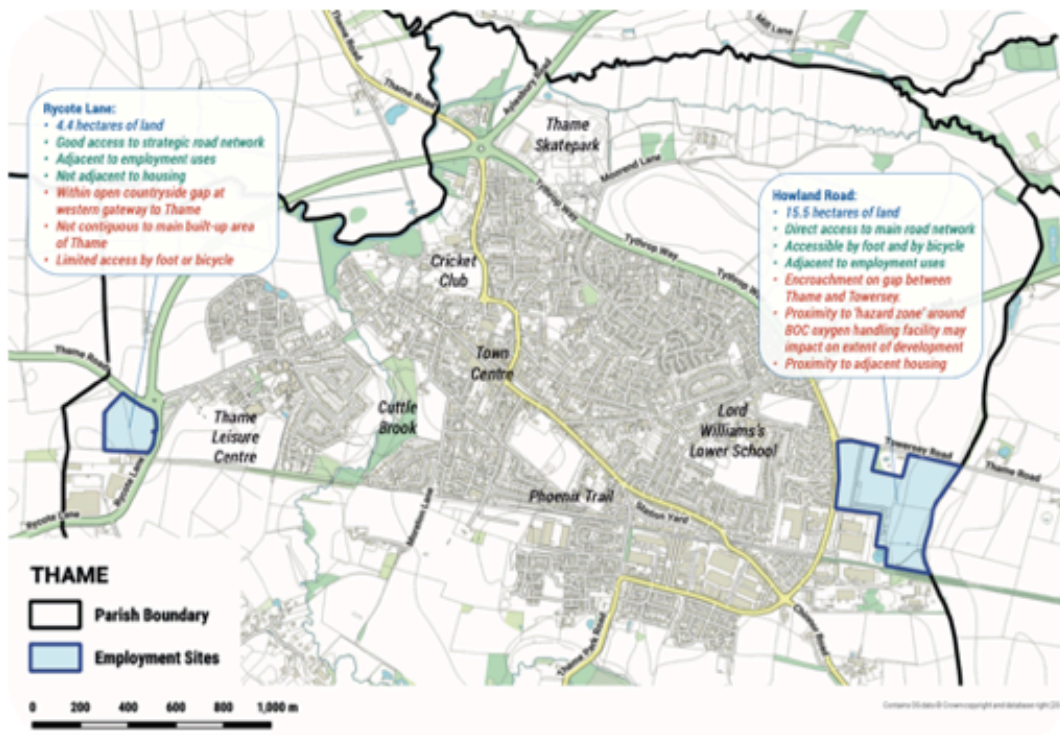
## EMPLOYMENT LAND

The South Oxfordshire Local Plan requires a minimum of 3.5 hectares of land for employment uses to be allocated for development in the Thame Neighbourhood Plan.

Land east of Howland Road was presented last time. Land adjacent to the road frontage was broadly supported.

However, it has been suggested that a wider area of land be considered appropriate, along with an alternative site at Bycote Lane. These are presented below. The site boundaries and areas shown are based on those submitted by site promoters for consideration. This does not necessarily mean that the entirety of that site will be allocated for development.

Please tell us which locations you think are most appropriate for new employment land, using the table overleaf.



Note: Aspects in favour of the sites are indicated with green text in the annotations, with those against in red text.



**THAME**  
Town Council

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW  
QUESTIONNAIRE  
PLEASE RETURN BY 7 FEBRUARY 2022

- 1) Please indicate your preferred site for employment land and explain why. Please also include any other comments you have.

Site	Preference Please tick	Reasons / Comments.
Howland Road		
<del>Rycote Lane</del>		



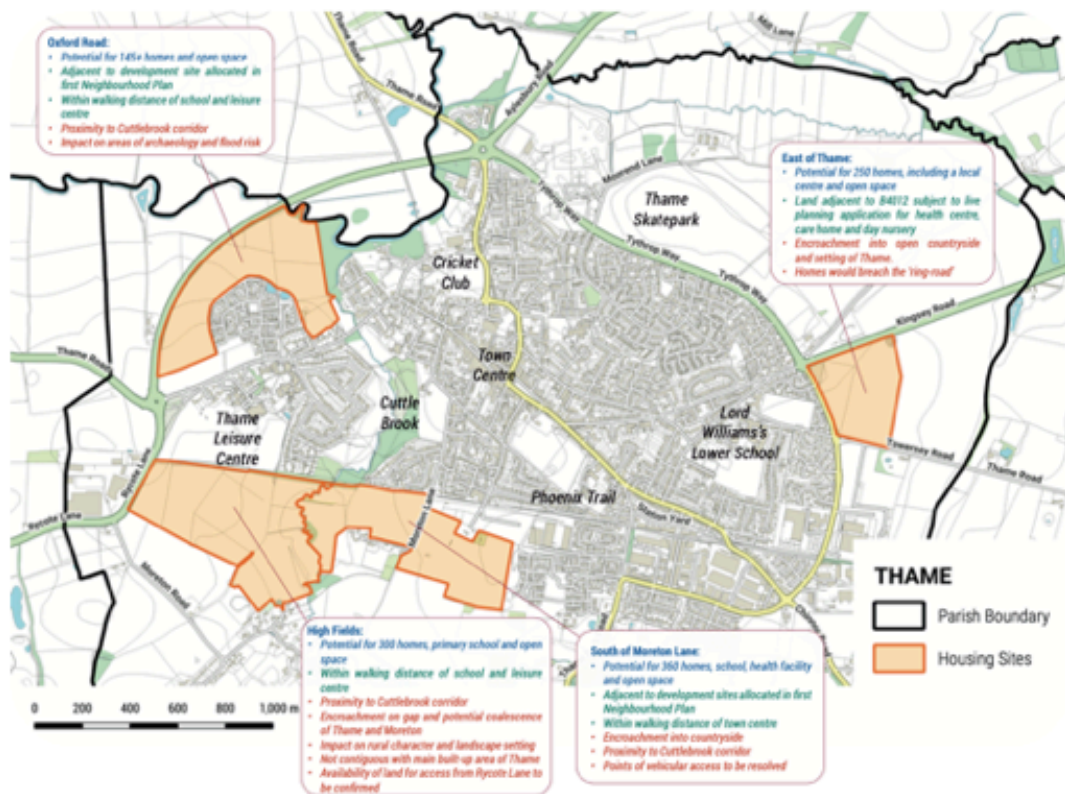


## HOUSING SITES

The South Oxfordshire Local Plan requires land for at least 339 new homes to be allocated in the Thame Neighbourhood Plan. A number of smaller sites were previously presented. Some of these are now coming forward through the planning process and which may contribute towards this figure.

However, it is likely that a larger site or parts of larger sites may be needed to meet the requirements. Based on feedback from the last consultation, a range of sites are presented below. The site boundaries and areas shown are based on those submitted by site promoters for consideration. This does not necessarily mean that the entirety of that site will be available for development.

Please tell us which locations you think are most appropriate for new housing, using the table overleaf.



Notes: Aspects in favour of the sites are indicated with green text in the annotations, with those against in red text.  
All development figures based on information provided by site promoters, except for Oxford Road, where the figure is estimated based on the area of land outside areas of flood risk and archaeological interest, with an average density of 30 homes per hectare then applied to this



**THAME**  
Town Council

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW  
QUESTIONNAIRE  
PLEASE RETURN BY 7 FEBRUARY 2022

**2) Please indicate your preferred site(s) for housing and explain why. Please also include any other comments you have.**

Site	Preference Please tick	Reasons / Comments
East of Thame		
High Fields		
Oxford Road		
South of Moreton Lane		



### WIDER IDEAS

In response to comments made through the last consultation event about movement, climate change and relationship with the countryside, a series of concept ideas for inclusion in the review of the Plan have been prepared. They are introduced below. Are they heading in the right direction? Please let us know your thoughts about these.

#### 3) Improve connections to the Phoenix Trail:

Ideas	Is this idea heading in the right direction? Please tick one			Comments
	Yes	No	Not Sure	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Create new and improved links to the Phoenix Trail, integrated with safer walking and cycling routes for all across Thame.</li><li>• Where development opportunities arise, create new active frontages onto the Phoenix Trail, enhancing safety and security through natural surveillance.</li><li>• Improve attractiveness of the Phoenix Trail through general maintenance, unobtrusive lighting and new public art.</li></ul>				

Are there any existing routes to the Phoenix Trail that you think need improving?  
Where might new routes be provided?



**4) A Thame walking route with connections to the countryside:**

Ideas	Is this idea heading in the right direction? Please tick one			Comments
	Yes	No	Not Sure	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A leisure and recreation walking route around Thame connecting green spaces and community facilities.</li><li>• Connected to routes that extend out into the countryside and link with the villages around Thame.</li><li>• Could be expanded to include safe walking and cycling routes to Haddenham &amp; Thame Parkway station.</li></ul>				

Are there any existing routes and connections to the countryside that you think need improving?  
Where might new routes be provided?



**5) A town-wide network of mobility hubs:**

Ideas	Is this idea heading in the right direction? Please tick one			Comments
	Yes	No	Not Sure	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hubs providing a range of transport solutions including car share, EV charging points, bike and scooter hire, providing alternatives to the car for short journeys. Could incorporate Park and Ride at appropriate locations .</li><li>• Located around Thame at key destinations, such as the town centre, employment areas and community facilities.</li><li>• Potentially combined with bus stops and 'community kiosks', providing a point for collection of goods and sharing of equipment used for home maintenance.</li></ul>				

Where could mobility hubs be located in Thame?

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**6) A connected network of green streets and spaces:**

Ideas	Is this idea heading in the right direction? Please tick one			Comments
	Yes	No	Not Sure	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Street tree planting and greening programme along verges or areas of unused space, at large junctions for example. Less parking in the town centre could create new amenity space.</li><li>• Introduction of wildflowers that enhance biodiversity.</li><li>• Introduction of 'raingardens' that manage surface runoff from heavy rainfall and reduce risk of flooding.</li></ul>				

What streets and spaces might benefit from new greenery?

**7) Do you have any other ideas or priorities for change or development in Thame?**



**THAME**  
Town Council

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW  
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### YOUR DETAILS

It is important to understand the demographics of those undertaking the survey to establish trends in different genders, age categories or stakeholders in Thame to provide a plan for the community. Please tell us the following:

#### 8) Gender

Male	Female	Other	Would rather not say
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#### 9) Age

Under 18	18-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	Over 65	Would rather not say

#### 10) Are you:

A Resident of Thame	
A Visitor to Thame	
An Employee in Thame	
A business or organisation in Thame (if so, please provide the name of organisation)	
An agent, landowner, or developer (if so, please provide the name of organisation, and whom you are acting on behalf of)	
Other (please specify)	

#### 11) If you would like to be kept updated on the Neighbourhood Plan, please provide your email address:

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### DATA PROTECTION

Data is being collected by Troy Planning and Design on behalf of Thame Town Council. Data in this questionnaire will be analysed to inform the contents of the Neighbourhood Plan. Anonymous data may be shared as evidence that the Plan reflects the aspirations of the community. Email addresses will only be used as stated and will not be shared with third parties.

If you wish your data to be removed or to change your contact preferences, please email: [info@troyplanning.com](mailto:info@troyplanning.com). Please see our privacy and data retention terms at: <https://troyplanning.com>.

## THAME NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW

### QUESTION:

**Does Thame have to deliver 339 homes through the revised TNP?**

### ANSWER:

339 is the number given to Thame by the District Council. Since those 339 were passed on to us, some more housing has come forward and we can take that off that total.

This includes homes that have received planning permission, like those on the old DAF Headquarters site. It also includes some on sites that do not yet have planning permission, but that it is reasonable to count. For example, an application for 57 homes has been made on Reserve Site C, south of Wenman Road.

**Due to these new sites coming forward, we now think that we will have to find room for fewer than 200 out of the original 339 homes.**

Thame also has to work out how many homes it must plan for to help its residents who have special needs. Some of these might be able to be provided instead of the District's homes, but others might need to be provided in addition to them. We are currently working towards finding out what these special needs are.

**[WWW.THAMETOWNCOUNCIL.GOV.UK/TNP2](http://WWW.THAMETOWNCOUNCIL.GOV.UK/TNP2)**

## THAME NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW

### QUESTION:

**What is meant by 'specialist housing'?**

### ANSWER:

We have a duty to provide specialist housing under the District's planning policy. We currently have multiple sites across Thame where developers want to build care homes for the elderly. These commercial schemes have focused on the most lucrative provision.

Thame believes that all of our elderly housing needs should be investigated and, where possible, provided for.

Thame also has major issues concerning housing affordability and we believe we should try and help local families stay in the Thame area.

**[WWW.THAMETOWNCOUNCIL.GOV.UK/TNP2](http://WWW.THAMETOWNCOUNCIL.GOV.UK/TNP2)**



## THAME NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW

### QUESTION:

**Will all the new homes will be delivered in one location?**

### ANSWER:

There are several sites around the town that will count to the homes we have to build, including some that already have planning permission. Any remaining homes will need to go on one or more of the 4 major sites. With the numbers remaining being relatively low, it is preferable that the homes go on one site, rather than having several 'half-filled' sites which may attract further, uncontrolled development in the future.

[WWW.THAMETOWNCOUNCIL.GOV.UK/TNP2](http://WWW.THAMETOWNCOUNCIL.GOV.UK/TNP2)

## THAME NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW

### QUESTION:

**Why have the CEG and Diagnostic Reagents, and the Cattle Market sites been removed from this consultation?**

### ANSWER:

The use of these sites for housing was well supported during the last consultation and they are very likely to be included within the draft Thame Neighbourhood Plan. The CEG site was an allocated Reserve Site for the last Thame Neighbourhood Plan, and already has a planning application on it for 57 homes.

[WWW.THAMETOWNCOUNCIL.GOV.UK/TNP2](http://WWW.THAMETOWNCOUNCIL.GOV.UK/TNP2)

## THAME NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW

### QUESTION:

**Were the Highfields and East of Thame housing sites rejected in the first consultation? If so, why have they been included in this consultation?**

### ANSWER:

For the first consultation, both the Highfields and East of Thame housing sites were examined, but not initially highlighted for growth as there were concerns with how they performed against the Vision and Objectives of the Thame Neighbourhood Plan. There were also landscape concerns over both of these sites. Some members of the public were, however, not happy to have had them discounted as an option at the earliest stage and felt they wanted to know more about them.

**[WWW.THAMETOWNCOUNCIL.GOV.UK/TNP2](http://WWW.THAMETOWNCOUNCIL.GOV.UK/TNP2)**

## THAME NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW

### QUESTION:

**Will TNP2 deliver a new school?**

### ANSWER:

We hope to have the answer from the County Council's School Planning Team very soon. Although new homes will bring more children, natural variation in birth rates in and around Thame means that it might not be necessary to provide a new primary school.

Lord Williams's School is likely to expand to 12-form entry under its current growth plans. From that point onwards, it may cater for future growth by shrinking or expanding its catchment area as necessary.

**[WWW.THAMETOWNCOUNCIL.GOV.UK/TNP2](http://WWW.THAMETOWNCOUNCIL.GOV.UK/TNP2)**

## THAME NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW

### **QUESTION:**

**Will TNP2 deliver a new health hub (near the Rugby Club)?**

### **ANSWER:**

There is already a live planning application for a new facility for Thame GPs on this site. The wider site does not have to be used to help with the delivery of new health services.

**[WWW.THAMETOWNCOUNCIL.GOV.UK/TNP2](http://WWW.THAMETOWNCOUNCIL.GOV.UK/TNP2)**

## THAME NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW

### **QUESTION:**

**Would the High Fields or South of Moreton Lane developments result in Thame losing the road-free footpath connecting Thame and Moreton?**

### **ANSWER:**

Neither site would harm the current footpaths serving Moreton, and neither proposal suggests sending vehicle traffic along Moreton Lane itself.

**[WWW.THAMETOWNCOUNCIL.GOV.UK/TNP2](http://WWW.THAMETOWNCOUNCIL.GOV.UK/TNP2)**

## THAME NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW

### QUESTION:

**Can the Cuttle Brook Nature Reserve be extended?**

### ANSWER:

Extending the CBNR is being offered by the promoters of land at High Fields and South of Moreton Lane. The land has been identified as unsuitable for development, being mostly flood plain.

Although the public would benefit from an extension to the CBNR, it is possible that any extension in this area would have to remain closed to the public. This is because the current CBNR is suffering from over-use and the plants, wildlife and water quality of the Cuttlebrook are being harmed. A closed extension would provide a buffer area where plants and animals could live without disturbance which should help with the continual repopulation of depleted areas.

**[WWW.THAMETOWNCOUNCIL.GOV.UK/TNP2](http://WWW.THAMETOWNCOUNCIL.GOV.UK/TNP2)**

## THAME NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW

**"The High Fields site will deliver a 30-acre expansion to the Cuttlebrook Nature Reserve"**

### FACT CHECK:

Potentially true.

Areas within the flood plain are of very little value in development terms and may not be of great value to the farmer. Three of the four sites have areas prone to flooding and if carefully managed could provide areas for leisure, increasing habitats and reducing flood risk.

The possibility exists that public access to any future extension area, anywhere along the Cuttlebrook may have to be restricted or prohibited to help our natural assets flourish.

**[WWW.THAMETOWNCOUNCIL.GOV.UK/TNP2](http://WWW.THAMETOWNCOUNCIL.GOV.UK/TNP2)**

## THAME NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW

**"The High Fields site is the only site that can deliver an extension to the Phoenix Trail."**

### **FACT CHECK:**

False.

The Phoenix Trail already connects to National Cycle Route 57, which serves Rycote Lane and provides an onward cycle route through to Gloucestershire. More direct access to Rycote Lane could be provided without development; parts of the Phoenix Trail immediately adjacent, next to the South of Moreton Lane site has for many years been leased by the owner to Sustrans, the cycle charity.

**[WWW.THAMETOWNCOUNCIL.GOV.UK/TNP2](http://WWW.THAMETOWNCOUNCIL.GOV.UK/TNP2)**

## THAME NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW

**"The High Fields site would have its own access off Rycote Lane."**

### **FACT CHECK:**

Not known.

The access off Rycote Lane is in the ownership of a local family trust. It is not known if or when access could be agreed across this land.

**[WWW.THAMETOWNCOUNCIL.GOV.UK/TNP2](http://WWW.THAMETOWNCOUNCIL.GOV.UK/TNP2)**

## THAME NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW

**"The High Fields site will provide 120 affordable homes (rent / shared ownership / first homes)"**

### **FACT CHECK:**

False.

This would be the level of provision if 300 homes were required, which is highly unlikely to be the case. Whatever site gets chosen, the owner / developer would have to provide 40% of the homes on their sites as affordable homes.

**[WWW.THAMETOWNCOUNCIL.GOV.UK/TNP2](http://WWW.THAMETOWNCOUNCIL.GOV.UK/TNP2)**

## THAME NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW

**"The High Fields site will provide 8 acres of land next to Lord Williams for additional school and community use."**

### **FACT CHECK:**

The Town Council does not believe Lord Williams's needs any additional land.

Thame may not need a new primary school. Any general community use should be accessible by public transport, but it is not known if commercial operators could run a viable service to this site, even if housing expanded in numbers.

**[WWW.THAMETOWNCOUNCIL.GOV.UK/TNP2](http://WWW.THAMETOWNCOUNCIL.GOV.UK/TNP2)**



**NO PLAN IS PERFECT BUT WITHOUT A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN, WE HAVE NO CONTROL OVER DEVELOPMENT IN THAME AND THERE IS A RISK OF MORE DEVELOPMENT IN EVEN LESS FAVOURABLE LOCATIONS.**

**THE CHOICE IS NOT 'HAVE HOMES' VERSUS 'DON'T HAVE HOMES'. THE CHOICE IS TO EITHER LET THE DEVELOPER BUILD WHAT THEY THINK IS RIGHT OR TO GET THEM TO BUILD WHAT LOCAL PEOPLE NEED.**

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**Thame Neighbourhood Plan Review: TNP2**

Consultation Summary:

Second Consultation

March 2022





Thame Town Council

**Thame Neighbourhood Plan (TNP2)**

Consultation Statement, February 2024

Volume 3a: Report of consultation on Development Sites  
and Wider Policy Ideas

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