

Welcome



The story so far:

- The Parish Council has been preparing a Neighbourhood Plan for Great Bardfield.
- We have now reached a major milestone and are commencing consultation on the Draft Plan.
- Consultation lasts until **Friday 2 August**, a period of 8 weeks.
- This exhibition provides a brief summary of the Plan, illustrating the planning policies and proposed community aspirations that are contained in the Plan.

What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

It is a relatively new kind of planning document designed to allow local people to play an active part in planning for their area.

When complete, the Plan will form part of the statutory development plan for the area, meaning Braintree District Council and Planning Inspectors will have to take note of what it says when they consider planning applications.

The Neighbourhood Plan sits alongside national and local planning policies when decisions are made on planning applications



Over the next 7 weeks you have an opportunity to read the Plan and submit your comments.



WE NEED YOUR VIEWS BY 2 AUGUST
Why not comment as you go round by accessing the comments form from your mobile phone using the QR code?

Plan Preparation Process



How the Plan is prepared

There are several stages that must be completed, as illustrated. These stages are governed by the regulations for preparing neighbourhood plans and so there is no short cut.



The Plan

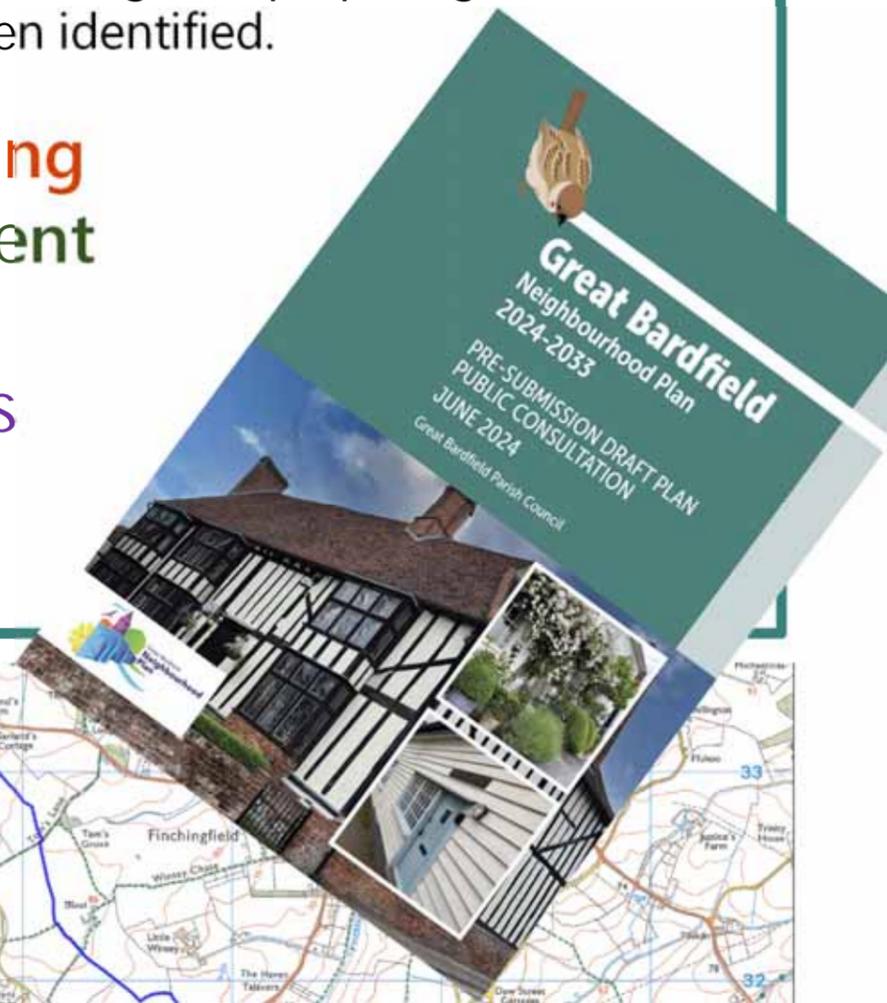


Plan Contents

The Plan itself runs to 60 pages and is necessarily quite complex in places. This is because it will be used by Braintree District Council and Government Planning Inspectors to decide whether planning applications should be approved.

Based on the issues identified by you during the initial stages of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan, the following themes have been identified.

- **Development Location and Housing**
- **Landscape and Natural Environment**
- **Built Environment**
- **Community Services and Facilities**
- **The Local Economy**
- **Highways and Travel**



The Plan contains:

Planning Policies

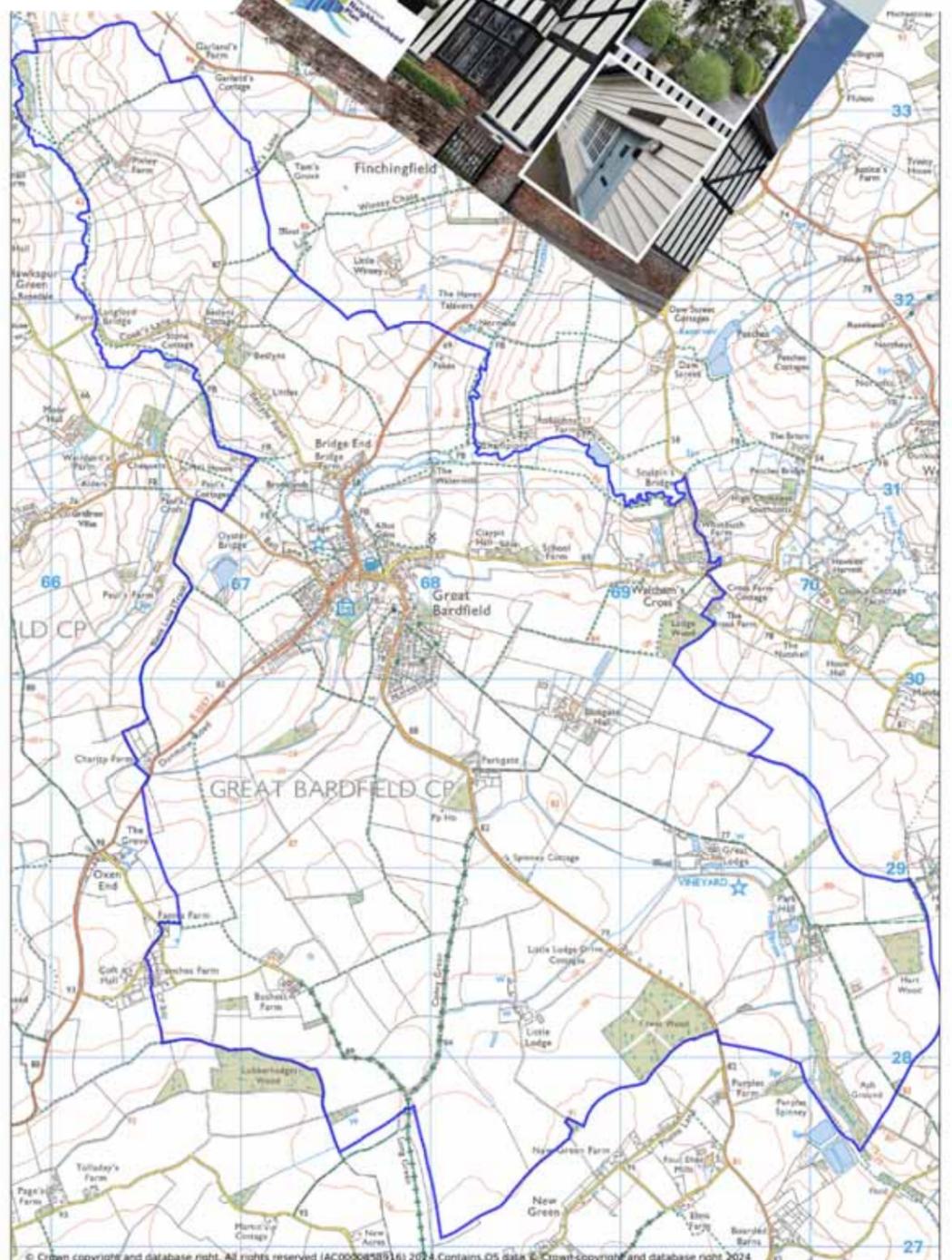
These will be used to supplement the Local Plan when decisions on planning applications are made.

Planning policies can only cover matters that would require planning permission, so they can't, for example, tackle speeding.

Community Aspirations

These are non-planning matters that will address matters of concern raised by residents during the preparation of the Plan.

All the Planning Policies and Community Aspirations are reproduced on the boards that follow.



What the Local Plan says



A Local Plan for the Braintree district was adopted in 2021.

It designates Great Bardfield as a "Second Tier Village", and states:

"Second Tier villages are those which may not serve a wider hinterland but provide the ability for some day to day needs to be met, although they lack the full range of facilities of a Key Service Villages."

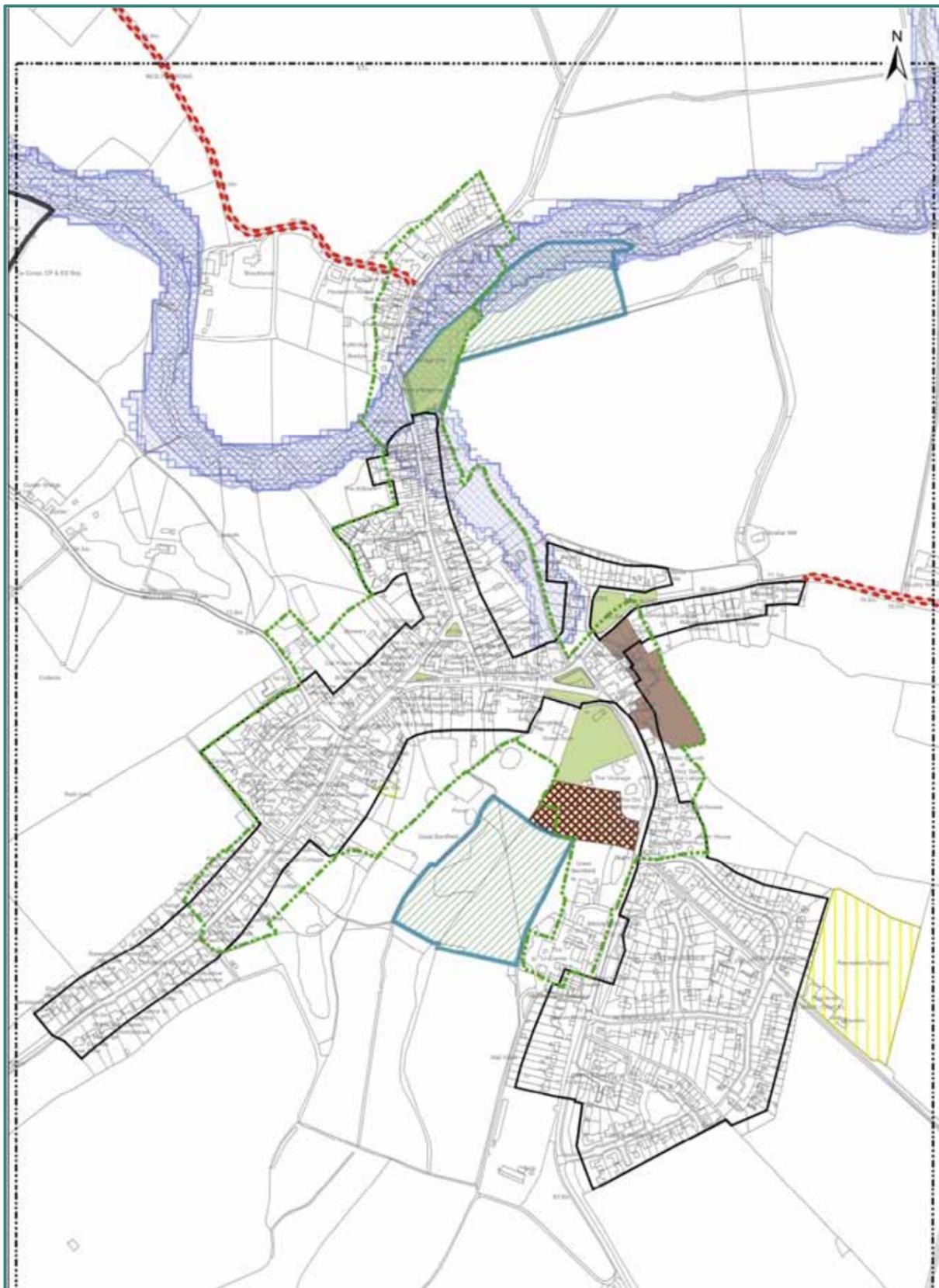
Development of a small scale may be considered sustainable within a Second Tier village, subject to the specific constraints and opportunities of that village."

The Local Plan does not identify any additional sites for housing in Great Bardfield.



Neighbourhood Plans cannot contradict the main government planning policies or the strategic policies in the Local Plan for the area.

For example, they cannot propose less development than is planned for in the adopted Local Plan.



The map illustrates the Local Plan designations for Great Bardfield.

The black line illustrates the "Development Boundary".

Local Plan Policy LPP 1 - Development Boundaries states:

"Within development boundaries, development will be permitted where it satisfies amenity, design, environmental and highway criteria and where it can take place without material adverse detriment to the existing character and historic interest of the settlement."

Development outside development boundaries will be confined to uses appropriate to the countryside whilst also protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils to protect the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside."

Key: Local Plan 2013-2033

District Boundary	Designer Outlet Centre	Formal Recreation
Inset Map	Strategic Growth Location	Informal Recreation
Development Boundary	Residential Site 10 or more Dwellings	Allotments
Conservation Area	Specialist Housing	Visually Important Space
Road Proposal	Proposed Gypsy/Travellers Site	Structural Landscaping
Halstead Bypass Corridor	Business Use	Local Wildlife Site
Protected Lanes	Employment Policy Area	Cemetery/Churchyard
2033 Cycleway	Comprehensive Development Area	Local Nature Reserve
Local Centre	Special Employment Area	Green Buffer
District Centre	Vehicle Storage	Suitable Accessible Natural Greenspace
Town Centre	Transport Related Policy Area	Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
Primary Shopping Area	Regeneration Area	Historic Parks and Gardens
Primary Frontage	Education	Scheduled monument
Secondary Frontage	Car Park	Flood Zone 2
Retail & Town Centre Uses	Community Uses	Flood Zone 3
Retail Warehousing	Leisure and Entertainment	Flood Zone 3B

Vision and Objectives



Neighbourhood Plan Vision

To conserve and protect Great Bardfield's characteristics as a village within its rural environment whilst ensuring that it is a vibrant, safe, welcoming and greener community, providing an attractive location for people of all ages to live, learn and work.

The Vision translates into the following Objectives that cover the six Plan themes

Development Location and Housing

- To support the development of small scale housing sites in the Parish to meet local needs which are at an affordable level relative to the average local income.
- To ensure that any new housing scheme includes an appropriate mix of housing types suitable for all age groups.

Landscape and Natural Environment

- To protect and enhance the countryside within the Parish, including important ecological sites, trees, hedgerows and watercourses, together with the village greens and other green spaces in Great Bardfield.
- To encourage green initiatives within the community for a cleaner and healthier future.
- To protect important views from both outside and within Great Bardfield, particularly those featuring in the works of the Bardfield artists.

Built Environment

- To protect and enhance the parish's many heritage assets and ensure that any development serves to make a positive contribution to the existing environment.
- To ensure that the landscape surrounding the Great Bardfield conservation area is not fundamentally altered to the detriment of the village.
- To encourage and facilitate the installation and uptake of renewable energy for the existing housing stock and business properties.
- To ensure that the design, style and density of any new housing scheme is in keeping with the character of Great Bardfield and built to a high sustainability standard.
- To ensure that all planning applications for new housing in the Parish shall include renewable energy technology for each unit built.

Community Services and Facilities

- To continue to provide opportunities for all ages for cultural, leisure, community, sport, religious and other activities within the Parish to foster a sense of community.
- To support enhancement and growth of education facilities in the village for all age groups.
- To sustain a vibrant, safe and welcoming village.
- To consider how best to accommodate green infrastructure such as electric car charging points in the village given the growth in this sector.

The Local Economy

- To promote the provision of high speed broadband in the Parish to aid local businesses and home workers.
- To support and enhance opportunities for local businesses and to encourage home working.
- To strengthen and enhance the existing village centre.
- To support and enhance the visitor economy, building on the legacy of the Bardfield artists.

Highways and Travel

- To improve car parking, traffic management and public transport for Great Bardfield.
- To improve conditions for walking and cycling through the village including promoting lower speed limits in the core of Great Bardfield.
- To ensure that any new developments do not exacerbate the current problems with parking, speeding and road safety.

DO YOU SUPPORT THE VISION AND OBJECTIVES?

Development Location



Context

- The adopted Local Plan identifies “Development Boundaries” for settlements which “*mark the existing built form of a town or village and represent the distinction between a built-up area and its surrounding countryside.*”
- Outside of the development boundaries, areas are considered to be 'countryside'. In these locations, development will be confined to uses appropriate to the countryside whilst also protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils to protect the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.
- Prior to the adoption of the Local Plan in 2022, the 2005 Braintree Local Plan defined a Development Boundary around the cluster of houses at Bridge End. Evidence of a grouping of houses around Bridge Farm north of the River Pant is clear on the 1897 Ordnance Survey map and today there are around 40 dwellings in this area.
- Preparing the Neighbourhood Plan has provided an opportunity to reinstate the Development Boundary for Bridge End, as illustrated on the map on the right.

Policy GBD 1 – Bridge End Development Boundary

A Development Boundary is defined at Bridge End, as identified on Map 2. Within The Development Boundary, development will be permitted where it satisfies amenity, design, environmental and highway criteria and where it can take place without material adverse detriment to the existing character and historic interest of the settlement.



Waltham's Cross

- Waltham's Cross is a small group of dwellings and farmsteads located to the east of the main village, as illustrated to the right.
- The Local Plan includes a policy (LPP39) concerning infill development within hamlets, which are defined as a nucleus of at least ten existing dwellings. However, it further states that:
“Properties which are situated substantially away from the classified road frontages, set within large grounds with a sizeable gap to neighbouring properties, or which are part of very small groups of less than ten dwellings, are not considered to form part of a hamlet.”
- There is no nucleus of ten dwellings in this area that would meet the definition of a hamlet for the purposes of Policy LPP39.
- Proposals for development in this area will be considered as being in the countryside and against the second paragraph of Local Plan Policy LPP1, reproduced on an earlier board.



DO YOU SUPPORT POLICY GBD 1?

Housing

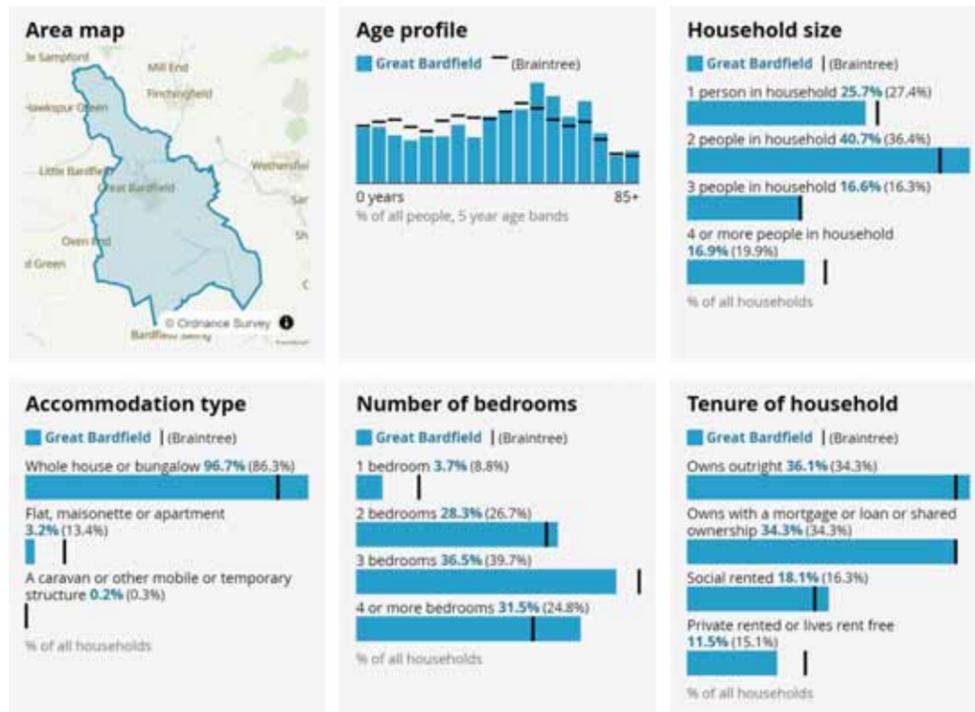


Context

- In 2020 the Parish Council secured the preparation of a Housing Needs Assessment as part of the Government's Neighbourhood Plan support package.
- The Assessment looked at the overall need for additional housing in the parish, affordability of housing and the needs of older households and those requiring specialist housing.
- The report forms part of the suite of evidence documents that support the Neighbourhood Plan and is available to view on the Neighbourhood Plan pages of the Parish Council website.
- In summary, the Housing Needs Assessment concluded that:
 - There is no need for additional housing to meet the general needs of the population;
 - There is some need for affordable housing both as affordable housing for sale and for rent; and
 - The provision of specialist housing (meaning residential care for the elderly, sheltered affordable rental housing or private retirement scheme) in the parish is not feasible.
- Given this evidence, and in accordance with the Settlement Strategy of the Local Plan, **the Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate any further sites for housing development during the period to 2033.**



Great Bardfield



Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

The Local Plan contains a number of up-to-date policies relating to the design and delivery of housing meaning that this Neighbourhood Plan does not need to repeat them.

In summary, those policies of relevance to Great Bardfield are:

- Policy LPP 32 Affordable Housing in Rural Areas
- Policy LPP 35 Housing Mix, Density and Accessibility
- Policy LPP 36 Residential Alterations, Extensions and Outbuildings
- Policy LPP 37 Replacement Dwellings in the Countryside
- Policy LPP 38 Rural Workers Dwellings in the Countryside
- Policy LPP 39 Infill Development in Hamlets
- Policy LPP 40 Residential Conversion of Buildings in the Countryside



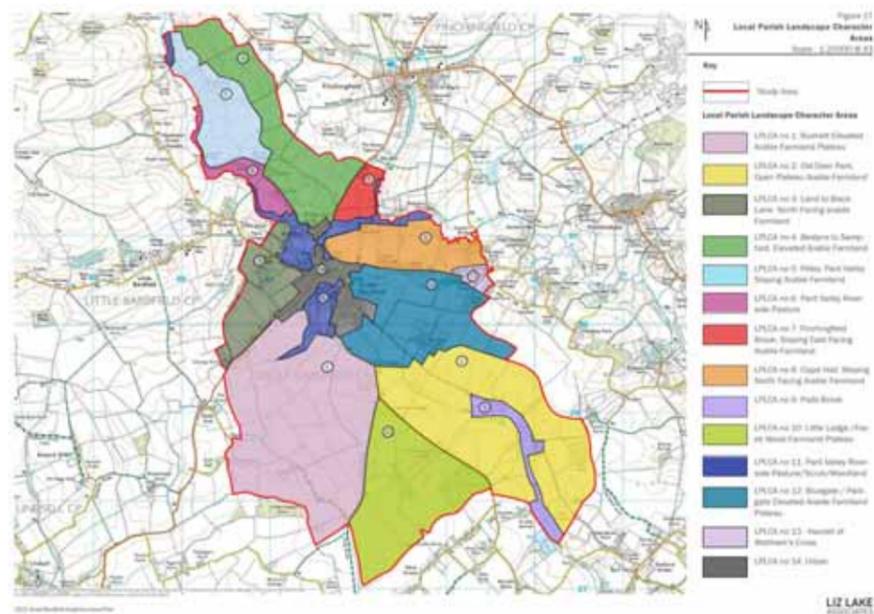
Landscape & Natural Environment

Context

- There are six County Wildlife Sites in the parish; Bridge End Meadows; Great Bardfield Marsh; Ash Ground; Foxes Wood; Lodge Wood; and Hart Wood.
- The latter three sites are also classified as ancient woodland.
- The Local Plan designates parts of Mill Road, Bell Lane, Beslyns Road and Cooks Lane as "Protected Lanes".
- Across the parish there are a number of deciduous woodlands that are identified as priority habitats and two small areas of traditional orchard.
- We had a Landscape Assessment prepared to support the content of the Plan.
- It identifies that "Great Bardfield's landscape setting on the valley-slopes of the River Pant and its tributary, the Bardfield Brook, is still overwhelmingly rural in character. There are numerous significant views out from the historic core of the settlement into the wider landscape, particularly to Gibraltar Mill and the Pant Valley and Bardfield Mill, as well as from the footpaths that run along the boundary of the Conservation Area."

Our landscape

- The Neighbourhood Plan Landscape Appraisal contains a set of generic guidelines for landscape management applicable across the whole parish, and which will be applied in relation to considering planning applications.
- Those guidelines are:
 - Conserve and manage the ecological structure of woodland, copses and hedgerows within the study area;
 - Conserve and enhance the existing hedgerow pattern where appropriate to local landscape character, and strengthen through planting with hawthorn where gappy and depleted;
 - Conserve and manage the ecological structure of pasture and meadows alongside the Pant and its tributaries;
 - Conserve historic lanes and unimproved roadside verges;
 - Use traditional management practices where possible.
 - Establish arable field margins as important nature conservation habitats.
 - Narrow, single track roads could be designated as Quiet Lanes.



Policy GBD 2 – Maintaining and Improving Great Bardfield's Landscape Character

Proposals that enhance the character of the landscape will be supported.

To conserve the essential landscape, heritage and rural character of the Neighbourhood Plan Area, development proposals shall, as proportionate to the development:

- demonstrate how the landscape characteristics of the site and its vicinity have informed the design of the proposal; and
- conserve and enhance the rural and landscape character and the setting of the built-up areas of the parish, having regard to Great Bardfield Landscape Assessment (August 2022).

Proposals for new buildings outside the Development Boundaries will be required to be accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, or other appropriate and proportionate evidence, that demonstrates how the proposal can be accommodated in the countryside without having a significant adverse impact, by reason of the building's scale, materials and location, on the character and appearance of the countryside and its distinction from the built-up area.



DO YOU SUPPORT POLICY GBD 2?

Landscape & Natural Environment



Important Views

- Both the Landscape Assessment and Great Bardfield Conservation Area Character Appraisal identified important views into and out of the built-up area of the village from publicly accessible points.
- There could be circumstances where a development proposal would have a significant detrimental impact on the key features of a view identified in the Appraisal and such a proposal would not be supported.

Policy GBD 3 - Protection of Important Views

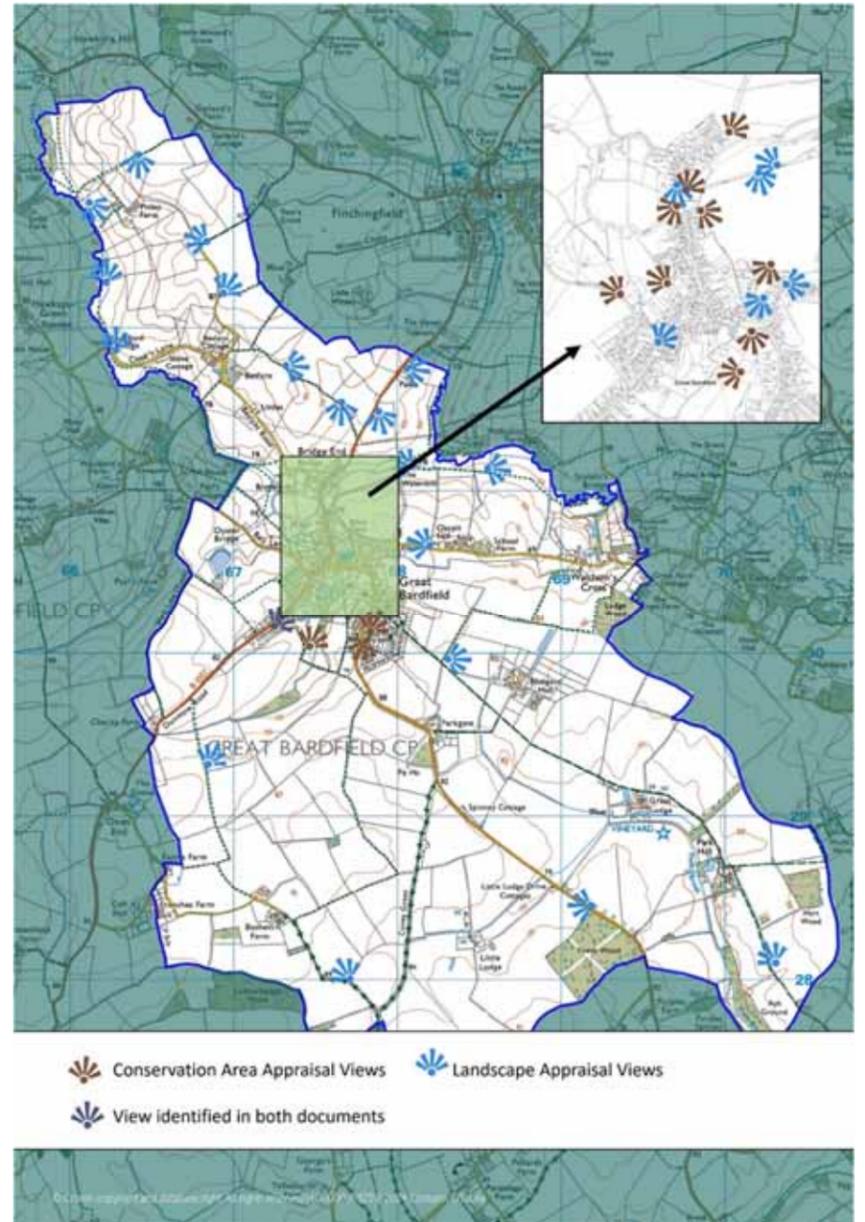
Important views from public vantage points, either within the built-up area or into or out of the surrounding countryside, are identified on Map 5 [right]. Development will not be supported where it would have a detrimental visual impact on the key landscape and built development features of these views, as identified in the Great Bardfield Landscape Assessment (August 2022).

Wildlife Habitats

- The loss of natural habitats as part of a development can have a significant detrimental impact on the wider landscape and opportunities for maintaining and improving the biodiversity of the area.
- The Environment Act 2021 places a statutory requirement for all appropriate developments to deliver a minimum 10 percent measurable net gain in biodiversity.
- The Neighbourhood Plan therefore supplements the requirements of the Local Plan by requiring new development to, as appropriate, deliver a minimum ten percent of measurable net gains in biodiversity. It also encourages development that is exempt from the national regulations to deliver biodiversity net gain.
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- While the parish has a good stock of trees it is important that we do not become complacent.
- The planting of new trees is encouraged if that characteristic is to remain for future generations. The Parish Council can play an important role in facilitating additional tree planting across the parish.

Community Aspiration 1 – Tree Planting

The Parish Council will proactively seek locations to continue tree planting throughout the parish and encourage residents, where possible, to plant appropriate local species in their gardens.



Policy GBD 4 – Protection of Trees, Hedgerows and other Natural Features

Qualifying development proposals are required to achieve a biodiversity net gain of at least 10 per cent, or the advised national minimum amount, whichever is greater, measured using the national biodiversity net gain calculation methodology.

Where previously developed land is exempted from biodiversity net gain under the relevant regulations, a minimum net gain will be encouraged but not be required, unless the site supports at least one protected or priority species population or habitat, or an assemblage of species with an otherwise demonstrably high biodiversity value.

Where new access is created, or an existing access is widened, through an existing hedgerow, a new hedgerow of native species shall be planted on the splay returns into the site to maintain the appearance and continuity of hedgerows in the vicinity.

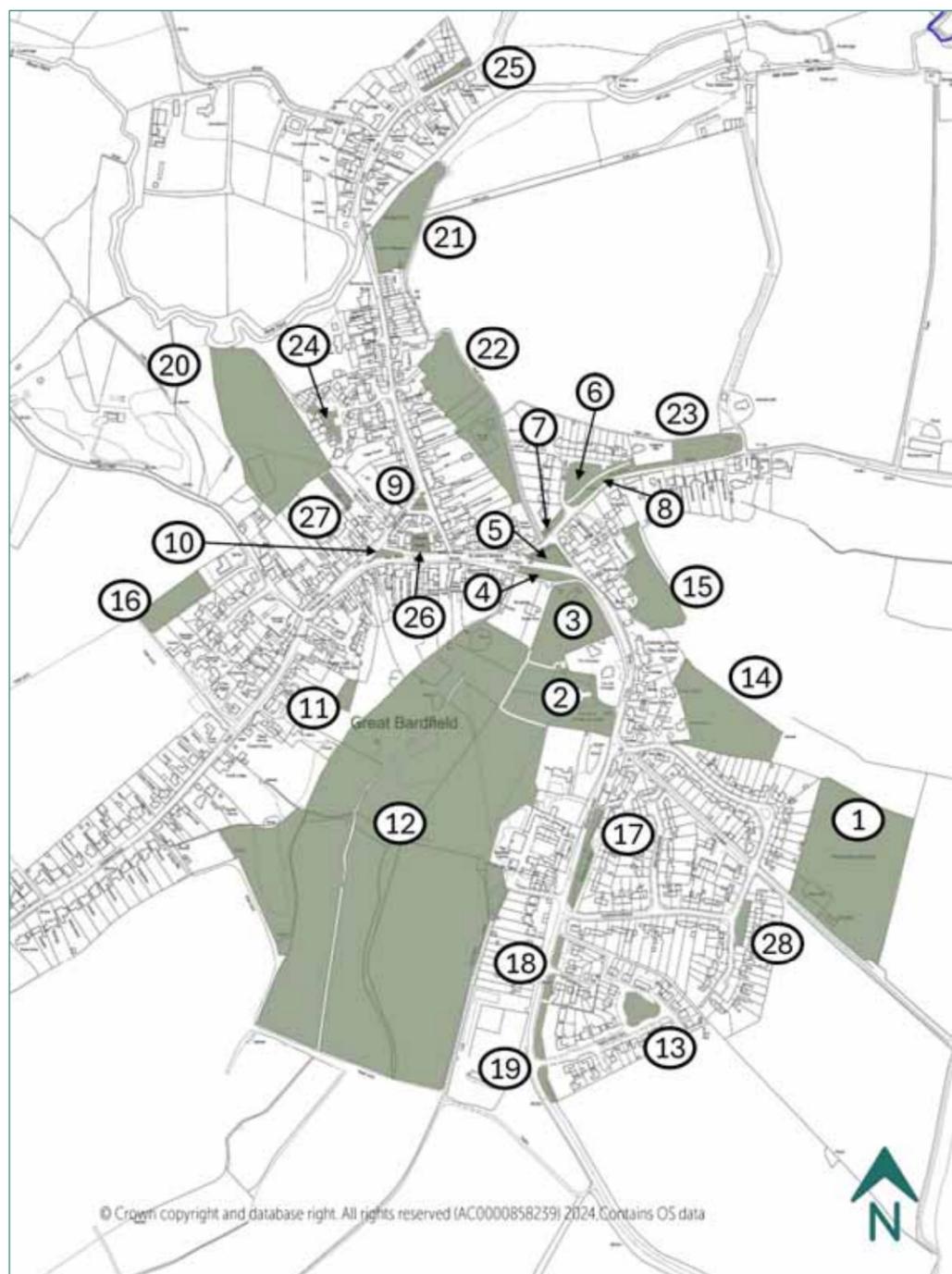


DO YOU SUPPORT POLICIES GBD 3, GBD 4 AND COMMUNITY ACTION 1?

Local Green Spaces



- National planning policy enables the designation and protection of land of particular importance to local communities as Local Green Spaces ('LGS') in neighbourhood plans.
- Government policy states that the designation should only be used where the green space is:
 - *in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;*
 - *demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example, because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and*
 - *where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.*
- It is recognised that the designation of Local Green Spaces should not be used simply to block development.
- Such designations rule out new development other than that allowed for if it were designated Green Belt. in very special circumstances.
- Our background work has identified 28 spaces that we feel meet the criteria.



Policy GBD 5 – Local Green Spaces

The following Local Green Spaces are designated in this Plan and identified on Map 6:

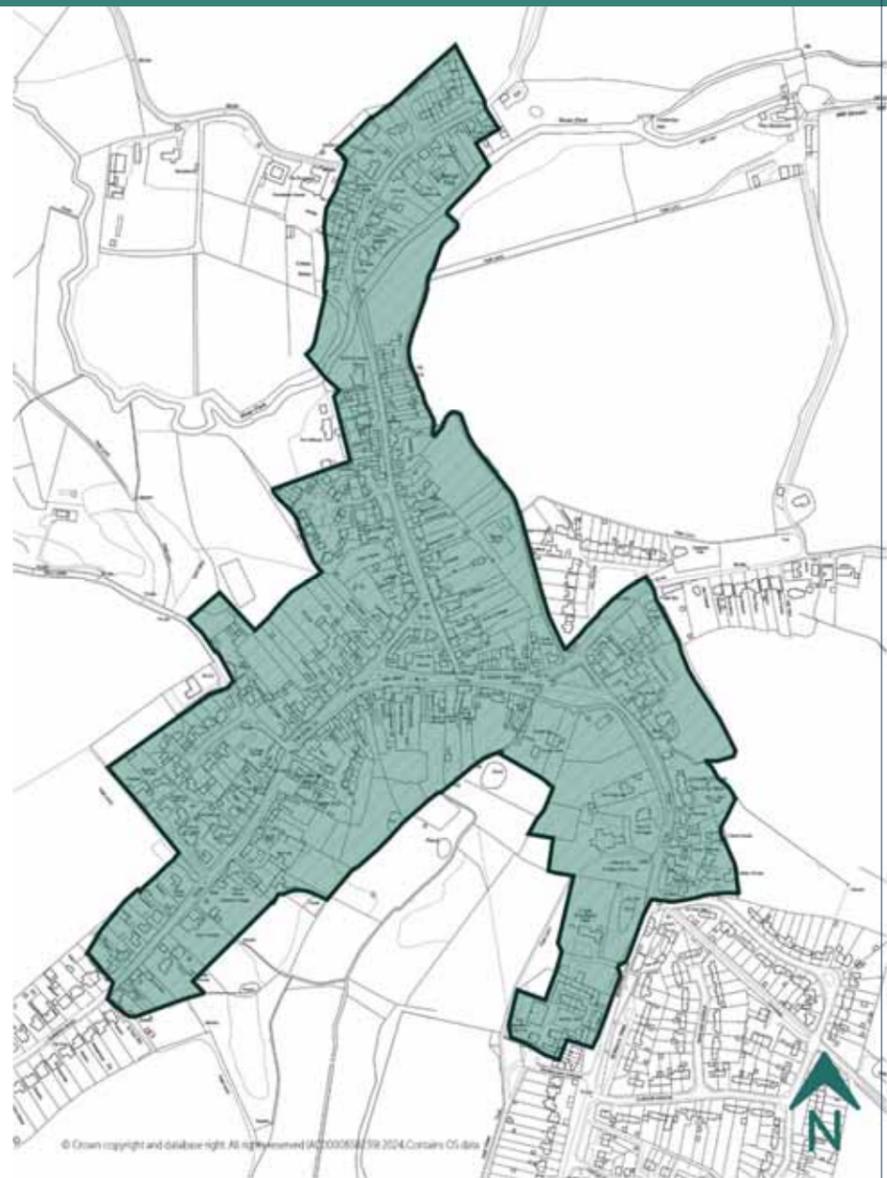
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|----|---|----|---------------------------------|
| 1 | Recreation Ground/Playing Field/Children's Playground | 15 | School Playing Field |
| 2 | St. Mary's Churchyard | 16 | Land Rear of Telephone Exchange |
| 3 | Glebe Meadow | 17 | St. Mary's Villas Verge |
| 4 | Causeway Green | 18 | Castle Shot Verge |
| 5 | School Green | 19 | Deer Park View Verge |
| 6 | Mill Close Green | 20 | Vine Meadow and allotments |
| 7 | Mill Close Verge | 21 | Piper's Meadows |
| 8 | Mill Road Verge | 22 | Land rear of Bridge Street |
| 9 | Crown Green | 23 | Land near Gibraltar Mill |
| 10 | Memorial Green | 24 | Northampton Meadow Green |
| 11 | Quiet Space | 25 | North Field Verge |
| 12 | The Valley of Bardfield Brook | 26 | Quakers Burial Ground |
| 13 | Deer Park View Green | 27 | The Vine Garden |
| 14 | Land off Bendlowes Road | 28 | Land at top of Aleinor Avenue |

Development in the Local Green Spaces will be consistent with national policy for the Green Belt.

DO YOU SUPPORT POLICY GBD 5?

Context

- The built environment covers both the historic buildings and features of the parish as well as the design of new development that will come forward during the lifetime of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- The parish contains 102 listed buildings, of which 73 are within the Great Bardfield Conservation Area which covers much of the built-up area of the village. A Conservation Area Appraisal was completed for the District Council in 2020
- The Conservation Area Appraisal identified six potential non-designated heritage assets in the Conservation Area, namely:
 - The Primary School, Braintree Road
 - Stone House, Braintree Road
 - Townsends, Braintree Road
 - Brookside and Meadowside Cottages, Mill Road
 - The Town Hall, High Street
 - Old Granary, Bridge Street
- The District Council commenced the process of creating a Local Heritage List in 2017 that could include these properties but, at the time of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan, there remained no Local Heritage List for Great Bardfield.



Community Aspiration 2 – Local Heritage List

The Parish Council will work with Braintree District Council to prepare a Local Heritage List for Great Bardfield to include the six potential non-designated heritage assets identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal and any other buildings in the parish and features considered worthy of inclusion.

- Policy LPP 53 of the Local Plan states that the preservation and enhancement of the character and appearance of designated Conservation Areas and their settings will be encouraged



Policy GBD 6 – Great Bardfield Conservation Area

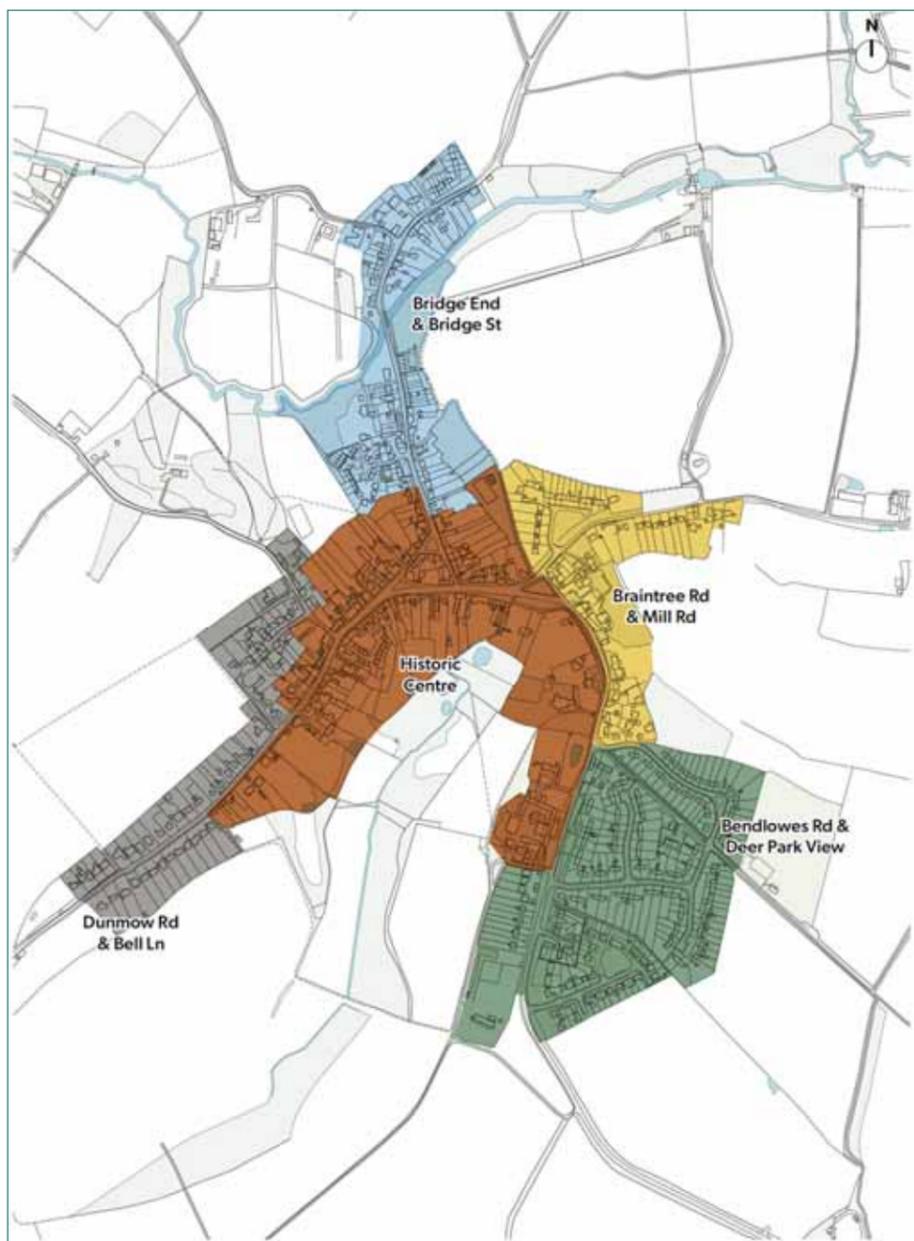
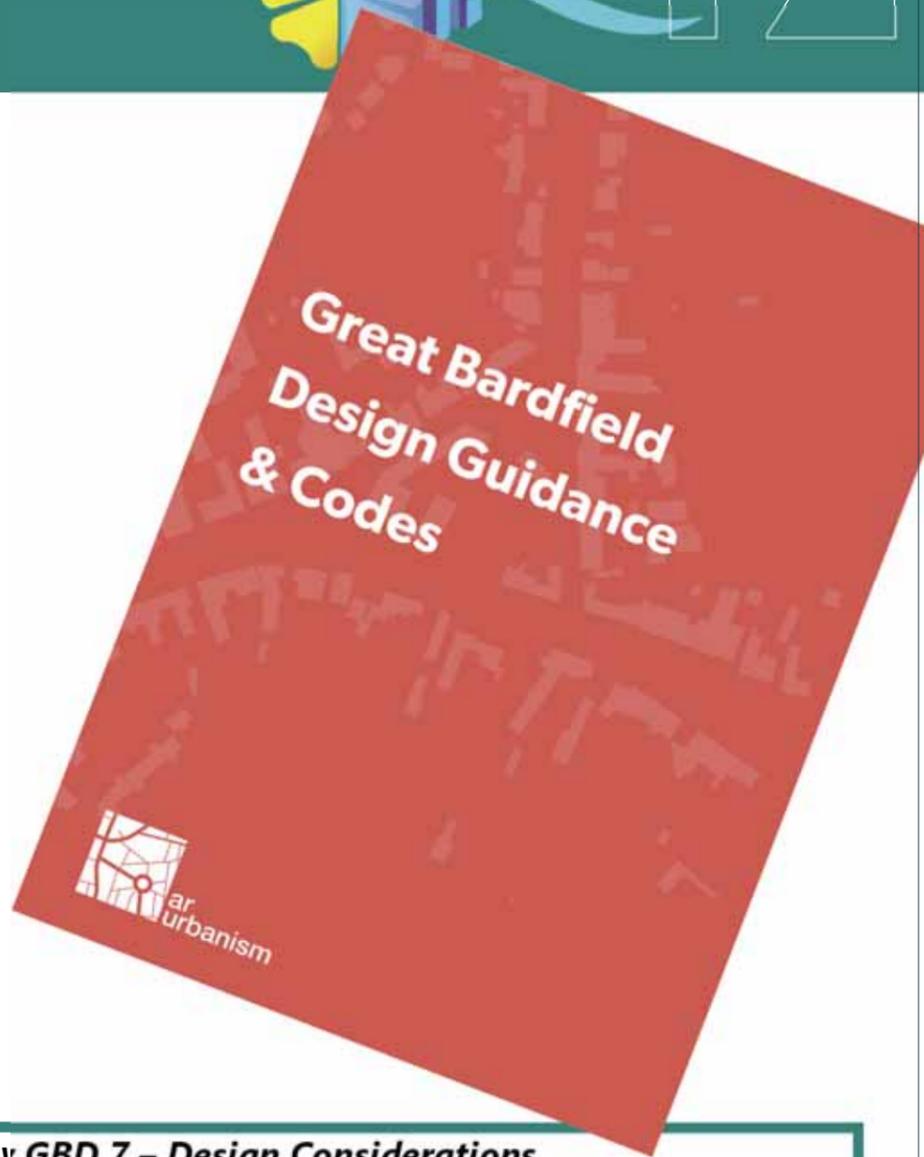
Proposals within, affecting the setting of, or affecting views into or out of, the Conservation Area, as illustrated on Map 7 [above], should:

- retain, and, where appropriate, enhance features that contribute positively to the area's special character, appearance and setting, including as identified in the Great Bardfield Conservation Area Appraisal; and
- where relevant and practical, remove features which have a negative impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area; and
- assess, and mitigate against, any negative impact the proposal might have on the townscape, roofscape, skyline and landscape of the Conservation Area; and
- aim to protect trees, or where losses are proposed, demonstrate how such losses are appropriately mitigated against.

With the exception of provision for visitor parking, proposals that rely on on-street provision in the Conservation Area to meet the Essex Vehicle Parking Standards will not be supported.

Context

- Design Guidelines and Codes have been prepared for the parish by AR Urbanism design consultants and grant funded.
- The document is published as supporting evidence to the Neighbourhood Plan and seeks to inform the design that any future development should follow.
- The Design Guidance and Codes build upon the work and content of the Village Design Statement, in particular updating the extent of the character areas identified in the Village Design Statement and the Conservation Area Appraisal.
- It provides guidance for identified character areas as well as providing parish-wide guidance.
- Development proposals will be expected to have regard to the design guidance for the character areas, reproduced below, as well as the parish-wide guidance.



The Character Areas

Policy GBD 7 – Design Considerations

Proposals for new development must, as appropriate to the proposal, demonstrate how the proposal addresses the Character Area Guidance, as identified in the Great Bardfield Design Guidelines and Codes, and create and contribute to a high quality, safe and sustainable environment.

In addition, all planning applications should demonstrate how they satisfy the requirements of the Development Design Checklist in Appendix 4 of this Plan.



DO YOU SUPPORT POLICY GBD 7?

Community Services & Facilities 13

Context

- The village has a wide range of services and facilities that meet the day to day needs of residents as well as the many visitors to the village.
- These include a primary school, local supermarket, specialist shops, public houses and the Town Hall. It is vital that the facilities that serve residents' needs are maintained and, where feasible, complemented with additional facilities to maintain a level of self-sufficiency for the village to support the wider parish.
- During the lifetime of the Plan there may be circumstances that force the closure of a shop or community facility and there might be no demand, or it is not viable, for it to remain in its current or alternative community use. In such circumstances it might be better for the premises to revert to an alternative use but only if certain circumstances can be proven. Policy GBD 8 provides criteria which, together with the policies in the Braintree Local Plan, will be used to determine any such proposals.

Policy GBD 8 – Protecting Existing Services and Facilities

Proposals that would result in the loss of valued facilities or services which support the local community (or premises last used for such purposes) will only be permitted where:

- a. it can be demonstrated that the current use is not economically viable and is not likely to become viable. Supporting financial evidence should be provided including any efforts to advertise the premises for sale for a minimum of 6 months on realistic terms first agreed with the Local Planning Authority; and*
- b. it can be demonstrated, through evidenced research, that there is no local demand for the use and that the building/site is not needed for any alternative social, community or leisure use; or*
- c. alternative facilities and services are available, or replacement provision is made, of at least equivalent standard, in a location that is accessible to the community it serves with good access by public transport or by cycling or walking.*

Community Aspiration 4 – Outdoor Community Spaces

The Parish Council will:

- a) encourage use and enhancement of existing outdoor spaces and support the inclusion of facilities such as an outdoor gym; and*
- b) review the maintenance of the Quiet Space; identify any additional planting and promote its use.*

The Local Economy

Context

- The 2021 Census noted that some 60% of Great Bardfield's residents aged 16 years and over were "economically active", defined as being either in employment or unemployed, compared with 63% for Braintree district as a whole.
- There are a number of businesses based across the parish and tourism plays an important part of the local economy.
- The Local Plan focuses on locating most employment growth to the main centres of the district.
- The Neighbourhood Plan does not include additional policies relating to proposals for economic development or tourism.



DO YOU SUPPORT POLICY GBD 8 AND COMMUNITY ASPIRATION 4?

Context

- Neighbourhood plans have little power to introduce highway improvements as most schemes will not require planning permission. Improvements are reliant on the County Council's Highways Department for investment in projects or improvements required as part of the mitigation of the impact of development proposals.
- The adopted Local Plan seeks to promote sustainable modes of travel and to better integrate all forms of transport and improve roads and public transport and to promote cycling and walking.
- It requires that "*Sustainable modes of transport should be facilitated through new developments to promote accessibility and integration into the wider community and existing networks. Priority should be given to cycle and pedestrian movements and access to public transport*".
- The Neighbourhood Plan addresses the specific issue of the shortage of off-street car parking in the Conservation Area and the potential impact that the loss of any off-street parking provision could have in exacerbating the high levels of on-street parking that is causing congestion and blocking footways.

Policy GBD 9 – Off-street parking in the Conservation Area

Proposals within the Conservation Area that would result in the loss of off-street car parking spaces and/or garages will only be acceptable where it can be shown, to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority, that these car parking spaces are being re-provided in an equal or better position to serve that main use.



Community Aspirations

- The volume of traffic passing through the village centre and, in places, its speed has a significant detrimental impact on the quality of life for residents.
- Combined with frequent occurrences of pavement parking, the result is a Conservation Area dominated by traffic.
- The pedestrian environment is especially compromised where footways are narrow and users with pushchairs or mobility scooters can get passed cars parked on pavements.
- The village centre does not have the benefit of dedicated off-street car parking for visitors', and this has an impact on the ability to reduce on-street parking as well as limiting the ability for visitors of shops and services to be able to park and stay.

Community Aspiration 5 – Traffic Management

The Parish Council will seek to work with the County Council Highways Department to establish and agree a strategy for the management of pavements and seek to repair, at minimum, those most in need of resurfacing work.

Community Aspiration 6 – Pavements

The Parish Council will continue to seek a suitable piece of land for a car park for the use of residents and visitors.

Community Aspiration 7 – Car Parking

The Parish Council will continue to seek a suitable piece of land for a car park for the use of residents and visitors.

- Beslyns Road and Mill Road are designated as "Protected Lanes" in the Local Plan in order to conserve the traditional landscape and nature conservation character.

Community Aspiration 8 – The Protection of Lanes

The Parish Council will seek the appropriate management of verges:

- a) through protection from erosion through increased traffic and large vehicles.*
- b) only mowing verges after flowers and grasses have seeded unless considered a road safety risk, such as where visibility is impaired.*

Walking provides an important opportunity for people to have a healthy lifestyle, as well as potentially reducing car use. The parish has a good range of public rights of way that provide both links to neighbouring villages as well as recreational circular walks

Community Aspiration 9 – Public Rights of Way

The Parish Council, working with the County Council rights of way team and landowners, will promote the use of public rights of way and ensure they are accessible along the network.

What Next?



Consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan ends on

2 August

At the end of the consultation the Working Group will review all submitted comments before deciding if any amendments to the Plan are required.

At the same time a "Consultation Statement" and a document known as the "Basic Conditions Statement" will be prepared. The Final Draft Plan – known as the "Submission Plan" and the above documents will be put to the Parish Council for approval for submission to Braintree District Council.

Further Consultation

Braintree District Council will carry out a further six-week consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan before it is submitted to an Independent Examiner.

Examination

The Independent Examiner will review the Plan and consider any objections to it.

The Examiner's Report will recommend whether the Plan, possibly with amendments, should proceed to a referendum in the parish.



Referendum

If the Examiner recommends that a Referendum on the Plan should take place, this will be organised and paid for by Braintree District Council in the same way as a local election.

Notice will be given of the Referendum and all those living in the parish that are entitled to vote at an election will be asked whether the Neighbourhood Plan should be approved.

No matter how many turn out to vote, if more votes say "Yes" then the Neighbourhood Plan will be adopted.

You can submit your comments on the Draft Neighbourhood Plan online at the Parish Council website or, if you don't have the internet, by completing a comments form and returning it to the Community Information Point or Between The Lines Bookshop.

Why not complete a form today?