

Tetsworth Neighbourhood Development Plan 2041



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1. Introduction

What is a Neighbourhood Development Plan?

1.1 The Neighbourhood Planning system was introduced by the Localism Act 2011. Since its introduction, local communities have been able to develop Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDP) as the third formal level of the tiered approach to planning policy which aims to give local communities more say about land-use and development in their area. The creation of a NDP is an opportunity for communities to develop a shared and positive vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area.

1.2 Neighbourhood Planning allows communities to work through their Parish Council to help identify, for example, the nature, extent and location of future housing development, set out opportunities for improvements to community infrastructure, facilities and services, and identify important features, both built and natural, that should be protected.

How a Neighbourhood Development Plan is prepared and fits into the Planning System

1.3 Like higher level Local Plans, the preparation of NDPs is subject to a prescribed series of procedural stages which include assembly of a solid evidence base, periods of consultation and an examination. For NDPs, the process culminates with a local referendum. Once adopted, a 'made' NDP becomes an integral part of the adopted Local Plan of a neighbourhood's District Council and Local Planning Authority. In turn, Local Plans are subordinate to Government planning policy expressed in the National Planning Policy Framework.

1.4. In particular, approval of a NDP is subject to satisfying the following constraints:

- Have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.
- Be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority.
- Not breach, and otherwise be compatible with legislative obligations.

The Tetsworth NDP Project

1.5 Tetsworth Parish Council embraced the opportunity to influence the neighbourhood's development and launched the Tetsworth NDP project in April 2016. It established a NDP Steering Group of volunteer residents which undertook the task of its preparation. The resulting document, Tetsworth NDP 2035, was adopted in May 2021 and became part of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 (SOLP2035). Since then, its declared vision, objectives and policies for the future of the village and its surrounding countryside have been influencing the shape and direction of development within the Tetsworth Neighbourhood Area.

1.6. The initial review of the Tetsworth NDP 2035 had been planned for 2026, five years after its adoption. However, the decision of South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils to collaborate in the development of a new Joint Local Plan, prepared as Joint Local Plan 2041 (JLP2041), accelerated Tetsworth Parish Council's timescale to review its NDP and maintain consistency with higher level planning policy.

1.7 The preparation of Tetsworth's NDP 2035 was supported by a sound evidence base and wide-ranging consultation with Tetsworth residents and others with a local interest. Details of the consultation were recorded in a separate Consultation Document. The NDP Steering Group conducting the review on behalf of Tetsworth Parish Council has maintained strong community engagement and updated the policies and evidence base with 2021 census data and changes in local circumstances.

The Tetsworth Neighbourhood Area and Period of Validity

1.8 The Tetsworth Neighbourhood Area, defined as the land enclosed within the Tetsworth Parish boundary, was confirmed by South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) on 1 June 2017 as shown on the map at Figure 1. The Tetsworth village settlement lies at the centre of the area and the edge of its built-up footprint is defined by the Settlement Boundary shown in the Policies Map inset.

1.9 The revision of Tetsworth NDP 2035 extends its period of validity by 6 years to 2041 to establish full alignment with JLP2041. The 2011 baseline of the evidence base has been maintained but extended to include new and revised information.

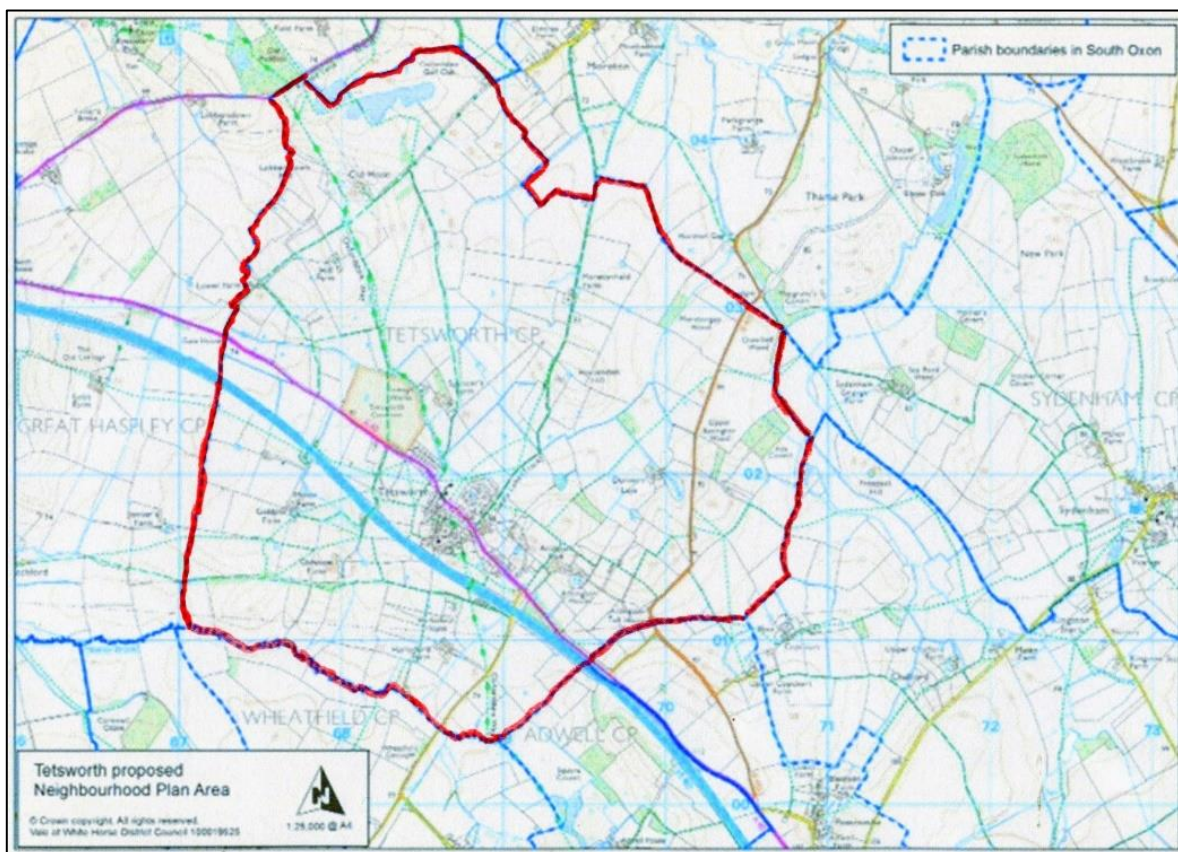


Fig 1. Tetsworth Neighbourhood Area as Defined by the Tetsworth Parish Boundary

The SODC Policy Context

1.10 Tetsworth's NDP policies are in general conformity with SOLP2035 and JLP2041 as recorded in Tetsworth's Basic Conditions Statement.

The Tetsworth NDP Structure

1.11 Tetsworth NDP is divided into the following sections:

Section 1.	Introduction
Section 2.	The Tetsworth Context
Section 3.	Vision and Objectives
Section 4.	The Evidence Base
Section 5.	Tetsworth Planning Policies
Section 6.	Implementation and Monitoring

The Evidence Base

1.12 The Tetsworth NDP draws on 2011 and 2021 census data to establish its baseline information for the plan period. The objectives and policies in the Tetsworth NDP have been informed by a number of focused studies and reports which define the character and status of Tetsworth Parish, and record the opinions and wishes of local residents. Reports of these studies are available as the following stand-alone documents and are summarised in Section 4 of the NDP:

- Tetsworth Parish Character Assessment
- 15 Key Views Report
- Tetsworth Housing Analysis
- Tetsworth Sustainability Overview
- Tetsworth Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire Response Analysis

2 The Tetsworth Context

The Parish

2.1 This section of the Tetsworth NDP provides a brief description of the location, history and more recent status of Tetsworth. It also sets out baseline data for Tetsworth recorded by the Office for National Statistics in the 2021 Census.

Tetsworth's Location

2.2 Tetsworth is located within South Oxfordshire and largely comprises a single, nucleated village community near the centre of the Neighbourhood Area, surrounded by open countryside. As shown in Figure 2, Tetsworth lies approximately 15 miles east of the centre of Oxford and 4 miles south of the market town of Thame. Aylesbury and High Wycombe are situated about 15 miles north-east and south-east of the village respectively. Access to these towns is judged to be important by the overwhelming majority of residents for reasons of employment and provision of services and facilities.



Fig 2. Location of Tetsworth and Surrounding Major Towns

Parish Rural Setting

2.3 Tetsworth Parish has a predominantly rural agricultural setting. The village settlement lies near the centre of the approximately circular Parish which has an area of just over 4 square miles. The Parish boundary adjoins surrounding parishes in open countryside and the village enjoys significant green gaps between it and other settlements or other significant developments. Although often described as nestling below surrounding higher viewpoints, much of the older area of the village is built on a hill with the church steeple being a visible landmark from most directions. The Parish lies between the Oxford Green Belt to the west and the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Beauty

to the east. Although without formal landscape protection, the countryside within the Parish has previously been described by planning inspectors as having landscape value in its own right.

Tetsworth's History

2.4 Tetsworth probably has Anglo Saxon origins. Its name is believed to be made up of a person's name, 'Taetel', and the common Anglo Saxon place name ending 'worth' meaning an enclosure or homestead. It certainly existed as a settled community at the time of the Domesday Book, although it was not mentioned in it. Tetsworth's position at the crossroads of the main London-Oxford route and a north-south roadway from Thame to Wallingford was recognised in the earliest known printing of a map of England in 1382. Until the late 16th century, the land comprising Tetsworth was controlled by either the church or crown in turn.

2.5 The village's growth and prosperity has historically been heavily dependent on agricultural employment, although it achieved some prominence as an important staging point during the golden age of turnpike roads and coach travel. There was a great deal of poverty in the early 19th century, but comparative wealth and population growth to more than 500 by 1851. In part due to the spread of railways elsewhere and fewer agricultural or other local employment opportunities, the population declined and the 1931 census recorded fewer than 300 Tetsworth residents and only about 100 households.

Although subject to post-war expansion, the village of Tetsworth has continued to be the sole settlement within the Parish. Much of its tightly nucleated footprint and village road pattern are still easily recognisable from a century ago.



Fig 3. Tetsworth Village Settlement Footprint

Tetsworth's Enduring Heritage

2.6 Although the Parish does not have a Conservation Area, Tetsworth has 15 Listed Buildings with the most prominent being The Swan, once a noted coaching inn, listed at Grade II* and St Giles church with its landmark steeple. Most of the protected structures lie within the Tetsworth village footprint. Three of the listed buildings were built as a result of the benevolence and foresight of the Reverend John W Peers who was the vicar of Tetsworth from 1841 to 1876. During his tenure, he oversaw the building of the current St Giles church and the Old Vicarage, the establishment of a village school and laying of the network of attractive cobble village footpaths. His legacy has contributed significantly to the character of Tetsworth and is still with us today. As well as its listed assets, Tetsworth's street-scene also continues to benefit greatly from the presence of a number of Victorian or earlier dwellings of significant architectural merit located throughout the village core. The history of the village is documented in more detail in the Tetsworth Parish Character Assessment.

Tetsworth Today

2.7 At the time of the 2021 census, Tetsworth had grown to a population of 857 residents, approximately 19% of whom were under 15 years old, with another 19% older than 65. Compared with the rest of South Oxfordshire, this age profile revealed a similar proportion of younger residents, but the proportion of older residents was slightly lower than the wider community. In comparison with the national demographic profile, Tetsworth had a higher proportion of school-age children and lower proportion of retirees. The Parish supported nearly 350 households, the overwhelming majority of which lived in the village settlement as owner-occupiers with just 20 or so dwellings situated elsewhere in the surrounding countryside. The size of the village and limited access to services, facilities and public transport place it firmly in the Tier 4 village category in JLP2041's hierarchy of settlements.

2.8 A significant infrastructure feature of the Parish is the M40 motorway which has traversed the area and passed along the southern edge of the village since 1974, and was extended to Birmingham in the early 1990s. An overhead electricity transmission line, a solar farm and two buried trunk gas pipelines are also features of the open countryside in the Parish. However, the village does not benefit from a gas supply and suffers from occasional power outages and sewage overflows.

2.9 Post-war expansion of Tetsworth's housing stock had been achieved through a small number of significant housing projects each generating between 25 and 50 new homes, together with a trickle of individual houses and smaller developments taking advantage of available infill sites within the village. The most recent major development was construction of the 39 dwellings of the Blackthorn Rise estate completed in 2020. Despite this expansion, Tetsworth has maintained its tightly nucleated footprint which is sufficiently compact to encourage walking and cycling as the dominant modes of getting around the village. More detailed coverage of such themes as population, home ownership and what makes Tetsworth special is contained in the Tetsworth Parish Character Assessment and Tetsworth Housing Analysis.

Transport Infrastructure

2.10 Tetsworth enjoys ready access to the national road network with the A40 running through the village and access to the adjacent M40 motorway available at Junctions 6 and 8 approximately 3 miles east and 5 miles west of the village. Thame, the nearest Market Town, can be reached by car in

under 10 minutes and journey times to Oxford, Aylesbury and High Wycombe are less than half-an-hour. Tetsworth is poorly-served by public transport. Provision has now reduced to a bus service (Route 275) running just three times a day on weekdays between Oxford and the larger village of Chinnor via Tetsworth, and a single weekday round trip from High Wycombe to Oxford at the beginning of the working day and returning at the end of the day. Journey times to Oxford and High Wycombe are approximately 40 minutes. A single round trip service (Route 117) to Thame on Tuesdays and Thursdays was introduced in 2024, but its continuation is already under review.

2.11 Tetsworth is remote from the national rail network and the closest connection is at Haddenham and Thame Parkway on The Chiltern Line. This station is 7 miles north of Tetsworth, beyond Thame.

Living in the Parish

2.12 Tetsworth is not well endowed with facilities and services with residents relying, almost exclusively, on travelling to Thame or further afield for health, secondary education, and virtually all business and retail needs. It is notable that Thame's own infrastructure and services are already under increasing pressure due to the town's own rapid new housing and population growth.

2.13 Two thirds of residents in paid employment commute out of the village on a daily basis while half of the remainder operate businesses from their home addresses. Almost all who commute, do so by car and approximately three-quarters of those who work outside the village travel at least 10 miles, with a significant proportion commuting at least 30 miles. The close access to the M40 is a clear benefit for many commuters, but the down-side of its proximity is the never-ending motorway noise affecting all Tetsworth residents. Unemployment in the Parish is low with only around 1% of working age residents receiving Jobseeker's Allowance.

2.14 The dominant reasons stated by families for becoming residents of Tetsworth are that 'it is a nice place to live' and that 'a suitable home was available'. These views are reinforced by the reported principal attractions of living in Tetsworth which are led by its 'rural location and lifestyle', 'ease of access to the countryside' and 'feeling part of the community'. The majority of village residents wish to see a very modest rate of growth over the future planning period with Tetsworth remaining 'a rural community where people both live and work' and being 'little changed from 2017'.

2.15 An issue that Tetsworth shares with other residents of Oxfordshire is the affordability of housing. Despite the majority of its residents enjoying a relatively affluent lifestyle, the housing affordability gap in Tetsworth is a concern and was assessed in 2018 to average £250,000 and may be as much as £125,000 even for less expensive, smaller dwellings. In 2024, the average purchase price of houses sold in Tetsworth was £445,417. The majority of properties sold were detached properties selling for an average price of £557,500. Terraced properties sold for an average of £325,000, with semi-detached properties fetching £350,000. Overall, the historical selling price in Tetsworth for 2024 was 2% up on the previous year but 21% down on the 2019 peak of £562,767. These figures for Tetsworth are about £20,000 lower than Oxfordshire as a whole, but far higher than the average of £279,000 for house sales across the country.

3 Vision and Objectives

3.1 The Vision statement for Tetsworth's future development reflects the broad wishes of the community to accept a modest rate of change and growth while preserving its essential character as a rural village settlement. Much of this can be delivered within the higher-level planning policies of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and JLP2041's policies for Tier 4 settlements. Therefore, Tetsworth NDP's Objectives, and its Policies to achieve them, focus on the priorities of 'what makes Tetsworth special'.

3.2 The Vision and Objectives of Tetsworth's Neighbourhood Plan are:

Vision

Vision

To sustain Tetsworth as an inclusive, rural community where residents want to live, maintain its attractiveness and look to an active and vibrant future.

Objectives

Objective 1

To maintain Tetsworth's nucleated settlement character by supporting a mix of high quality infill housing that reflects the housing types and tenures which satisfies the local community housing need and is in proportion with the size and rural character of the Parish.

Objective 2

To preserve the green spaces within and adjacent to the Tetsworth village settlement and the key views into and from its built-up area.

Objective 3

To protect and enhance Tetsworth's heritage assets and their settings.

Objective 4

To protect the rural landscape character and setting of Tetsworth while supporting and enhancing local amenities and environmental assets.

Objective 5

To maintain and enhance wildlife habitats and biodiversity in the Parish.

Objective 6

To identify and support service improvements and infrastructure initiatives which could enhance the sustainability of Tetsworth and wellbeing of its residents.

4 The Evidence Base

4.1 Studies specifically undertaken to inform the preparation of the Vision, Objectives and Policies within the Tetsworth NDP were listed in Section 1. The associated reports are published as stand-alone documents, but are summarised here in Section 4. In addition, Policies in the Tetsworth NDP take note of relevant data in JLP2041 and on the following topics published by specialist organisations and agencies

- Protected species and habitats – Thames Valley Environmental Records
- Agricultural land classification – Natural England
- Heritage assets – Historic England
- Flood risk – Environment Agency

4.2 2011 and 2021 census data from the Office for National Statistics and a Community Insight Report for the Tetsworth Area issued in January 2018 all provided helpful official external sources of information on Tetsworth's demographics and social and economic status.

Tetsworth Parish Character Assessment

4.3 This study provided a detailed picture of Tetsworth in six defined areas of the village settlement and a more generic description of the five radiating countryside sectors surrounding the village. The aim of addressing built-up and rural areas separately was to acknowledge that different planning policies may be applied in the different environments. Each of the village's Settlement Area assessments covers such aspects as housing type and design, the streetscape, notable heritage and community assets, green and public open spaces and valued settings. The six village Settlement Areas are shown in Figure 4.



Figure 4. Tetsworth Village Character Areas.

Village Historic Core This area contains the majority of Tetsworth heritage assets, is characterised by its long-standing network of narrow roads and its attractive housing mix of individual designs and various ages. More than any other area, it is what makes Tetsworth special and has only limited capacity for further infill development.

Marsh End and High Street West This area comprises the limited ribbon development of individually-designed housing largely along the southern side of High Street and the post-war development of Marsh End originally built as template social housing, but now exhibiting greater individuality with changes incorporated by owner-occupiers.

Village Green This open green space at the heart of the village is highly valued by residents as a focus for sports activities and other community social and leisure events. It also includes a recently refurbished children's play area and an outdoor learning centre. Its attractive setting and status merit protection from development.

Swan Gardens Estate This 1990s development of over 40 dwellings with a single access from the High Street is dominated by large 'pattern book' executive residences but also includes some smaller terraces of affordable homes. The overall design of the area has left few opportunities for further development.

Blackthorn Rise Estate A development site at Mount Hill Farm was recently transformed into a new 39 dwelling housing estate with a single access from the High Street. The development has delivered a modern mix of market and affordable homes.

High Street East This area features limited ribbon development of housing largely of individual designs and various ages facing both sides of the High Street from its eastern entry into the village.

4.4 The five Countryside Sectors surrounding the village are shown in Figure 5. The two large areas to the north of the A40 are separated by Judds Lane, a restricted byway running northwards from the village towards Moreton and Thame. Two further Sectors cover the open countryside between the A40 and M40 highways to the east and west of the village settlement with the remaining Sector covering all land to the south of the M40.

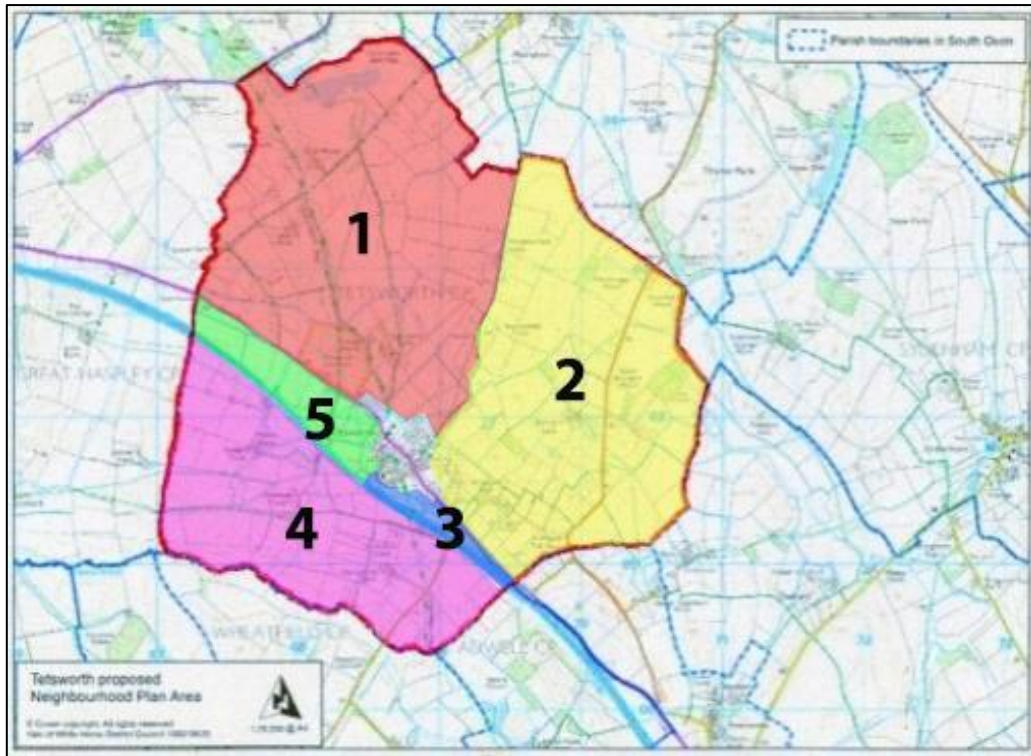


Figure 5. Tetsworth Parish Rural Character Sectors.

4.5 Although each Countryside Sector contains its own unique rural features, a common theme is the attractive rolling landscape of the clay vale and timeless farming activity across a long-established field pattern defined by mature hedgerows. These, individual native trees and field margins provide much-valued wildlife habitats for many bird species in decline. The local countryside has been particularly successful in supporting a growing population of red kites. Most of the agricultural holdings support varied livestock grazing while others dedicate some of their fields to arable cropping. Just beyond the north-eastern edge of the Parish, Thame Park has been designated as a Conservation Target Area. Another notable feature of Tetsworth's surrounding countryside is the unusually extensive network of public footpaths and rights-of-way which include the nationally-recognised Oxfordshire Way. Together, these footpaths and byways give much-appreciated amenity access for walkers, runners and cyclists to open spaces and undeveloped countryside from the edge of village. The value of key views of, from and within the village is of such significance that it was the subject of a separate Key Views study and report.

4.6 There have been only two significant developments in the open countryside. One, developed during the 1990s, is the Oxfordshire Golf Course and Spa which extends beyond the northern edge of the Parish. The other is the recent development of Harlesford Solar Farm on 79 hectares of agricultural land to the south of the M40 motorway.

4.7 Tetsworth residents enjoy many public amenity spaces within the village itself including the Village Green, Jitty, Pound, War Memorial setting and allotments, as well as the extensive network of bridleways and paths radiating through the village into the surrounding open countryside. The Parish Council has responsibility for the small allotment site and the care of 18 trees which are subject to Tree Preservation Orders. Tetsworth Common which adjoins the north-west edge of the village settlement and is adjacent to the Oxfordshire Way is also a valued green space. Grazing rights over this land have been granted to a local farmer.

15 Key Views Report

4.8 The importance of preserving, as far as possible, the attractive views into, within and from the Tetsworth village settlement is documented in this report. All of the views are from publicly-accessible viewpoints and reflect the aesthetically attractive sense of place of the village and its hinterland. Many of the inwards views from footpaths or other rights-of-way on higher ground, including the Oxfordshire Way, feature Tetsworth's landmark church steeple or frame the attractive nestled setting of the village. Valued views in the village itself focus on sight-lines of and beyond the Village Green. Outward views of the countryside emphasise the rural character of the Tetsworth community. To emphasise the impact of this report, it is included in the NDP document as an Annex.

Tetsworth Housing Analysis

4.9. This study documents Tetsworth's housing stock of almost 350 dwellings by type, size and tenure as it stood at the 2021 census. However, its main purpose is to establish the nature and extent of housing growth which has been achieved since 2011 and the potential for future sustainable development. It assesses this against the expected growth targets for Tier 4 settlements set out in JLP2041 and considers the potential impact this would have on housing supply. The study also reports the views of residents on the level, type and location of any additional housing. The highest level of support was for houses with 3 or fewer bedrooms, hinting at the affordability gap facing would-be Tetsworth residents.

4.10 Nearly half of the local housing stock is detached houses or bungalows, approximately a third is semi-detached dwellings with the remainder split between terraced homes and flats/apartments. The overall housing stock comprises over 40% of dwellings with 4 or more bedrooms, about 35% with 3, 20% with 2 and just 5% with a single bedroom. This profile reflects the household composition with nearly half comprising 3 or more people and just 15% being single person households. At the time of the 2021 census, over three-quarters of households lived in privately owned properties with or without a mortgage while the remainder relied on the social or private rental sector. Once established in Tetsworth, families tend to stay here for a long time, approximately 60% having been residents for more than 10 years.

4.11 By 2024, over 70 new dwellings had already been delivered or have planning permission over and above the 2011 census baseline. A major element of this growth is the significant development of an estate of 39 new dwellings at Blackthorn Rise. The approved developments therefore already represent growth of nearly 20% from the baseline figure. This is nearly double the upper growth expectation for Smaller Villages in earlier Local Plans. Their successor, JLP2041, now limits housing growth to infill developments on brownfield sites within Tier 4 settlements' built-up footprint.

4.12 Against this background, SODC called for potential development sites resulting in registration on its Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) database. A number of sites surrounding the Tetsworth village settlement were registered and included part of the land proposed for the creation of a new strategic settlement known as Harrington. These sites are shown in Figure 6.

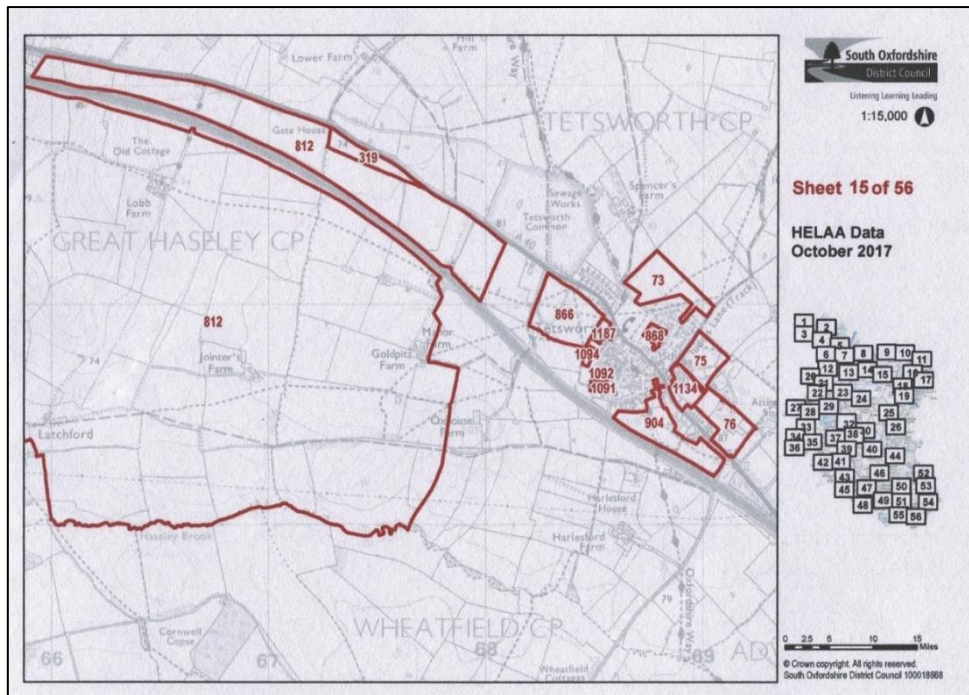


Figure 6. SODC's HELAA Data for Tetsworth

To date, infill sites have delivered 4 new dwellings at Victoria Gardens and 39 new dwellings at Blackthorn Rise all of which were occupied by 2020. The remaining sites all lie outside the Tetsworth settlement boundary. The dominant Harrington proposal for up to 6,500 houses reaching the edge of Tetsworth is not included in JLP2041 as a strategic development site.

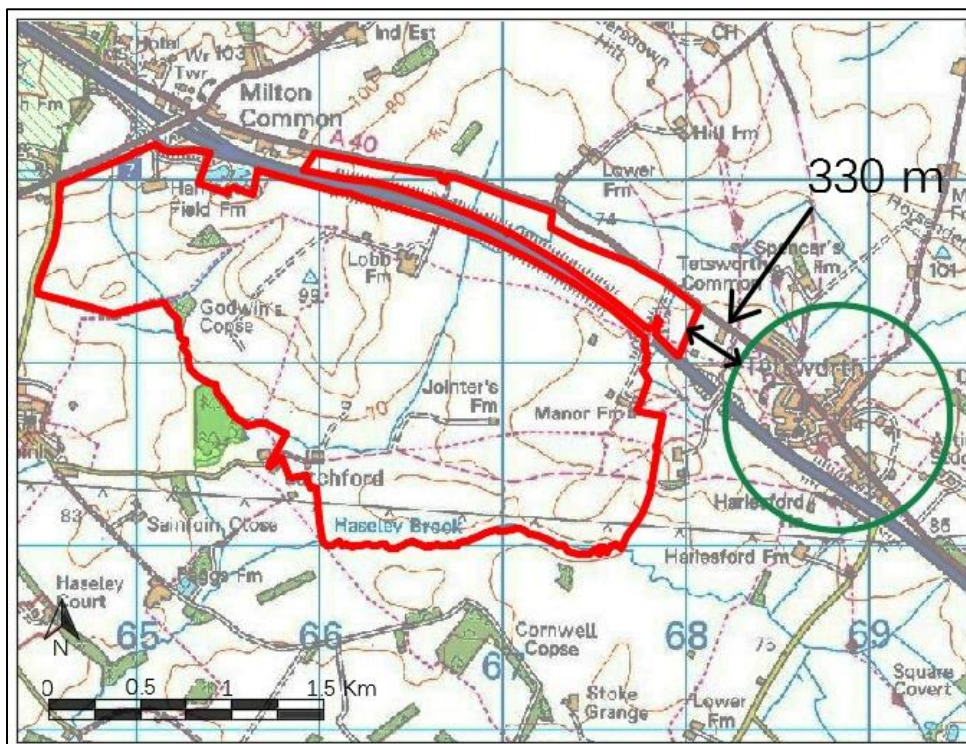


Figure 7. Harrington Potential Development Site Plan

4.13 The Tetsworth Housing Analysis report concludes that the village has already more than fulfilled its identified housing requirements, including affordable housing provision, for the period. The village's poor sustainability status also indicates that future housing growth should be limited to trickle growth through infill proposals. Accordingly, no Site Allocations have been made within the Tetsworth NDP.

4.14 Finally, the report recognises the affordability challenge facing individuals and families wishing to buy or rent homes in the village. Therefore, it seeks to encourage proposers of future housing developments to address this issue by bringing forward designs for more financially accessible dwellings. This could be achieved by supporting infill and redevelopment proposals for starter homes and smaller homes suitable for downsizing and retirement living.

Tetsworth Sustainability Overview

4.15 Like many small rural settlements, Tetsworth no longer enjoys the services of a village post office or a broad range of retail outlets, but continues to support the essential pillars of a village community. Tetsworth Memorial Hall, St Giles Church, Tetsworth Sports & Social Club, the Village Green and its PATCH play area and sports teams collectively represent the principal community assets that support village social life. All are judged to be very important local amenities by the majority of residents. The Old Red Lion public house also supports a small village store. However, the restaurant premises forming part of The Swan Antique Centre has not had a tenant since mid-2023.

4.16 Tetsworth Primary School is an important community asset providing pre-school and primary education for local children and is popular with parents. In March 2023, the school was fully-subscribed with 70 children enrolled in its primary and nurse sections. A future increase in the school's capacity is planned under a Section 106 obligation from the Blackthorn Rise housing development, but has yet to be implemented. Children must travel to schools in Thame, Wheatley, Watlington or further afield for secondary education.

4.17 Above average car ownership, at 2 cars per household, is a reflection of the paucity of public transport services and local employment opportunities, and ready access to a well-developed road network connecting with more active centres of business and employment. Local unemployment is low, and the proportion of self-employed residents amongst the economically active is much higher than District and National levels. Significant local business ventures include the Oxfordshire Golf Club, Hotel & Spa, the Zioxi educational furniture plant, The Swan Antiques Centre, and a number of neighbouring equestrian and agricultural enterprises. A proportion of residents also operate a range of generally home-based domestic and professional service businesses. However, most of those in employment commute out of the village to work.

4.18 Overall, the paucity of village facilities and public transport is reflected in Tetsworth scoring just 38 points in a range of 19-70 in SODC's assessment of these attributes for Smaller Villages in its Settlement Assessment published in November 2018. Residents accept that relying on Thame or other towns for virtually all their business and service needs is an acceptable feature of living in Tetsworth.

Tetsworth NDP Questionnaire Response Analysis

4.19 A wide-ranging questionnaire seeking Tetsworth residents' opinions of life in the village and their aspirations for its future was conducted during May 2017. 273 residents, approximately 50% of the adult population of Tetsworth, submitted responses to the questionnaire. The survey covered the following subject areas:

- Resident Profile
- Living in Tetsworth
- Use of Land
- Housing Development
- Infrastructure and Environment
- Possible 'New Town' Development
- The Future of Tetsworth
- Employment and Business

The findings built on and superseded residents' opinions recorded in a similar survey conducted in 2014 to support the development of the Tetsworth Community-Led Plan 2015-2025.

4.20 The general themes of responses showed the strongest support for improvements in community infrastructure and services while preserving the size and character of the village and countryside much as it is today. Only a minority was in favour of significant new housing development and there was very little appetite for commercial or industrial development. The feedback provided valuable information in framing the Vision, Objectives and Policies which should be included in the Tetsworth NDP. These views were also taken into account in the preparation of the Character, Housing and Sustainability aspects of the Evidence Base.

5 Tetsworth Planning Policies

The Policy Context

5.1 The following Policies in Tetsworth's NDP have been guided by its Vision and Objectives in Section 3 and supported by the findings of the Evidence Studies summarised in Section 4. The policies are illustrated in the Policies Map and Inset at Figures 8 and 9.

Policy TET1: Tetsworth Settlement Boundary

The Tetsworth Settlement Boundary is defined by the edge of the village built-up footprint and is shown in the Policies Map Inset. Its purpose is to distinguish policies applicable to development within the village footprint and those in the surrounding countryside.

5.2 This policy is intended to distinguish between supported development within the built-up area of the village and its surrounding countryside in order to manage development proposals accordingly. The village settlement is defined as the area within the formal Settlement Boundary. Essentially, this is land within the observed settlement edge formed by buildings which have a clear functional relationship to the village. The Boundary is shown as the outer edge of the 6 Village Settlement Areas shown on the Policies Map Inset. This area also reflects plot boundaries where they are clearly defined in the street-scene or within the landscape, for example by mature trees/hedges, boundary walls/fences. Features that appear visually as part of the open landscape: roads, waterways, large open gardens with no or few built structures are excluded from the settlement footprint, irrespective of their functional relationship to land within the village settlement.

Policy TET2: Housing Development within the Village Settlement Boundary

Within the Tetsworth Settlement Boundary, housing development will be limited to brownfield sites, replacement dwellings or subdivision

5.3 New housing development will be acceptable in principle within the village settlement, subject to it being appropriate in terms of its design, compliance with JLP2041 policies and Tetsworth's status as a Tier 4 village in the District's settlement hierarchy. This is expected to result in small scale growth of the housing stock that is appropriate for a reasonably remote village with limited public transport and few community services. Property prices in Tetsworth are higher than average, so proposals for less-expensive dwellings will be encouraged. This could be achieved by supporting infill and redevelopment proposals for smaller homes with 3 or fewer bedrooms, starter homes and houses designed for downsized retiree ownership.

5.4 Tetsworth's NDP does not make any housing site allocations as Tetsworth has, since the 2011 census, already accepted additional housing well in excess of growth expectations in superseded Local Plans and JLP2041's housing policy for Tier 4 villages. SODC has confirmed that the 'indicative housing figure' for Tetsworth, as per Para 62 of the NPPF, is zero.

Policy TET3: Housing Development in the Surrounding Countryside

Outside the Settlement Boundary, housing development will be limited to dwellings satisfying an established agricultural or rural need and respect the countryside landscape and amenity

5.5 This policy requires that development proposals outside the village Settlement Boundary to be consistent with the relevant policies of JLP2041 and Tetsworth NDP in respect of protecting local landscape character and preserving the character of the natural environment. The policy recognises the valued agricultural and amenity functions of the countryside and working farmland in shaping rural character.

Policy TET4: Sustainable and High-Quality Housing Design

Development proposals in a Settlement Character Area will be supported provided that they demonstrate that the positive features identified relating to that Area in the Neighbourhood Plan Character Assessment and guidance in the South Oxfordshire Design Guide have been incorporated into the design of the development.

Development proposals should:

- ***Demonstrate that the size, location and character of gardens and outdoor amenity spaces have been considered as an integral part of the design***
- ***Promote environmental sustainability design features, to mitigate the effects of climate change, conserve and enhance natural resources and prevent environmental pollution***
- ***Encourage building techniques and methodologies, selecting sustainably sourced materials to promote the sustainability of the dwelling***
- ***Respect and enhance the character of identified heritage assets and their settings***
- ***Encourage use of traditional and vernacular building materials which respect the character and setting of the development***
- ***Ensure the proposed development does not result in significant adverse impact on the residential amenities of adjacent residential properties***
- ***Ensure that the proposed development does not overload or damage the utility infrastructure***
- ***Require the design of on-plot residential parking spaces to reflect the local character and not detract from the street scene***
- ***Ensure, where possible, the proposed development does not adversely affect the free and safe flow of traffic on the local highway network and is in accordance with relevant policies in the NPPF***

5.6 This policy complements Policies TET2 and TET3 by requiring housing proposals that are suitable in principle within the village settlement and countryside understand and respond to the Character Assessment in order that their design is also suitable to the specific character of the area within which they are located. The South Oxfordshire Design Guide also contains generic guidance on how design in villages should be approached successfully.

5.7 The Character Assessment acknowledges that the village is not uniform in its character and therefore defines six distinct Settlement Character Areas. For each Area it describes the overall character, layout, topography, spaces, connectivity by roads and footpaths, natural features, landmarks, common building characteristics and key views, some of which are addressed specifically by other policies in this Plan. It is expected that applicants will set out in their proposals (in their Design & Access Statements, where required, or elsewhere in their applications) how their proposals accord with the guidance or justify why a departure from that guidance is necessary.

Policy TET5: Community, Commercial and Utility Development within the Settlement Boundary

Proposals for provision of additional or enhancement of existing community services and facilities will be supported provided that they are appropriate to the scale and character of the village.

Proposals for small-scale development or enhancement of business premises will be supported provided that they are appropriate to the scale and character of the village.

Proposals for utility infrastructure enhancements to improve the sustainability of the Tetsworth settlement will be supported.

5.8 Tetsworth currently has a poor sustainability status and would benefit from enhancement of its community facilities. Examples would include extension of the village primary school, provision of additional recreation and leisure facilities, and accommodation for public services only available in Thame or further afield.

5.9 The majority of economically active residents commute out of the village for employment and all residents are obliged to travel out of Tetsworth for almost all of their domestic and business needs. Support for the development or enhancement of business premises operating in the village would make a positive contribution to the vitality and sustainability of the Tetsworth community. This policy is complementary to Policies TET2 and TET4.

5.10 Frequent electrical power outages, occasional sewage overflows and the absence of a gas distribution network in Tetsworth are indicators of the poor sustainability status of the village. Therefore, utility infrastructure improvements will be supported. Additionally, the village's telecommunications infrastructure currently limited fibre connectivity to 2 cabinets in the settlement. Fibre connectivity to individual properties would clearly be of benefit to village-based businesses and working-from-home.

Policy TET6: Commercial Development in the Surrounding Countryside

Within the Countryside Character Sectors, commercial development proposals will be supported provided that they satisfy an established agricultural or rural activity need and preserve or enhance the positive landscape characteristics documented in the Neighbourhood Plan Character Assessment and guidance in the South Oxfordshire Design Guide.

5.11 This policy complements Policy TET2 by requiring commercial land use proposals that are suitable in principle to a countryside location to respect the rural character of Tetsworth's surrounding countryside. In particular, development proposals must demonstrate that they have minimised agricultural, landscape and amenity harms to an acceptable level. The South Oxfordshire Design Guide also contains generic guidance on how design in the countryside should be approached successfully.

5.12 The Character Assessment acknowledges that the countryside in the Parish is not uniform in character and therefore defines five distinct Countryside Character Sectors. For each Sector it describes the overall character, land form, topography, spaces, connectivity (roads, footpaths etc), natural features, landmarks, common building characteristics and key views, some of which are addressed specifically by other policies in this Plan. It is expected that applicants will set out in their proposals (in their Design & Access Statements, where required, or elsewhere in their applications) how their proposals accord with the guidance or justify why a departure from that guidance is necessary.

Policy TET7: Renewable Energy Generation Development

Commercial renewable energy development within Tetsworth's countryside Sectors will be supported provided that:

- ***Solar farm proposals are no larger than 5 Ha***
- ***Wind farm proposals require no more than 3 masts with maximum rotor tip height of 80 metres***

5.13 Tetsworth has embraced the national drive towards sustainable power generation methods and supported the construction of the large-scale Harlesford Solar Farm on a 79 Ha site with the potential capacity of 49.9MW. However, proposed, permitted and implemented plans for 3 further similarly-scoped large-scale solar farms in neighbouring parishes give rise to concerns over the cumulative harmful environmental impact of clustering such facilities. Collectively, these developments will radically change the landscape character and agricultural potential of well over 300 Ha of the local countryside. JLP 2041 recognises the harmful impact of clustering and supports development of solar farms on sites of between 5 and 20 Ha and generating between 5 and 15 MW of energy in the Tetsworth Neighbourhood Area. Similarly, it supports development of wind farms

with a turbine tip height no taller than 100 metres and 1 MW power generation capacity. To address the unacceptably severe harms of further clustering of renewable energy capacity in the Neighbourhood Area, Tetsworth's NDP sets the maximum size and capacity of future commercial solar and wind farm proposals at the lower bounds of JLP 2041 criteria.

Policy TET8: Key Views

The Neighbourhood Plan identifies Key Views on the Policies Map as valued sightlines into and out of the village. Development should preserve or enhance the local character of the landscape and not have significant adverse impact on the important views assessed in the 15 Key Views report published in March 2019.

5.14 This policy, and the Policies Map, identifies a series of views from public vantage points in and beyond the edge of the village that are considered in the Neighbourhood Plan Key Views report as especially important in defining the special character of the village and its rural hinterland.

5.15 These views are particularly distinctive of the rural landscape setting, with the village lying low within it but with long views into the countryside. The policy does not seek to prevent any development lying within a view but requires that proposals recognise and take account of these in their design. In each case, only the minimum area of land necessary to define the view has been identified.

Policy TET9: Conserving and Enhancing Local Heritage Assets

In addition to the nationally-recognised Listed Buildings, the Neighbourhood Plan identifies the following Local Heritage Assets:

- ***Old Red Lion Public House;***
- ***Tetsworth War Memorial;***
- ***Mount Hill Farmhouse;***
- ***The Old School;***
- ***Falklands Villa;***
- ***The Victorian Congregational Chapel;***
- ***Harlesford House.***
- ***Tetsworth Cobble Footpaths***

Development proposals that affect a Local Heritage Asset or its setting will take account of the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the asset.

5.16 This policy, based on Historic England guidance, identifies a number of buildings and structures in the Parish that, whilst not designated as listed buildings, are assessed as having local heritage value through a combination of their age, distinctive architectural and aesthetic merit within the Parish or a historical association with people or events. Their specific value is described in the Tetsworth Parish Character Assessment. The listed buildings in the Parish, and their settings, already benefit from statutory protection in the planning system and are therefore not included

here. Additionally, the Oxfordshire History Centre has recorded excavation of a number of archaeologically significant sites on the southern edge of Tetsworth which were investigated ahead of the construction of the M40 motorway.

5.17 Local Plan policies on the historic environment recognise that ‘Proposals for development that affect non-designated historic assets will be considered taking account of the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.’ Para 202 of the NPPF in respect of ‘non-designated heritage assets’ reinforces such protection. At present, the District Council does not maintain a list of such assets.

Policy TET10: Landmark Buildings

The Neighbourhood Plan identifies the following Landmark Buildings with significant social and community value:

- ***Tetsworth Memorial Hall;***
- ***Tetsworth Sports & Social Club Pavilion;***
- ***Oxfordshire Golf Club and Spa (including entrance gateway structure).***

Development proposals to extend or redevelop a locally significant Landmark Building should preserve or enhance the role it performs in defining the character of that part of the village and/or countryside.

5.18 This policy identifies a number of buildings and structures in the Parish that, whilst not designated as Listed Buildings or Local Heritage Assets, occupy a prominent location in the village or countryside and thus contribute to its character and the sense of place. Their specific value is described in the Neighbourhood Plan Character Assessment.

5.19 This policy will operate alongside Local Plan policies which require proposals to create a distinct sense of place by way of understanding the role played by a landmark in the street-scene or countryside. Proposals to extend or to redevelop a prominent building must seek to avoid compromising the role it plays by way of its building line, height or group value with other buildings.

Policy TET11: Common Land and Green and Public Open Spaces

The Neighbourhood Plan designates Tetsworth Common as a Local Green Space, as shown on the Policies Map. Development will only be supported in very special circumstances.

The Neighbourhood Plan also identifies the following as Public Open Spaces within the village settlement, as shown on the Policies Map:

- ***Tetsworth Village Green***
- ***The Jitty***
- ***The Pound***
- ***Village Allotments***
- ***Forest School Outdoor Learning Centre***
- ***Tetsworth War Memorial Setting***

Development within Common Land or other Public Open Space should preserve and where possible enhance public access and the contribution of the site to the health and well-being of visitors and residents.

Loss of a public open space will only be supported where:

- ***Alternative better provision within the Neighbourhood Area can be secured***
- ***Assessment has determined that the space is surplus to requirements***

5.20 This policy serves two purposes. Firstly, it designates the Common, a much cherished and historically important open space for walkers and riders on the edge of the village, as a Local Green Space in accordance with Paras 105 and 106 of the NPPF. The policy has the effect of managing development proposals in line with the NPPF provisions in the Green Belt, which prevent inappropriate development of the land unless the ‘very special circumstances’ test can be met. A full description of each space is provided in the Tetsworth Parish Character Assessment. Additionally, the Judd’s Lane restricted by-way leading northwards from the village settlement provides much-appreciated amenity access to an undeveloped rural corridor on both sides of the track.

5.21 Secondly, the policy identifies five Public Open Spaces, some of which are registered Common Land, inside the village footprint. Whilst not meeting the tests to be designated as Local Green Spaces, they are still worthy of protection from harmful development. The policy therefore requires that any development proposals are of a scale that does not undermine their character and of a type that does not undermine public access and enjoyment of the spaces.

Policy TET12 – Dark Skies and Light Pollution

Tetsworth will maintain its long-established policy of having no public street lighting and support measures promoting Dark Skies in the Neighbourhood Area and minimising light pollution within the village settlement.

5.22 Tetsworth has had a long-standing policy to maintain Dark Skies in the public domain with the absence of any street lighting in the village. Expanding this policy to new domestic and commercial development proposals will help to minimise the impact of light pollution and maintain the rural character of Tetsworth and its surrounding countryside.

Policy TET13 – Biodiversity and the Natural Environment

Development should ensure that existing wildlife habitats are not harmed, retaining and enhancing existing green and blue infrastructure and providing net gains in biodiversity. Proposals should take account of findings and recommendations in the Tetsworth Parish Character Assessment.

In particular, biodiversity gains should ideally be achieved within proposed development sites or be delivered within the Neighbourhood Area.

Whether or not associated with development proposals, this Neighbourhood Plan encourages the planting of trees and hedgerows to enhance the diversity of wildlife habitats and attractiveness of the rural landscape.

5.23 This policy reflects development principles that relate to green infrastructure opportunities and constraints. It ensures that development proposals can address green and biodiversity matters relevant to the nature and scale of the proposal. For the most part, they can be dealt with as part of the proposed landscape scheme as a means of ensuring any potentially harmful effects of the development can be satisfactorily mitigated.

5.24 The policy supports initiatives for enhancement of tree and hedgerow cover with native species which are recognised to assist in the preservation of wildlife habitats and species diversity. It also supports the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices in the countryside.

Policy TET14 – Road Safety and Residential Parking

New developments should not cause an unacceptable reduction in road safety and take account of local impacts on:

- ***Traffic flow in the village***
- ***Ability to share all transport infrastructure between all road and footpath users***

Mitigation to improve road safety should avoid impacts such as noise or the introduction of urbanising features.

New residential development (including extensions) that gives rise to the need for additional parking will be supported only where adequate parking provision is made in line with the Oxfordshire County Council parking standards.

In order to achieve this:

- ***Priority should be given to the provision of on-plot parking solutions.***
- ***Where on-plot parking solutions are not practicable or are inappropriate, planning proposals should set out reasonable alternative provision. These might include communal parking areas, garage blocks or parking bays.***
- ***Proposals should also address the need for parking solutions for visitors.***

5.25 The A40 main road passing through the centre of the village settlement normally supports moderate traffic volumes. The Dark Skies policy at TET12 precludes the introduction of a formal pedestrian crossing on the High Street. However, the road is the designated diversion route whenever M40 incidents between Junctions 6 and 8 result as a result of lane or full carriageway closure, generating vastly increased traffic flows through Tetsworth. The limited capacity and absence of pedestrian footpaths along roads in the historic core of the village are a known road safety hazard and represent a chronic shortage of on-street parking capacity. It is therefore particularly important that new dwellings do not add to these problems.

6 Implementation and Monitoring

Delivery

6.1 The policies in Tetsworth NDP are planning policies. Responsibility for their application, therefore, lies primarily with the Local Planning Authority (LPA) which is SODC. The LPA will consider our NDP policies when dealing with planning applications within our Neighbourhood Area, ensuring that any development that takes place in our area is consistent with the spatial strategy, infrastructure needs and design criteria laid out in this plan. As statutory consultees on planning applications submitted within the parish, Tetsworth Parish Council also has a responsibility to ensure that the requirements of the NDP are applied to all planning applications in the area. Parish Council meetings are open to the public, and planning applications are accessible to those who might wish to comment on them, so there is an additional role for members of our community to help to ensure that any development in the area is consistent with the NDP.

Monitoring

6.2 Responsibility for monitoring the effectiveness of the NDP lies primarily with Tetsworth Parish Council. By supporting this plan and its policies, Tetsworth Parish Council undertakes to review on an annual basis the outcome of planning applications in the area in relation to:

- the difference (if any) that the NDP made to the outcome of applications, and whether NDP policies subsequently need to be reviewed or revised;
- the number and nature of resident submissions or objections, whether these are relevant to NDP policies and whether these policies subsequently need to be reviewed or revised;
- reporting the effectiveness of NDP policies on an annual basis.

Community Infrastructure Levy

6.3. The majority of residential and commercial building projects now attracts the liability on developers to pay a Community Infrastructure Levy. Tetsworth's 'made' NDP results in 25% of the proceeds of the levy from local building projects being made available for spending by Tetsworth Parish Council. The Community Infrastructure Levy receipts from small infill developments will not be sufficient to fund major infrastructure improvements, but do have the potential to support more modest improvements for the benefit of the Tetsworth community. A number of potential infrastructure improvement projects were identified within the Tetsworth Community-Led Plan 2015-2025 and others have subsequently come to light. Examples include additions to the PATCH play area, implementation of road safety measures, refurbishment projects in Tetsworth Memorial Hall and Tetsworth Primary School enhancements.

6.4. Creation and maintenance of a prioritised list of potential local projects which would benefit from Community Infrastructure Levy spending is the responsibility of Tetsworth Parish Council. This Plan requires the Council to consult residents on the inclusion and prioritisation of projects in its candidate list.

Action: Tetsworth Parish Council will consult village residents on potential CIL-funded projects to be included in its candidate list and their prioritisation.

7 Tetsworth NDP Policies Maps

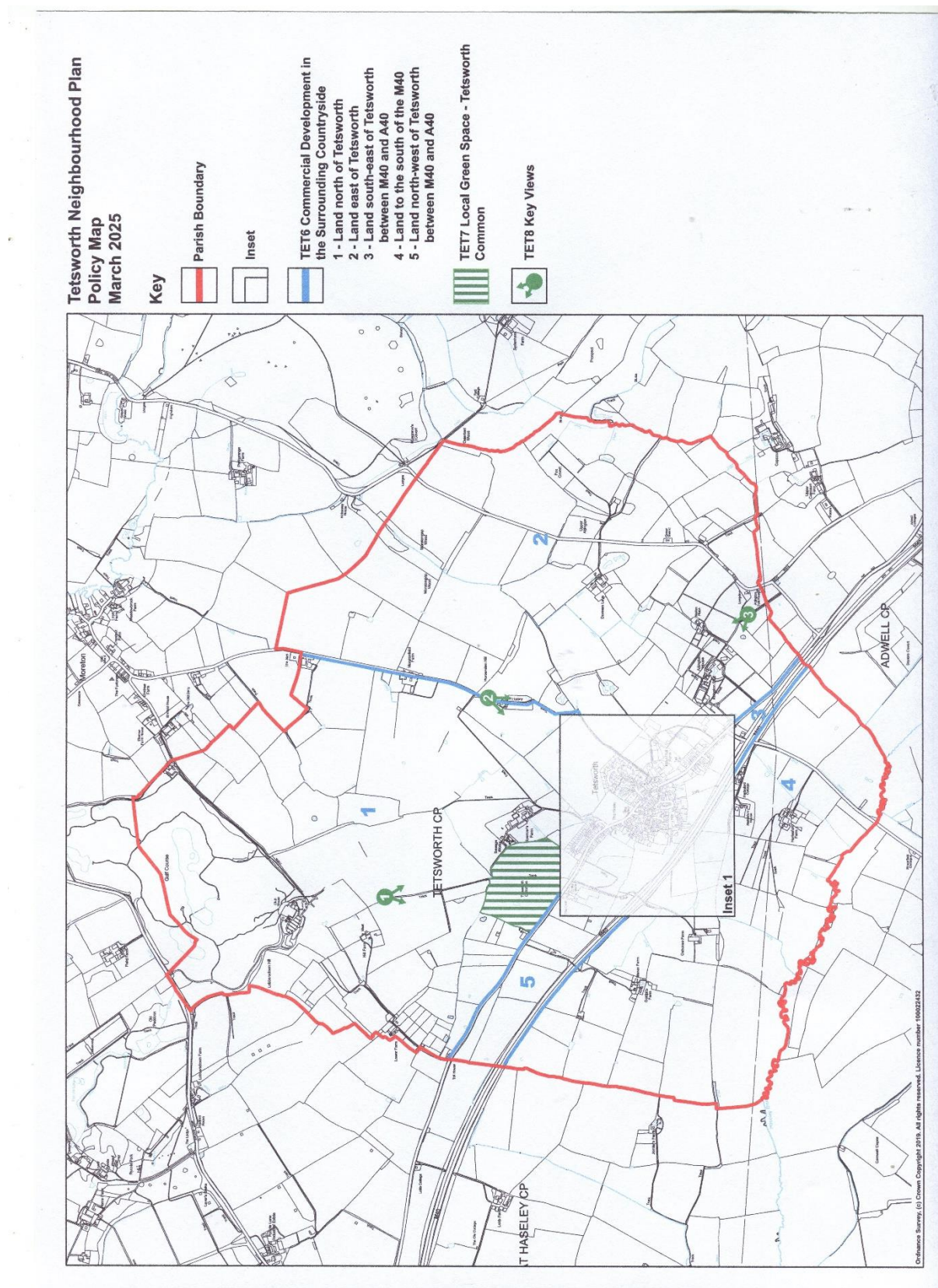


Figure 8. Tetsworth NDP Policies Map

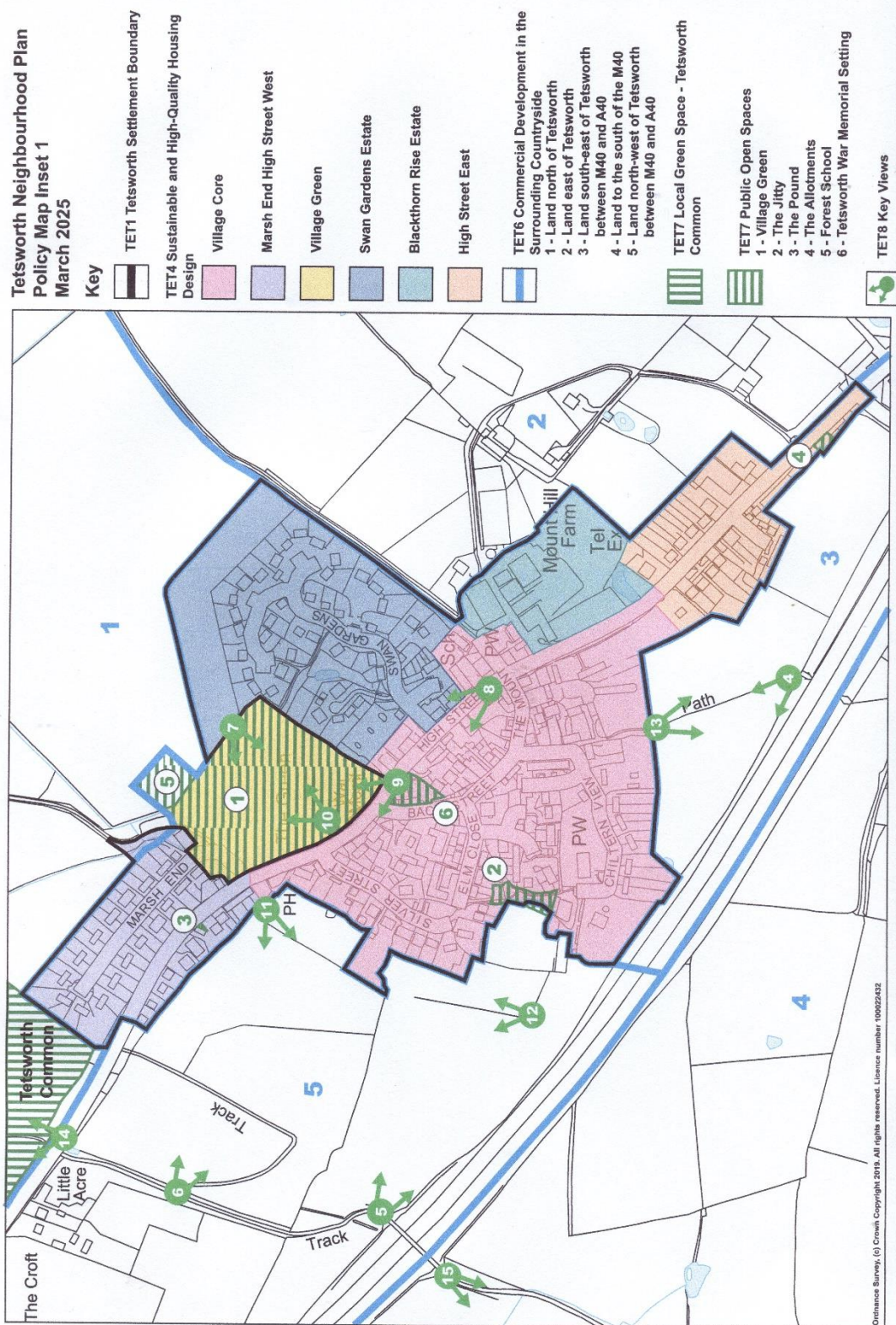


Figure 9. Tetsworth NDP Policies Map Inset

Annex Key Views Report (Available as separate document)