

HOUSING OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

DRAFT

OBJECTIVE A: TO PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE DESIGNATED GREEN BELT IN THE PARISH

POLICY 1: GREEN BELT

The East Herts District Plan contains proposals for the development of land to the North of Ware, part of which is within the Parish of Thundridge. The following policy is designed to compensate for the loss of Green Belt in the south of the Parish. The Parish Council believes that, by extending the Green Belt, the policy would protect the gap between High Cross and Wadesmill, as well as the future gap between Thundridge and the developments to the North of Ware.

The designated Green Belt in the Parish will be protected and enhanced in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy GBR1 of the East Herts District Plan. The Parish Council will make representations to East Herts Council with a view to extending the Green Belt to include the Group 2 village of High Cross at the next review of the District Plan.

POLICY 2: DISTRIBUTION OF DEVELOPMENT

For the plan period 2018 – 2033, any development will be concentrated in the Group 2 settlements of High Cross and Thundridge and Wadesmill, within the defined village boundaries as shown on the Policies Map.

The following sites are proposed to be allocated for development:

(1) Garden at Poplar Close, High Cross (1 or 2 dwellings)

Development will be supported on this site for small dwellings for identified local housing needs, according to the following criteria:

- (a) the height, mass, and form of the buildings should complement the character of the built environment ;**
- (b) primary access to and from the site for pedestrians, road users, and construction traffic to be from Poplar Close;**
- (c) self-supporting parking provision in accordance with Policy 7.**

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(2) The Greenhouses Site, off North Drive, High Cross (Up to 20 dwellings)

Development will be supported on this site for a mixture of open market and affordable dwellings for identified local housing needs, according to the following criteria:

- (a) at least 40% of the units shall be affordable, with priority for starter and retirement homes;
- (b) the height, mass, and form of the buildings should complement the historic character of the built environment in High Cross;
- (c) a landscaped strip shall be provided on the eastern edge of the site, to screen it from the A10 bypass;
- (d) primary access to and from the site for pedestrians, road users, and construction traffic to be from North Drive;
- (e) self-supporting parking provision in accordance with Policy 7.

Two other sites have been assessed as being suitable for development, but are outside the defined village boundaries, but could be considered as rural exception sites. These are:

Site at Poles Lane, Thundridge

This site could accommodate up to 5 dwellings, but it is outside the village boundary and in the Green Belt. It is also covered by a Local Wildlife Site, designated by the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust.

Site at Wadesmill Hill

This site could accommodate two small dwellings, but it is outside the defined village boundary and in the Green Belt.

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POLICY 3: RURAL EXCEPTION SITES

For the purposes of the Thundridge Neighbourhood Plan, District Plan Policy HOU4 will be applied according to the following criteria:

- Affordable Housing Units shall be allocated to persons who, in the first instance:
 - (1) have been ordinarily resident in the Parish of Thundridge for the 12 months immediately preceding the date of application for the affordable housing unit or have at any time previously resided in the Parish for at least five years, or;
 - (2) have a strong local connection with the Parish of Thundridge through either a close family connection or being employed within the Parish.
- In the second instance, if no applicant qualifies after 16 weeks in the first set of criteria, those who are resident in, or have a strong connection with, neighbouring rural parishes.
- If no applicant qualifies after a further 16 weeks, then preference should be given to those who are currently resident in East Hertfordshire.

OBJECTIVE B: TO ENSURE THAT HOUSING GROWTH IS ORGANIC, IN ACCORDANCE WITH LOCALLY-DEFINED NEEDS

OBJECTIVE C: TO PROVIDE A MIX OF HOUSING TYPES, INCLUDING SMALLER UNITS FOR OLDER PEOPLE, AND STARTER HOMES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

From the Parish surveys and the evidence base, it is clear that some development for local housing needs will be necessary. The average age of the Parish population is increasing because residents want to remain, but there are limited options for people to down-size. At the same time, there are limited options for younger people to obtain suitable accommodation, either to rent or to buy. This is exacerbated by a lower number of houses on the market. Both primary schools need young families to live locally to keep their numbers sustainable. A stable population is needed to sustain local pubs, shops and other facilities and services.

In order to address these issues, the following policies will apply.

POLICY 4: HOUSING MIX

In the Parish of Thundridge, there will be a mix of housing tenures, types, and sizes in accordance with current and future local housing need and housing market assessments. Priority will be given to the following types of housing:

- (i) Starter homes and smaller dwellings for private purchase.
- (ii) Affordable housing for rent or shared ownership.
- (iii) Smaller units, including bungalows, for older residents to down-size.

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OBJECTIVE D: TO ENABLE SMALL INFILL DEVELOPMENTS IN POCKETS OF LAND THAT CAN ACCOMMODATE IT SYMPATHETICALLY

(NB: The definition of “small” and “infill” can be included in the reasoned justification for this policy. It is suggested that “infill” sites should be located so as to respect the street scene and village character. “Small scale” should mean developments of up to five dwellings.)

POLICY 5: INFILL DEVELOPMENTS

In the villages of High Cross and Thundridge and Wadesmill, applications for small-scale housing developments on infill sites will be considered provided that they make a positive contribution to the street scene and settlement character.

OBJECTIVE E: TO ENSURE THAT NEW DEVELOPMENT IS BUILT TO A HIGH STANDARD OF DESIGN WHICH REINFORCES LOCAL DISTINCTIVENESS AND CHARACTER

POLICY 6: DESIGN CRITERIA

The reasoned justification for this policy will be set out in more detail in the draft NP, and cross-referenced to the evidence base.

Design of new development will be important. Where a proposed development potentially conflicts with other policies in the Neighbourhood Plan, such as impacting on views or the setting of historic buildings, developers must show that the design of the scheme seeks to minimise its impact. The following policy will apply:

The scale and design of new development will reflect the traditional character of the built environment in the Parish of Thundridge. The following guidelines will apply;

- **All new development should respect the historic design vernacular of the Parish and its local setting**
- **Building materials should be in harmony with existing properties**
- **New buildings should respect neighbouring roof heights, profiles and pitches, the characteristic spaces between dwellings, the historic building lines, and the overall density of development in the villages**
- **The height of new buildings should be no more than two storeys above ground level**
- **Detailing should be in line with traditional design features**
- **Infilling should not obscure public views of the surrounding countryside or the settings of listed buildings, nor should it reduce significantly the garden areas which are essential to the setting of existing residential properties**
- **Redevelopment, alterations and extensions to historic farmsteads and agricultural buildings in the Parish should be sensitive to their distinctive character, materials, and form.**

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POLICY 7: VEHICLE PARKING IN RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS

In all proposals for residential development, adequate off-street car parking should be provided. The following local standards will be applied:

- For developments of one, two, or three bedrooms, two parking spaces (in addition to provided garage facilities) per dwelling will be required within the dwelling site or on land tied to the site
- For developments of four bedrooms, three parking spaces per dwelling (not counting garages) will be required within the site or on land tied to the site
- For visitor and overspill car parking, one off-road space will be required for every three dwellings in the immediate vicinity of those dwellings
- In all new developments of one or more dwellings, sufficient spaces shall be provided for the overnight parking of light commercial vehicles which are owned by residents
- For sheltered housing units, including housing for older people, a minimum of one off-street car parking space per dwelling will be required, together with one space per warden, and a ratio of one visitor parking space per four units.
- For any future planning permissions, there should be a presumption against the change of use of garages and parking areas for alternative uses within the curtilage of a dwelling.

POLICY 8: STATIC CARAVANS

There will be a presumption against the development of any more pitches for static caravans in the Parish, in particular for the use of non-permanent residents.

V8: 10th July 2018