

Barton-le-Clay Neighbourhood Plan 2015-2035



"Village is a place where you can find peace,
unity, strength, inspiration and most
importantly a natural and beautiful life."
— *Minahil Urfan*

Revision History		
Issue No	Issue Date	Details
12	Dec 25	Review and update in response to comments from External Examiner.
11	Jun 25	Final review with CBC Neighbourhood Planning Officer.
10	Apr 25	Submission Version before sign-off by Parish Council.
9	Feb 25	Review and update in response to revised Green Infrastructure Plan.
8	Jan 25	Review and update in response to revised Design Guide.
7	Sept 24	Review and update in response to Reg 14 comments by CBC.
6	Jan 24	Review and update in response to public consultations.

Foreword

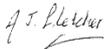
Barton-le-Clay Neighbourhood Plan

Barton-le-Clay Parish Council welcomes the opportunity for residents to shape the future of their Village through the Barton-le-Clay Neighbourhood Plan (BLCNP). The Plan complements the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan 2015–2035 while adding policies and design guidance specific to the Village.

Work began in 2012 under the late Councillor Lyndon Davison-Williams but was paused pending adoption of the Local Plan in 2021. A new Steering Committee, the Barton-le-Clay Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee (BLCNPSC), was formed in 2022 to complete the work, supported by expert advice from Central Bedfordshire Council, the Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity, the Greensand Trust and AECOM.

The Plan reflects extensive community engagement, from surveys and exhibitions to workshops and site visits, and represents the dedication of local volunteers. It demonstrates our support for carefully managed, small-scale development that protects Barton-le-Clay's historic character while welcoming new residents to share in a sustainable, balanced and attractive community.

The Plan you read today is the result of an enormous amount of work by a small team of volunteers from the village, and I would like to give a special mention to James Fletcher, who has spent many hours of his own time working on the many versions of the Plan in preparation for Referendum.



Chair - Abigail Fletcher
Barton-le-Clay Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee
Dec 2025

Acknowledgements

The Barton-le-Clay Neighbourhood Plan was commissioned by Barton-le-Clay Parish Council who appointed a Steering Committee; the Barton-le-Clay Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee (known hereafter as **BLCNPSC**) comprised entirely of residents and Parish Councillors.

The committee:

Chair - Councillor Abigail Fletcher
Gemma Widdowfield
Lt Col (Retd) James Fletcher
Councillor Nick Day
Councillor Will Rudd
Andy Knight
Sue Waller
Rodney Taylor
Richard Sheen
Simon Oxley
Tim Wall
Joe Irwin
Councillor Kalim Qureshi

Special thanks go to Carolyn Callen – Clerk to Barton-le-Clay Parish Council – for keeping the **BLCNPSC** on course, and to local organisations and retailers, especially the Co-op, who provided space in their premises for information days/events to enable the **BLCNPSC** to update villagers on the Barton-le-Clay Neighbourhood Plan (known hereafter as **BLCNP**) process and progress and to canvas opinions on draft policies (as part of the consultation process).

Contents

1.	Introduction	1
	1.1 Central Bedfordshire Local Plan (CBLP) 2015 to 2035	1
	1.2 Neighbourhood Plans	2
	1.3 Barton-le-Clay Neighbourhood Plan (BLCNP) 2015 - 2035	2
	1.4 Setting the Scene	4
2.	The Scope of the Neighbourhood Plan	7
3.	Development of the Neighbourhood Plan	7
4.	Vision and Objectives	9
5.	Community Involvement Strategy	10
	5.1 Strategy	10
	5.2 Road to Adoption	11
	Policy Strategic Development Principles (SDG1)	11
6.	Barton-le-Clay - A Picturesque and Historic Village	12
	6.1 Barton-le-Clay History	12
	6.2 Barton-le-Clay and its Heritage	13
	6.3 Conservation Area.	13
	6.4 Assets of Community Value	13
	6.5 Present Day Barton le Clay	14
	6.6 Protecting our Heritage Assets	14
	Policy Historic Environment (HE)	15
7	7. Housing	16
	7.1 Housing Needs Survey	16
	7.2 Starter Homes	16
	7.3 Meeting Diverse and Changing Needs	16
	7.4 Vulnerable Groups	17
	7.5 Summary	17
	Policy Housing (HOU)	17
8.	High Quality Design	19
	8.1 Purpose and Context	19
	8.2 Design Evidence	19
	8.3 Application	20
	Policy Design New Developments (DND)	21
9.	Green Infrastructure - Protecting and Enhancing the Green Environment	22
	9.1 Overview	22
	9.2 Purpose and Method	22
	9.3 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)	23
	9.4 Compliance Statement	23
	9.5 Local Green Spaces	23
	9.6 Biodiversity and New Developments	26
	9.7 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)	26
	9.8 Delivery and Monitoring	26
	Policy Green Infrastructure, Landscape and Biodiversity	27
10.	Employment & Economy	28
	11.1 Introduction	28
	11.2 Business Owner Survey	28
	Policy Employment Economy (EE)	29
11.	Transport	30
	11.1 Introduction	30

12.2 Local Transport Priorities	30
12.3 Pedestrian and Cyclist Safety	30
12.4 Community Led Improvements	31
11.5 Public Transport and Rail Connectivity	31
12.5 Strategic Infrastructure: M1–A6 Link Road	31
Policy Sustainable Transport, Safety, and Village Character	32
12. Implementation and Delivery Plan	32
11.1 Purpose	32
12.2 Delivery Table	32
12.2 Monitoring and Review	33
Glossary	35

Table of Illustrations

Type	Page	Details
Figures		
Figure 1	P8	BLCNP Key Stages of Preparation.
Figure 2	P20	Adoption of CBC Design Guides into AECOM's Design Guides.
Maps		
Map 1	P3	Barton-le-Clay Neighbourhood Plan Area
Map2	P4	Land East of Barton-le-Clay (HAS05).
Map 3	P5	Proposed Greenwoods New Town
Map 4	P12	Barton le Clay 1882-1899
Map 5	P25	Candidate Green Spaces
Tables		
Table 1	P10	Policy-Objective Matrix
Table 2	P20	Impacts on Biodiversity Mitigation Hierarchy
Table 3	P24	Candidate Local Green Spaces
Table 4	P27	Economic Activity – Barton-le-Clay
Table 5	P32	BLCNP Delivery Plan

Annexes:

- A. Housing Needs Survey (BedRCC 2023).
- B. AECOM Design Codes (Sept 2023).
- C. Green Infrastructure Plan (Oct 2023).
- D. Consultation Document.
- E. SEA/HRA Screening Report.

Appendices:

1. Barton-le-Clay Green Belt Settlement Map
2. BLCNP ToRs.
3. Examples of Listed Properties.
4. Barton-le-Clays' Heritage.
5. Conservation Areas Map.
6. Present Day Barton-le-Clay.
7. Review of Village Green Infrastructure.
8. Candidate Local Green Spaces.
9. Review of Village Transport Infra-structure.

1 Introduction

1.1 Central Bedfordshire Local Plan 2015 to 2035

1.1.1 The [Central Bedfordshire Local Plan 2015 to 2035 \(CBLP 2015-2035\)](#) is the key strategic planning document for Central Bedfordshire and will guide and support the delivery of new infrastructure, homes and jobs. It sets out the long-term vision and objectives for the area, what is going to happen, where, and how this will be achieved and delivered over the next 20 years, from 2015 to 2035.

1.1.2 The **CBLP 2015-2035** was adopted in July 2021. Policy SP1a of the Plan requires a review of the plan within 6 months of adoption, following which, it requires the Local Plan to be updated, where necessary. The review process commenced in January 2022, with public consultations planned throughout 2026, submission in 2028 and adoption in Dec 2028.

1.1.3 The review also allows new CBC strategies such as [Vision 2050](#), the [Strategic Plan 2024-26](#) and the [Sustainability Plan/Climate Change - Tackling it and our Strategy](#), to be incorporated into the new Local Plan - [Creating Great Places to Live](#).

1.1.4 Six themes across three key areas will form the new **CBLP 2015-2035**:

Key Areas:

1.1.4.1 Sustainability. Limiting the impact on the environment and giving back to nature as much as possible.

1.1.4.2 Accessibility. Designing inclusive places for everyone to live life to the fullest.

1.1.4.3 Health and wellbeing. Designing places to have a positive impact on our physical and mental health.

Themes:

1.1.4.4 Access to outstanding new or improved green space and nature.

1.1.4.5 A range of jobs that are easy to get to.

1.1.4.6 High-quality, well-designed homes for every stage of life.

1.1.4.7 Excellent transport options, including walking and cycling.

1.1.4.8 Local facilities such as roads, schools, shops, and parks.

1.1.4.9 Respecting and enhancing the unique character of our towns and villages.

1.1.5 The **CBLP 2015-2035** and its reiterations will form the framework for the Barton-le-Clay Neighbourhood Plan.

1.2 Neighbourhood Plans

1.2.1 The Localism Act 2011 empowers local communities in England to take the lead in planning how their own neighbourhoods will develop, in the form of a Neighbourhood Plan¹ which sits alongside the **CBLP 2015-2035** and means that decisions on planning applications will be made using both the **CBLP 2015-2035** and the Neighbourhood Plan. In general terms, the Neighbourhood Plan sets out the local (tactical) framework developed from the **CBLP 2015-2035** which sets out the strategic framework. The overarching principle is that requirements/guidance in Neighbourhood Plan policies must not exceed those in the **CBLP 2015-2035**.

1.2.2 Neighbourhood Plans are a type of statutory plan. Not only are they intended to be produced by local people for their own areas, but they also must be approved by a referendum of the people living in that area. Unlike national planning policy, which is approved by Parliament, or local planning policy, which is approved by the local authority, a Neighbourhood Plan can only be brought into force following a majority vote by residents of the Neighbourhood Area and a vigorous consultation process.

1.2.3 After a Neighbourhood Plan comes into force, the Plan will be a statutory planning policy document which means that when decisions are made on planning applications, the policies in the Plan must be considered by the Planning Authority, in this case, CBC². A Barton-le-Clay Neighbourhood Plan (**BLCNP**) will enable Barton-le-Clay Parish Council to have a greater, and more positive, influence on how the Village develops.

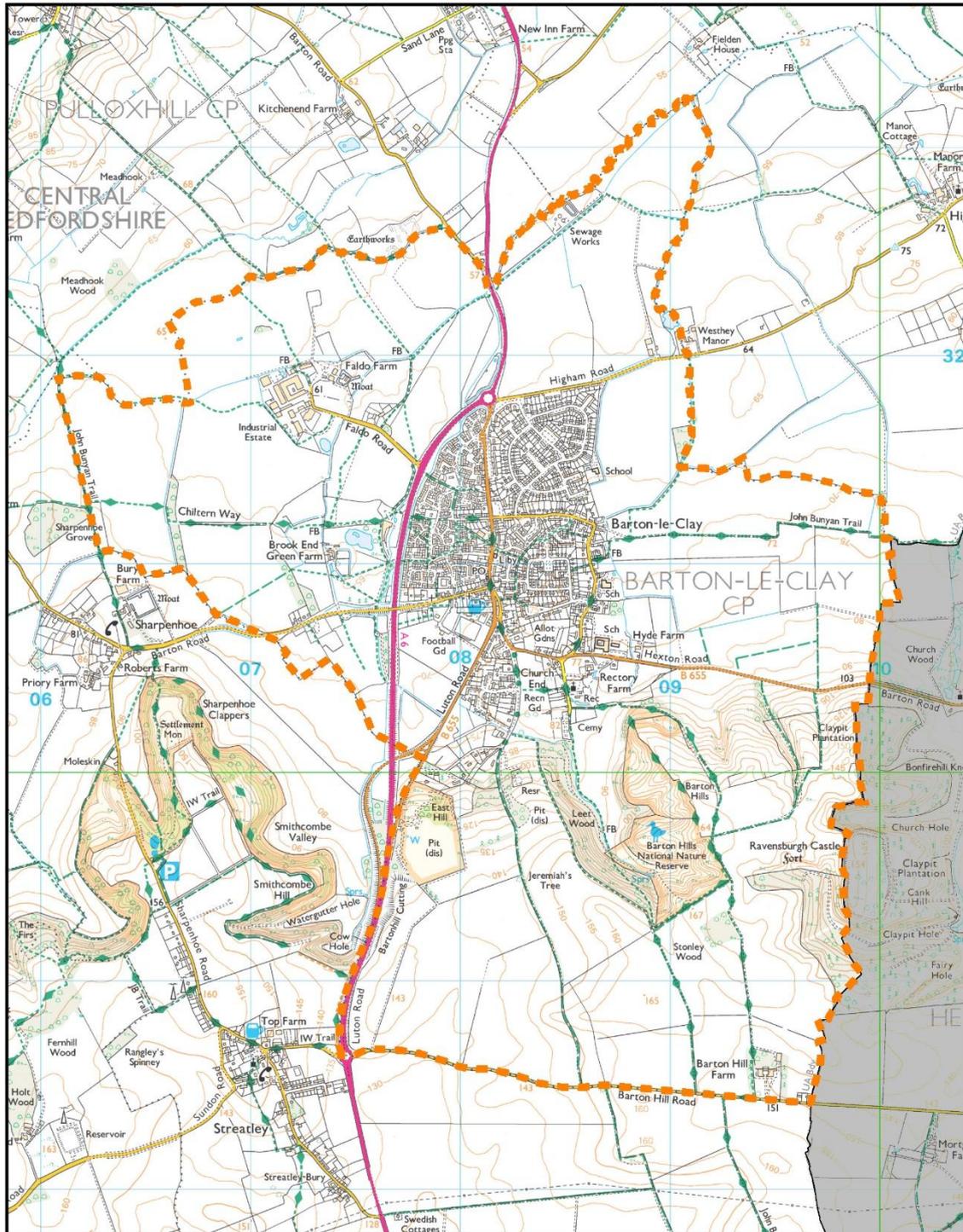
1.3 Barton-le-Clay Neighbourhood Plan (BLCNP)

1.3.1 Work on **BLCNP** began in 2012, but its completion was delayed until CBC had completed their Local Plan. The **CBLP 2015-2035** was submitted to the Government on 30 April 2018 and after passing through the consultation/review phases by the Government Planning Inspectorate, it was adopted in July 2021. Work to complete the **BLCNP** restarted in January 2022.

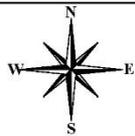
1.3.2 The **BLCNP** Area of Interest is the area within the Barton-le-Clay Parish boundary, as designated by CBC in December 2016 see Map 1.

¹ [Neighbourhood Planning](#).

² [Relationship between Neighbourhood Plans and the CBC Local Plan](#)



Neighbourhood Plan Area



Date: 08 April 2014

Scale 1:25000

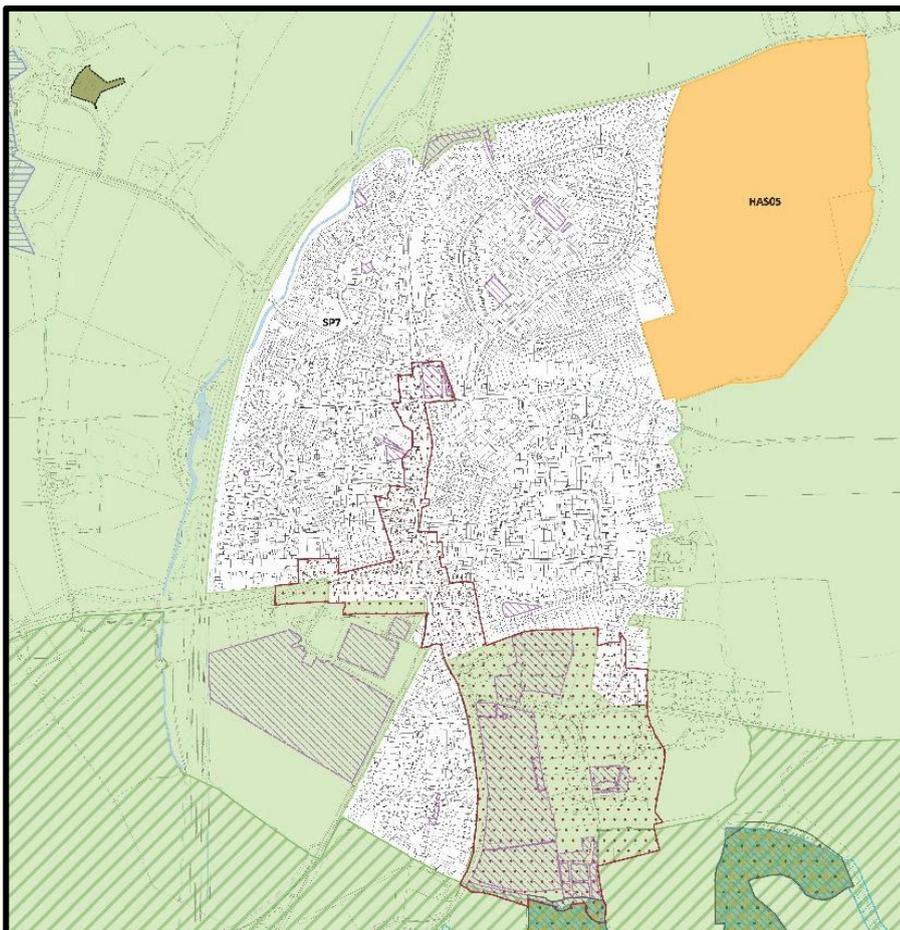
© Crown Copyright and database right, 2014
 Ordnance Survey 100049029.
 Central Bedfordshire Council.
 Cities Revealed aerial photography copyright
 The GeoInformation Group, 2010

Map 1 - BLCNP Area of Interest.

1.4 Setting the Scene

1.4.1 The **CBLP 2015-2035** (Part 8) identifies Barton-le-Clay as an Inset Green Belt Settlement and excluded from the Green Belt – see Map, **Appendix 1**. The inner Green Belt boundary that acts as a 'Settlement Envelope', this means that normal planning policies, and Policy 'SP7 – Developing within Settlement Envelopes'³ which states, '*within the Settlement Envelopes the Council (CBC) will support housing, employment and other uses including new retail, service and community facilities proportionate to the scale of the settlement, taking account of its role and function in the settlement hierarchy*'. This includes Infill and Windfall Developments.

1.4.2 Like many rural areas in England, Barton-le-Clay has been the subject of increasing pressures for development and the **CBLP 2015-2035 - SP1 Growth Strategy**⁴ states that "a minimum of 39,350 homes, and approximately 24,000 new jobs will be delivered in Central Bedfordshire over the period 2015 to 2035". Although Barton-le-Clay has not been identified as an area for strategic growth, it has been identified as one – see Map 2 (HAS05), of 19 areas for development, and Full Planning Permission has been granted for the building of, up to 500 new homes, a lower/primary school and provision of public open space with associated infrastructure.



Map 2 – Land East of Barton-le-Clay (HAS05).

³ [Policy SP7: Development within Settlement Envelopes](#)

⁴ [Policy SP1: Growth Strategy](#)

1.4.3 In addition to sites identified for development in the **CBLP 2015-2035**, new development projects come forward, e.g., the proposed Greenwoods New Town.⁵ – see **Map 3**.

1.4.4 Fortunately, the Greenwoods New Town proposal, which sought to deliver a new settlement of nearly 4,000 homes between Barton-le-Clay and Silsoe, was formally refused by Central Bedfordshire Council in March 2024. The proposal was found to conflict with national and local planning policy, harm the Green Belt and heritage assets, and undermine the spatial strategy for sustainable growth. The site may though, be reconsidered under Central Bedfordshire’s emerging **Local Plan (Regulation 18 Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 expected in 2026)**.



Map 3 – Greenwoods New Town.

⁵ CB/22/01804/OUT

1.4.5 In considering the immediate and long-term impacts of the **CBLP 2015-2035**, Barton-le-Clays status as an 'Insert' Green Belt Settlement, potential development of Inset and Windfall sites, new developments such as 'HAS05 – Land East of Barton-le-Clay', reinforces the urgent need for a **BLCNP** to ensure that the needs of the village are protected and enable the local community to shape the future development of the village for the benefit of those that live here, and those who wish to make Barton-le-Clay their home.

1.4.6 The Parish Council will use the Plan to:

1.4.6.1 Guide comments on planning applications;

1.4.6.2 Negotiate with landowners and stakeholders to achieve the best possible outcomes for the community, based on our stated Purpose and Vision;

1.4.6.3 Direct financial resources for the Parish, such as Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and 'Section 106' funding⁶, to support villagers' wishes and aspirations.

1.4.7 The Parish Council will monitor and report on the implementation of the **BLCNP** after a period of two years. Review to cover:

1.4.7.1 Planning application approvals and rejections, at both Parish and County level, to ensure that the **BLCNP** is being considered when applications are presented;

1.4.7.2 Review Planning Officer reports, as appropriate for the type of application decided, to ensure that the **BLCNP** is considered, particularly where an application is refused at Parish level, but approved at County level;

1.4.7.3 What progress is being made on the implementation of the policies in the Plan;

1.4.7.4 What financial contributions available to the community are being targeted towards identified plans and projects;

1.4.7.5 The plan does not unnecessarily restrict growth;

1.4.7.6 The Plan remains based on the most up-to-date information e.g., outcomes from the consultations for the new **CBLP 2015-2035 'Creating Great Places to Live'**⁷ and from standalone consultations such as the '**Rural Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) Engagement**' and that may require modifications to the **BLCNP**.

⁶ [Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990](#)

⁷ [New Local Plan - Creating Great Places to Live.](#)

1.4.8 At the end of the review, the Parish Council will then decide whether the Plan should be formally reviewed and if so, will ensure that residents and stakeholders engage in any update of that Plan.

1.4.9 After the initial two-year review, the Parish Council will determine the frequency of subsequent reviews. Subsequent reviews will normally occur at intervals of no more than five years, or earlier if required by a review of the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan. The Reviews will ensure that the Plan remains responsive to changing circumstances and continues to reflect the aspirations of Barton-le-Clay's residents.

2 The Scope of the Neighbourhood Plan

2.1.1 Paragraph 8 of [Schedule 4B to Town and Country Planning Act 1990](#) requires that Neighbourhood Development Plans must –

2.1.1.1 Have appropriate regard to national policies and advice, for example, the [National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\) Dec 2024](#);

2.1.1.2 Having special regard to preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of any Conservation Area⁸,

2.1.1.3 Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, and,

2.1.1.4 Be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the Central Bedfordshire, for example, the CBLP 2015 – 2035, [Central Bedfordshire Design Guide - Aug 2023](#) and Supplementary Policy Documents (SPD) such as [Parking Standards for New Developments](#) and [Electric Vehicle Charging Technical Guidance for New Developments - Dec 2022](#), and support local initiatives such as the [Barton-le-Clay Leisure Strategy 2021 - 2026](#).

3 Development of the Neighbourhood Plan

3.1.1 The Neighbourhood Plan process is set out in the [Neighbourhood Planning \(General\) Regulations 2012](#). This document defines the main stages that a Neighbourhood Plan must go through before it is voted on at the referendum. Neighbourhood Plans that do not closely follow the Regulations in the way they are produced may be vulnerable to legal challenge later.

3.1.2 A summary of the main stages in preparing the Barton-le-Clay Neighbourhood Plan are shown in **Figure 1** below.

⁸ See Appendix 5.

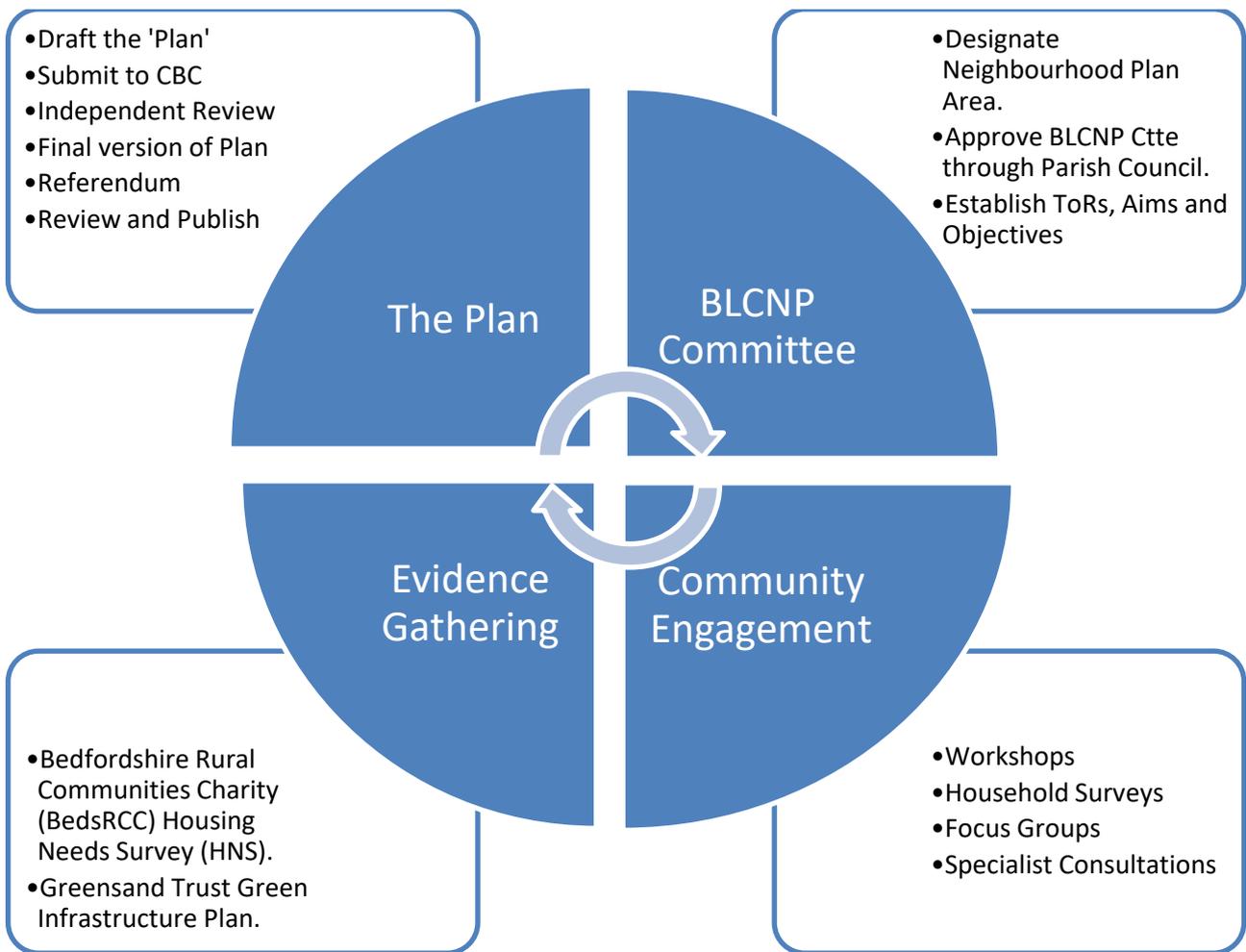


Figure 1 – BLCNP Key Stages of Preparation.

3.1.3 Neighbourhood Plans must be based on relevant evidence about the neighbourhood area (the Parish of Barton-le-Clay) and must reflect the views of the local community. The Parish Council has, therefore, been careful to gather the necessary evidence to inform the Neighbourhood Plan and to underpin the policies in it. In addition, the Parish Council has made community engagement a priority throughout the process of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan as detailed in the **BLCNP Consultation Document at Annex D.**

3.1.4 Barton-le-Clay Parish Council, as the qualifying body, is responsible for the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan for its parish area and established an Advisory Steering Committee to work within a set of agreed Terms of Reference (ToR) – see **Appendix 2**, to consult villagers and external specialists to produce the **BLCNP** with recommendations, that are supportive to the **CBLP 2015-2035** and meet the needs and aspirations of the Parish community.

4 Vision and Objectives

4.1.1 The vision and objectives of this Neighbourhood Plan have been carefully developed by the Steering Committee and have evolved to reflect the priorities of the community and, to guide planning decisions within Barton-le-Clay.

"Sustainable growth which recognises the ability of the village to contribute to the housing needs of the wider area, as set out in Part 6 of the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan, while respecting the particular characteristics of the Parish and the needs and wishes of the community, will be supported".

4.1.2 From our vision, we have developed Objectives which complement the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan, whilst ensuring that our Neighbourhood Plan meet the needs of the Village. **BLCNP** Objectives:

4.1.2.1 **Protect Local Character, Heritage, and Landscape.**

- Safeguard the village's rural character, compact form, and historic identity.
- Conserve and enhance the countryside, biodiversity, and nationally protected landscapes.
- Retain key views, hedgerows, trees, and historic features including Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas.

4.1.2.2 **Promote Sustainable and High-Quality Development.**

- Support small-scale, well-designed development that aligns with local principles.
- Maintain important countryside gaps between settlements.
- Ensure new development contributes positively to infrastructure and respects the Parish's character.

4.1.2.3 **Meet Local Housing Needs Inclusively.**

- Provide a balanced mix of housing types and tenures based on the Housing Needs Survey.
- Address the needs of all age groups and abilities, including those with mental health conditions, dementia, and disabilities.

4.1.2.4 **Protect and Improve Community Assets and Green Spaces.**

- Retain public houses and community facilities, and designate Assets of Community Value where appropriate.
- Enhance existing green spaces and designate new ones for public enjoyment and wellbeing.

4.1.2.5 **Enhance Movement, Safety, and Connectivity.**

- Reduce reliance on cars by improving walking and cycling access to local services.
- Support traffic calming, better parking, and safer pedestrian environments.

4.1.3 Our vision and third-party, external reviews e.g., the Housing Needs Survey, the Design, Guidelines & Codes and Green Infra-structure Plan, drive the development of the Plan Policies and align with our Objectives – see **Table 1**.

Policy Area	Policy Reference	Aligned Objectives
Sustainable Development & Growth	SDG1–SDG3	4.1.2.1, 4.1.2.2, 4.1.2.6
Historic Environment	HE1–HE2	4.1.2.4, 4.1.2.3, 4.1.2.1
Housing	HOU1–HOU3	4.1.2.5, 4.1.2.6, 4.1.2.11
Design of New Developments	DND1–DND2	4.1.2.1, 4.1.2.3, 4.1.2.6, 4.1.2.11
Green Infrastructure	GI1–GI5	4.1.2.1, 4.1.2.3, 4.1.2.10
Employment & Economy	EE1–EE2	4.1.2.6, 4.1.2.9
Transport	TRA1	4.1.2.7, 4.1.2.8, 4.1.2.6

Table 1 – Policy - Objective Matrix

5 Community Involvement Strategy

5.1 Strategy

5.1.1 It is essential to involve the community in the Neighbourhood Plan process and ensure that everyone in the community can have their say. To achieve this the **BLCNPSC** produced a Neighbourhood Plan Communications Strategy – see **Annex D**.

5.1.2 The Steering Committee initially met monthly and has provided both a written and verbal update at each Parish Council meeting.

5.2 Road to Adoption

5.2.1 Reg 14 - Pre-submission consultation and publicity.

5.2.2 Reg 15 - Plan proposals.

5.2.3 Reg 16 - Publicising a plan proposal.

5.2.4 Reg 17 - Submission of plan proposal to examination.

5.2.5 Reg 18 - Publication of the examiner’s report and plan proposal decisions.

5.2.6 Reg 19 - Decision on a plan proposal.

5.2.7 Reg 20 - Publicising a neighbourhood development plan.

Policy SDG1: Strategic Development Principles

Policy Statement: All development proposals will be expected to comply with the following principles. The proposal will be assessed as a whole, and supported where it:

1. Is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan, comprising the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.
2. Contributes positively to the Vision and Objectives of this Neighbourhood Plan.
3. Respects the established character of Barton-le-Clay by being of a scale, density, and design that is appropriate to the village's rural setting, compact form, and existing infrastructure capacity.
4. Conserves and, where possible, enhances the historic environment, landscape character, and biodiversity of the parish, including the setting of nationally protected areas.
5. Protects and improves community wellbeing by:
 - Delivering a mix of housing that responds to local needs, including affordable and accessible homes.
 - Safeguarding and enhancing community facilities, green spaces, and local employment opportunities.
 - Improving movement, safety, and connectivity for all, with a emphasis on

6 Barton-le-Clay - A Picturesque and Historic Village

6.1 Barton-le-Clay History

6.1.1 The village of Barton-le-Clay is in the county of Bedfordshire, situated midway between Bedford and Luton on the A6 and between Hitchin and Harlington on the B665.

6.1.2 Barton-Le-Clay, literally, Barton in the Clay – see **Map 4**, derives its name from its position being sited where the clay soil starts under Barton Hill. The overlordship was vested in the Crown at the date of the Domesday Survey⁹, remaining so until the Dissolution when the manor was taken in hand by the King and annexed to the manor of Ampthill in 1542. The manor formerly belonged to the monks of Ramsey; it was given to the Ramsey Abbey, Huntingdonshire in 1044 by Eadnoth, bishop of Dorchester. The grant was confirmed by Edward the Confessor in 1066, by William the Conqueror in 1068 and again by Edward III in 1334.

⁹ Barton [-in-the-Clay] was a settlement in Domesday Book. It had a recorded population of 33 households in 1086.



Map 4 - Barton-le-Clay 1882-1899.

6.2 Barton-le-Clay and its

Heritage

6.2.1 Barton-le-Clay Parish is rightly proud of its historic environment and heritage assets¹⁰ and recognises the need to conserve and enhance all these important features.

6.2.1.1 Scheduled monuments. Moated site at Faldo Farm.

6.2.1.2 Barton Hills AONB (see 10.6).

6.2.1.3 Listed Grade 1 & II buildings within Barton-le-Clay¹¹. Examples of Listed Buildings in the village is at **Appendix 3**.

6.2.2 Barton-le-Clays rich heritage is discussed in detail at **Appendix 4** and summarised below.

¹⁰ Heritage Assets include Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas, Registered Parks and Gardens, Historic Landscapes, Archaeological Sites and Monuments, and other non-designated historic features.

¹¹ [Historic England - National Heritage List for England \(NHLE\)](#)

6.3 Conservation Area

6.3.1 There is a large conservation area in the village that comprises of two parts (Map at **Appendix 5**):

6.3.1.1 Part 1 - The rectangular area of land in the south is focused on Old Road, Hexton Road and Church Road including the hamlet surrounding the Church of St Nicholas and meadows, and,

6.3.1.2 Part 2 - The long narrow area to the North comprising the village centre on Bedford Road and houses on Sharpenhoe Road,

6.3.2 A Barton-Le-Clay Conservation Area Appraisal¹² carried out in Dec 2009 recommended two enhancements to the existing Conservation Area:

6.3.2.1 **Enhancement One.** Area of Green Space enclosed by Bedford Road, Manor Road and Lime Close. This important tree lined open space forms part of the setting to historic buildings which make a positive contribution to this part of the conservation area and also forms part of the gateway to the older sections of Barton-Le-Clay from the north.

6.3.2.2 **Enhancement Two.** The east side of Bedford Road adjacent to and including the entrance to Old School Gardens.

6.3.3 Enhancement One is discussed as a candidate Green Space in the Green Infrastructure Plan. The Parish Council will work with the Planning Dept CBC to include Enhancement Two into the existing Conservation Area.

6.4 Assets of Community Value

6.4.1 An Asset of Community Value is a building or piece of land that is used to further the social wellbeing or interests of the local community. Through the **BLCNP** consultation process, the **BLCNPSC** will be open to nominations for consideration of Non-Designated, Heritage Asset and/or Asset of Community Value¹³.

6.5 Present Day Barton-le-Clay

6.5.1 Barton-le-Clay is a vibrant Bedfordshire village that blends rural charm with modern living. With a population nearing 5,000 and a strong sense of community, it offers a safe and family-friendly environment. The village is experiencing modest growth, with around 349 new homes expected by 2030. Residents enjoy access to local schools, shops, green spaces, and good transport links to nearby towns. Governed by an active parish council, Barton-le-Clay maintains its distinct identity while adapting to future needs through thoughtful planning and community engagement. A full description of the Present Day Barton-le-Clay is detailed in **Appendix 6**.

¹² [Barton-Le-Clay Conservation Area Appraisal Draft December 2009](#)

¹³ N.B. The Bull Public House was considered but does not meet the necessary criteria as it is not the only public house in the Village, and it is already protected by being a listed building.

6.5.2 In addition to Barton-le-Clay's rich historic environment, Barton-le-Clay sits alongside and within the setting of the Chilterns AONB and the Barton Hills/SSSI. The outstanding natural landscape and biodiversity is covered in depth as part of the GI Plan – Section 10.

6.6 Protecting our Heritage Assets

6.6.1 The NPPF Dec 24¹⁴ sets national planning policy that requires planners to recognise and seek to sustain the significance¹⁵ of individual heritage assets. This national policy is supported by **CBLP 2015-2035 - Policy HE3: Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and Built Heritage** and the **CBC Design Guide** (latest reiteration).

6.6.2 The BLCNP, through its 'Barton-le-Clay Parish-Wide Design Guidelines and Codes' sets out a guide for developers that focuses on high quality development that considers the historic nature and setting of Barton-le-Clay, so that developments in the area establish a strong sense of place and respond to local character and history by reflecting the local identity of the place through use of appropriate materials and attractive design.

¹⁴ [NPPF Dec 24 - 16. 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment' that our Heritage Assets](#)

¹⁵ Significance (for heritage policy) - The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic, or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

Policy HE1: Historic Environment, Heritage Assets and Archaeological Sensitivity

Objective:

To conserve and enhance the historic environment of Barton-le-Clay, including its Conservation Area, Listed Buildings, historic landscape setting, and areas of archaeological interest, ensuring that development sustains the village's special character and significance.

Policy Statement:

Development which may affect historic assets, including Listed Buildings, the Conservation Area, non-designated heritage assets, or heritage assets with archaeological interest, will be assessed against Policies HE1, HE2 and HE3 of the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan and Part 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (Dec 2024), as appropriate.

Development proposals will be supported where they:

1. **Conserve or enhance the significance** of designated and non-designated heritage assets, including buildings, structures, historic landscapes, and features that contribute positively to the village's character.
2. **Protect the setting of the Conservation Area**, particularly:
 - a. key views identified in the AECOM Design Guidelines,
 - b. the historic relationship between Church Road, Hexton Road and Old Road, and
 - c. the visual and spatial character of Bedford Road and Sharpenhoe Road.
3. **Avoid harm to the setting of heritage assets** or to green spaces that contribute to their significance unless:
 - a. a clear and convincing justification of public benefit is demonstrated, and
 - b. the harm is the minimum necessary and outweighed by those benefits.
4. **Respond positively to local character**, including scale, massing, layout, materials, boundary treatments and landscape features that reflect the village's historic form.
5. **Provide an Archaeological Heritage Statement** for proposals:
 - a. on or adjacent to sites identified in the Bedfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER), or
 - b. within areas of known or potential archaeological interest.
Where appropriate, archaeological evaluation, investigation and post-excavation analysis must be secured.
6. **Retain historic landscape features**, including ancient hedgerows, historic field boundaries, farmsteads, and the relationship between the village and the Chilterns escarpment.

Reasoned Justification:

Barton-le-Clay's historic character derives from its Conservation Area, Scheduled Monument, Listed Buildings, traditional settlement pattern and its archaeological potential. The policy ensures development respects these designations and their settings, in line with national and local planning frameworks, while providing Barton-specific guidance for decision-makers.

7 Housing

7.1 Housing Needs and Evidence

7.1.1 The Barton-le-Clay Housing Needs Survey (HNS), undertaken by Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BedsRCC) in 2023, identified the current and emerging housing requirements of local people. The full report is provided in **Annex A**.

7.1.2 Key findings include:

7.1.2.1 A shortage of smaller, affordable homes suitable for first-time buyers and young families.

7.1.2.2 A strong demand for 2–3-bedroom properties and single-storey homes to support older residents wishing to downsize.

7.1.2.3 Limited availability of accessible or adaptable dwellings within the parish.

7.1.3 Population data confirms an ageing demographic, with over **21% of residents aged 65+**, significantly higher than the national average. This trend is expected to continue, increasing demand for adaptable, accessible, and retirement housing.

7.2 Starter Homes

7.2.1 The HNS found a need for up to **12 affordable homes** for households with a local connection, best delivered through small-scale, well-designed developments or a **Rural Exception Site**.

7.2.2 In addition, the Plan defines **starter homes** as modestly sized 1–2-bedroom properties, affordable to those on local median incomes and located within walking distance of village services. Their delivery will help younger residents remain in the community, maintaining a balanced age profile and supporting the long-term vitality of Barton-le-Clay.

7.3 Meeting Diverse and Changing Needs

7.3.1 The Plan recognises the need for housing that supports people at all life stages and with differing mobility or health needs. This includes:

7.3.1.1 Accessible and adaptable homes built to **Building Regulations M4(2)** standards;

7.3.1.2 Bungalows and smaller properties suitable for older residents;

7.3.1.3 A mix of tenures that includes affordable rent, shared ownership, and market housing.

7.3.2 Such provision aligns with **CBC Local Plan Policies H1–H3** and supports the **NPPF's** objective to create inclusive and mixed communities.

7.4 Vulnerable Groups

7.4.1 The OCSI¹⁶ data shows that while the number of residents claiming disability benefits is below regional averages, there remains a local need for suitable accommodation for residents with disabilities or long-term conditions.

7.4.2 The Neighbourhood Plan also acknowledges the needs of older and more vulnerable groups – including those at risk of isolation or with limited mobility or transport access – and supports the delivery of safe, accessible homes that allow residents to live independently for longer.

7.5 Summary

7.5.1 Overall, the evidence demonstrates a need for:

- 7.5.1.1 A modest number of affordable homes for local people;
- 7.5.1.2 Smaller, adaptable dwellings and bungalows for older residents; and
- 7.5.1.3 Starter homes for younger households entering the housing market.

7.5.2 These priorities underpin **Policies HOU1–HOU3**, ensuring that future development, e.g., the Land East of Barton-le-Clay (HAS05) development, in Barton-le-Clay meets the needs of all residents while protecting the character and scale of the village.

Policy HOU1: Affordable and Locally Needed Housing

Objective: To support the delivery of affordable housing that meets the needs of Barton-le-Clay's current and future residents, particularly younger households and first-time buyers.

Policy Statement: Development proposals for 10 or more dwellings will be supported where they:

1. Provide a minimum of **30% affordable housing**, in accordance with Central Bedfordshire Local Plan Policy H4 and the Housing Policy Technical Guidance SPD (Aug 2023).
2. Prioritise the delivery of **1- and 2-bedroom starter homes**, as defined in this Plan, to meet the needs of first-time buyers and younger households identified in the Barton-le-Clay Housing Needs Survey.
3. Are of a scale, design, and tenure mix that reflects the village's character and infrastructure capacity and contributes to a sustainable and inclusive community.

¹⁶ [OSCI Local Insight profile for 'Barton-le-Clay Parish' Area – dated 14 Aug 23.](#)

Policy HOU2: Retaining and Supporting Bungalow Stock

Objective: To preserve, so far as possible, Barton-le-Clay's stock of single-storey homes to meet the needs of older residents and support 'downsizing'.

Policy Statement: Where planning permission is required to extend a single-storey dwelling upwards, such proposals will not be supported unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the development will retain the availability of accessible, single-storey accommodation. This policy applies particularly to bungalows within the **Housing North Character Area**, as identified in the **AECOM Design Guidelines**.

Reasoned Justification: Bungalows provide essential accommodation for older residents and those with limited mobility. The loss of these homes through upward extensions has reduced the supply of accessible, single-storey dwellings in the parish. While it is recognised that some upward extensions may fall under permitted development rights, this policy seeks to guide planning decisions **where formal permission is required**, to ensure that the remaining bungalow stock is protected in line with the community's housing needs and the objectives of the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan Policy H3 (*Housing for Older People*).

Permitted Development and Bungalows It is recognised that many upward extensions and conversions can be carried out under national **Permitted Development Rights**, which this Plan cannot restrict. This policy therefore applies only where planning permission is required, ensuring that within its statutory limits, it protects the remaining bungalow stock. This approach is in line with the community's identified housing needs and supports the objectives of **Central Bedfordshire Local Plan Policy H3 (Housing for Older People)**.

Policy HOU3: Inclusive Home Adaptations

Objective: To enable residents with additional health or mobility needs to remain in their homes through sensitive, inclusive design.

Policy Statement: Proposals for home extensions or adaptations to support residents with disabilities, long-term health conditions, or sensory impairments will be supported where they:

1. Are designed to be accessible, safe, and visually sympathetic to the existing dwelling and surrounding area; and
2. Do not cause unacceptable impacts on neighbouring amenity or the local street scene.

Supporting Text This policy complements national Building Regulations (Part M: Access to and Use of Buildings) and supports the delivery of adaptable homes that enable residents to remain within the community.

8 High-Quality Design

8.1 Purpose and Context

8.1.1 Good design is a core principle of national and local planning policy. The **NPPF (Dec 2024)** and the **Central Bedfordshire Design Guide (CBDG)** both emphasise that well-designed buildings and places can enhance wellbeing, community pride, safety, and sustainability.

8.1.2 The Barton-le-Clay Neighbourhood Plan builds on these principles, ensuring all development:

- 8.1.2.1 Reflects the village’s distinctive built and landscape character;
- 8.1.2.2 Creates attractive, accessible, and inclusive places;
- 8.1.2.3 Integrates natural features and public spaces; and
- 8.1.2.4 Conserves resources and the historic environment.

8.2 Design Evidence

8.2.1 To support this approach, **AECOM** prepared the *Barton-le-Clay Design Guidelines and Codes (2023)*, following local site analysis and consultation with the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee.

8.2.2 These guidelines complement the **CBDG** and form part of the evidence base for the Plan (**Annex B**).

8.2.3 Together, they provide design principles covering:

- 8.2.3.1 **Materials and detailing** appropriate to local vernacular;
- 8.2.3.2 **Housing mix, layout and scale** consistent with existing patterns of development;
- 8.2.3.3 **Relationship to heritage assets and the rural edge**;
- 8.2.3.4 **Views, lighting, and biodiversity integration**; and
- 8.2.3.5 **Guidance on infill and backland development.**

8.2.4 Applicants are expected to demonstrate how their proposals respond to these local design codes and to the policies of this Plan.

8.3 Application

8.3.1 The AECOM Guidelines, used alongside the **CBDG**, establish the quality and character expected of future development. They provide a consistent framework for assessing proposals and ensure that growth in Barton-le-Clay enhances the village’s appearance, identity, and environmental performance. **Figure 2** shows how the AECOM guidelines are aligned with CBDG.

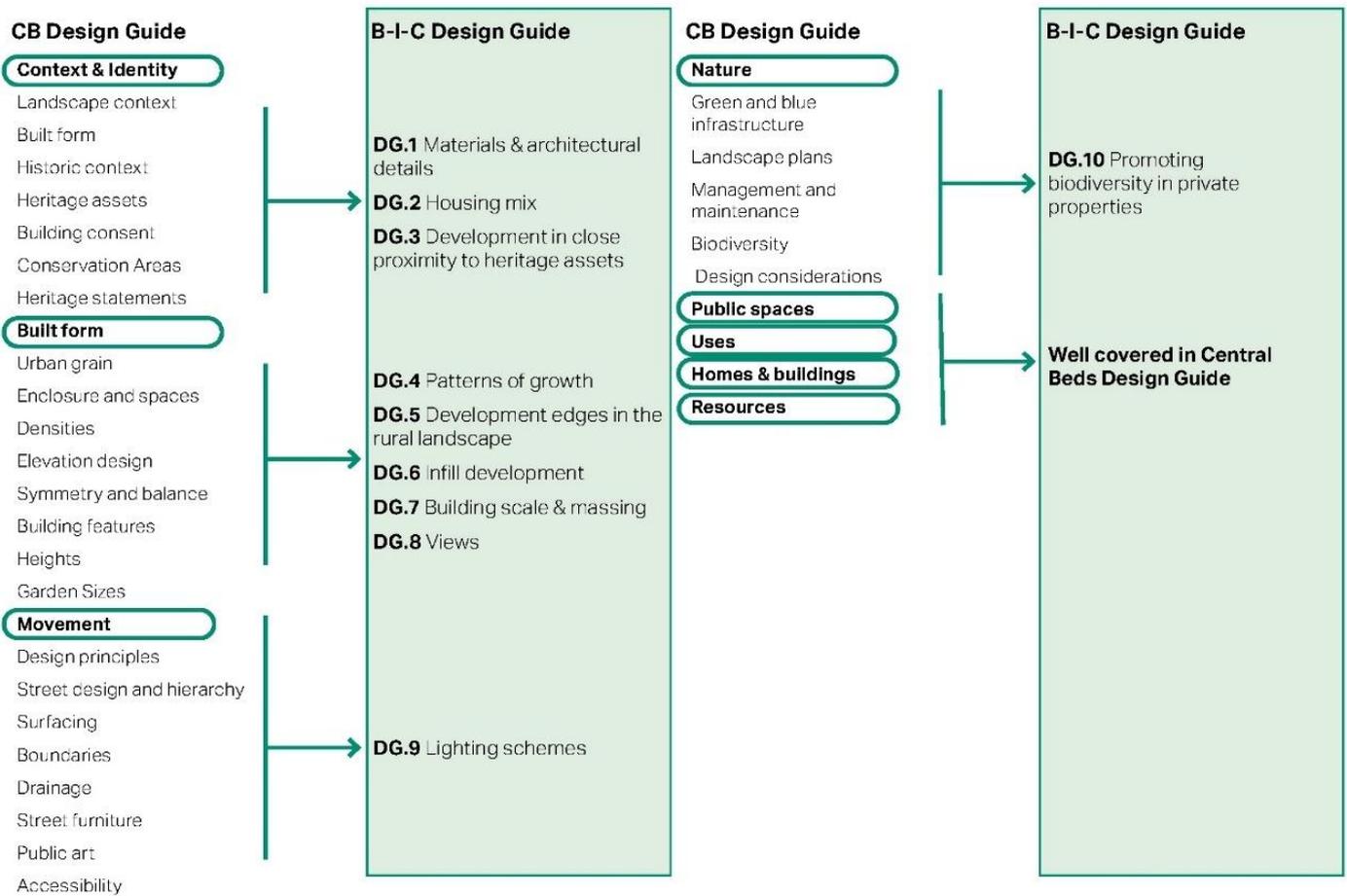


Figure 2 - Adoption of CBC Design Guides into AECOM’s Design Guides.

Policy DND1: High-Quality, Inclusive and Contextual Design

Objective: Where appropriate to its nature and location, new development will be assessed against the provisions of Local Plan Policies H2, HQ1 and CC3, and will be required to demonstrate that regard has been had to the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide and the Barton-le-Clay Design Guidelines and Codes, as relevant.

Policy Statement: In particular, the following criteria will be relevant to the consideration of planning applications within the Parish:

1. Have regard to the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide and adhere to the principles of the AECOM Barton-le-Clay Parish-Wide Design Guidelines and Codes.
2. Demonstrate compatibility with the village context, including:
 - Scale, density, and layout that reflect the surrounding development pattern
 - Use of materials appropriate to the local setting
 - Retention and framing of key views to reinforce rural character
3. Support inclusive and adaptable living, by:
 - Providing accessible design for people with physical and sensory needs
 - Considering dementia-friendly environments and sensory impacts
4. Incorporate sustainable drainage and surface water management, including:
 - Minimising hardstanding and maximising permeable surfaces.
 - Use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in line with CBC Policy CC5.
5. Provide appropriate infrastructure, including:
 - Parking provision that meets CBC Parking Standards (Aug 2023), including cycle, disabled, and mobility scooter spaces
 - Electric vehicle charging points (minimum one per five spaces) per CBC EV Charging Guidance (Dec 2022)
 - High-speed broadband and telecommunications networks.

Policy DND2: Protecting Green Spaces and Village Grain

Objective: To protect Barton-le-Clay's green spaces, landscape character, and development grain from inappropriate infill and backland development.

Policy Statement: Backland or infill development proposals will not be supported where they:

1. Result in the **loss of garden space**, green infrastructure, or local biodiversity
2. Fail to respect the **open character and rural setting** of the site and its surroundings
3. Are not clearly and demonstrably in accordance with the **local development pattern**, including:
 - Plot size and frontage length
 - Dwelling scale and spacing
 - Use of locally appropriate materials and detailing
4. Proposals must show that they enhance, rather than erode, the village's landscape and spatial character.

9 Green Infrastructure - Protecting and Enhancing the Green Environment

9.1 Overview

9.1.1 The **Greensand Trust** was commissioned by the Barton-le-Clay Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee in 2023 to prepare a **Parish-level Green Infrastructure Plan (GI Plan)**.

9.1.2 The final report (October 2023) forms part of the evidence base (**Annex C**), supported by a **Parish GI Review (Appendix 7)**.

9.1.3 The **GI Plan** identifies the parish's key natural, historic, cultural and recreational assets and proposes opportunities to strengthen connections between them through an integrated network of accessible and biodiverse green spaces.

9.2 Purpose and Method

9.2.1 The Plan's purpose is to protect and enhance Barton-le-Clay's green infrastructure network by:

9.2.1.1 Mapping existing features such as woodlands, open spaces, watercourses, and rights of way;

9.2.1.2 Highlighting opportunities for new green corridors, habitat creation and improved access; and

9.2.1.3 Guiding future development to deliver biodiversity net gain and landscape enhancement.

9.2.2 Preparation followed a two-stage process of mapping, stakeholder engagement, and community consultation led by the Greensand Trust, culminating in the final plan approved by the Parish Council.

9.3 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

9.4 Compliance Statement

9.4.1 The **BLCNP** has been subject to **SEA** and **HRA** screening in accordance with statutory requirements. The screening confirms that the Plan does not allocate development sites and, when considered both alone and in combination with other relevant plans or strategies, is unlikely to have significant effects on designated Natura 2000 sites. It is therefore determined that neither a further Strategic Environmental Assessment nor an Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations is required.

9.5 Local Green Spaces

9.5.1 An assessment of all green spaces within the parish was undertaken using the criteria set out in **NPPF (Dec 2024)**.

9.5.2 Following this assessment, the sites listed in **Table 3** and illustrated on **Map 5** are designated as **Local Green Spaces (LGS)**. Details of individual LGS are at **Appendix 8**. Together they form a vital part of the parish's green network, providing recreational value, ecological connectivity and visual character.

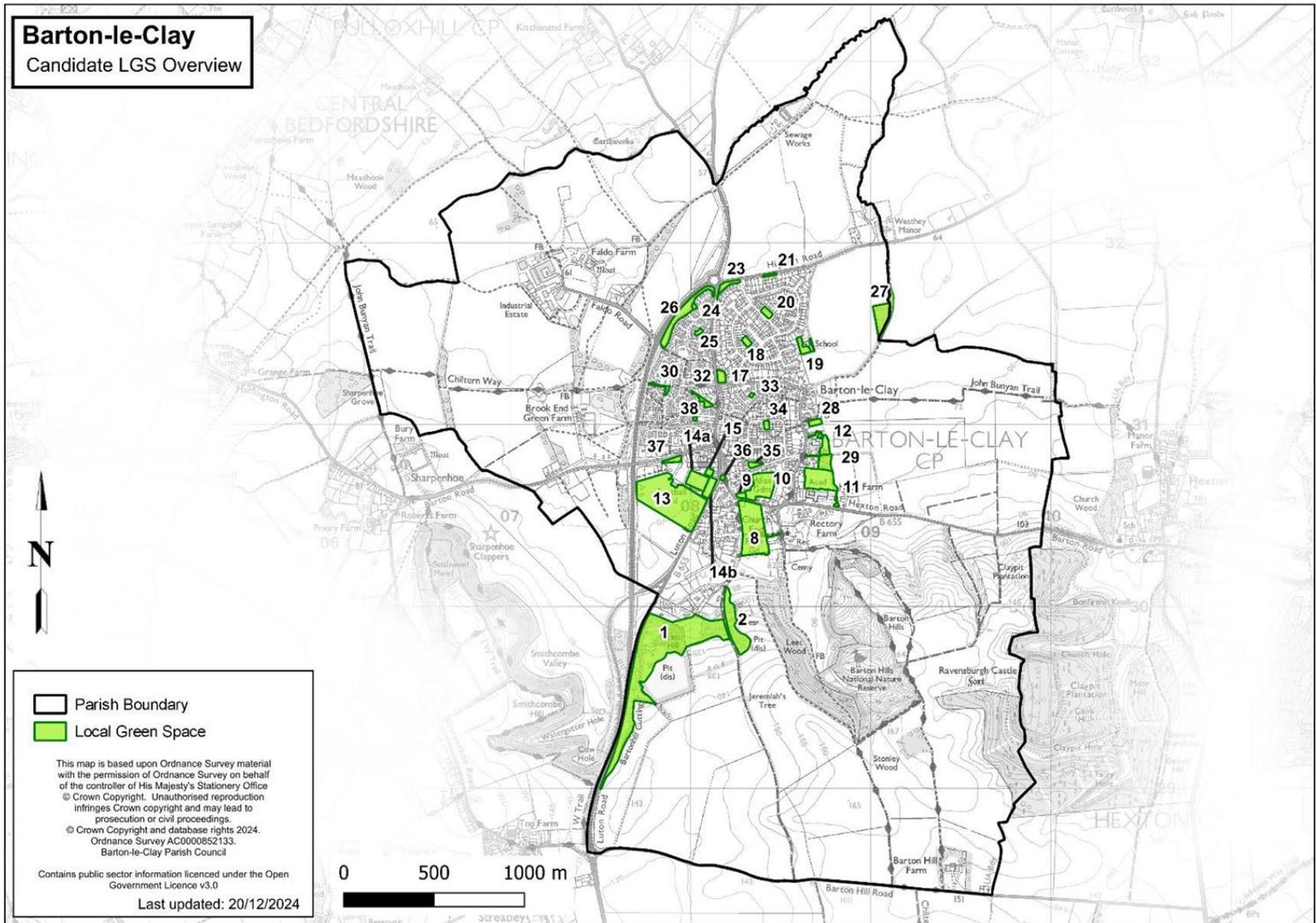
9.5.3 In line with the **NPPF**, management of any development within designated Local Green Spaces will be **consistent with national policy for Green Belts**, ensuring long-term protection of these valued areas.

Nº.	Name	Designated LGS
1	Barton Quarry CWS	Yes
2	Barton Pit CWS	Yes
3	Barton Hills SSSI	No
3b	Barton Hills CWS (areas 3 plus 3b)	No
4	Barton Gravel Pits CWS	No
5	Barton Scrubby Grasslands CWS	No
6	Barton-le-Clay Burial Ground (consecrated ground)	No
7	St Nicholas Church Cemetery (consecrated ground)	No
8	Arnold Recreation Ground and Tennis Courts	Yes
9	Community Garden	Yes
10	Barton-le-Clay Allotments	Yes
11	Arnold Middle School Playing Field	Yes
12	Ramsey Manor Lower School Playing Field	Yes
13	Luton Road Sports Field	Yes
14a	Barton Rovers Football Club	Yes
14b	Barton Rovers Football Club Training pitch	Yes
15	Barton-le-Clay Bowling Club	Yes
16	Former Orchard	No
17	Lime Close Amenity Space	Yes
18	Norman Road/Cromwell Avenue Play Area	Yes
19	Orchard School Playing Field	Yes
20	Saxon Crescent Amenity Space	Yes
21	Higham Gobion Road Greenspace	Yes
22	Higgins Wood- Wood N of Faldo Farm	No
23	Hanover Place Greenspace	Yes
24	Simpkins Drive Greenspace	Yes
25	Greenspace between Burr Close and Ashby Drive	Yes
26	Stream corridor adjacent to A6	Yes

Nº.	Name	Designated LGS
27	Beechener's Spinney ¹⁷	TBC
28	Pasture to North of Ramsey Manor School	Yes
29	Lively Land	Yes
30	Grange Close Green Corridor	Yes
31	Meadhook Drive Greenspace	Yes
32	Franklin Avenue Greenspace	Yes
33	Manor Farm Close Greenspace	Yes
34	Arnold Close Greenspace	Yes
35	Dunstall Road Greenspace	Yes
36	War Memorial	Yes
37	Land adjacent to Sharpenhoe Road	Yes
38	Nicholls Close Greenspace	Yes

Table 3 - Designated Local Green Spaces (LGS).

¹⁷ Beechener's Spinney Woods forms part of the Land East of Barton-le-Clay (HAS05) development and its future will be reviewed as part of the detailed planning process for the HAS05 Land.



Map 5 - Candidate Green Spaces.

9.6 Biodiversity and New Developments

9.6.1 The Neighbourhood Plan Area contains a rich variety of natural habitats of a local, National, and international importance and the biodiversity of the area must be protected and its protection a priority in any design.

9.6.2 It is noted that new development will have impacts on biodiversity and the 'Mitigation Hierarchy' in **Table 2** is supported.

AVOID	MINIMISE	REMEDiate	COMPENSATE
Where possible, habitat damage should be avoided.	Where possible, habitat damage and loss should be minimised.	Where possible, any damaged or lost habitat should be restored.	As a last resort, damaged or lost habitat should be compensated for.

Table 2 – Impacts on Biodiversity Mitigation Hierarchy.

9.7 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

9.7.1 Under the Environment Act 2021, all planning permissions in England (with a few exemptions) will have to deliver at least 10% BNG¹⁸. For small sites¹⁹, this became effective from 2 April 2024.

9.7.2 In general terms, only small sites are likely to be developed in the Neighbourhood Plan Area. These will still need to meet the requirements of Policy EE2 – Enhancing Biodiversity of the CBLP 2015 - 2035 and [CBC Biodiversity Net Gain Guidance in support of Local Plan Policy EE2 \(latest edition\)](#) that requires all new development to provide a net gain in biodiversity. This means improving biodiversity by creating or enhancing habitats, leaving nature in a better state that it was before. Techniques to enhance biodiversity are covered in DG.10 Promoting Biodiversity in Private Properties in the AECOM Design Guidelines.

9.8 Delivery and Monitoring

9.8.1 Implementation will be supported through partnership with Central Bedfordshire Council, the Greensand Trust, landowners and local volunteers.

9.8.2 Progress will be reviewed alongside the Parish's Environmental Action Plan to ensure the network is maintained and enhanced over time.

¹⁸ The biodiversity gain objective of at least a 10% gain is measured against the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat for the development.

¹⁹ The CBLP (page 114) defines Small Scale as 'usually limited to 10 dwellings in order to preserve the character of the settlement'.

Policy GI1: Green Infrastructure, Landscape and Biodiversity

Objective: To conserve and enhance the countryside, biodiversity, and nationally protected landscapes, and to protect and enhance existing green spaces for public enjoyment, wellbeing, and ecological connectivity.

GI-1: Biodiversity Net Gain. All development must deliver a minimum of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) as measured under the Environment Act 2021 and in line with Central Bedfordshire Local Plan Policy EE2. Proposals must demonstrate how they protect and enhance the parish's ecological network, contribute to the strategic Green Infrastructure network, and avoid adverse impacts on designated sites, including the Barton Hills SSSI.

GI-2: Landscape Character, Views and Rural Setting. Development must conserve and enhance the local landscape character, including chalk downland, hedgerows, treelines, and the defined rural settlement edge. Proposals will be supported where they:

1. Protect key views to and from the Conservation Area, Barton Hills, and the Chilterns escarpment.
2. Avoid urbanising effects, such as development on ridgelines or the use of intrusive rooflines, materials, or lighting.
3. Provide a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) where the development may affect key views, the settlement edge, nationally designated landscapes, or other visually sensitive locations.

GI-3: Local Green Spaces. The areas of land listed in Table 3 and shown on Map 5 are designated as Local Green Spaces. Inappropriate development within these designated spaces will not be approved except in very special circumstances, where the harm to the Local Green Space by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

GI-4: Trees and Hedgerows. Development must retain mature trees, woodland, and species-rich hedgerows wherever possible. Where removal is unavoidable due to compelling development needs, it must be justified, and a scheme for replacement planting of appropriate native species and maturity must be provided. All proposals must comply with Tree Preservation Orders and ensure the protection of important hedgerows during construction.

GI-5: Green Corridors and Access. Development must maintain, enhance, and create ecological corridors and public access. Proposals will be expected to:

1. Maintain and improve wildlife corridors, ensuring connectivity between habitats.
2. Enhance links to and within the Public Rights of Way network.
3. Support the creation of safe, attractive walking and cycling routes connecting residential areas to village facilities, green spaces, and the Barton Hills.

10 Employment & Economy

10.1 Introduction

10.1.1 Barton-le-Clay Parish has a thriving commercial community, centred on the south end of Bedford Road and Windsor Road with a wide range of shops and services, the Faldo Road Industrial Estate which comprises 35 businesses covering a wide range of different industries and retailers, some of which have a national presence and the Olde Watermill Shopping Village; home to an eclectic mix of 20 small businesses and retail outlets.

10.1.2 It is well located for businesses as it is easily accessible from the A6 and B655, with good links to the M1 and A1(M) via these routes. Harlington train station is the closest rail link (3.6 miles) with Flitwick train station 5 miles away. London Luton Airport is the closest airport.

10.1.3 In terms of economic activity, Barton-le-Clay compares favourably with rates in both Central Bedfordshire and England²⁰ - **Table 4**. The higher 'Economically Inactive' rate is consistent with the high percentage of retirees in the village.

Economically active	Full-time employees	Part-time employees	Self-employed people	Economically inactive
2,556	1,459	498	466	1,566

Table 4 – Economic Activity – Barton-le-Clay.

10.1.4 The Village has several eateries and convenience stores, two estate agents, three Public Houses, hairdressing and beauty salons, and numerous self-employed residents working from home. Unfortunately, there have been several closures, including the village Post Office. The closure of the Post Office is a serious concern, particularly amongst villagers who relied on the Post Office for their banking and postal needs. The nearest Post Office is now at Clophill, and the nearest ATM is outside of the local Coop.

10.2 Business Owner Survey – Summary

10.2.1 Local business owners in Barton-le-Clay identified several infrastructure and service challenges that affect their ability to operate and grow sustainably. These concerns closely mirror those raised by residents and reinforce the need for joined-up solutions that benefit the whole community.

10.2.2 Key issues raised include:

²⁰ Census 2021.

10.2.2.1 Lagging infrastructure: GP and NHS dental services are not keeping pace with population growth.

10.2.2.2 Traffic and highways: Congestion, potholes, and inadequate parking near the Recreation Ground and Bedford Road shops.

10.2.2.3 Connectivity: Poor access to fibre broadband limits business efficiency and remote working.

10.2.2.4 Transport: Limited public transport options to Luton, Bedford, and Milton Keynes affect visitor access and staff recruitment.

10.2.2.5 Accommodation: Lack of hotel or B&B facilities for business visitors and contractors.

10.2.2.6 Business rates: High costs for small enterprises with modest profits.

10.2.2.7 Community safety: Support for Speed Watch initiatives to manage traffic speeds.

10.2.3 These shared concerns highlight the importance of integrated planning across transport, infrastructure, and digital connectivity. Addressing them will help deliver the Neighbourhood Plan's Vision for a thriving, inclusive Barton-le-Clay by 2035.

Policy EE1: Supporting Local Enterprise and Employment

Objective:

To encourage the growth, expansion, and diversification of small businesses in Barton-le-Clay, supporting local employment while protecting the village's character, environment, and residential amenity. Objectives 4.1.2.6 and 4.1.2.9 of this Plan

Policy Statement:

1. Proposals for the development of new small businesses, or the expansion and diversification of existing enterprises—including farm-based operations—will be supported in principle, subject to:
 - Compliance with other relevant policies of this Neighbourhood Plan; and
 - Alignment with Policies EMP4, HQ1, and HQ5 of the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan (2015–2035).
2. Development will be particularly supported where it:
 - Provides opportunities for home-based businesses, micro-enterprises, rural tourism, or agricultural diversification.
 - Demonstrates suitable access, parking, and servicing arrangements appropriate to the scale and nature of the proposal.
 - Avoids significant adverse impacts on residential amenity, the rural landscape, and the character of the village.

11 Transport

11.1 Introduction

11.1.1 Transport infrastructure in Barton-le-Clay must serve the needs of all users—pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, and those with limited mobility—while preserving the village’s rural character and managing development pressures. The Neighbourhood Plan supports transport improvements that reduce reliance on private vehicles, enhance safety, and promote inclusive, sustainable movement.

11.1.2 A review of Barton-le-Clays transport infrastructure is detailed at **Appendix 9** and summarised below.

11.2 Local Transport Priorities

11.2.1 The Barton-le-Clay LAMP highlights several transport concerns:

11.2.1.1 Speeding and traffic volume on key routes (e.g., Hexton Road, Bedford Road, Luton Road).

11.2.1.2 Inadequate pedestrian crossings and footway connectivity.

11.2.1.3 Parking congestion near schools, shops, and residential areas.

11.2.1.4 Limited cycling infrastructure and poor integration with regional routes.

11.2.2 These issues inform the Neighbourhood Plan’s emphasis on traffic calming, pedestrian safety, and active travel infrastructure.

11.3 Pedestrian and Cyclist Safety

11.3.1 The Plan prioritises safe, inclusive movement by:

11.3.1.1 Supporting 20mph zones in sensitive areas (e.g., Conservation Area, residential streets).

11.3.1.2 Enhancing pedestrian crossings near schools, shops, and bus stops.

11.3.1.3 Improving footpath surfaces, continuity, and visibility.

11.3.1.4 Upgrading cycling routes and signage, with links to the Chiltern Cycleway.

11.3.2 These measures reduce conflict between users and encourage active travel.

11.4 Community-Led Improvements

11.4.1 The Parish Council has used CBC's Rural Match Fund to deliver targeted transport enhancements, including:

11.4.1.1 Vehicle-Activated Signs (VAS) and Speed Indicator Devices (SID).

11.4.1.2 Footpath upgrades and safer access routes.

11.4.1.3 Community-led traffic surveys and monitoring.

11.4.2 The Plan supports continued use of such funding to deliver locally supported improvements.

11.5 Public Transport and Rail Connectivity

11.5.1 Bus services connect Barton-le-Clay to Luton, Bedford, and nearby villages, but residents report concerns about:

11.5.1.1 Infrequent services, especially evenings/weekends.

11.5.1.2 Limited accessibility for older and disabled residents.

11.5.1.3 Lack of sheltered stops and real-time information.

11.5.2 The Plan encourages improvements to service reliability, accessibility, and integration with walking and cycling routes.

11.5.3 Rail access is via Harlington and Luton stations. The Plan supports:

11.5.3.1 Better bus links to stations.

11.5.3.2 Secure cycle parking.

11.5.3.3 Coordinated timetables to support multimodal journeys.

11.6 Strategic Infrastructure: M1–A6 Link Road

11.6.1 The proposed M1–A6 Link Road may reduce through-traffic in Barton-le-Clay but raises concerns about:

11.6.1.1 Development pressure along the corridor.

11.6.1.2 Impacts on landscape, biodiversity, and tranquillity.

11.6.1.3 Connectivity and access for local residents.

11.6.2 The Plan supports ongoing monitoring and community engagement to ensure strategic infrastructure aligns with village character and transport capacity.

Policy TRA1: Sustainable Transport, Safety, and Village Character

Objective:

To ensure that development supports safe, sustainable movement for all users while respecting Barton-le-Clay's rural character and heritage. Objectives 4.1.2.6, 4.1.2.7 and 4.1.2.8 of this Plan.

Policy Statement:

1. The impact of development proposals on **highway safety and movement for all users** will be assessed against Local Plan Policy T2. In addition, where appropriate and practicable, new roads, junctions, footpaths and traffic management measures should be designed to complement the rural character of the village and reflect and incorporate local heritage.
2. Where appropriate and practicable, **new roads, junctions, footpaths, and traffic management measures** should be designed to **complement the rural character of the village** and **reflect and incorporate local heritage**.
3. Development that enhances **safe walking, cycling, and public transport connections** will be supported in principle.

Reasoned Justification: Barton-le-Clay faces increasing traffic pressures due to its rural location and commuter links. This policy complements Local Plan Policy T2 by ensuring new development contributes positively to road safety, active travel, and the distinctive rural setting of the village. Specific measures such as speed management, crossing points, and improved connectivity are encouraged through partnership with Central Bedfordshire Council and local initiatives.

12 Implementation and Delivery Plan

12.1 Purpose

12.1.1 The **BLCNP** sets out a clear vision and policy framework for guiding development in the parish. To ensure that this vision is realised, the Plan includes a Delivery Plan that identifies priority projects, responsible bodies, potential funding sources, and indicative timescales. This section provides a practical roadmap for implementation, enabling the Parish Council, Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC), and community partners to coordinate efforts and allocate resources effectively. It also supports transparency and accountability in how planning contributions, such as Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 agreements, are used to benefit the local community.

12.2 Delivery Table

12.2.1 **Table 5** below summarises key actions and projects that support the delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan's policies and objectives. It includes lead organisations, delivery partners, potential funding sources, and indicative priorities and timescales. The table is not exhaustive and may be updated as new opportunities, funding streams, or community needs emerge.

Ref	Project/Action	Linked Policy	Lead Body	Partners	Funding Source	Priority	Timescale
DP1	Designate and enhance Local Green Spaces	GI3, GI5	Parish Council	CBC, landowners	CIL, CBC grants	High	2026–2027
DP2	Install VAS/SID and implement 20mph zones	TRA1	Parish Council	CBC Highways	CBC Highways, CIL	High	2026–2028
DP3	Develop starter homes on suitable infill sites	HOU1	CBC Planning	Developers, Housing Associations	Section 106, Homes England	Medium	2026–2030
DP4	Protect and adapt bungalows for downsizing	HOU2	CBC Planning	Parish Council	Developer-led	Medium	Ongoing
DP5	Improve walking/cycling links to village centre	TRA1, GI5	Parish Council	CBC, Sustrans ²¹	CIL, Section 106	High	2026–2028
DP6	Support new farm shop or heritage-based tourism	EE1	Parish Council	Local businesses	Private, CBC Rural Grants	Medium	2026–2029
DP7	Tree planting and biodiversity corridors	GI1, GI4	Parish Council	Wildlife Trust, CBC	CIL, DEFRA grants	High	2026–2028
DP8	Prepare Conservation Area guidance and signage	HE1	Parish Council	CBC Conservation Team	CBC, Heritage Lottery	Medium	2026–2028

Table 5 - BLCNP Delivery Table.

Notes:

- **CIL:** Community Infrastructure Levy (CBC-managed).
- **Section 106:** Developer contributions tied to specific planning consents.
- **Priority:** Based on community need, feasibility, and alignment with objectives.
- **Lead Body:** Responsible for initiating and coordinating delivery.
- **Partners:** Supporting organisations or stakeholders.

12.3 Monitoring and Review

12.3.1 The Parish Council will monitor progress against the Delivery Plan annually, using planning application data, project updates, and feedback from stakeholders. This will include:

12.3.1.1 Reviewing planning approvals and refusals to ensure alignment with Neighbourhood Plan policies.

²¹ Sustrans: A UK charity that works with communities, local authorities, and partners to design and deliver walking and cycling infrastructure. They manage the National Cycle Network and support active travel initiatives that promote healthier, low-carbon transport.

12.3.1.2 Tracking the use of CIL and Section 106 contributions to support identified projects.

12.3.1.3 Assessing progress on priority actions and identifying any delivery challenges.

12.3.1.4 Engaging with CBC, developers, and community groups to coordinate implementation.

12.3.1.5 Updating the Delivery Table as needed to reflect new priorities or funding opportunities.

12.3.2 A formal review of the Neighbourhood Plan will be undertaken two years after adoption, as outlined in Section 1.4.9.

Glossary

Term	Meaning & Definition
Affordable Housing	Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the housing market (generally provided by housing associations, working in partnership with CBC).
Area of Interest (AOI)	The AOI is the area that is covered by the Neighbourhood Plan. The Barton-le-Clay Neighbourhood Area, which is the same as the area defined by the Barton-le-Clay Parish boundary, was designated by Central Bedfordshire Council in December 2016.
Asset of Community Value	An asset of community value is land or property of importance to a local community which is subject to additional protection from development under the Localism Act 2011.
Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)	A planning approach that ensures development leaves biodiversity in a measurably better state than before. Under the Environment Act 2021, most developments must deliver at least a 10% net gain in biodiversity compared to the baseline conditions.
BLCNP	Barton-le-Clay Neighbourhood Plan.
BLCNPSC	Barton-le-Clay Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee.
BLCPC	Barton-le-Clay Parish Council.
Brownfield Site	Abandoned, closed or under-used industrial or commercial facilities.
Bridleway	Path or track along which horse riders have right of way.
CBC	Central Bedfordshire Council, the relevant Local Authority responsible for all planning matters.
CBLP 2015-2035	Central Bedfordshire Local Plan 2015-2035
Conservation Area	Defined as designated heritage assets by the National Planning Policy Framework, Conservation Areas are areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character, appearance or setting of which is desirable to preserve and enhance
County Wildlife Site (CWS)	A CWS is a conservation designation in the United Kingdom that highlights areas of significant wildlife value within a county. Although these sites do not have statutory protection, they are recognized for their importance in preserving local biodiversity.
Cycle Lane	The part of a road that is separated by a dash or solid white line from the rest of the road, for the use of people riding bicycles.
Development	In planning terminology, development means any new building, any alteration to a building, or change of use of land or building.
Design Code	Design Codes are a set of illustrated design requirements that provide specific, detailed parameters for the physical development of a site or area. The graphic and written components of the code should build upon a design vision, such as a masterplan or other design and development framework for a site or area.

Term	Meaning & Definition
Design Guide	A Design Guide is a document providing guidance on how development can be carried out in accordance with good design practice, often produced by a local authority.
Dwelling	A house, flat, or other place of residence
Footpath	Footpath means a highway over which the public have a right of way on foot only, e.g. path or pavement that runs alongside the road.
Footway	Footway is that part of highway that has been set aside for pedestrians, being a way over which the public have a right of way on foot only, e.g. a path separate to the road.
Green Infrastructure (GI)	A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.
Greenfield Land/Site	Land (or a defined site) which has never been built on before or where the remains of any structure or activity have blended into the landscape over time (opposite of brownfield land). Applies to most land outside the built-up area boundaries.
Heritage Asset	A building, monument, site, place, area, or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage assets include designated heritage assets (protected by legislation) such as Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, or Listed Buildings, and assets identified by the local planning authority. Heritage assets are often recorded on the Historic Environment Record and on local lists.
Highway Mitigation	Highway mitigation refers to measures taken to reduce or offset the potential negative impacts of new development on the local road network, traffic safety, and pedestrian movement.
Historic England (HE)	Formally English Heritage.
Historic Environment	NPPF Dec 2024 definition - <i>all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.</i>
Housing Needs Study (HNS)	A study that assesses the future housing needs of the area, in terms of the size, type and affordability of dwellings.
Infill Site	A small plot of land within an existing built-up area, typically located between or behind existing buildings, that is suitable for new development.
Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)	An assessment prepared by qualified landscape professionals to evaluate how a proposed development may affect the landscape as a resource and people's views of it. LVIAs are usually required for larger or more visually sensitive sites.
Listed Building	A building included in a list compiled or approved by the Secretary of State. It includes any object or structure fixed to the building and any object structure within the curtilage of the building which, although not fixed to the building, formed part of the land, and has done so since July 1948. Listed Buildings are

Term	Meaning & Definition
	designated heritage assets (as defined by the National Planning Policy Framework – NPPF Dec 24).
Local Community Space	Space valued by the local community, both for the environmental and social benefits it brings.
Local Housing Need	The number of homes identified as being needed through the application of the standard method set out in national planning guidance.
Local Green Space	Designating areas as Local Green Space is a way to provide special protection for green areas of particular importance to local communities.
Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)	Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs), as set out in the Government’s Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy, are a strategic approach to identifying cycling and walking improvements required at the local level. They enable a long-term approach to developing local cycling and walking networks, ideally over a 10-year period, and form a vital part of the Government’s strategy to increase the number of trips made on foot or by cycle.
National Landscapes	Formally known as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) are places of exceptional beauty, biodiversity, and cultural value—protected for the benefit of the nation. They are living, working landscapes that support thriving communities, restore nature, and promote wellbeing.”
National Nature Reserve (NNR)	National Nature Reserve
Nature Recovery Network (NRN)	An expanding, increasingly connected, network of wildlife-rich habitats supporting species recovery, alongside wider benefits such as carbon capture, water quality improvements, natural flood risk management and recreation. It includes the existing network of protected sites and other wildlife rich habitats as well as and landscape or catchment scale recovery areas where there is coordinated action for species and habitats.
Neighbourhood Plan	Neighbourhood Plans sit alongside the local plan and are produced by local communities and the relevant Town or Parish Council. They put in place planning policy for a specific area to guide future development. A Neighbourhood Plan may contain a vision, aims, planning policies, proposals for improving the area or providing new facilities, or allocation of key sites for specific kinds of development. Neighbourhood Plans have to pass an examination and a local referendum before being adopted to form part of the Development Plan for Central Bedfordshire.
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF Dec 24)	National Planning Policy Framework – Dec 24. The Central Government over-arching planning policy document which includes topic-based policies, with which the Neighbourhood Plan must comply.
Permitted Development Rights (PDRs)	National rights granted by government that allow certain types of building works or changes of use to be carried out without needing full planning permission. Examples include small extensions, roof alterations, and some changes to dwellings such as bungalows.

Term	Meaning & Definition
Planning Condition	A condition imposed on a grant of planning permission (in accordance with the Town and County Planning Act 1990) or a Condition included in a Local Development Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.
Previously Developed Land (sometimes called Brownfield Land).	Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures; land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time.
Scheduled Monument	A scheduled monument is a nationally important site or building that is included in the Schedule of Monuments kept by the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media, and Sport. The regime is set out in the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1969 (1). Scheduled Monuments are designated heritage assets (as defined by the National Planning Policy Framework – NPPF Dec 24).
Settlement Boundary	Settlement boundaries are an essential tool for the management of development, principally to prevent the encroachment of development into the countryside.
Significance (for heritage policy)	NPPF Dec 2024 definition - <i>The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic, or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.</i>
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)	SSSI is a conservation designation denoting a protected area extremely valuable for its flora, fauna, physiological and geological features and protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	A procedure (set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) which requires the formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.
Strategic Gap	The space between settlements which protects individual settlements’ unique identity.
Sustainability Statement	A document that provides information on sustainability measures incorporated into the development to achieve or exceed policy compliance.
Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS)	A drainage system that mimics natural drainage processes to reduce the effect on the quality and quantity of run-off from a development and provide amenity and biodiversity benefits. They use a sequence of techniques that together form a management train. As surface water flows through the system,

Term	Meaning & Definition
	the speed of the water flow is controlled, and pollutants are removed.
Tree Preservation Order - TPO	A TPO is made by a Local Planning Authority to protect specific trees or an area, group or woodland from deliberate damage and destruction. TPOs can prevent the felling, lopping, topping, uprooting or otherwise wilful damaging of trees without the permission of the Local Planning Authority.
Vernacular	Is a category of architecture based on local needs, construction materials and reflecting local traditions?
Village Centre	The Village Centre in Barton-le-Clay is classed as the Conservation areas clustered around the High Street – as illustrated in Map 7.
Villager	A person who lives in a village (Barton-le-Clay).
Wildlife Corridor	Areas of habitat connecting wildlife populations.
Windfall	Sites which have not been specifically identified as available in the Local Plan process. They normally comprise previously developed sites that have unexpectedly become available.