

EAST THAME RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION (ETRA)

THAME NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN NEWSLETTER- July 2023

[Urgent News](#)

Thame Town Council (TTC) has started the latest consultation on the new Thame Neighbourhood Plan (TNP2). We are **deeply concerned** that the plan that is being proposed contains a number of policies which, if implemented, could have a **detrimental impact** on the residents of Thame.

These impacts include the possibility of both **housing and employment sites in any parts of Thame**; employment sites **that are far larger** than Thame requires; an **increase in** the amount of **on-street parking** in residential areas; and a **loss of viability** for the already struggling **town centre**.

It is vitally important that as many people as possible respond to TTC's consultation so that we can ensure that these detrimental impacts do not happen.

[TNP2 details](#)

TTC have produced 490 pages of documentation to support the proposed plan. These are summarised in 14 consultation boards which can be found, along with all other documentation and details of consultation events, on the TTC website at www.thametowncouncil.gov.uk/tnp2

Below we have summarised those items that we think are the most important ones for TTC to receive feedback from local residents.

The proposed plan that is out for consultation contains 31 key policies. Of these 31 policies the ETRA committee considers 6 of them to be major. These 6 policies and our comments on them, including whether we agree or disagree with them, are listed below.

Policy GDH1: Housing Allocations. (Strongly Agree)

ETRA favoured the building of new houses on the Oxford Road site and we are pleased to see that this site has been selected to accommodate the majority of new houses.

Policy GDE1 Land at Rycote Lane. (Location: Strongly Agree) (Size: Strongly Disagree)

ETRA favoured the building of employment space on the Rycote Lane site so we are pleased to see that this site has been selected.

However, we are concerned that the size of the proposed site (5.5 hectares net employment space) is well in excess of what is required by the Local Plan (3.5 Ha) and that the proposals are driven by external demand rather than Thame's needs.

Policy GDH2: Windfall housing criteria and Policy GDE2 Windfall employment proposals. (both Strongly Disagree)

Under these policies if sites allocated for housing or employment have not received planning permission within 3 years of TNP2 being adopted, then developers will be allowed to apply for planning permission on sites which are not allocated in TNP2. These would be classed as 'Windfall' developments.

We think that this 3-year timescale is too short a period and should be increased to 5 years.

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Failure to do this is likely to result in many more additional houses and/or employment sites being built across Thame.

Policy GDR1 Cattle Market Site and GATCP1: Town centre parking. (Both Disagree)

GDR1 proposes to reduce parking and remove the only long-stay parking in Thame without any certainty of adequate alternative provision. This is in part driven by the addition of further houses on the Cattle Market site, 30 more than suggested in the first consultation.

GATCP1 proposes to further rationalise (i.e. reduce) town centre parking.

Without long-stay parking the large numbers of people who commute into Thame for work will be forced to park in residential areas and traders at the Tuesday market will have nowhere to park their vehicles. Reduction in available short-stay parking will impact the viability of the town centre for both shopping and visitors, both of which TTC claim to be important. It will also impact the ability of people to drop off/pick up children from Barley Hill school. No independent impact assessment and study has been made.

Supporting the town centre

Other than some statements in the Vision and Objectives section, we can find no policies that specifically support the viability of the town centre as a vibrant market town. In fact, a number of policies seem to directly work against this. We believe that this is a serious omission.

How to respond to the proposals

The council's preferred method to receive feedback on these policies is via an online form. This form requires each policy to be rated as **Strongly Agree/Agree/Neither Agree or Disagree/Disagree/Strongly Disagree** and there is an option for comments on each policy.

Residents can complete the form here <https://www.thametowncouncil.gov.uk/thame-town-council/thame-neighbourhood-plan-revision/#Consultation3>

Paper copies may be obtained from the Town Hall.

It is vitally important that as many people as possible respond to the critical policies that we have outlined above. So, if you don't want to complete the whole of the online form you can send an email just about those policies to consultations@thametowncouncil.gov.uk

ETRA will be responding in full to the proposal and a copy of our response is available on our website <https://www.hugofox.com/community/east-thame-residents-association-13799/home#> Our response covers all 31 policies and are for assistance only and residents are encouraged to express their own views.

Whichever method of feedback is used residents are required to provide name, address, post code, email address (if applicable).

Get regular updates

In addition to printed newsletters we send email updates to people who register with us. You can register to receive our emails by emailing to eastthameresidents@gmail.com

The ETRA Committee