

FAO Bedford Borough Council Planning Policy Group

Dear Sir/Madam,

Subject: Bedford Borough Council Local Plan 2040

In the proposed 2040 Local Plan there are several options proposing further development within Shortstown parish but due to the high levels of development that Shortstown has already seen further housing beyond what has already been built would risk Shortstowns rural character, further diffuse its small and fragile centre, and risk the future of the historic airship sheds and Cardington airfield.

Over the few years Shortstown has been targeted for massive development. Between 2014 and March 2021 901 houses have been built in the parish. When the Cardington Airfield development to the North of the sheds has been completed another 592 houses will have been added. Once that is complete that will be 1493 houses added to the parish since 2014.

While the development of RAF Cardington did include a notional village centre this has been slow to develop and Shortstown is still severely deficient in key services for the level of households now within the parish.

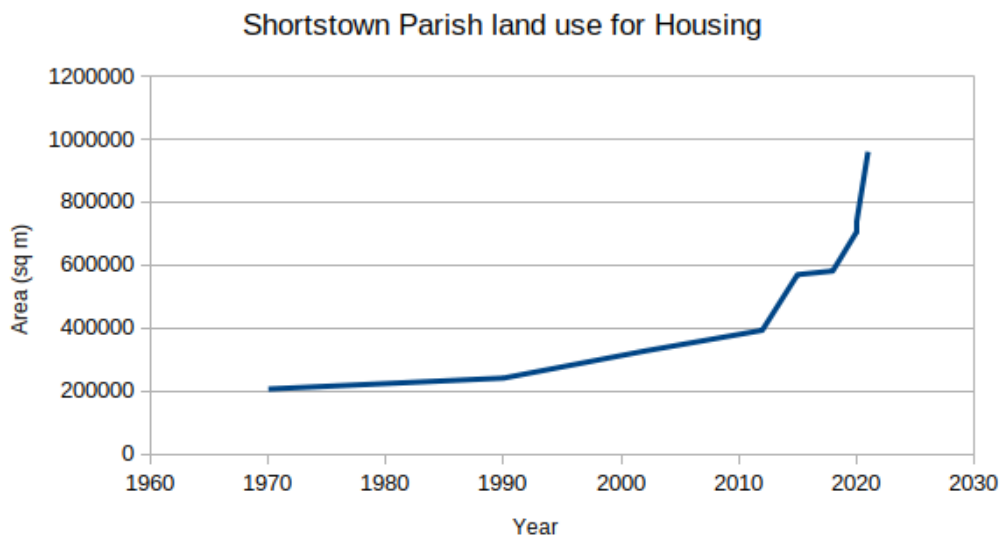
Shortstown Parish Council object to the designation of Shortstown as a Key Service centre. At its current state it is more at the level of a neighbourhood centre. This is supported by table in section 2.5/2.6 from the Town Centres and Shopping Policies Topic Paper.

Shortstown is dependant on the A600 for professionals to commute to work either North towards the A421 and Bedford or to the South. However this single link has proven to be vulnerable to disruption going as it does through an accident blackspot at the junction with Harrowden Lane. Public transport is currently insufficient except for accessing Bedford for occasional shopping. This creates a tension between the notional Borough policy to reduce car use with transport infrastructure that discourages public transport use for commuters.

The Transport Model discussed in supporting documents shows the A600/A421 junction is already forecast to be saturated and additional housing would only make things worse. For this reason we would also object to large development within the parish of Cotton End as that would also massively increase the strain on our limited transport infrastructure.

As can be seen in the included figure Shortstown has seen recent rapid change over recent years and when the additional development to the North of the historic sheds is included this pushes the developed area within the parish to roughly 25% of the parish.

The proposed College Farm & Shorts Park developments would completely change the character of the parish and ruin the future of the sheds and airfield for movie and airship use. The Shortstown Parish Council objects to those proposals.



Shortstown Parish Council require a pause in further developments within the parish so that the current situation following the existing large development completion can become clear and be reviewed.

Yours sincerely

Shortstown Parish Council