



# Central Bedfordshire Local Plan 2015 - 2035

July 2021

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[Policy H1: Housing Mix](#)

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[Policy EMP1: Small and Medium Employment Sites](#)

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[Policy T2: Highways Safety and Design](#)

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[Policy CC7: Water Quality](#)

[Policy CC8: Pollution and Land Instability](#)

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 What is the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan?

1.1.1 The Central Bedfordshire Local Plan 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.

1.1.2 Local planning has a crucial role to play in delivering the Council's vision of enhancing and maintaining Central Bedfordshire as 'a great place to live and work'. It is important to note that all policies within the Local Plan will apply to all development where appropriate.

1.1.3 The Local Plan sets out the Council's strategy for meeting the area's needs until 2035.

1.1.4 The main sections are as follows:

- Chapter 1 provides an overview of the process and how the Local Plan fits within the planning system;
- Chapter 2 provides background knowledge about Central Bedfordshire and the main issues that the Plan needs to consider;
- Chapter 3 describes the process so far – comments and views submitted on the draft Plan and through community engagement;
- Chapter 4 provides a short summary of our overall vision and strategic objectives;
- Chapter 5 sets out how the proposed growth should be distributed across Central Bedfordshire and the Council's key spatial objectives;
- Chapter 6 provides a general overview of how growth is distributed across Central Bedfordshire and a summary of housing numbers;
- Chapter 7 offers insight into delivery, how the overall Plan targets are calculated and site allocations; and
- The chapters that follow are dedicated to development management policies (that inform day-to-day decision making on planning applications) these are themed by topic area.

## 1.2 National and Sub-Regional Context

1.2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development, and for Local Plans this means that opportunities to meet the development needs of an area for new homes, jobs and infrastructure must be positively planned for at a local level. This Plan was assessed having regard to the 2012 NPPF, consistent with the transitional arrangements<sup>1</sup>.

1.2.2 The Government also requires every local authority area to have an up-to-date, sufficiently ambitious plan in place so that growth is truly plan-led. This is in everyone's

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<sup>1</sup> Paragraph 214. Annex 1: Implementation. MHCLG 2019, NPPF

interests, as it means that growth can be effectively managed and strategies for delivering it are developed with the benefit of input from the local community.

- 1.2.3 Local authorities are also required to work constructively with their neighbours and other bodies under Duty to Cooperate, to ensure that cross-boundary issues like East West Rail (EWR), housing need and jobs are not planned for in isolation.
- 1.2.4 In addition, the Government's most recent Housing White Papers (February 2017 and September 2017) urge local authorities to make more land available for homes in the right places by maximising the contribution from brownfield land, releasing more small and medium sized sites, and making it easier to build new settlements.
- 1.2.5 The Industrial Strategy White Paper (December 2017) also sets out the Government's vision to enhance Britain's industrial competitiveness through investment in research and development, digital infrastructure, transport shift and a focus on key sectors like the automotive industry. With an existing cluster around Nissan in Cranfield and the Millbrook Proving Ground, and with huge opportunities for research and development at the new business parks planned in the Marston Vale and south of Biggleswade, the Plan has responded positively to this direction of travel.
- 1.2.6 Central Bedfordshire is already one of the most highly connected areas but due to its unique location in the centre of the Oxford-Cambridge Corridor<sup>2</sup>, there are a number of key opportunities that this Plan is positioned to take full advantage of; including the proposed East West Rail Link (EWR), the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Arc and associated high tech employment led growth.
- 1.2.7 In order to exploit the wider opportunities in the Corridor highlighted in the National Infrastructure Commission Report, the Council is actively leading and driving forward a coordinated approach to enhanced growth within the central area of the Corridor and is leading on the identification of a high-level, joint, spatial strategy for the delivery of comprehensive economic-led growth across the corridor through the local planning process.
- 1.2.8 In order to recognise the levels of growth envisaged, it is likely that a step-change in delivery mechanisms will be required. Central Bedfordshire Council is therefore also actively exploring alternative delivery mechanisms including:
  - Off-site manufacturing and other modern methods of construction;
  - Support for small and medium-sized housebuilders, as well as the larger firms; and
  - Self and custom-build development through provision of serviced plots.

## 1.3 Developing the Spatial Strategy

- 1.3.1 In response to these opportunities, an extensive new evidence base has been commissioned the results of which, together with public consultation and engagement such as the Shaping Central Bedfordshire consultation and Community Planning work, has led to the development of a robust and balanced strategy. The strategy identified is

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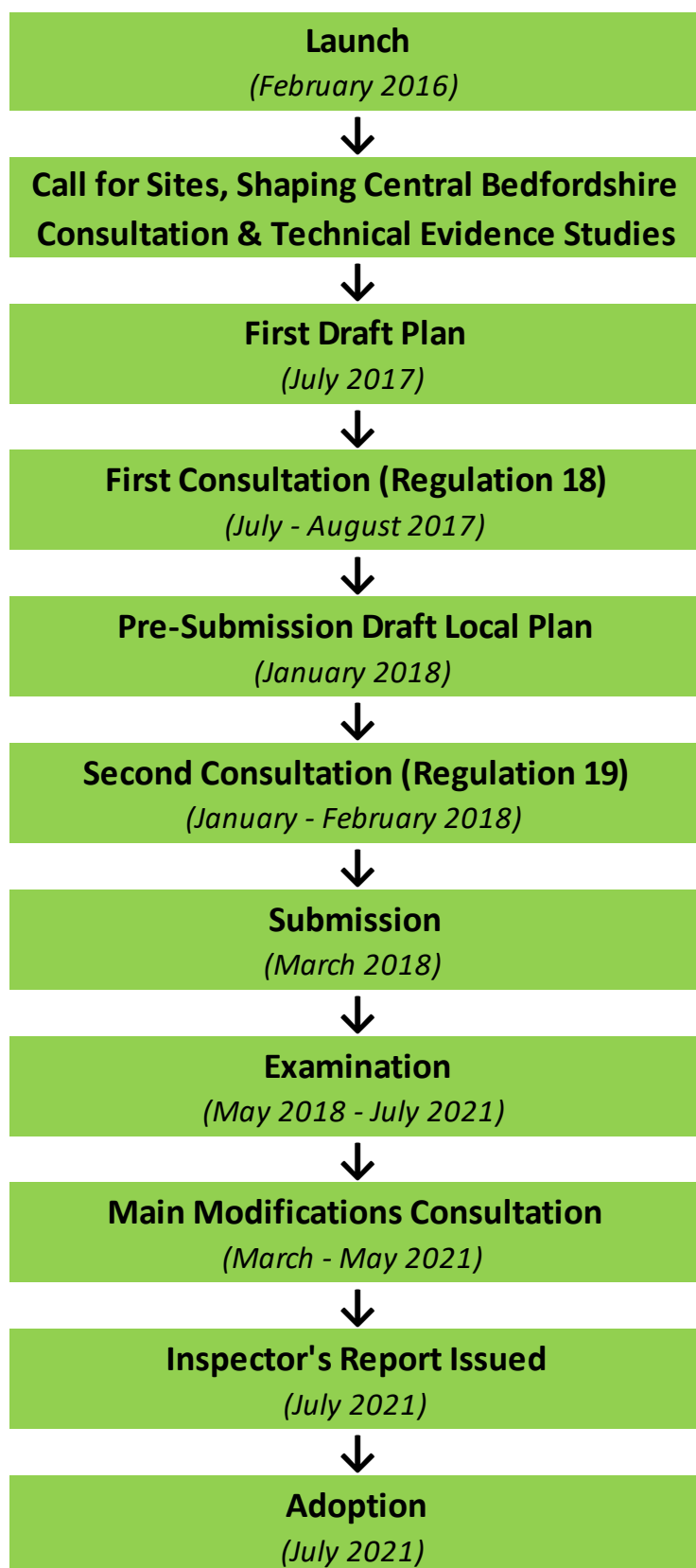
<sup>2</sup> National Infrastructure Commission Report (November 2017)

considered to be the most appropriate for Central Bedfordshire given the complexity of the area and the variety of issues and factors that need to be taken into consideration. It is fully expected that the strategy identified will deliver significant growth with clear economic, environmental and social benefits over the next 20 years.

## 1.4 Future Housing Needs and Partial Plan Review

- 1.4.1 The Government published a new standardised methodology for calculating housing need in September 2017 which meant a significant 60% increase in the number of homes that would be required to be delivered per annum (1600 homes – 2553 homes) to meet just our own housing need. The Council consider that while the OAN is likely to rise over time further work is needed on factors specific to Central Bedfordshire before a new approach can be supported and is looking to commission additional studies for the relevant Housing Market Area, together with neighbouring authorities.
- 1.4.2 The potential of Central Bedfordshire to play a core role in relation to the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Arc is acknowledged in the recent National Infrastructure Commission reports, and the Government's response in the Autumn Budget 2017. However, the timing, service and route selection for new strategic road and rail infrastructure is yet to be determined. These decisions, along with other examples, such as relating to the locations of railway stations on East West Rail, will have a major impact on the scale of future development and growth potential that could be accommodated within Central Bedfordshire.
- 1.4.3 As such, a Partial Review of the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan is proposed to investigate opportunities for future growth that can capitalise on Government decisions around strategic infrastructure.

## 1.5 The Plan Process



## 1.6 Requirements of Plan Making

1.6.1 This Plan has been prepared under the legislative provision of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and appropriate regulations including the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The Plan has taken into account national planning policy, currently set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Department for Communities and Local Government [DCLG], 2012<sup>3</sup>), Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (DCLG, 2015) and the web based published Planning Practice Guidance.

### Evidence Base

1.6.2 The Council's policies must be backed up by credible, robust and proportionate evidence that supports the approach taken and justifies what is proposed. The evidence base for this Plan is extensive and is available on the Council's website at [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/localplan](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/localplan). It is the Council's job to balance all of the evidence and find the most suitable way forward. This evidence base includes research on housing, employment, retail, Green Belt and flooding as well as the views of local people, businesses, landowners, developers and public agencies involved in the area.

### Duty to Cooperate

1.6.3 In accordance with the 'Duty to Cooperate' set out in the Localism Act 2011, the Plan has been produced through close partnership working with the neighbouring authorities and relevant bodies under the Act to ensure that sub-regional and cross boundary planning issues have been taken into account. This work under the 'Duty to Cooperate' replaces the role of regional planning.

1.6.4 As referenced earlier in this section, this strategic cross boundary working is not confined to our immediate nine neighbouring authorities but extends right across the wider corridor area as a result of the identification of the Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford Arc as a key area for growth.

## 1.7 Which Documents Does This Local Plan Replace?

1.7.1 This Local Plan replaces the North Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Document (2009) and the majority of the remaining policies within the South Bedfordshire Local Plan (2004), the Mid Bedfordshire Local Plan (2005) and the remaining saved policies of the Bedfordshire and Luton Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2005) so far as they affect Central Bedfordshire. Those residual site allocations in the north Site Allocations Document (2011) that are not already built out will remain (Appendix 2), in addition to the Minerals and Waste Local Plan – Strategic Sites and Policies (2014), which will sit alongside this new Local Plan forming the Development Plan for Central Bedfordshire.

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<sup>3</sup> To reflect transitional arrangements. Paragraph 214. Annex 1: Implementation. MHCLG 2019, NPPF

## 2. Key Themes: A Snapshot of Central Bedfordshire - Challenges and Opportunities

### 2.1 Overview

- 2.1.1 Covering 716 square kilometres, Central Bedfordshire currently has a population of approximately 278,900<sup>4</sup> and is the 11th largest Unitary Authority in England by area and the 15th largest by population. Central Bedfordshire is one of the least densely populated Unitary Authority areas and is classified as predominantly rural with just over half the population living in the rural area. Approximately 63% of the population are within the working age group, being between 16 and 65 years of age, although 81% of the population are considered to be economically active (aged 16-74).
- 2.1.2 The Luton and Central Bedfordshire SHMA (May 2017) identifies population growth of 19.5% over the plan period to 2035 for Central Bedfordshire compared to a 13.4% increase identified for England over the same period.
- 2.1.3 In line with national trends, Central Bedfordshire is also projected to have a rise in older age groups over the period (age ranges 70+), but also is projected to have rises in the 55-69 age range. It is also likely that the delivery of new starter homes and family homes together with skilled jobs will also attract younger people and families which may have a significant effect on the age profile in Central Bedfordshire. This will put additional pressure on public services, but this will be addressed as part of the wider consideration in delivering sustainable growth.
- 2.1.4 Central Bedfordshire residents are generally healthy and the life expectancy for both men and women is longer than it is in England as a whole. However, residents of Central Bedfordshire do experience inequalities in health outcomes. Whilst overall levels of deprivation within Central Bedfordshire are low, there are three areas that are within the 10-20% most deprived area in England and a further six within the 20-40% most deprived areas. The majority of these wards are within the southern area of Central Bedfordshire, which is more densely populated, and urban in character.

### 2.2 Connectivity and Achieving Sustainable Growth and Communities

- 2.2.1 Central Bedfordshire is one of the most accessible areas in the East of England and is particularly well connected on all of the main north-south routes, namely the M1, A1, A5, and A6. It is well served by existing rail stations on the East and West Coast and Midland Main rail lines and East West Rail will also deliver further connectivity with a committed upgrade to Ridgmont station and the potential new station north of Sandy. This excellent access brings potential for business and housing growth but also pressure on infrastructure and a high outflow of residents for employment and services.
- 2.2.2 Travel patterns within Central Bedfordshire are less sustainable with a high reliance on car commuting, together with increasing pressure on interchanges and the rural road network. Connectivity east to west will improve with the dualling of the A421 in the

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<sup>4</sup> Office for National Statistics (2016), Mid-Year Estimates



northern part of Central Bedfordshire, and will continue with the opening of the A5-M1 link road in the south. However, further strategic east west connections are required to deliver significantly enhanced growth levels over and above that planned for in this Local Plan.

- 2.2.3 **The key challenge this Plan addresses is** driving more sustainable growth by improving and extending the range of economic opportunities and services available locally and securing additional infrastructure, including enhancing digital connectivity, to unlock the area's full potential and to achieve more sustainable travel.

## 2.3 Cross Boundary and Neighbouring Growth Pressures and the Role of the Green Belt

- 2.3.1 Major urban areas adjoin Central Bedfordshire with growth pressures that are intensifying. Central Bedfordshire is part of four Housing Market Areas (HMA) and adjoins nine local authorities. Within the HMAs, urban areas are often constrained by tightly drawn boundaries and therefore due to housing pressures, may have to look beyond their administrative area to accommodate growth. Less expensive housing costs and the availability of employment space in the area is also attractive to those looking to move from areas further south. Accommodating growth pressures in the form of unmet housing need from neighbouring authorities, close to where the need arises, could be achieved in the south of the area by removing the most sustainable locations for development from the Green Belt, but overall the Green Belt continues to serve its purposes well, safeguarding the identity of Central Bedfordshire by maintaining the openness of the countryside, preventing coalescence of our towns, and protecting the dispersed settlement pattern.
- 2.3.2 The Council will seek opportunities to maximise the use of suitable and available, previously developed or 'brownfield' land before looking to sites within the Green Belt or greenfield sites elsewhere in Central Bedfordshire to accommodate future growth requirements. An Urban Capacity Study for Dunstable, Houghton Regis and Luton identified opportunities to increase the capacity of current sites within the conurbation, which could contribute towards the unmet housing need within the Luton Housing Market Area. However much of the available and suitable previously developed land in the area is either now built out or already committed for redevelopment.
- 2.3.3 **The key challenge this Plan addresses is** to establish where these unmet housing needs can be accommodated sustainably, whilst also meeting our own objectively assessed housing need. Removal of sites from the Green Belt to meet unmet needs will be balanced against the requirement to maintain our local character and prevent coalescence of settlements.

## 2.4 Market Town and Villages - Local Economy and Services

- 2.4.1 Central Bedfordshire is primarily a place of market towns and a number of villages whose history and character are integral to its identity and attractiveness. The two largest towns, Leighton Buzzard and Dunstable, are located in the south of Central Bedfordshire whilst the north of Central Bedfordshire contains a series of smaller towns

including Biggleswade, Sandy and Flitwick. Whilst some settlements have become successful growing service centres with a good range of local employment, others find it increasingly difficult to maintain their services and economic strength in the face of competition from the large urban centres on our boundaries.

2.4.2 **The key challenge this Plan addresses is** to manage growth so that as far as practicable it can avoid damaging the role and special value of Central Bedfordshire's market towns and villages, for example through policies on coalescence, whilst at the same time directing growth to the larger towns and locations where it can make a real difference in improving local services and employment opportunities; for example the A1 corridor towns where there are regeneration opportunities which would improve economic offer and enhance the town centres.

## 2.5 New Community Scale Growth

2.5.1 The majority of Central Bedfordshire is characterised by small scale towns and villages and there is a limit to how much new growth can be accommodated either as infill, re-use of redundant sites, or as village extensions. In many of these locations, services and infrastructure are unsuitable (or could not easily be upgraded) beyond moderate scale additions. This Plan has identified allocations where large-scale new communities can be delivered. These new settlements or urban extensions have capacity for a minimum of 1,500 homes and can provide a mix of housing types and tenures as well as a range of new services and facilities. These new communities provide the opportunity to secure new physical, social and community infrastructure and higher standards of design and sustainable development although it is recognised that these need upfront funding and have longer build out trajectories, often stretching beyond this plan period.

2.5.2 **The key challenge this Plan addresses is** the identification of sustainable locations in Central Bedfordshire where large scale, new communities have the best prospects of success based on viability, deliverability, access to services and improved economic potential and where new strategic infrastructure can be delivered to support growth and unlock future potential.

## 2.6 Environment, Heritage Assets and Sustainability

2.6.1 Much of Central Bedfordshire is of high landscape and biodiversity value. Key assets include the Greensand Ridge recently designated as a Nature Improvement Area, parts of the Chilterns AONB which is a national priority area for landscape conservation and the Forest of Marston Vale. The authority area also contains a number of water bodies as a result of former clay workings which offer significant potential for recreation and tourism and can be connected as part of the proposed Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway. There are also approximately 11,000 recorded buildings, sites and records of historic interest. However, maintaining and enhancing these assets has become more difficult in the light of development, activity pressures and reduced funding.

2.6.2 **The key challenge this Plan addresses is** to find ways in which new development can be used to strengthen and enhance these assets, as well as creating new green infrastructure.

## 3. Consultation: Engagement

### 3.1 Council Priorities

3.1.1 The Plan is consistent with the priorities set out in the Council's Five Year Plan 2015<sup>5</sup>.

3.1.2 This Five Year Plan highlights our vision and priorities and sets out the following six key priorities for the area:

- Enhancing Central Bedfordshire;
- Great resident services;
- Improving education and skills;
- Protecting the vulnerable and improving wellbeing;
- Creating stronger communities; and
- A more efficient and responsive council.

3.1.3 Whilst the Plan aims to achieve all the priorities outlined above, the main priority that the Plan aligns to is Enhancing Central Bedfordshire.

3.1.4 This aims to improve Central Bedfordshire as a place to live, by enhancing prosperity with more and better jobs; improving infrastructure, and providing the quantity and type of housing needed by our residents while maintaining and enhancing the character of the area. Development will be facilitated by great infrastructure, such as super-fast broadband, Wi-Fi and transport. Our market towns and villages will thrive and prosper, with improved town centres and facilities.

3.1.5 It is considered that the six growth themes set out in Figure 1 of this section are appropriate foundations for the Local Plan to contribute to achieving the vision and priorities of both the Plan and the Council as a whole.

### 3.2 Community Plans and Growth Themes

3.2.1 Community Planning is a new approach, unique to Central Bedfordshire Council, which goes above and beyond the legal consultation requirements of the Local Plan which the Council undertook at Regulation 18 from 4th July - 29th August 2017. Our engagement vision is to have a proactive, ongoing dialogue with the local community about local needs and opportunities.

3.2.2 Additional growth which is going to be necessary in many parts of Central Bedfordshire brings with it pressures on infrastructure and services. Accordingly, building up a local picture of existing issues that people face is critical to understanding where new development can be accommodated and what measures need to be put in place to alleviate those pressures.

3.2.3 In order to capture this information at a local level (larger than parish, smaller than the whole of Central Bedfordshire) 15 community areas were mapped, based on a number of factors:

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<sup>5</sup> Central Bedfordshire Five Year Plan (2015)

- Natural catchment or ward areas, connections and associations amongst communities e.g. for shopping, schools, work;
- Access to services and facilities e.g. shops, post office, leisure services;
- Town and rural hinterlands; and
- Shared characteristics, similar issues and opportunities.

3.2.4 Grouping the areas like this has helped local residents to engage because they were able to see the direct relevance to where they live and help us consider all of the local issues and opportunities.

3.2.5 The first stage (November 2016 to March 2017) involved holding an event in each of the 15 Community Areas. Following these events, 15 Community Plans which collate all the information gathered at an event have been prepared and published as part of the evidence base for the Local Plan.

3.2.6 Using these as the foundation, the next stage of Community Planning will seek to engage directly with communities about the implementation of the allocations proposed for their area in this Plan. This may help to inform the spending of developer contributions as part of any future planning applications for the sites.

Figure 1: Six Key Themes

# The 6 Growth Themes



*Local character*

**What we have we love. Our history, countryside and communities. We need to build, with care to enhance what we have.**

How do we look after what you value about where you live? We need to balance development with protecting our villages, market towns and beautiful countryside. We want to use local character to inform development to ensure that we achieve the best we can.

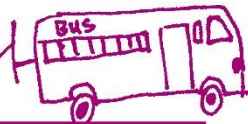
*Environment*

**Our environment is important. It influences how & what we create. We need quality development.**



How do we balance the need for growth with protecting our environment? By having quality developments that are sensitive to the environment, to climate change and to ensure growth is dealt with responsibly for the next generation.

*Transport*



**How do we get around? With more of us on our cycleways, roads, rail. How do we improve & maintain our transport links?**

We need to plan growth that has good connections, not only to jobs and facilities, but also to recreation services and the countryside. We need to look at improving our existing transport networks and make the most of opportunities for new links.

*Jobs and Business*



**Where will everyone work? Supporting local businesses to grow & attracting new business. We need to create jobs for all.**

How do we support the economy of your community and proposed growth in your area? We need to invest and attract business. Regenerating areas can help to attract new investment to improve job prospects.

*GROWTH & Infrastructure*



**Where to place homes & services. Supporting market towns, villages & new settlements. We need to plan places to grow communities.**

Where can this growth go and how do we get the best opportunities for you and your community? We need to consider not only the locations for growth, but also what other facilities, services and infrastructure these areas will need for the next generation.

*Homes*



**Homes for every stage of life. A house is not a home until it's lived in. We all need a home we're proud of.**

What type of housing does your community need? Looking at the local population, from young to old, we need to ensure that the area can accommodate changes in lifestyle, affluence or choice. Quality homes for all, for now and tomorrow.

# 4. Vision and Objectives

## 4.1 The Vision – Where we want to be in 2035

4.1.1 This chapter examines the Vision for Central Bedfordshire and provides further explanation of how the area will look in 2035, if the challenges and opportunities identified are successfully addressed. It goes on to identify a series of strategic objectives to deliver the Vision, which form the basis of the policies in this document.

### A Vision for 2035

4.1.2 Central Bedfordshire has taken full advantage of its exceptional strategic position as the central hub of the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Arc and its existing strategic north-south routes to deliver new high-tech employment supported by sustainable new homes in a number of new village clusters in the Marston Vale and on the A1 corridor and town extensions to Luton and Arlesey which are well integrated into an enhanced high-quality landscape. The heritage and distinctiveness of the existing market towns and villages has been preserved and enhanced by moderate growth ensuring a high-quality environment for all residents. The new businesses and population are served by excellent community, transport and communications infrastructure and multi-service hubs have been delivered to support strong communities.

## 4.2 The Strategic Objectives – How we will get there

4.2.1 The following strategic objectives provide the stepping stones between the vision set out above, and the Local Plan for Central Bedfordshire, and form the basis of the Local Plan’s policies.

Theme	Strategic Objective	Local Plan Policies
Growth & Infrastructure	<p><b>SO1</b> Ensuring sustainable growth and associated infrastructure including the continued regeneration of town and neighbourhood centres to deliver the annual target for new homes and the provision of integrated health and care hubs.</p> <p><b>SO2</b> Delivering enough homes and jobs to meet our needs. Promote and demand good urban design practices throughout all types and scale of development across Central Bedfordshire.</p>	<p>SP1, SP2, SP5, SP7, R1, R2, R3, T1, EE12, HQ1, HQ2, HQ5, HQ9, HQ11</p>

Theme	Strategic Objective	Local Plan Policies
Local Character	<p><b>SO3</b> Conserve and enhance the area’s historic environment by ensuring new development, including changes to the public realm, are of high quality design, appropriate to the significance of the heritage asset, and seek to maintain and enhance the contribution of built, landscaped and buried heritage. Seek to encourage developments that will result in a reduction in the number of heritage assets on the national Heritage at Risk Register (HAR).</p> <p><b>SO4</b> Create high quality neighbourhoods that have regard for local character and use sustainability principles which are sensitive and responsive to the significance of the local environment, are distinctive, safe, functional and accessible and which reinforce the identity of the area’s townscapes, landscape and public spaces.</p>	<p>SP3, SP4, SP5, EE4, EE5, EE6, EE7, EE8, EE9, HQ1, HQ7, HQ8, HQ9, HE1, HE2, HE3, DC1, DC2, DC3, DC5</p>
Jobs & Business	<p><b>SO5</b> Provide a minimum of 24,000 new jobs by 2035, accommodating new economic growth along strategic and sustainable transportation routes, new mixed use developments and existing established sites.</p> <p><b>SO6</b> Recognise the contribution of land for employment uses to meet the needs of different sectors of the economy and manage the release of surplus employment land for other uses where appropriate.</p> <p><b>SO7</b> Link deprived areas with employment benefits arising from the development of major sites and existing key locations.</p>	<p>SP1, EMP1, EMP2, EMP3, EMP4, EMP5</p>
Homes	<p><b>SO8</b> Address housing needs in Central Bedfordshire using appropriate affordable housing targets and policies to encourage quality and choice.</p>	<p>SP1, SP8, H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, H6, H7, H8, DC3</p>

Theme	Strategic Objective	Local Plan Policies
Transport	<p><b>SO9</b> Reduce the reliance on the use of the car by improving facilities at bus and train stations, delivering transport interchanges and by promoting safe and sustainable forms of transport, such as improved walking and cycling routes.</p> <p><b>SO10</b> Ensure a reliable network of east/west and north/south public transport routes to improve access to local services and facilities, especially for those without a car, through well planned routes and integrated public transport. Encouraging the shift from road to rail freight to reduce demands on the highway network.</p>	T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, EE11, HQ1, HQ2
Environment	<p><b>SO11</b> Promote healthier and more active lifestyles by improving the quality of, and accessibility to, the area's open spaces, as areas for sports, recreation, visual interest, biodiversity, education, health and wellbeing.</p> <p><b>SO12</b> Encourage the development of wildlife corridors and networks to support objectives of the Central Bedfordshire Nature Conservation Strategy, the NIA, AONB and Green Infrastructure Plans, and provide new open spaces in line with the requirements identified in Central Bedfordshire's Leisure Strategy.</p> <p><b>SO13</b> Support the necessary changes to adapt to climate change by minimising emissions of carbon and local air quality pollutants, protecting and enhancing biodiversity. Improving and protecting air and water quality, reducing flood risk and adverse impacts from noise including the safeguarding of quiet areas and reducing the impacts of contaminated land.</p>	SP3, EE1, EE2, EE3, EE4, EE5, EE6, EE7, EE8, EE9, EE10, EE11, EE12, T6, CC1, CC2, CC3, CC4, CC5, CC6, CC7, CC8, HQ1, HQ10, DC1, DC2, DC4, DC5



# 5. The Spatial Strategy

## 5.1 Spatial Context

- 5.1.1 Central Bedfordshire has an important relationship with surrounding major centres; particularly London, Milton Keynes, Bedford and Luton; and also by its strategic position at the centre of the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Arc which will receive significant additional investment in strategic infrastructure. This presents major potential for improved connectivity and growth within Central Bedfordshire, for continued strategic joint working with neighbouring authorities to help realise enhanced growth opportunities identified within the NIC Report, and to help meet housing need in constrained neighbouring areas such as Luton.
- 5.1.2 Alongside this wider context however, much of Central Bedfordshire is characterised by small scale communities where infrastructure and services are limited and whose rural or semi-rural setting is often of high environmental value. The goal of this strategy is to grow existing communities within a sustainability driven approach so that they benefit through improved services, facilities and employment opportunities, leading to reduced travelling and outflows. Growth will be delivered without over development which threatens the character of our existing communities.
- 5.1.3 The overall challenge, which this strategy addresses, is to embrace the opportunities for sustainable economic led growth while safeguarding and enhancing the environmental, heritage and community features that make the area a great place to live and work.
- 5.1.4 Central Bedfordshire will deliver approximately 24,000 new jobs over the plan period by growing existing key employment locations and sectors and by taking full advantage of our transport infrastructure opportunities. In addition to this figure, around 6,000 jobs will be delivered to meet 'footloose' strategic warehousing (B8 uses) on three major strategic employment sites.
- 5.1.5 To meet our statutory requirements and to serve the interests of our communities, the Local Plan proposes delivery of 39,350 new homes. This includes 32,000 new homes to meet the housing need of Central Bedfordshire and 7,350 homes to meet unmet housing need arising from Luton. However the Plan additionally provides for further consideration of strategic growth and proposes a Partial Review to further assess future potential in the East West and A1/East Coast Main Line corridors as new infrastructure is committed. This will consider the potential for delivering a greater number of homes and the timescale in which they could be delivered (either in years 10-15 of this plan period or in the next plan period) depending on strategic infrastructure routing and timing, wider delivery support and sustainability and market factors. Further details of the proposed Partial Review are set out at section 5.5.

## 5.2 Key Spatial Objectives

- To grow existing communities across Central Bedfordshire, proportionate to their scale and environmental context, so they are more sustainable through improved services, facilities and employment opportunities, leading to reduced travelling

and outflows. In smaller settlements this will continue the use of the Council's Settlement Envelopes which have been successful in directing development onto previously developed or vacant land;

- To create additional environmental enhancement, for example by extending the Forest of Marston Vale and enabling a section of the Milton Keynes to Bedford Waterway;
- To help meet the major housing need of Luton, which is highly constrained by its boundary, as well as that from the south of Central Bedfordshire. This is principally through urban extensions from the Luton, Dunstable and Houghton Regis conurbation boundary and also using opportunities to increase the capacity of sites identified within the conurbation by increasing their density, as identified in a recent urban capacity study;
- To develop additional growth opportunities around existing and committed transport hubs, through urban intensification, and on previously developed land – Central Bedfordshire's good access to strategic transport routes creates potential for higher density and more sustainable growth around existing key hubs. Undeveloped brownfield sites are limited but the Council is committed to maximising the use of available land within settlements (as with the Market Towns Regeneration Fund) and realising new brownfield opportunities like former airfields as at RAF Henlow;
- To develop current strategic growth opportunities with a good potential for more sustainable development to a level which can be supported by existing and committed strategic infrastructure together with developer and public funding. This would include for example Marston Vale and East of Arlesey; and
- To commit to identifying future opportunities for Strategic Growth in a Partial Plan Review to link with Government decisions around strategic infrastructure through Central Bedfordshire.

## 5.3 A Balanced Strategy

5.3.1 This strategy aims to balance wider delivery and sustainability considerations within this overall approach:

- The delivery of small and medium scale growth alongside the strategic locations will ensure the continuous delivery of homes in the short to medium term and enable the Council to maintain a rolling 5-year housing land supply;
- A balance between more moderate development around existing towns and villages and large new settlements, recognising that an entirely new community takes longer to deliver and needs entirely new services;
- Green Belt continues to be a constraint in the south of the area but there is a strong case for alterations to Green Belt boundaries around some Green Belt settlements to support communities and enhance their sustainability, as well as immediately adjoining Luton so that a good proportion of unmet housing need from Luton and Dunstable can be met close to where it arises; and
- A balance between growth in the north and south of the area supported by evidence in the Sustainability Appraisal (SA). In addition to alleviating the cumulative impact of development on the north by distributing the growth more

evenly, the SA also supports growth in the south by virtue of the clear positive effects on social sustainability as a result of regenerating areas with higher levels of social deprivation.

## 5.4 Spatial Strategy Approach

### Spatial Strategy Approach

This Plan seeks to:

1. Build on our existing and emerging economic strengths in key sectors and deliver approximately **24,000 new jobs**;
2. Deliver a minimum of **39,350 new homes** through new villages, moderate extensions to existing towns and villages in line with the provision of new infrastructure and to meet identified housing need close to **key transport corridors** (East-west, A1/East Coast Mainline and M1/Thameslink). This includes 27,696 homes that are already planned for or built;
3. Balance the delivery of significant sustainable infrastructure and growth with the **enhancement and protection** of existing communities, landscape, the historic environment and countryside and actively **prevent the coalescence** of settlements across the area through the identification of Important Countryside Gaps;
4. Maximise potential opportunities for the **intensification and redevelopment** and the regeneration of urban areas (Biggleswade, Dunstable, Houghton Regis, Flitwick, Leighton Linlade) through town centre frameworks or masterplans;
5. Commit to a future Partial Plan Review to identify opportunities to deliver longer term economic and housing growth, in line with Government decisions around strategic infrastructure;
6. Ensure that growth is designed and delivered in ways which benefit existing neighbouring communities, for example through improved transport facilities or regeneration of local commercial facilities; and
7. **Deliver housing need** identified for the **Luton HMA** and some unmet need from Luton **close to where it arises** where there is capacity to do so sustainably. This will be through a strategic extension close to Luton's urban edge and moderate extensions to existing villages and towns with good connectivity and access to services. This will mean **releasing some Green Belt land** where exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated.

## 5.5 Partial Plan Review

5.5.1 In the context of Central Bedfordshire's position within the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford Arc, the Council will commence a Partial Review of this Plan within six months of its adoption. As indicated in the recent National Infrastructure Commission reports, and the Government's response in Budget 2017, the area is acknowledged to be of great economic importance nationally and is likely to experience major ongoing pressures for

growth. While Government has made commitments to new strategic road and rail infrastructure, the timing, service and route selection for those investments still needs further development and definition while related issues such as potential for capacity upgrades of the A1 have still to be resolved. These decisions, for example on new East West Rail stations, will have a major impact on the location, scale of development and wider potential of strategic growth sites in Central Bedfordshire.

- 5.5.2 The Council has already undertaken a number of studies to help prepare for possible future growth which would realise some of the potential outlined by the National Infrastructure Commission. This Plan includes firm commitment to some strategic locations where there is a strong existing infrastructure base, such as Marston Vale, to a level of growth which can be supported by that infrastructure together with firmly committed or achievable additional infrastructure. However, in other cases, such as the East West Rail new line to Cambridge and A1 upgrades, further decisions on routing, timing and commitment, as well as wider investment and delivery support are required before any decisions about future growth can be made.
- 5.5.3 A Partial Review of this Plan will provide the opportunity to identify the potential for future growth that can capitalise on Government decisions around strategic infrastructure and will contribute to the ongoing work within the Central Corridor Area.
- 5.5.4 The Partial Review will commence within six months of adoption of this Plan and be completed as soon as practicably possible, in line with Government decisions around strategic infrastructure. Following the review, the Plan will be updated where necessary.

#### **Policy SP1a: Partial Review of the Local Plan**

The Council will commence a Partial Review of the Plan within six months of adoption of the Local Plan 2035.

The Partial Review will investigate, as part of the wider statutory plan-making processes and identify where necessary, opportunities for future growth that can capitalise on any appropriate commitments to improve existing, or provide new, strategic infrastructure.

Following the review, the Plan will be updated, where necessary.

## 6. The Proposed Locations for Growth

### 6.1 Overview

6.1.1 In developing the Local Plan, the Council has consulted through a series of initiatives as set out in Chapter 3 and the outcomes of these have influenced the content of the Plan. To reflect the very different capacities and constraints for growth potential these consultations have drawn on the characterisation of Central Bedfordshire into component areas according to their main spatial, settlement, environmental and infrastructure features:

- The South Area – close to Luton and extending west to Leighton Linlade and north to Flitwick;
- The A1 Corridor – Arlesey, Biggleswade, Sandy and north to Tempsford;
- The East-West axis – from the M1 through the Marston Vale to Wixams; and
- The Central Area – small towns and villages, from Ampthill to Moggerhanger.

6.1.2 The following sections set out broadly the potential for growth proposed in this Plan for each of these areas.

### 6.2 South Area

6.2.1 This Plan identifies a requirement to accommodate ‘unmet need’ as Luton is a highly constrained urban area. Some of this need is being met by North Hertfordshire District Council; however through Duty to Cooperate discussions, the Council has committed to providing for 7,350 homes within Central Bedfordshire within the Luton Housing Market Area (HMA).

6.2.2 As the Luton HMA, within Central Bedfordshire, is largely comprised of Green Belt land, this has necessitated proposals that require some release of land within the Green Belt and ‘exceptional circumstances’<sup>6</sup> for these can be demonstrated. Small villages ‘washed over’ by Green Belt generally have limited capacity to grow, but there is potential for medium scale growth along the major transport corridors following the M1, A5 and the railway (Midland Main Line), or large-scale growth for sites in close proximity to Luton that could be linked to the Luton-Dunstable Busway and/or the strategic transportation network. The lack of new sites within the urban areas of Luton, Dunstable and Houghton Regis mean that significant further growth on greenfield land is required.

6.2.3 Consultation told us that growth in the south was supported because of the proximity to key services in the urban centres of Dunstable, Houghton Regis and Luton.

6.2.4 Significant pieces of new infrastructure in the south, including the A5-M1 link road, the Woodside Link, the Luton/Dunstable Busway and new M1 Junction 11a, will also help to support this level of growth.

6.2.5 This area is characterised by the Green Belt, the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the Greensand Ridge Nature Improvement Area (NIA), all of which

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<sup>6</sup> The National Planning Policy Framework (2012), Paragraph 83

have valued habitats and landscapes which are existing environmental assets. However, major sites to the north of Houghton Regis and to the East and South of Leighton Buzzard are already under development or have planning permission.

6.2.6 The new homes proposed are in the form of a strategic site that is closely related to Luton's northern urban edge, or in the form of highly sustainable extensions of a more moderate scale to large towns and villages that are inset into the Green Belt. Both deliver growth to meet housing need where it is arising, and have a good level of services and connectivity.

6.2.7 The allocations in this area are:

- North of Luton - approximately 3,600 homes and approximately 7 hectares for employment;
- Extensions to Barton le Clay, Eaton Bray, Flitwick, Harlington, Hockliffe, Houghton Regis, Leighton Linlade, Luton (Caddington), Toddington and Westoning; and
- Sundon Rail Freight Interchange (RFI) (around 45 hectares for employment).

6.2.8 Houghton Regis North Sites 1 and 2 both have planning permission for strategic scale development and are included in this plan as strategic commitments.

## 6.3 A1 Corridor Area

6.3.1 There is great future potential for large scale growth in this area as a result of service improvements on the East Coast Mainline shown by the allocation of a 2,000 home extension to Arlesey in this Plan and the recent permission for a 1,500 home East of Biggleswade Garden Community. However, it is recognised that to take forward further significant growth in this area, there has to be greater clarity on the routing of both the Expressway and the Central Section of East West Rail. This will enable an informed approach to the siting and planning of new sites and will be addressed in the Partial Plan Review set out in section 5.5.

6.3.2 The Government has, however, demonstrated clear support for the timing and funding of the east-west connectivity proposals in the Autumn Budget (November 2017). Potential future growth that can capitalise on this will be addressed in the Partial Plan Review.

6.3.3 The Greensand Ridge Nature Improvement Area (NIA) and Ivel Valley and their valued habitats are existing environmental assets in this area. There are also opportunities for new environmental projects, including a new Country Park for Arlesey and Stotfold, a long distance 'Great North Cycleway', and access and open space networks around Biggleswade, Sandy, and the Arlesey, Stotfold and Fairfield areas.

6.3.4 The allocations in this area are:

- East of Biggleswade (around 1,500 homes);
- East of Arlesey (around 2,000 homes);
- Extensions to Arlesey, Biggleswade, Dunton, Everton, Langford, Potton and Sutton (approximately 740 dwellings); and
- Holme Farm, Biggleswade (around 78 hectares for employment).

## 6.4 East-West Area

- 6.4.1 This area of Central Bedfordshire is an important economic area with advanced research and development at Cranfield Technology Park and Millbrook Proving Ground and close links with Milton Keynes. The area is well connected with the upgraded A421, and the M1 and the planned Western Section upgrade of East West Rail between Oxford and Bedford.
- 6.4.2 Much of the landscape has been restored and the Forest of Marston Vale is an important asset. Extending the Forest of Marston Vale and the delivery of the Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway are critical to the delivery of growth with a strong design and environmental focus in this area.
- 6.4.3 A series of linked villages with appropriate landscape buffering to protect the existing communities of Marston Moreteyne, Lidlington and Brogborough from coalescence and new facilities to benefit existing residents are therefore proposed in this Plan as an allocation.
- 6.4.4 This strategy supports the proposed East West Rail route and the Oxford-Cambridge Expressway and in turn the National Infrastructure Commission's central finding that the Oxford-Cambridge area, which runs through Central Bedfordshire, provides a 'once in a generation opportunity' to be the UK's Silicon Valley, delivering growth in science, technology and innovation<sup>7</sup>.
- 6.4.5 When delivered, these will enhance the development potential of further large-scale growth in the Marston Vale.
- 6.4.6 Consultation and evidence told us that villages around Woburn, including Aspley Guise, must be protected due to their unique character, heritage assets and natural environment, so any future development here would need to be appropriately buffered to avoid coalescence and harm to the character of the existing settlements.
- 6.4.7 The allocations in this area are:
- Marston Vale New Villages (around 5,000 homes and approximately 30 hectares of employment);
  - Extensions to Cranfield, Wixams and Marston Moreteyne; and
  - Marston Gate (around 35 hectares for employment).

## 6.5 Central Area

- 6.5.1 The settlement pattern and constrained infrastructure limit the options for strategic scale growth in this area. As such a number of small and medium allocations are proposed around settlements that have good access to services and facilities.
- 6.5.2 This area has had a large number of recent permissions as a result of speculative development. This has led to piecemeal development which does not allow for a holistic approach to the delivery of new services and infrastructure.

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<sup>7</sup> National Infrastructure Commission Report (November 2017)

6.5.3 The Sustainability Appraisal and the transport modelling evidence tells us that there is limited scope for residential growth in this area due to limited capacity on the network, particularly along the A507 as result of incremental growth of existing settlements.

6.5.4 The allocations in this area are:

- Extensions to Campton, Clifton, Haynes, Henlow, Lower Stondon, Maulden, Meppershall, Moggerhanger, Northill, Shefford, Shillington and Upper Gravenhurst.

## 6.6 Growth Strategy

6.6.1 The allocations for employment, housing, and mixed-use development are set out in Policy SP1 overleaf. The allocations have been selected with regard to their overall sustainability based on the evidence presented in the Growth Options Studies for the Luton HMA and the North of Central Bedfordshire, technical site assessment work, the Sustainability Appraisal, transport modelling and other technical evidence studies.

6.6.2 The plan target is to deliver 39,350 homes. A modest contingency on the 'supply' of sites has been applied to provide a failsafe if sites fail to come forward as scheduled in our delivery plan (see table 6.2). This will ensure delivery throughout the plan period to 2035 and in particular will ensure that the Council can maintain a rolling five-year housing supply.

6.6.3 The full identified net capacity of allocated sites is set out in Policy SP1. The total capacity of the strategic sites is greater than needed within the plan period to meet the housing requirement, and only a proportion of the overall capacity will count towards the plan target for new homes. Based on reasonable assumptions, the expected delivery rates within the plan period, and the residual to be delivered outside of the plan period is shown in the delivery rates table in Chapter 7.



## **Policy SP1: Growth Strategy**

A minimum of 39,350 homes, and approximately 24,000 new jobs will be delivered in Central Bedfordshire over the period 2015 to 2035. Of the 39,350 homes, this includes around 27,696 homes which are already planned for or built, as well as 7,350 homes to be delivered by 2031 to meet unmet housing need arising from Luton.

In order to accommodate the growth required up to 2035 in a sustainable and controlled manner, growth will be distributed throughout Central Bedfordshire, including on land currently designated as Green Belt. Green Belt boundaries will be redrawn for a small number of sites where a strong case can be made that they meet the exceptional circumstances tests for removal and allocation for housing.

1. New homes and jobs will be delivered via a combination of strategic and small - medium scale allocations throughout Central Bedfordshire. Strategic allocations will be made at the following locations\*:
  - a. North of Luton (Town Extension) - approximately 3,600 homes and 7ha employment land
  - b. Sundon Rail Freight Interchange (RFI) (Strategic Employment Area) - 45ha
  - c. Marston Valley (New Villages) - 5,000 homes and 30ha employment land
  - d. Marston Gate (Strategic Employment Area) - 35 ha
  - e. East of Arlesey (Town Extension) - 2,000 homes
  - f. East of Biggleswade (New Village) - 1,500 homes and 2ha employment land
  - g. Holme Farm, Biggleswade (Employment Area) - 78ha, including approximately 25ha of mixed B2, B8 and E(g) uses and 38ha of B8 strategic floorspace.
  
2. In addition, the unmet housing needs of 7,350 homes arising from Luton will be delivered by 2031 through a combination of the following sites:
  - a. (SC1) North Houghton Regis (1&2)
  - b. (SA1) North of Luton
  - c. (HAS05) Land East of Barton le Clay
  - d. (HAS07) Caddington Park, Caddington
  - e. (HAS14) Land off Eaton Park
  - f. (HAS17) Land South West of Steppingley Road, Flitwick
  - g. (HAS18) Site adj. to Flitwick Garden Allotments off Steppingley Road
  - h. (HAS19) Land at Upper Gravenhurst/The Pyghtle
  - i. (HAS20) Land West of the Midland Mainline Railway, Harlington
  - j. (HAS21) Land West of Sundon Road, Harlington
  - k. (HAS25) Land at Leighton Road, Hockliffe
  - l. (HAS26) A5 Watling Street, Hockliffe
  - m. (HAS28) Bidwell Gospel Hall (Dell Mount)
  - n. (HAS29) Land to the East of Houghton Regis
  - o. (HAS38) Land fronting Silsoe Road, Maulden
  - p. (HAS49) Land East of Leighton Road, Toddington
  - q. (HAS50) Alma Farm, Toddington.
  - r. (HAS51) Land off Flitwick Road, Westoning
  - s. (HAS52) West View Farm, Westoning

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Development will also be brought forward through medium and small-scale extensions to villages and towns throughout Central Bedfordshire (as identified in Policy HA1) and through Neighbourhood Plans.

Planning applications for piecemeal development that prejudices the delivery of allocations set out in this policy will be refused.

*\* Some strategic sites are expected to deliver beyond the plan period, with 3,100 homes expected to be delivered by 2035 for the North of Luton site, 3,125 homes expected to be delivered by 2035 for the Marston Vale New Villages site, and 1,300 homes expected to be delivered by 2035 for the East of Arlesey site as shown by Table 7.2. Please note that all employment figures are gross and include any land areas for landscaping.*

## 6.7 Small and Medium Sites

6.7.1 In addition to the strategic sites identified above, the Plan also allocates 48 small and medium sites for residential development. Ranging in size from 12 up to 650 dwellings, and spread throughout Central Bedfordshire, these can be brought forward for development more quickly than larger sites, and so aid delivery. These smaller and medium sized sites will also provide better choice in the market, opportunities for SME builders, enable our settlements to grow in ways that are sustainable and respect and enhance the character and identity of our settlements and countryside. A number of sites which will be released from the Green Belt and which sit within the Luton Housing Market Area, will also contribute towards meeting the unmet housing need from Luton.

## 6.8 Neighbourhood Planning

6.8.1 Neighbourhood Planning is a new way of allowing neighbourhoods to have a say in the statutory land use planning of their own areas. The Council is supportive of Neighbourhood Plans and support will be given to those communities who choose to produce a Neighbourhood Plan.

6.8.2 Neighbourhood Planning must arise from the community, with individuals and groups working in partnership with local businesses, developers and landowners in the area, to deliver sustainable development to meet the community's needs for the future.

6.8.3 There are two types of Neighbourhood Plans that may be produced;

- Neighbourhood Plans which may allocate land for development and/or include policies against which planning applications are judged; and
- Neighbourhood Development Orders which can grant planning permission for a specific type of development.

6.8.4 When proposing allocations, a robust assessment of all alternative sites available will be required to show that the most sustainable locations have been selected. The status of allocations made through the Neighbourhood Planning process is in effect, the same as

if made by the Council through a site allocations Development Plan Document because Neighbourhood Plans become part of the formal Development Plan for Central Bedfordshire, upon adoption.

### Delivering Homes through Neighbourhood Plans

6.8.5 In view of the fact that the progress of Neighbourhood Plans is outside of the control and jurisdiction of the Council, no specific target for the delivery of new homes has been attributed to Neighbourhood Plans. Therefore any new homes delivered through Neighbourhood Plans in addition to the small and medium site allocations, will effectively be treated as 'windfall'.

## 6.9 Housing Requirement and Supply

**Table 6.1: Derivation of Local Plan Housing Requirement**

Objectively Assessed Housing Need for Central Bedfordshire	32,000
Unmet Need from Luton	7,350
Total houses to be delivered over the period 2015-2035 – inc. committed sites	<b>39,350</b>

6.9.1 The Plan target is to deliver 39,350 homes over the period 2015-2035. This figure is comprised of Central Bedfordshire’s objectively assessed housing need over this period (32,000 homes) with the addition of Luton’s residual unmet housing need (7,350 homes).

**Table 6.2: Existing Dwelling Commitments at 01/04/20**

Type of Commitment	Number of dwellings to be delivered in the plan period
Net Completions (April 2015 - April 2020)	10,226
Existing Allocations	5,481
Strategic Sites (with planning permission)	7,436
Large Windfall (with planning permission)	3,821
Small Windfall (with planning permission)	732
<b>Total</b>	<b>27,696</b>

6.9.2 Table 6.2 sets out the amount of housing which is already allocated by a previous Development Plan or benefits from planning permission. These are called dwelling commitments and together with the number of completions to date, they are expected to deliver 27,696 dwellings during the 2015-2035 plan period. A breakdown of all these commitments can be found in the Housing Trajectory.

6.9.3 In addition to the above commitments, evidence set out in the Windfall Topic Paper demonstrates that there is sufficient compelling evidence to justify the addition of a moderate annual windfall allowance from years 6-15 in line with the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. This allowance for windfall is robust and achievable and takes account of other identified housing delivery.

6.9.4 The remaining homes will be provided through allocations made in this Plan and via windfall delivery. This Plan makes a moderate windfall allowance as windfall sites are expected to continue to be a reliable source of delivery in Central Bedfordshire.

**Table 6.3: New Housing Growth**

Proposed Housing Supply	Number of dwellings to be delivered in the plan period
Small and Medium Allocations	5,162
New Strategic Allocations	9,025*
Windfall Allowance (post five years)	2,640
Windfall Allowance (five-year supply period only)	233
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,060</b>

*\*Some strategic sites also deliver beyond the plan period (2035). Refer to the Housing Trajectory (Appendix 8) for more information.*

6.9.5 When completions, existing commitments, new allocations and an allowance for windfall are combined, the total housing delivery over the period 2015-3035 is as follows:

**Table 6.4: Total Delivery in the Plan Period up to 2035**

Source	Number of dwellings
Net Completions (2015-2020)	10,226
Existing Commitments	17,470
New Strategic Allocations	9,025*
Small and Medium Allocations	5,162
Windfall Allowance	2,873
<b>Total</b>	<b>44,756</b>

*\*Some strategic sites also deliver beyond the plan period (2035). Refer to the Housing Trajectory (Appendix 8) for more information.*

6.9.6 In order to deliver the jobs target identified and to contribute to meeting footloose strategic warehousing needs, the following additional land is allocated:

**Table 6.5: New Employment Land Allocations**

Location	Area (ha)
B8 Strategic Allocation – Sundon Rail Freight Interchange	45
B8 Strategic Allocation – Marston Gate	35
B8 Strategic Allocation – Holme Farm, Biggleswade	78
Marston Valley	30
North of Luton	7
East of Biggleswade	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>197ha</b>

## 6.10 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

### National Planning Policy Framework

6.10.1 In March 2012, the Government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. The NPPF requires that Local Plans are prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. Local Plans must, therefore, be consistent with the principles and policies of the Framework, including the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

### Policy SP2: National Planning Policy Framework - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

When considering development proposals, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan (and, where relevant, with policies in Neighbourhood Plans) will be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Where relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise; taking into account whether any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.

# 7. Implementation

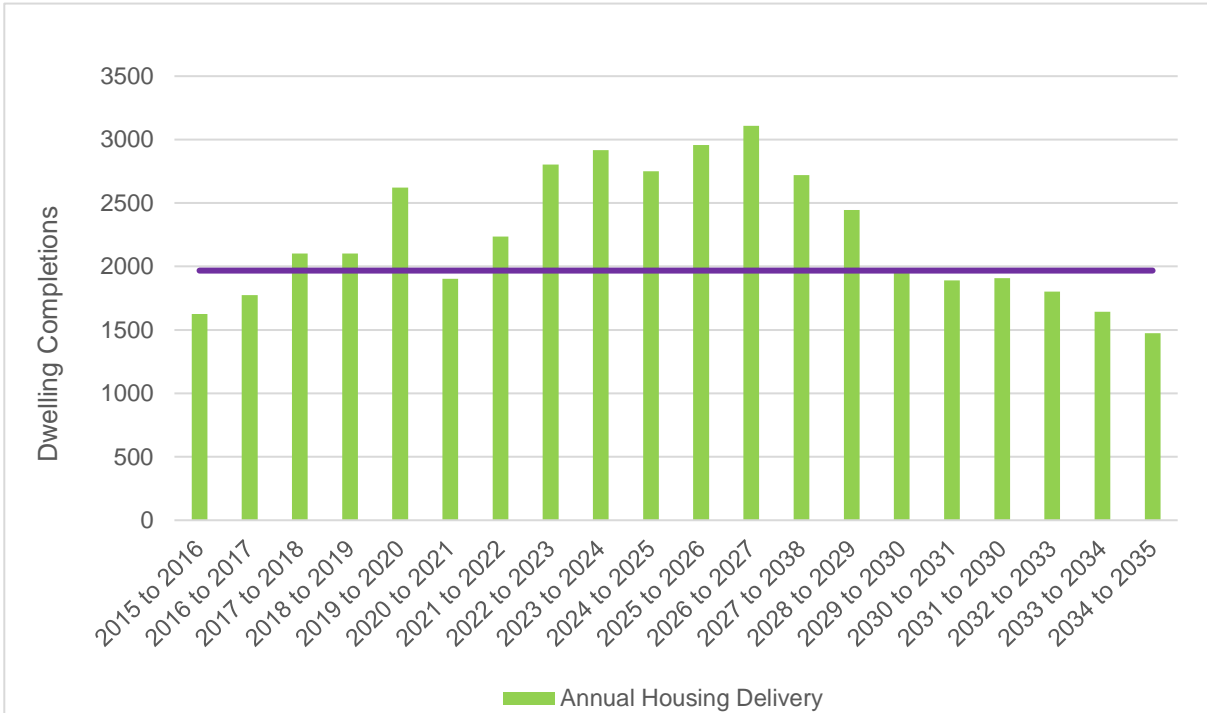
## 7.1 Housing Delivery

7.1.1 The Housing Trajectory (as of 01/04/2020) demonstrates that there is a total supply of 44,756 homes which will be delivered throughout the lifetime of the Plan. This represents a surplus of 5,406 homes and is 14% above the Plan requirement. While there is confidence that the allocation sites will deliver, the 14% surplus in the supply will provide sufficient flexibility in the event of any delay or non-delivery.

7.1.2 The delivery rates of existing housing commitments have already been determined and are set out within the Housing Trajectory: detailed Site Schedule (Appendix 8). It is important that new allocations identified by this Local Plan contribute to delivering a continuous supply of housing throughout the plan period. It is therefore appropriate for the Council to use reasonable assumptions to determine the likely delivery of particular development sites taking into consideration past trends, competing sites, the provision of infrastructure, likely commencement, and any enabling works that need to be undertaken in advance of development.

7.1.3 This is particularly important for those key strategic sites which are critical to the delivery of this strategy. Realistic estimations of expected delivery are therefore set out below to ensure that this is managed effectively. The impact of phasing of the strategic scale sites to allow for the delivery of enabling infrastructure, means that some will not be delivered in their entirety within the plan period.

**Figure 7.1: Annual Housing Delivery**





7.1.4 Figure 7.1 demonstrates that annual housing delivery has consistently increased since the beginning of the plan period. Delivery will continue to rise due to the early delivery of a number of the small and medium allocations. Annual completions are expected to peak in the middle years when all the strategic allocations have commenced.

**Figure 7.2: Cumulative Housing Delivery**



7.1.5 Figure 7.2 shows that by the end of 2019/20 delivery is expected to have exceeded the requirement.

## 7.2 Distribution

7.2.1 This Local Plan seeks to deliver a range of housing site sizes which are distributed throughout Central Bedfordshire. This will provide choice and competition in the market and will ensure that delivery is maintained throughout the lifetime of the Plan.

**Table 7.1: Proposed Housing Supply across Central Bedfordshire in the Plan Period up to 2035**

	A1 Corridor	Central	East-West	South	Total
Completions	2,861	1,323	1,888	4,154	10,226
Existing Commitments	3,696	1,313	3,155	9,306	17,470
New Strategic Allocations	2,800	0	3,125	3,100	9,025*
Small & Medium Allocations	878	811	771	2,702	5,162
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>10,235</b>	<b>3,447</b>	<b>8,939</b>	<b>19,262</b>	<b>41,883</b>
Windfall Allowance					2,873
<b>Total</b>					<b>44,756</b>

*\*Some strategic sites also deliver beyond the plan period (2035). Refer to the Housing Trajectory (Appendix 8) for more information.*

**Table 7.2: Anticipated Delivery Rates of Strategic Sites**

Year	Dwelling numbers by Strategic Allocation			
	North of Luton	Marston Vale	East of Arlesey	East of Biggleswade
2021/22	-	-	-	-
2022/23	-	25	-	-
2023/24	110	64	-	75
2024/25	220	150	-	140
2025/26	250	186	50	140
2026/27	280	300	100	140
2027/28	280	300	100	150
2028/29	280	300	150	150
2029/30	280	300	150	150
2030/31	280	300	150	150
2031/32	280	300	150	150
2032/33	280	300	150	150
2033/34	280	300	150	105
2034/35	280	300	150	-
POST 2035	500	1,875	700	0

### 7.3 Five Year Housing Land Supply

7.3.1 The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) demonstrates that there are sufficient sites to ensure that the Local Plan meets the full objectively assessed need of 32,000 dwellings and 24,000 new jobs over the 2015-2035 plan period. In addition to meeting Central Bedfordshire’s housing need, the Plan target also includes provision for 7,350 homes to meet Luton’s identified ‘unmet’ need.

7.3.2 Local planning authorities are required to ‘identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years’ worth of housing against their

requirements'. If this cannot be demonstrated a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' is applied. It has therefore been vital that this Local Plan allocates sufficient deliverable and developable land at range of scales and locations in order to ensure that a five-year supply is maintained.

7.3.3 In order to demonstrate a five-year supply of housing, significant and demonstrable site specific evidence must be produced. This council undertakes quarterly site visits and regularly contacts housebuilders to determine when their sites will be delivered. This information is used to update the Housing Trajectory on a quarterly basis.

7.3.4 At 1st April 2020, Central Bedfordshire was able to demonstrate a five-year supply of 6.18 years against the plan requirement of 39,350. The derivation of this supply is set out below;

At April 2020, a total of 10,226 new homes have been delivered in Central Bedfordshire since the start of the plan period. This is 388 more than was required over the same period. As there has been an over delivery, there is no shortfall to be added to the five-year requirement;

39,350 - 10,226	=	29,124
29,124/15 (years remaining)	=	1,941.6
1,941.6 x 5	=	9,708

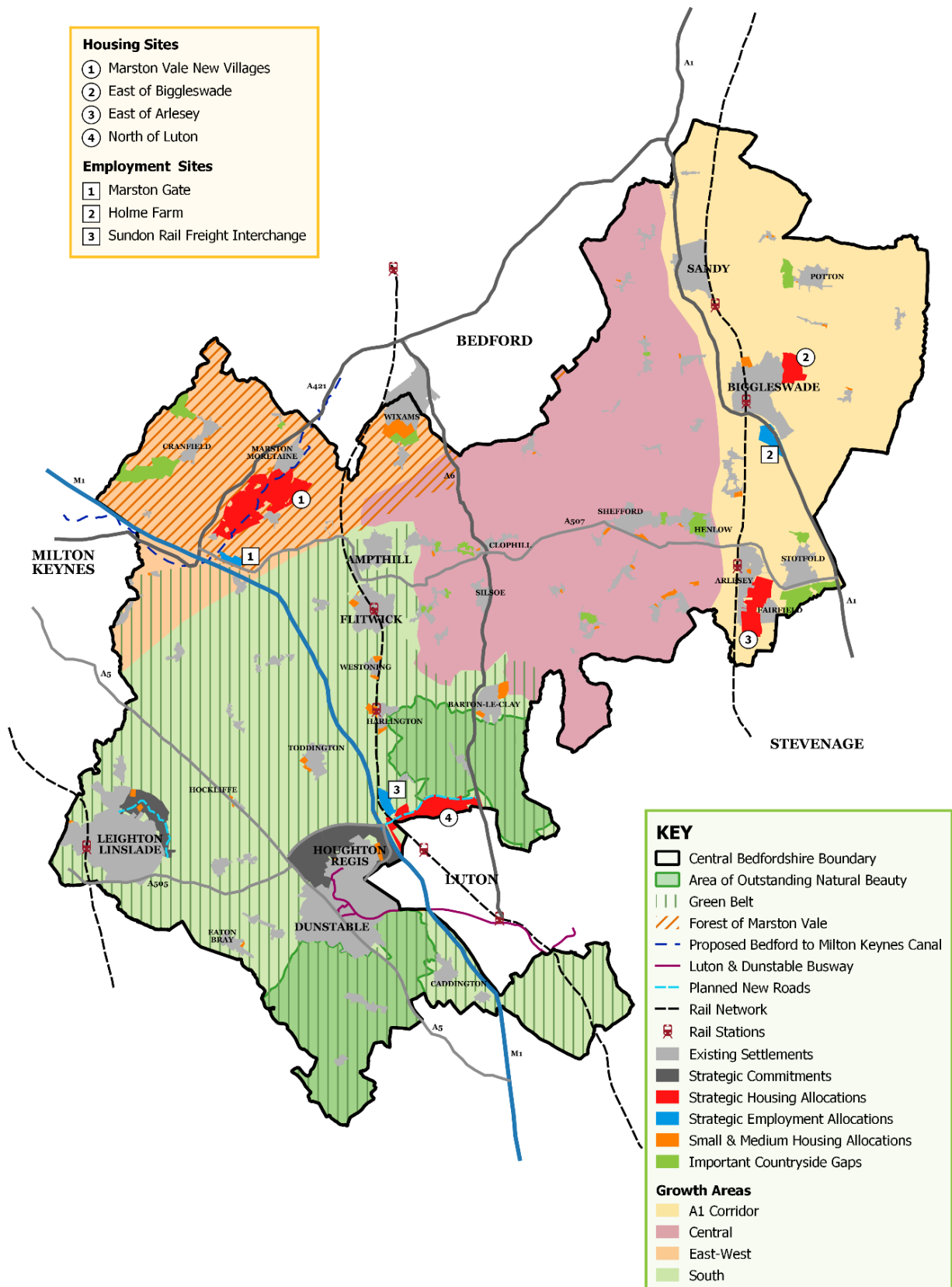
After a 5% buffer is added, the five-year supply requirement at April 2020 is 10,193. The Trajectory identifies a five-year supply of 12,609 which equates to 6.18 years and is a surplus of 2,416 homes.

## 7.4 Monitoring

7.4.1 Annual housing completions and the supply of housing land will be rigorously monitored on at least an annual basis to determine if delivery requirements are being met and whether the five-year supply of housing land is being maintained. The Housing Trajectory and statements on the five-year housing land supply will be published within the annual Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) and on the Council's website. The supply and development of employment land will also be monitored quarterly, and the figures will be published in the AMR.

7.4.2 In order to assess the application and effectiveness of all the policies in the Local Plan, a monitoring framework has been produced to support this Plan (Appendix 3). This lists all the policies and sets out how they will be monitored. The results of this monitoring will be published each year in the AMR. This will provide valuable evidence of any policy areas where the Council may need to take action.

## 7.5 The Key Diagram



## 7.6 Strategic Allocations: General Requirements for Residential Led Developments

- 7.6.1 Evidence has shown that the development of large-scale new communities (of more than 1,500 homes) which are well located for employment and services and have the potential to be well served by sustainable transport will be the most sustainable option for growth alongside small to medium scale development in proximity to existing settlements. The strategic allocations are set out in Policy SP1 and the site-specific requirements are set out in policies SA1, SA2, SA3 and SA4.
- 7.6.2 The strategic allocations and strategic commitments will be expected to demonstrate conformity with the strategic objectives and policies as set out within this plan, as well as having regard to relevant guidance such as the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide. The strategic housing allocations and commitments should also meet the generic requirements for strategic sites set out in Policy SP3 to ensure that good placemaking principles are embedded into new strategic developments. This is in addition to the site-specific allocation policies that follow.
- 7.6.3 Strategic scale residential led developments will be delivered in phases over a number of years. The viability of a scheme is likely to change over the lifetime of the development, in terms of the costs associated with developing the site and sales values. This may impact on the ability of the site to deliver the infrastructure required to support the development. The Council may require review mechanisms to address any economic uncertainties over the lifetime of the development. These provisions will form part of a Section 106 agreement and the trigger for a review of viability will be agreed between the Council and the applicant.
- 7.6.4 It is expected that promoters of allocated strategic sites will sign up to a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) with the Council.

### **Policy SP3: Generic Requirements for Strategic Housing Allocations**

The strategic housing allocations and commitments identified in this Plan will be required to meet the following requirements and objectives:

1. Creation of distinctive, well integrated new communities which respect their local context, enhance the standards of sustainable design in the locality and relate well to neighbouring settlements;
2. Preparation of a Development Brief for the whole site which includes a concept plan and an indicative phasing plan. The concept plan should reflect the location of the site, incorporate the highest standards of design and make effective use of the site through application of appropriate densities, layout and form;
3. Meeting the housing needs of all sectors of the community including families, the young and older people and to match house types to the local employment base in order to reduce the need for out commuting;

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4. Provision of a local centre for the new community, with a range of facilities to meet local needs including small-scale employment uses, pre-school facilities, and primary education, including provision for health and social care in the locality. Integrated Health and Care Hubs should be located in close proximity to schools and elderly persons accommodation and provided early in the development programme;
5. Provision of a Sustainable Transport Strategy, fully integrated into the overall masterplan and demonstrating improved linkages to existing transport nodes such as mainline rail stations by sustainable means and how the development will reduce the need to travel by car. Measures to mitigate the traffic impacts of the proposed development on the strategic and local road networks together with footpaths, cycleways, bridleways, and green corridors should be included;
6. Promoters should undertake a full Transport Assessment to ensure that the package of mitigation measures are incorporated into the scheme, including pedestrian and cycle links, a public transport strategy and any off-site contributions as deemed necessary. Due regard should be given to the phasing of the scheme and the delivery of strategic and non-strategic transport infrastructure projects;
7. A strategy for the conservation, protection and enhancement of the historic environment shall be developed and implemented. The strategy will include measures to avoid harm to the historic environment, and where harm cannot be avoided mitigate any harmful impacts, using information derived from site specific heritage impact assessments;
8. A Green Infrastructure Strategy which identifies measures to protect and enhance any environmentally sensitive areas within and around the site, avoid harmful impacts and mitigate the local and wider impacts of the development, including phasing of these measures and their long-term management, and to maximise the opportunities presented by undevelopable land;
9. Where appropriate, the development should provide a fully integrated Sustainable Drainage System to mitigate against any potential flood risk, apply a flood risk sequential approach to development across the site; and
10. The submission of an infrastructure phasing and delivery plan.

Where a site is not policy compliant, the submission of detailed viability information will be required, and the Council will seek review mechanisms to assess the viability of the strategic site throughout the timescale of the development.

## 7.7 Site Specific Allocation Policies

### Policy SA1: North of Luton

Land to the north of Luton, as identified on the Policies Map, is allocated for a mixed-use development consisting of approximately 3,600 dwellings and approximately 7 hectares of employment land for a mix of E(g), B2 and B8 uses.

Proposals for development within the area identified as the 'Eastern Bowl' on the Policies Map, will only be acceptable where additional evidence demonstrates that any impacts on the Chilterns AONB and heritage assets and their settings can be avoided, and if this is not possible, satisfactorily mitigated. The type and amount of development in the Eastern Bowl, and indicative mitigation measures, will be confirmed in the Development Brief.

Development proposals will be permitted where the principles set out below are met. These principles will be defined in more detail through the preparation of a Development Brief which will include a concept plan and an indicative phasing plan. Planning permission will only be granted for development following the Council's endorsement of this Development Brief. A site wide Design Code(s) will also be required, followed by area specific Design Codes for each phase, to be prepared by the developer and approved by the Council.

In order to ensure the development will be supported by the local and strategic infrastructure needed to ensure sustainable development, the Council will refuse any piecemeal planning permission that would undermine the Council's ability to deliver the required infrastructure.

The principles of the development are:

1. The development will form a well-designed, sustainable urban extension to Luton that will provide a mix of uses necessary to achieve a sustainable and vibrant community, including:
  - a. Approximately 3,600 homes with an appropriate balance and mix of residential accommodation to meet identified needs, which shall include subject to viability, a policy compliant mix of affordable housing, self/custom build plots and a mix of homes to meet all identified needs for older people;
  - b. Approximately 7 hectares of new non-strategic employment land to contribute towards meeting local employment needs, focused primarily to the west of the allocation site and centred around the new M1 Junction 11a to maximise access to the M1 and create an employment hub that complements the new employment uses at North Houghton Regis and Sundon RFI (Policy SE1). The 7ha requirement is in addition to completed employment land at Panettoni Park, adjacent to the M1;
  - c. Provision of the serviced land necessary to deliver a healthcare facility within the site to serve the identified health and social care needs of the proposed development and a commensurate financial contribution towards the delivery of that facility;

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- d. Provision of new community facilities in accordance with Policy HQ3, a mix of retail and at least one drinking establishment to serve the existing and new community's everyday needs;
  - e. Provision of new educational facilities, comprising day nurseries, early years, primary, secondary and sixth form facilities to meet the identified needs of the development or equivalent facilities to meet the educational and childcare needs arising from the development; and
  - f. Provision of leisure facilities, including:
    - i. indoor sport and leisure facilities, in accordance with Policy HQ4; and
    - ii. outdoor sport, leisure and open space, in accordance with Policy EE13.
2. The development will be required to be supported by a comprehensive scheme of highway improvements to mitigate the impacts of the development on the existing network within Central Bedfordshire and Luton. It is essential that the development contributes to the delivery of and is served by the M1-A6 Link Road as well as the existing roads into the North of Luton and the development shall provide the land and commensurate financial contributions towards its delivery;
  3. The development will be phased in accordance with the timing of supporting infrastructure and community facilities including the delivery of the Link Road, which shall be delivered as soon as viably possible;
  4. The development will provide other supporting transport infrastructure, which will include, where necessary, proposals to mitigate the impact of traffic associated with the development within Central Bedfordshire and Luton. Within Luton, appropriate transport mitigation schemes will be required at Marsh Road/Bramingham Road/Sundon Park Road; Barton Road/Icknield Way; and Barton Road/Birdsfoot Lane. Efficient public transport routes through the development will link with key destinations including Leagrave Train Station and Luton town centre, and to the Luton and Dunstable Guided Busway;
  5. The development shall integrate and connect to existing public Rights of Way within and adjoining the site to provide routes to the wider countryside and neighbouring settlements. The development shall include a cycleway connection to Route 6 of the National Cycleway Network;
  6. The development shall provide dedicated and safe pedestrian and cycle links from the new and existing neighbourhoods to local centres, employment opportunities, schools, shops and community facilities; both within the allocation and the wider Luton conurbation;
  7. The development shall maximise opportunities to create Green Infrastructure corridors through the site linking with existing Green Infrastructure assets, including a link between Bramingham Park and George Wood; and a link between Bramingham Wood and Sundon Wood, beneath the current alignment of the pylon lines. The development shall also provide a green corridor along key routes including the setting of the Theedway and appropriately designed Green Infrastructure to mitigate visual impacts upon the setting of the AONB and the significance of heritage assets;
  8. The development shall provide appropriate mitigation, compensation and/or enhancement of key features of biodiversity, to ensure a net gain for biodiversity including but not limited to;

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- a. Sundon Wood CWS, Bramingham Wood CWS, Sunshine Riding Stables CWS, Sundon Quarry SSSI and CWS, Galley and Warden Hills SSSI and CWS, Sundon Country Park CWS and Barton Hills National Nature Reserve SSSI; and
  - b. Identified protected species and priority habitats;
9. The design and construction of the development shall provide appropriate mitigation against any impacts, and make enhancements to, the Chilterns AONB, heritage assets and their settings and biodiversity, where necessary;
10. The site is in an area with a rich and varied historic environment. Parts of the site are within the setting of designated and important non-designated heritage assets, including:
- a. Drays Ditches, Streatley (Scheduled Monument);
  - b. The Galley Hill Round Barrows, Streatley (Scheduled Monument);
  - c. The Church of St Mary in Sundon (Grade I listed building);
  - d. St Mary's Vicarage (Grade II listed building);
  - e. Aubers Farmhouse (Grade II listed building);
  - f. Chestnut Cottage (Grade II listed building);
  - g. The landscape associated with Sundon Manor (which is also known as Sundon Park).

The site is also known to contain non-designated heritage assets with archaeological interest.

11. Any future development at this site must ensure it accords with the Historic Environment policies of this Plan (HE1, HE2 and HE3) and the requirements of the NPPF. Any future development proposals will take into account a Heritage Impact Assessment for the site or relevant phase, agreed between the developer and the Council, in consultation with Historic England. Indicative mitigation measures will be identified within the Development Brief, specific mitigation measures will be identified through the Design Coding process. Where preservation in situ of archaeological remains within areas of open space is proposed, any landscaping schemes will be designed to ensure that there is no damage to the heritage assets with archaeological interest;
12. Subject to the findings of the site-specific flood risk assessment the development shall deliver strategic measures to reduce flood risk including the use of sustainable drainage methods (SUDS) in line with Policy CC5;
13. Foul drainage from the development shall be connected to the mains sewerage network. The development shall demonstrate that there is adequate capacity in the water recycling centre (sewage treatment works) and the foul sewerage network to serve the proposed development, and that it will not have an adverse impact on surface or ground water in terms of quality and quantity. Any application for planning permission shall detail any infrastructure upgrades where required and any necessary phasing arrangements as agreed by the relevant sewerage company;
14. The development will respect the Chilterns AONB and its setting and shall provide appropriate landscaping measures to create a sense of place, provide a net gain for biodiversity and shall mitigate the potential impact of development on the wider

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landscape, including the AONB. Specific mitigation will be identified through detailed masterplanning and confirmed in the Development Brief and/or future planning applications. To mitigate harm to the AONB the development shall provide significant landscape enhancements on and beyond the northern allocation boundary and shall create a long-term, defensible Green Belt boundary as informed by detailed assessments. Noise attenuation fencing to mitigate noise impacts from the new link road will be resisted; and

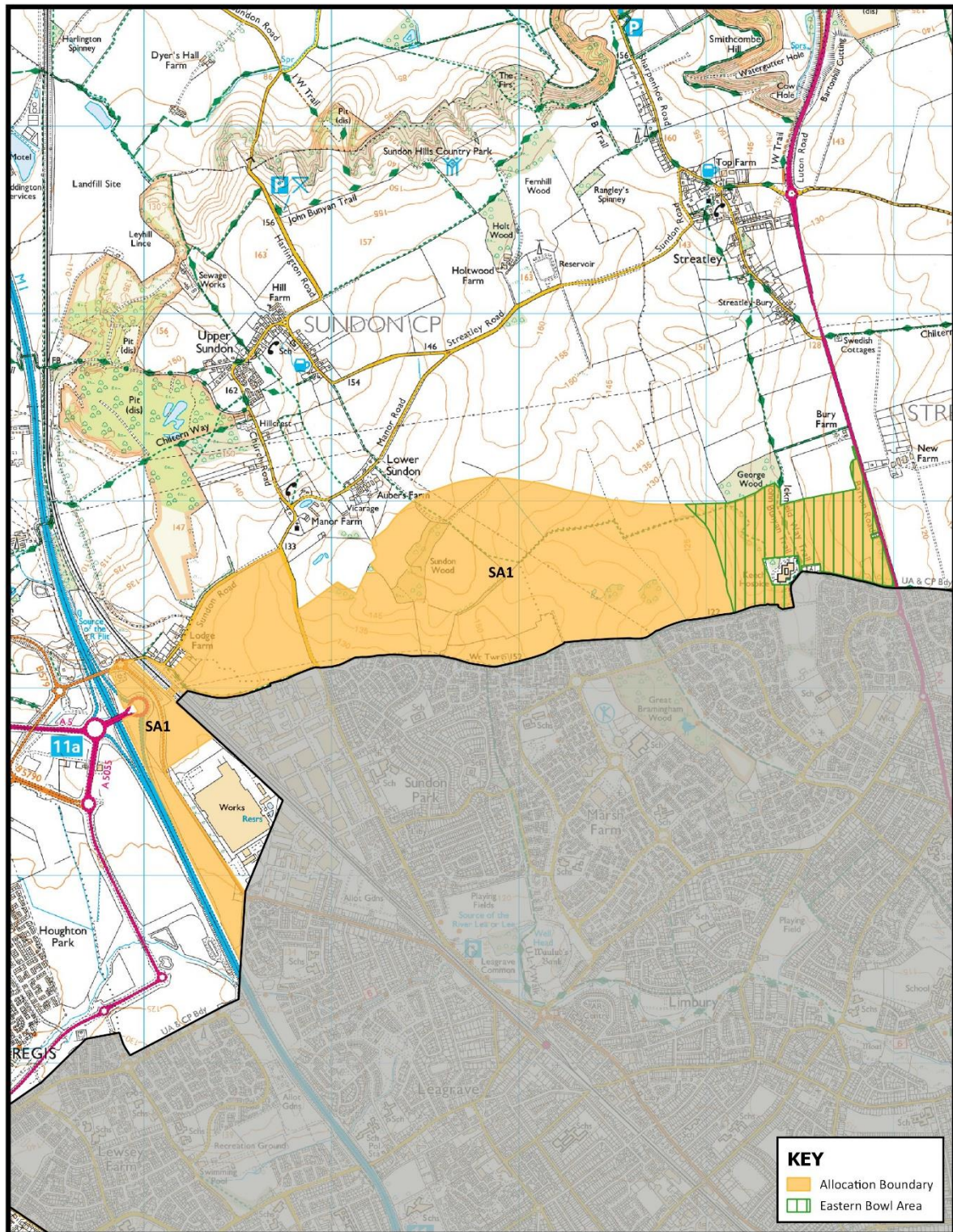
15. The development will incorporate measures to adapt to climate change, minimise energy use and include renewable energy technologies in accordance with policies CC1, CC2, CC3 and CC5, and any other relevant policies in the Plan.

The revised Green Belt boundary follows the extent of the allocation boundary.

# SA1: North of Luton

Policy SA1

North of Luton



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 Central Bedfordshire Council



Central Bedfordshire Local Plan

### **Policy SE1: Sundon Rail Freight Interchange (RFI)**

The land designated for Sundon RFI as identified on the Policies Map, will provide a Rail Freight Interchange alongside new employment land.

Development proposals will be permitted where they:

1. Provide an intermodal rail facility on approximately 5 hectares of the site;
2. Provide for approximately 40 hectares of new employment land accommodating B8 warehousing and distribution uses;
3. Are directly connected to M1 Junction 11a by the Integral Spur and M1-A6 Link Road;
4. Provide a commensurate financial contribution to the essential delivery of the M1-A6 Link Road and the provision of the Integral Spur, connecting Sundon Road to the M1-A6 Link Road;
5. Deliver a connection from the Integral Spur to the RFI;
6. Deliver strategic tree planting along the western boundary, and throughout the site, to aid screening and contribute to a net gain in biodiversity;
7. Enhance and manage the adjoining Sundon Chalk Pits CWS and Sundon Chalk Quarry SSSI to improve their ecological value and contribute to the GI network;
8. Preserve and enhance heritage assets and their settings within and around the site;
9. Provide an appropriate realignment of the Chiltern Way; and
10. Provide opportunities for sustainable transport links to be determined through a Transport Assessment.

SE1 has the potential to contain heritage assets with archaeological interest; therefore the impact of any future development on sub-surface archaeological remains must be avoided, and if this is not possible, mitigated.

A site-specific Flood Risk Assessment will be required and a sequential approach to site layout will be encouraged, to steer development away from areas of flood risk on the site. Subject to the findings of the flood risk assessment the development shall deliver strategic measures to reduce flood risk, including the use of Sustainable Drainage methods.

Development will be permitted in accordance with other relevant policies in the Development Plan and following the successful preparation of a masterplan.

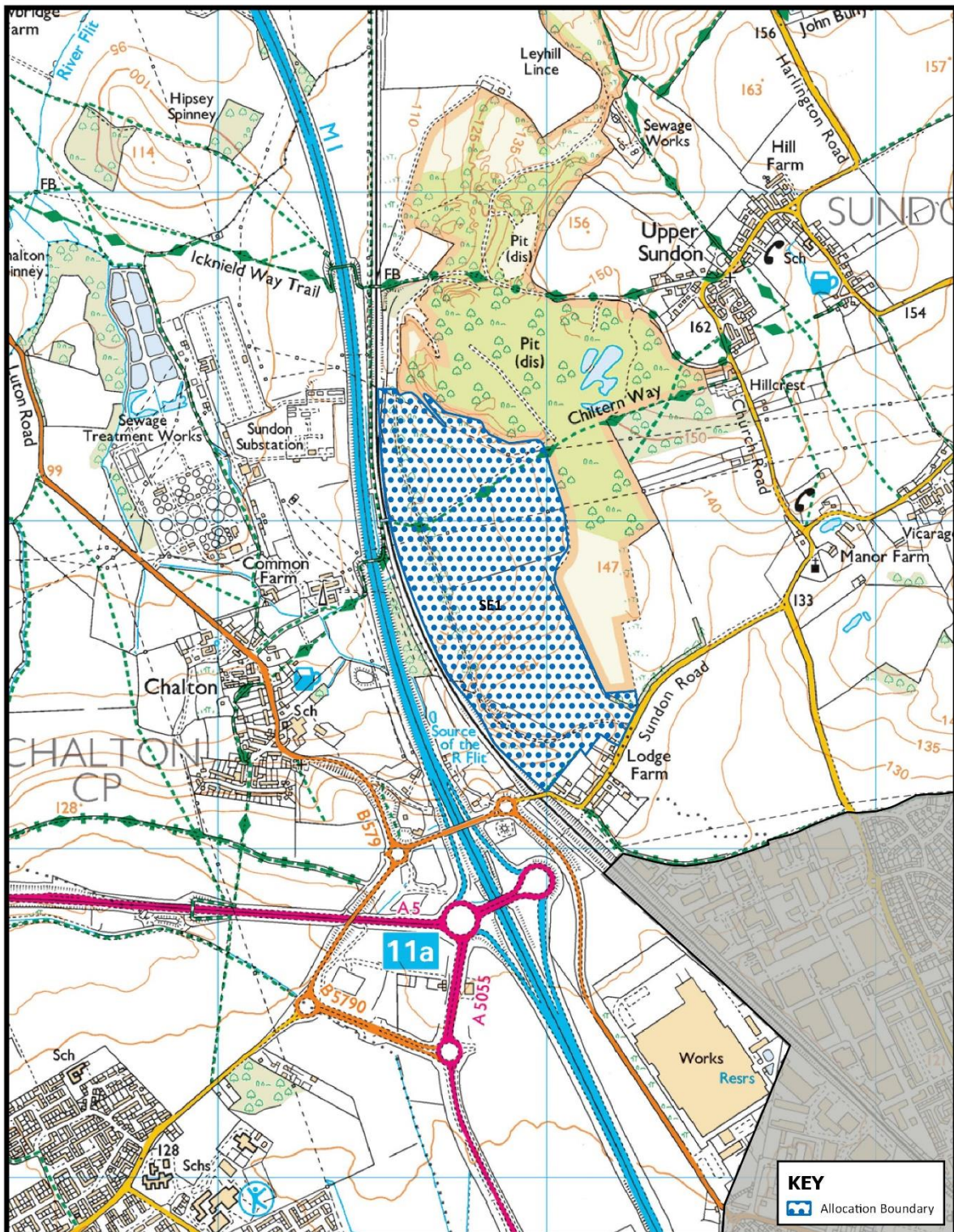
The on-site rail infrastructure and operational intermodal terminal should be constructed during the first phase of development. No more than 40,000sqm of warehousing shall be occupied until the rail connection, including signalling, sidings and locomotive run-round loop as required by Network Rail, has been constructed, commissioned and is available for use.

The Green Belt boundary follows the extent of the RFI and employment allocation. The CWS and SSSI will remain in the Green Belt.

## SE1: Sundon Rail Freight Interchange (RFI)

Policy SE1

Sundon Rail Freight Interchange (RFI)



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Central Bedfordshire Local Plan

## Policy SA2: Marston Vale New Villages

The land for Marston Vale New Villages, as identified in the Policies Map, is allocated for a mixed-use development comprising of approximately 5,000 dwellings and approximately 30 hectares of employment land. The employment land is allocated for new non-strategic E(g) and B2 uses, intended specifically for employment relating to research and development, office, services and tourism to contribute towards meeting local employment needs.

Development proposals will be permitted where the principles set out below are met. These principles will be defined in more detail through the preparation of a Development Brief which will include a concept plan and an indicative phasing plan. Planning permission will only be granted for development following the Council's endorsement of this Development Brief. A site wide Design Code(s) will also be required, followed by area specific Design Codes for each phase, to be prepared by the developer and approved by the Council.

In order to ensure the development will be supported by the local and strategic infrastructure needed to ensure sustainable development, the Council will refuse any piecemeal planning permission that would undermine the Council's ability to deliver such infrastructure.

The principles of the development are:

1. The development will form a series of new villages appropriately separated and screened from neighbouring settlements by green and blue infrastructure. The villages will provide a mix of uses necessary to achieve a sustainable and vibrant network of communities. Development will include:
  - a. Approximately 5,000 homes across a series of new villages with an appropriate balance and mix of residential accommodation to meet identified needs. This mix shall include, subject to viability, a policy compliant mix of affordable housing, self/custom build plots and a mix of homes to meet all identified needs for older people;
  - b. Approximately 30 hectares of employment land, to satisfy identified needs for Research and Development, office, services and tourism. This employment should be well-integrated with the villages, both in terms of design and pedestrian and cycle access;
  - c. Provision of a suitable parcel of serviced land and commensurate financial contribution towards the delivery of a primary healthcare facility to be delivered on site and the provision of a commensurate financial contribution towards the delivery of health and social care services to meet the healthcare needs of the development;
  - d. Provision of new community facilities in accordance with Policy HQ3, a mix of retail, a community library space and at least one drinking establishment to serve the existing and new community's everyday needs;
  - e. Provision of new educational facilities, comprising: day nurseries, early years, primary school, secondary school and sixth

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form to meet the identified needs of the development or equivalent facilities to meet the educational and childcare needs arising from the development; and

- f. Provision of leisure facilities, including:
  - i. indoor sport and leisure facilities, in accordance with Policy HQ3; and
  - ii. outdoor sport, leisure and open space, in accordance with Policy EE13, including pavilions and allotments.
2. The development shall provide dedicated and safe pedestrian and cycle links between the new and existing villages, connecting new local centres, employment opportunities, schools, shops, public transport nodes and community facilities with existing pedestrian and cycle networks in the wider Marston Vale;
3. The development shall maximise opportunities to create Green Infrastructure corridors. The allocation is expected to deliver a multifunctional Green Corridor through the entire length of the site to form the Bedford and Milton Keynes Waterway Park. The development will deliver a water-filled and navigable link to facilitate a waterway connection between Brogborough and Stewartby Lakes. The development shall deliver a cycleway within the Bedford and Milton Keynes Waterway Park Green Corridor. This will form part of a cycleway connection between Stewartby Lake and Ridgmont Railway Station;
4. The development shall provide appropriate mitigation, compensation and/or enhancement of key features of biodiversity including but not limited to, identified protected species and priority habitats. Key ecological features should be protected, well buffered and connected with additional habitat creation and linkages. Potential detrimental impacts on wet habitats valuable for Great Crested Newts or other flora and fauna must be avoided through careful zoning of uses or, where it is ecologically acceptable, habitats may be compensated through the creation of new ponds and wetland features;
5. The development shall provide appropriate landscape measures to create a sense of place, provide a net gain for biodiversity and include mitigation to address the potential impact of development on the wider landscape. The site is within the Forest of Marston Vale, and therefore any development must comply with Policy EE9;
6. The site is in an area with a rich and varied historic environment. Parts of the site are within the setting of designated heritage assets, including:
  - a. The medieval village and moated sites at Thrupp End, Lidlington (Scheduled Monument);
  - b. Moat Farm moated enclosure and associated settlement earthworks, Marston Moreteyne (Scheduled Monument);
  - c. The medieval Ringwork at the Round House, Brogborough Park Farm (Scheduled Monument);
  - d. The Church of St Mary the Virgin, Marston Moreteyne (Grade I listed building);
  - e. The Tower belonging to the Church of St Mary, Marston Moreteyne (Grade I listed building);
  - f. Moat Farmhouse, Marston Moreteyne (Grade II\* listed building);
  - g. Thrupp End Farmhouse, Lidlington (Grade II listed building);

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h. The Round House, Brogborough Park Farm (Grade II listed building)

The site is also known to contain non-designated heritage assets with archaeological interest.

7. Any future development at this site must ensure it accords with the Historic Environment policies of this Plan (HE1, HE2 and HE3) and the requirements of the NPPF. Any future development proposals will take into account a Heritage Impact Assessment for the site or relevant phase, agreed between the developer and the Council, in consultation with Historic England. Indicative mitigation measures will be identified within the Development Brief, specific mitigation measures will be identified through the Design Coding process. Any landscaping schemes proposed must also seek to safeguard existing tree lines/hedgerows. Where preservation *in situ* of archaeological remains within areas of open space is proposed, any landscaping schemes will be designed to ensure that there is no damage to the heritage assets with archaeological interest;
8. The development shall be designed to ensure that uses and developments within the site that are vulnerable to flood risk are located outside of areas of flood zones 2 and 3 and areas at high risk of surface water flooding. Flood capacity shall be retained on site;
9. The development will, through the creation of the Bedford and Milton Keynes Waterway Park, provide a link for moving water between Brogborough and Stewartby Lakes contributing, where possible, to water management objectives at the catchment scale;
10. Subject to the findings of the site-specific flood risk assessment the development shall deliver strategic measures to reduce flood risk including the use of sustainable drainage methods (SUDS) in line with Policy CC5. SUDS will be designed as part of the green infrastructure network, enhancing existing watercourses and drainage features, and integrating them with the Bedford and Milton Keynes Waterway Park where appropriate. Safe access and egress shall be provided taking account of the flood risk at the site;
11. The development shall integrate, connect to and improve alignments of existing public Rights of Way within and adjoining the site to provide routes within the development to the wider countryside and neighbouring settlements. In addition to these routes, the development will enable cycle and pedestrian connections to be made between Stewartby Lake and Ridgmont Railway Station which shall include appropriately designed crossings over the waterway;
12. The development will provide supporting transport infrastructure to mitigate the impact of traffic associated with the development, including a deliverable scheme of improvements at J13 of the M1 and improvements to the strategic and the local highway network as necessary, to mitigate the impacts of development. The development shall deliver viable and efficient public transport routes and segregated cycling routes through the development that enable links with key destinations including the nominated East West Rail stopping station and employment areas;

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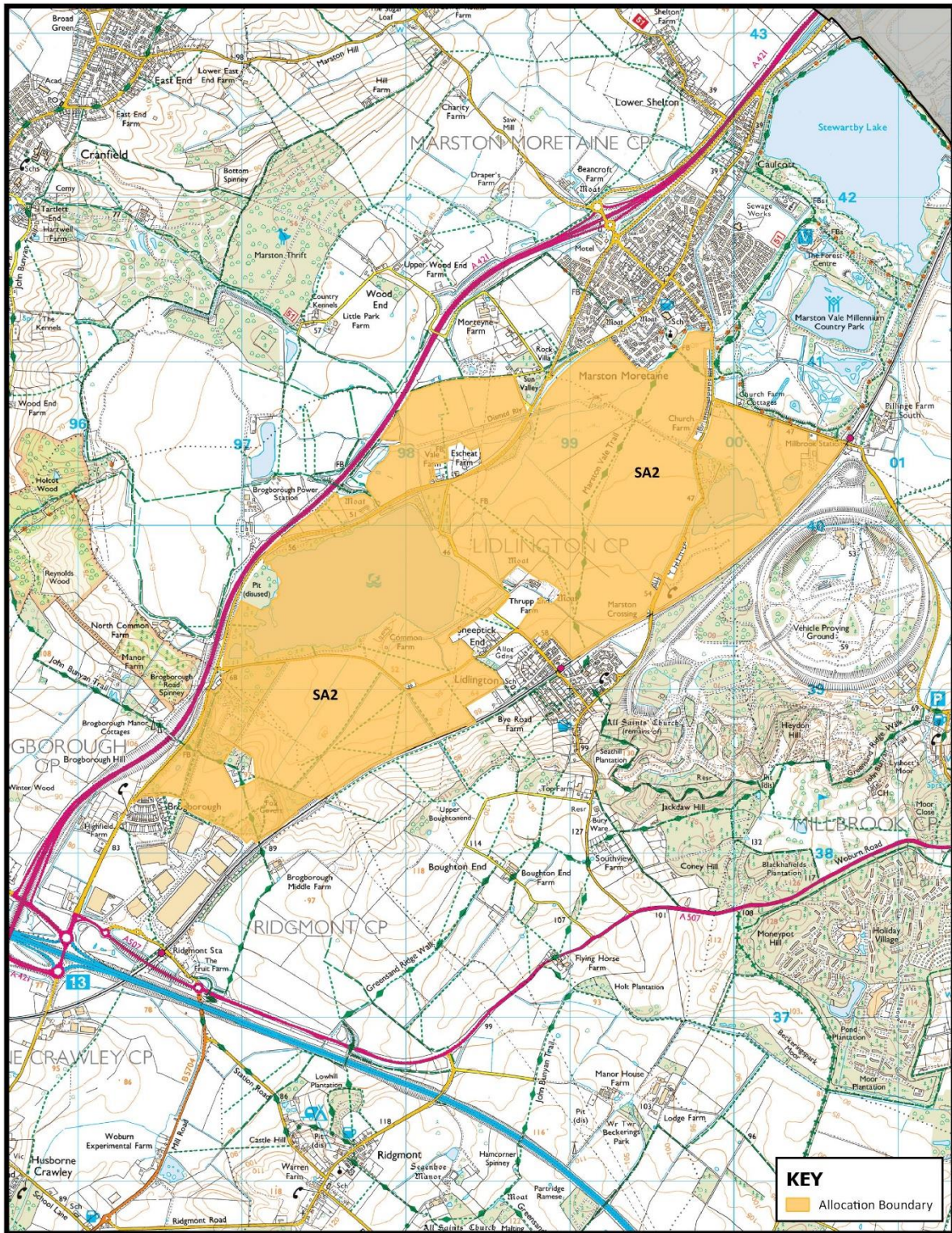
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13. The development shall provide commensurate contributions towards the provision of appropriate off-site infrastructure improvements including towards public transport interchange facilities relating to the enhancement of the nominated stopping station for East West Rail;
14. Foul drainage from the development shall be connected to the mains sewerage network. The development shall demonstrate that there is adequate capacity in water recycling centre (sewage treatment works) and the foul sewerage network to serve the proposed development and that it will not have an adverse impact on surface or ground water in terms of quality and quantity. Any application for planning permission shall detail any infrastructure upgrades where required and any necessary phasing arrangements as agreed by the relevant Water and Sewerage Company;
15. The development will incorporate measures to adapt to climate change, minimise energy use and include renewable energy technologies in accordance with policies CC1, CC2, CC3 and CC5, and any other relevant policies in the Plan;
16. The development shall be accompanied by a Mineral Resource Assessment in accordance with Policy MPS11 of the Minerals and Waste Local Plan (January 2014); and
17. The development will be required to respond appropriately to its location within the Health and Safety Executive Major Accident Hazard Pipelines Consultation Zone and identify mitigation measures where necessary.

# SA2: Marston Vale New Villages

Policy SA2

Marston Vale New Villages



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## Policy SE2: Marston Gate Expansion

The land allocated for Marston Gate Expansion, as identified on the Policies Map, will provide new employment floorspace.

1. Development proposals will be permitted where they:
  - a. Provide up to 30 hectares of new employment land and a minimum of 5 hectares of screening, landscaping and open space;
  - b. Deliver a mix of uses including B2 and B8 warehousing and distribution with associated E(g) and ancillary uses, and a lorry park with associated E(b) food and drink uses;
  - c. Facilitate necessary mitigation and improvements to the A507 and M1, including M1 Junction 13, to ensure the site is well connected to the strategic transport network;
  - d. Provide opportunities for sustainable transport links to be determined through a Transport Assessment and accompanying Travel Plan;
  - e. Deliver strategic measures to reduce flood risk, including the use of SUDS to attenuate and discharge surface water run-off at reduced rates, at least at a rate no greater than if the site were undeveloped and to reduce existing downstream risk. This may include consideration of off-site solutions; and
  - f. Provide appropriate landscaping and open space in the northernmost section of the site where the land rises at the edge of the Greensand Ridge, to ensure effective integration with the open countryside beyond the site.
2. Building heights, external ground levels and roof profiles across the development will be determined through the design process. Buildings will include a softened roof line to contribute to a reduction in the visual height of buildings with reduced eaves and no parapets. All buildings must include:
  - a. The use of colour banding and darker shades at lower levels, to add gravitas to the base of the building, with colours lightening up the elevations. The colour palette, which will be agreed with the Council, may consist of browns, greens and greys to aid the buildings integration into the surrounding landscape; and
  - b. The use of targeted off-site planting to be agreed with the Council and relevant landowners, to aid with mitigating key views.
3. Appropriate measures should be taken to ensure the proposals take full account of the potential arising from improvements to Ridgmont Railway Station (or relevant nominated station for East West Rail), to maximise sustainability and sustainable transport options. Proposals will provide commensurate contributions towards enhancing the infrastructure at Ridgmont Railway Station (or relevant nominated station for East West Rail), including public transport infrastructure facilities and car parking facilities;
4. SE2 is in an area with a rich and varied historic environment. It lies within the setting of a number of designated heritage assets, including Conservation Areas and:
  - a. The medieval Ringwork at the Round House, Brogborough Park Farm (Scheduled Monument);
  - b. The Round House, Brogborough Park Farm (Grade II listed building);

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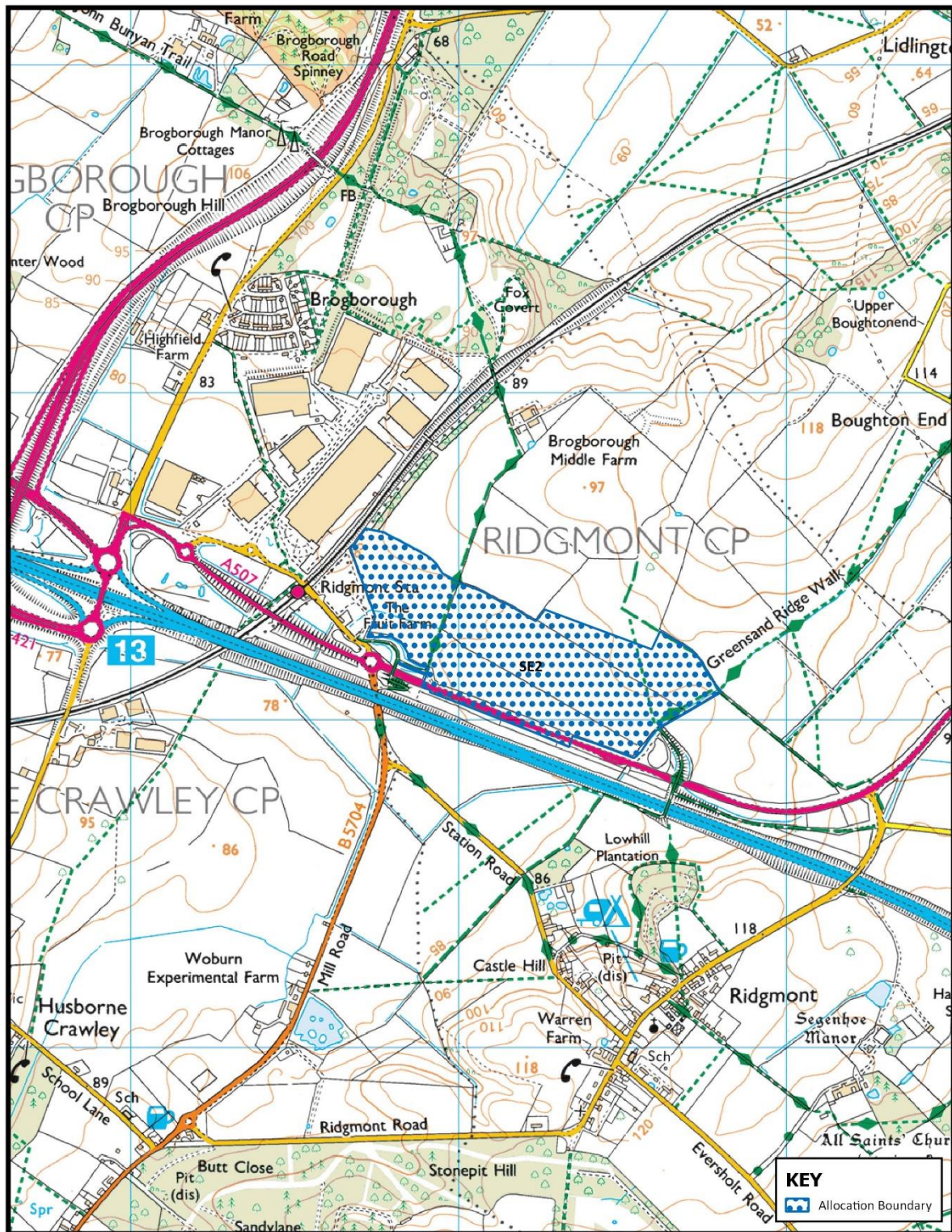
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- c. All Saints Church, Segenhoe (Scheduled Monument and Grade II\* listed building);
  - d. Segenhoe Manor (Grade II\* listed building)
  - e. Parish Church of St James, Husborne Crawley (Grade II\* listed building);
  - f. Malting Spinney Moat (Scheduled Monument); and
  - g. Woburn Abbey (Grade I Registered Park and Garden)
5. SE2 is also known to contain non-designated heritage assets with archaeological interest. Any future development at this site must ensure it accords with the Historic Environment policies of this Plan (HE1, HE2 and HE3) and the requirements of the NPPF. Specific details regarding the siting; scale, colour and massing of the buildings and the landscaping scheme will be agreed through a site-specific Design Code to be submitted and approved by the local planning authority; and
6. Development will be permitted in accordance with other relevant policies in the Development Plan and following the successful preparation of a masterplan which provides an exemplar design response to this unique gateway location.

## SE2: Marston Gate Expansion

Policy SE2

Marston Gate Expansion



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### Policy SA3: East of Arlesey

Land to the east of Arlesey, as identified on the Policies Maps, is allocated for a housing-led development consisting of approximately 2,000 dwellings, a relief road and a country park.

Development proposals will be permitted where the principles set out below are met. These principles will be defined in more detail through the preparation of a Development Brief which will include a concept plan and an indicative phasing plan. Planning permission will only be granted for development following the Council's endorsement of this Development Brief. A site wide Design Code(s) will also be required, followed by area specific Design Codes for each phase, to be prepared by the developer and approved by the Council.

In order to ensure the development will be supported by the local and strategic infrastructure needed to ensure sustainable development, the Council will refuse any piecemeal planning permission that would undermine the Council's ability to deliver such infrastructure.

The principles of the development are:

1. The development will form a well-designed sustainable urban extension to Arlesey that will provide a mix of uses necessary to achieve a sustainable and vibrant community, including:
  - a. Approximately 2,000 homes with an appropriate balance and mix of residential accommodation to meet identified needs, which shall include subject to viability, a policy compliant mix of affordable housing, self/custom build plots and a mix of homes to meet all identified needs for older people;
  - b. Provide the serviced land necessary to deliver a health care facility within the site to serve the health needs of the proposed development and the needs of the catchment area of that facility and a commensurate financial contribution towards the delivery of that facility;
  - c. Provision of new community facilities in accordance with Policy HQ3 including community centres, a mix of retail and at least one drinking establishment to serve the existing and new community's everyday needs;
  - d. Educational facilities, comprising day nurseries, early years, new school(s) for primary aged children to meet the identified needs of the development (or equivalent facilities to meet the educational and childcare needs arising from the development) and financial contributions towards the provision, improvement, enlargement or enhancement of schools for secondary aged children and sixth form facilities off-site to meet the identified needs of the development (or equivalent contributions towards projects to meet the educational needs arising from the development); and
  - e. Provision of leisure facilities, including:
    - i. Indoor sport and leisure facilities, in accordance with Policy HQ4; and
    - ii. Outdoor sport, leisure and open space, in accordance with Policy EE13

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2. The eastern edge of the built development shall be defined by the National Grid High Pressure Gas Pipeline to prevent coalescence between Arlesey and Fairfield. No built development, other than that associated with the formal sports and recreation, leisure and agriculture uses, shall be permitted beyond this boundary;
3. The development shall provide a country park between the eastern edge of the development and the Settlement Envelope of Fairfield. The country park will comprise a range of different formal and informal typologies to include:
  - a. Formal sports provision to the north adjacent to Chase Farm, including associated built development;
  - b. Protected habitat areas and enhanced facilities and associated infrastructure to support outdoor and water-based leisure uses, including the existing sailing, swimming and diving uses, in and around the Blue Lagoon to the south;
  - c. Open agricultural and/or natural greenspace in the central area, around the western boundaries of Fairfield (including the Green Lagoon), to maintain the existing countryside character and prevent coalescence between Fairfield and the development. Within this area there will be no development, other than that appropriate to open countryside.

The extent of the country park and the locations of the individual character areas are defined on the Policies Map.

4. The development shall provide an appropriately designed Relief Road to connect Hitchin Road (to the south of Arlesey) to the A507/High Street Link Road in the north being proposed as part of Chase Farm. This will allow for access directly onto the A507 relieving congestion along the High Street in Arlesey. The relief road will follow the route of the National Grid High Pressure Gas Pipeline as far as possible;
5. The development shall provide dedicated and safe pedestrian and cycle links from the new and existing neighbourhoods to local centres, the country park, Arlesey train station, employment opportunities, schools, shops and community facilities; both within the allocation and the wider Arlesey and Fairfield area;
6. The development shall maximise opportunities to create Green Infrastructure corridors and meet the aims and objectives of the Etonbury Green Wheel. This will be achieved through linking the proposed country park on the eastern edge with existing Green Infrastructure assets in Arlesey and Fairfield including a link with Etonbury Woods; and improving the ecological and biodiversity gains at the Blue and Green Lagoons;
7. The development shall provide appropriate mitigation, compensation and/or enhancement of key features of biodiversity including but not limited to:
  - a. Blue Lagoon and Green Lagoon; and
  - b. Identified protected species and priority habitats.
8. The site is in an area with a rich and varied historic environment. Parts of the site are within the setting of designated heritage assets including:
  - a. Fairfield Hospital (Grade II listed building);
  - b. The Isolation Hospital at Fairfield (Grade II listed building);
  - c. The Church at Fairfield Hospital (Grade II listed building);

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- d. Church Farmhouse, Arlesey (Grade II listed building); and
- e. Green Farmhouse, Arlesey (Grade II listed building)

The site is also known to contain non-designated heritage assets with archaeological interest.

9. Any future development at this site must ensure it accords with the Historic Environment policies of this Plan (HE1, HE2 and HE3) and the requirements of the NPPF. Any future development proposals will take into account a Heritage Impact Assessment for the site or relevant phase, agreed between the developer and the Council, in consultation with Historic England. The most sensitive to change is Grade II listed Green Farmhouse whose immediate setting still reflects its agricultural past and makes a strong contribution to its significance. Any mitigation measures proposed will be designed to ensure the agrarian character of setting of Green Farmhouse is reflective of the building's original use. Indicative mitigation measures will be identified within the Development Brief, specific mitigation measures will be identified through the Design Coding process. Where preservation *in situ* of archaeological remains within areas of open space is proposed, any landscaping schemes will be designed to ensure that there is no damage to the heritage assets with archaeological interest;
10. The development shall consider the risk of flooding from ordinary watercourses and surface water and shall avoid vulnerable development in these areas accordingly. Subject to the findings of the site-specific flood risk assessment the development shall deliver strategic measures to reduce flood risk including the use of sustainable drainage methods (SUDS) in line with Policy CC5. This will include consideration of off-site solutions on the Pix Brook and River Hiz. The flood risk assessment will consider where surface water from the development will be discharged, in relation to existing flood risks and flood history on the Pix Brook and River Hiz. Safe access and egress shall be provided taking account of the flood risk at the site;
11. The development shall integrate and connect to existing pedestrian and cycle connections within and adjoining the site to provide routes to the wider countryside and neighbouring settlements. Existing Rights of Way within the site will be upgraded and new routes will be created to Arlesey Train Station in the north, in addition to improving Rights of Way between the development site and the emerging Chase Farm development;
12. It is essential that the development integrates and connects to the existing road, cycle and footpath network in Arlesey to allow for permeability and legibility between the new development and Arlesey;
13. The development will be phased in accordance with the timing of supporting infrastructure and community facilities including the delivery of the Relief Road, which shall be delivered as soon as viably possible;
14. The development will provide other supporting transport infrastructure, including proposals to mitigate the impact of traffic associated with the development, including providing for efficient public transport routes through the development that link with key destinations including Arlesey, Letchworth and Hitchin Train

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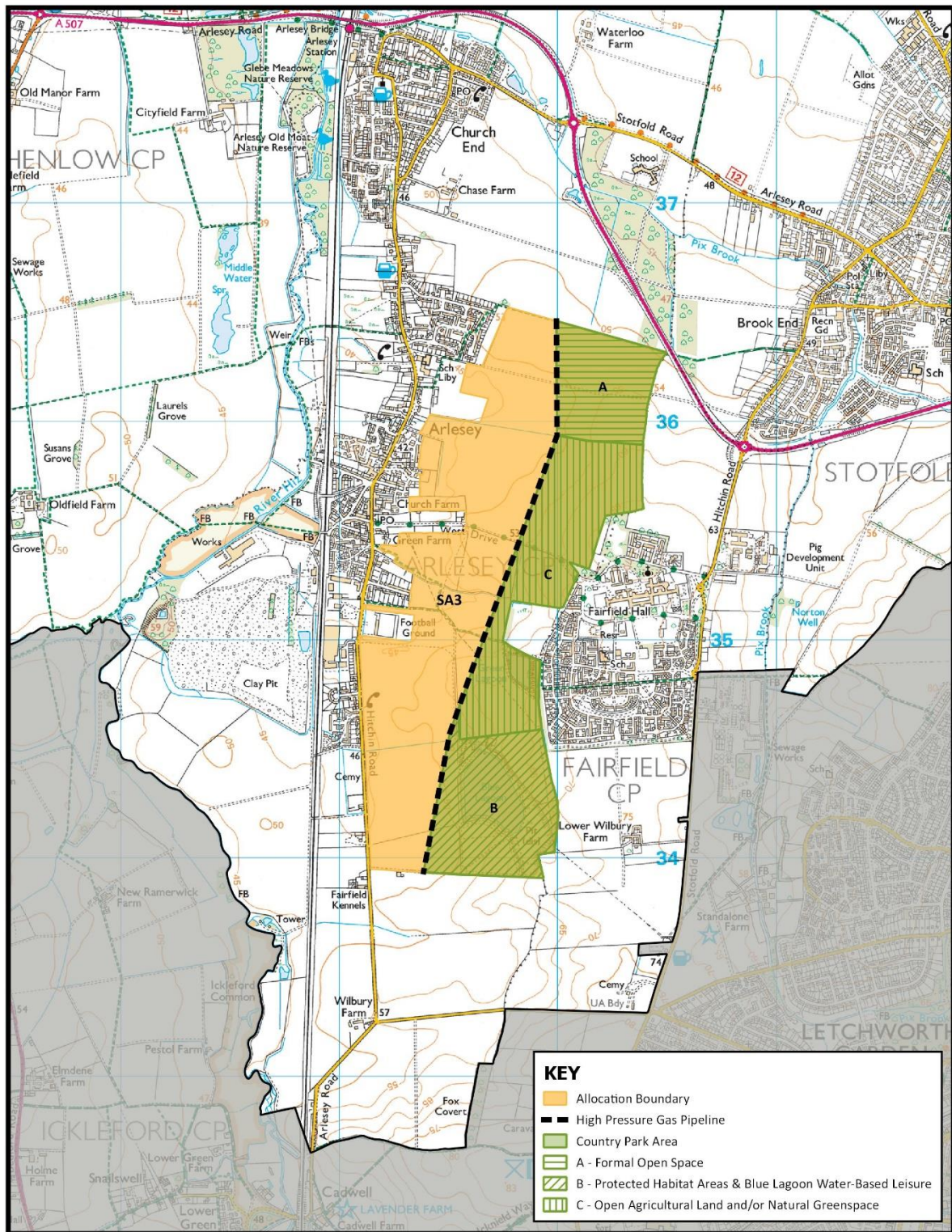
Stations. The Transport Assessment will additionally need to consider the cumulative impacts of planned development in north Hertfordshire and identify any required mitigation measures. Appropriate contributions will be secured through legal agreements in accordance with Policy HQ2;

15. Foul drainage from the development shall be connected to the mains sewerage network. The development shall demonstrate that there is adequate capacity in water recycling centre (sewage treatment works) and the foul sewerage network to serve the proposed development and that it will not have an adverse impact on surface or ground water in terms of quality and quantity. Any application for planning permission shall detail any infrastructure upgrades where required and any necessary phasing arrangements as agreed by the relevant Water and Sewerage Company;
16. The development shall provide appropriate landscaping measures to create a sense of place, prevent the coalescence of Arlesey and Fairfield, provide a net gain for biodiversity and shall mitigate the potential impact of development on a predominately agricultural landscape;
17. The development shall incorporate measures to adapt to climate change, minimise energy use and include renewable energy technologies in accordance with policies CC1, CC2, CC3 and CC5, and any other relevant policies in the Plan; and
18. The development will be required to respond appropriately to its location within the Health and Safety Executive Major Accident Hazard Pipelines Consultation Zone and identify mitigation measures where necessary.

# SA3: East of Arlesey

Policy SA3

East of Arlesey



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### Policy SE3: Holme Farm, Biggleswade

The land designated for Holme Farm, comprising of 78 hectares, incorporating 15 hectares for landscaping, environmental enhancements and sustainable access, as identified on the Policies Map, will provide new employment floorspace.

Development proposals will be permitted where they:

1. Provide for up to 63 hectares of new employment land comprising up to 38ha of strategic warehousing and up to 25ha of local employment opportunities, including, where appropriate, ancillary uses;
2. Deliver necessary improvements to the A1 and A1 roundabout providing appropriate access to the site;
3. Provide a new footbridge and cycleway over the A1 providing access to the services and facilities within the Stratton Park employment and retail area opposite;
4. Provide approximately 15 hectares of appropriate landscaping and contribute to the GI network, specifically in relation to the Biggleswade Green Wheel, including improvements to existing footpaths within the allocation providing greater pedestrian and cycle access between Biggleswade and the site via Windermere Drive;
5. Provide opportunities for sustainable transport links to be determined through a Transport Assessment, including the provision of shuttle buses to serve the new development, in perpetuity, from the train station at regular intervals during the working week as well as during the weekend;
6. Deliver strategic measures to reduce flood risk including the use of SUDS to attenuate and discharge surface water run-off at reduced rates and at least at a rate no greater than if the site were undeveloped and to reduce existing downstream risk. This may include consideration of off-site solutions;
7. Do not prejudice the operation of the neighbouring wind farm;
8. Protect mature woodland located within the site from development and enhance it by appropriate, sensitive landscaping;
9. Incorporate the following specific mitigation measures to reduce visual impact and enhance landscaping:
  - a. The retention of Category A and B trees and existing woodland located in the west of the area just outside the site allocation;
  - b. The need to maintain hedgerows where feasible and trees that have biodiversity potential;
  - c. The need to protect species as there are bats and several setts on the site, as well as great crested newts due to the ponds and ditches in proximity;
  - d. The provision of a landscape amenity area and ecological park with water feature;
  - e. Character features including a natural woodland edge extending from the existing area of woodland;
  - f. Landscape planting using native species;
  - g. A primary green link (centred on the Green Wheel) with improved surfacing connecting to a number of secondary green links which separate the phases of development;

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- h. Landscape focal points at the entrance to the scheme;
- i. Boulevard planting along the estate roads and amenity planting along pedestrian routes and around areas of car parking;
- j. Significant landscaping and open space around the southern boundary of the site adjacent to the A1 to provide a transition between the development and the adjoining countryside;
- k. A landscape buffer between the A1 to screen views of the development;
- l. Have maximum building heights of 23m across the site;
- m. Give appropriate consideration to the topography of the site, with buildings with larger floorplates (and higher eaves) only being permitted on the lower lying land; and
- n. Give appropriate consideration to roof profiles, colours and materials, alongside opportunities for photovoltaics.

SE3 is in an area with a rich and varied historic environment, it is known to contain heritage assets with archaeological interest. SE3 also lies within the wider setting of designated heritage assets including the Wall and Gate Piers at the Pump House and Pump Masters House, Biggleswade (Grade II listed Building).

Any development at this site must ensure it accords with the Historic Environment policies of this Plan (HE1, HE2 and HE3) and the requirements of the NPPF. Any future development at SE3 must demonstrate that any negative impacts on the significance of the Wall and Gate Piers at the Pump House and Pump Masters House, including through development in their setting, have been avoided and if this is not possible, mitigated. Specific details regarding the siting, scale, colour and massing of the buildings and the landscaping scheme will be agreed through a site-specific Design Code.

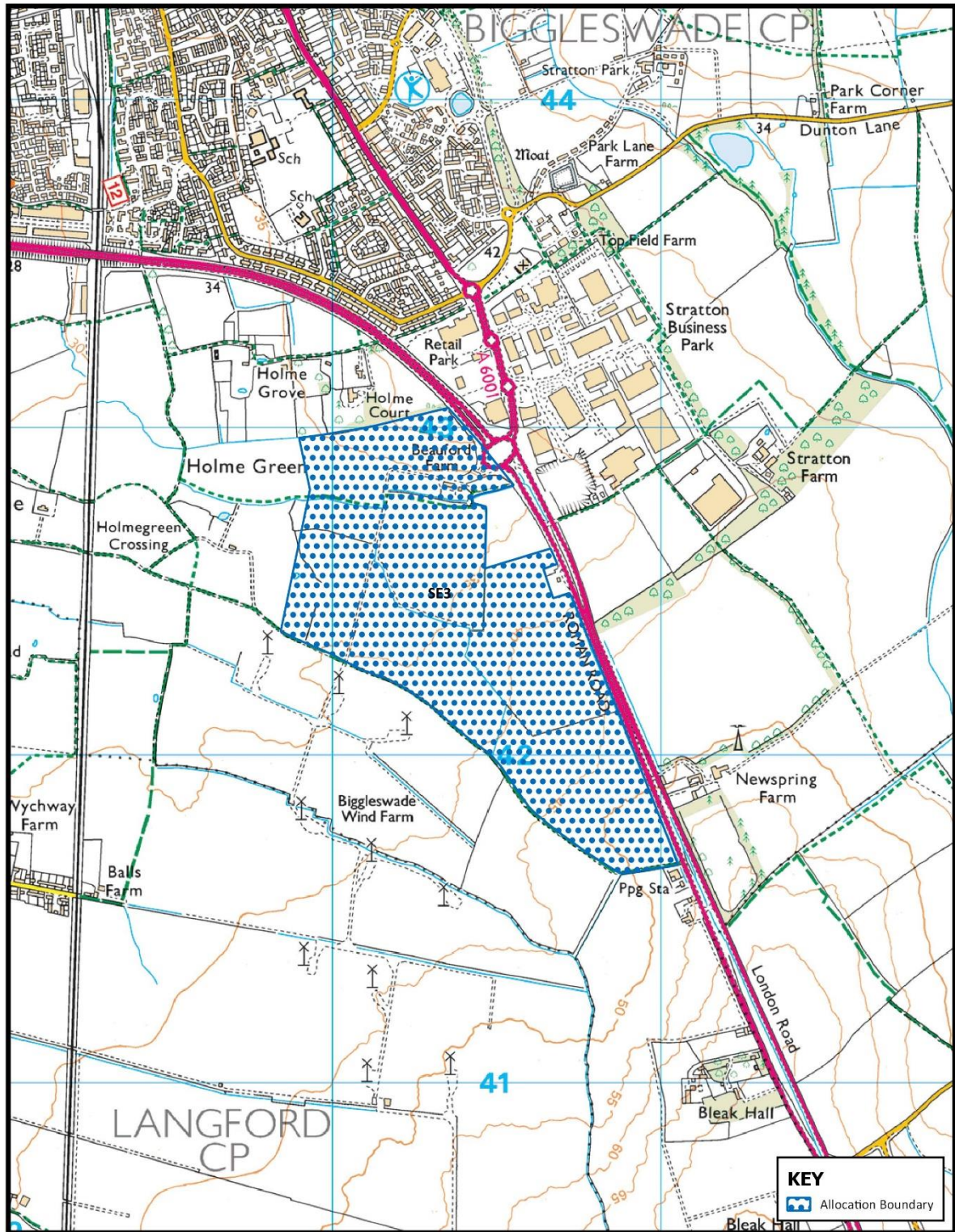
A detailed ground water risk assessment will be required to demonstrate no adverse impact from polluting activities on groundwater sources. Proposals will be supported where it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Council, in consultation with the water undertaker, that pollution to existing groundwater sources can be avoided or suitably mitigated.

Development will be permitted in accordance with other relevant policies in the Development Plan and following the successful preparation of a masterplan which provides an exemplar design response to this unique gateway location; and  
An intrusive field evaluation and appropriate mitigation strategy for multi-period archaeological remains will be required before commencement of development.

## SE3: Holme Farm, Biggleswade

Policy SE3

Holme Farm, Biggleswade



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## 7.8 East of Biggleswade Garden Community

7.8.1 East of Biggleswade is allocated in the Plan (Policy SA4) for a new village scale Garden Community. The site lies to the east of Baden Powell Way and the recent development of Kings Reach, and has been granted outline planning permission for:

- Up to 1,500 dwellings,
- Up to 2ha of commercial development, and
- Leisure and community facilities, including a new primary school and 60ha of open space.

7.8.2 In August 2018, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) published the 'Garden communities: Prospectus' to support the Garden Communities Programme. The Programme seeks to deliver purpose built, sustainable new settlements or urban extensions that are planned by local authorities and/or the private sector in consultation with the local community and provide:

- A mix of homes including affordable and self-build, and job opportunities;
- Community infrastructure, schools and health centres;
- Communities with a clear identity and an attractive environment, including green spaces and the public realm;
- Transport infrastructure, including roads, buses and cycle routes; and
- A plan for long-term stewardship of community assets.

7.8.3 The Prospectus encouraged bids from local authorities and private sector partners for proposals for new garden communities, and offered Government assistance to help deliver their development. In June 2019 East of Biggleswade was included in Phase 2 of MHCLG's Garden Communities Programme.

7.8.4 Policy SA4 sets out the site-specific policy requirements for the East of Biggleswade proposal and any future masterplanning, design coding and planning applications will be expected to demonstrate how the scheme will deliver a sustainable Garden Community.

#### Policy SA4: East of Biggleswade Garden Community

Land to the East of Baden Powell Way, as identified on the Policies Map, is allocated for a new, standalone mixed-use Garden Village consisting of approximately 1,500 dwellings and associated uses.

Development proposals will be permitted where the principles set out below are met. These principles will be defined in more detail through the preparation of a Development Brief which will include a concept plan and an indicative phasing plan. Planning permission will only be granted for development following the Council's endorsement of this Development Brief. A site wide Design Code will also be required, followed by area specific Design Codes for each phase, to be prepared by the developer and approved by the Council.

In order to ensure the development will be supported by the local and strategic infrastructure needed to ensure sustainable development, the Council will refuse any piecemeal planning permission that would undermine the Council's ability to deliver such infrastructure.

The principles of the development are:

1. The development will form a well-designed, sustainable Garden Village that will provide a mix of uses necessary to achieve a sustainable and vibrant standalone community, including:
  - a. Approximately 1,500 homes with an appropriate balance and mix of residential accommodation to meet identified needs, which shall include subject to viability, a policy compliant mix of affordable housing, self/custom build plots and a mix of homes to meet all identified needs for older people;
  - b. Provision of a commensurate financial contribution towards the delivery of a health and social care hub to serve the health and social care needs of the development,
  - c. Provision of new community facilities in accordance with Policy HQ3, a mix of retail and at least one drinking establishment to serve the existing and new community's everyday needs;
  - d. Educational facilities, comprising day nurseries, early years, new school(s) for primary aged children to meet the identified needs of the development (or equivalent facilities to meet the educational and childcare needs arising from the development) and financial contributions towards the provision, improvement, enlargement or enhancement of schools for secondary aged children and sixth form facilities off-site to meet the identified needs of the development (or equivalent contributions towards projects to meet the educational needs arising from the development); and
  - e. Provision of leisure facilities, including:
    - i. Indoor sport and leisure facilities, in accordance with Policy HQ4; and
    - ii. Outdoor sport, leisure and open space, in accordance with Policy EE13

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2. The development will provide appropriate vehicular access to the existing highway network. The following access points are identified on the Policies Map, and at least two of these routes will be required to serve the development:
  - a. Baden Powell Way, with a new roundabout at the junction with Frankel Way;
  - b. Baden Powell Way, connecting to the existing roundabout at the junction with Planets Way;
  - c. Baden Powell Way, with a new roundabout between Planets Way and Venus Avenue; and
  - d. Dunton Lane, via a new access road and new roundabout.
3. The development will provide dedicated and safe pedestrian and cycle links from the new and existing neighbourhoods to local centres, employment opportunities, schools, shops and community facilities; both within the allocation and the wider area;
4. The development will maximise opportunities to create multi-functional Green Infrastructure, including:
  - a. A parkland corridor to the west of the site to achieve the objectives of the Biggleswade Green Wheel and the provision of public open space as an extension to the Biggleswade Common. This Green Corridor will be of a scale commensurate to the Biggleswade Common with substantial wet woodland planting, rough grassland and scrub, complementary to Biggleswade Common whilst providing significant mitigation to the inter-visibility between the built development within the allocation site and Biggleswade;
  - b. Landscaping and habitat linkages following the northern boundary of the site allocation, extending from the boundary of the site adjoining Biggleswade Common and towards Dunton Fen as well as substantial soft landscaping to be provided along the eastern and southern boundaries of the site to mitigate visual impacts on the landscape and the setting of heritage assets.
5. The development will provide appropriate mitigation, compensation and/or enhancement of key features of biodiversity including but not limited to, identified protected species and priority habitats;
6. The development will ensure that the design and construction of the development as a whole has no undue impact on the landscape and biodiversity and provides for the mitigation and enhancements where feasible;
7. The site is in an area with a rich and varied historic environment and it is known to contain non-designated heritage assets with archaeological interest. Parts of the site are within the wider setting of designated heritage assets including:
  - a. Newton Bury Moat (Scheduled Monument);
  - b. Stratton Moat (Scheduled Monument); and
  - c. Sunderland Hall Farmhouse (Grade II listed building)
8. Any future development at this site must ensure it accords with the Historic Environment policies of this Plan (HE1, HE2 and HE3) and the requirements of the NPPF. Specific mitigation measures will be identified through the Design Coding process. Where preservation *in situ* of archaeological remains within areas of open space is proposed, any landscaping schemes will be designed to ensure that there is no damage to the heritage assets with archaeological interest;

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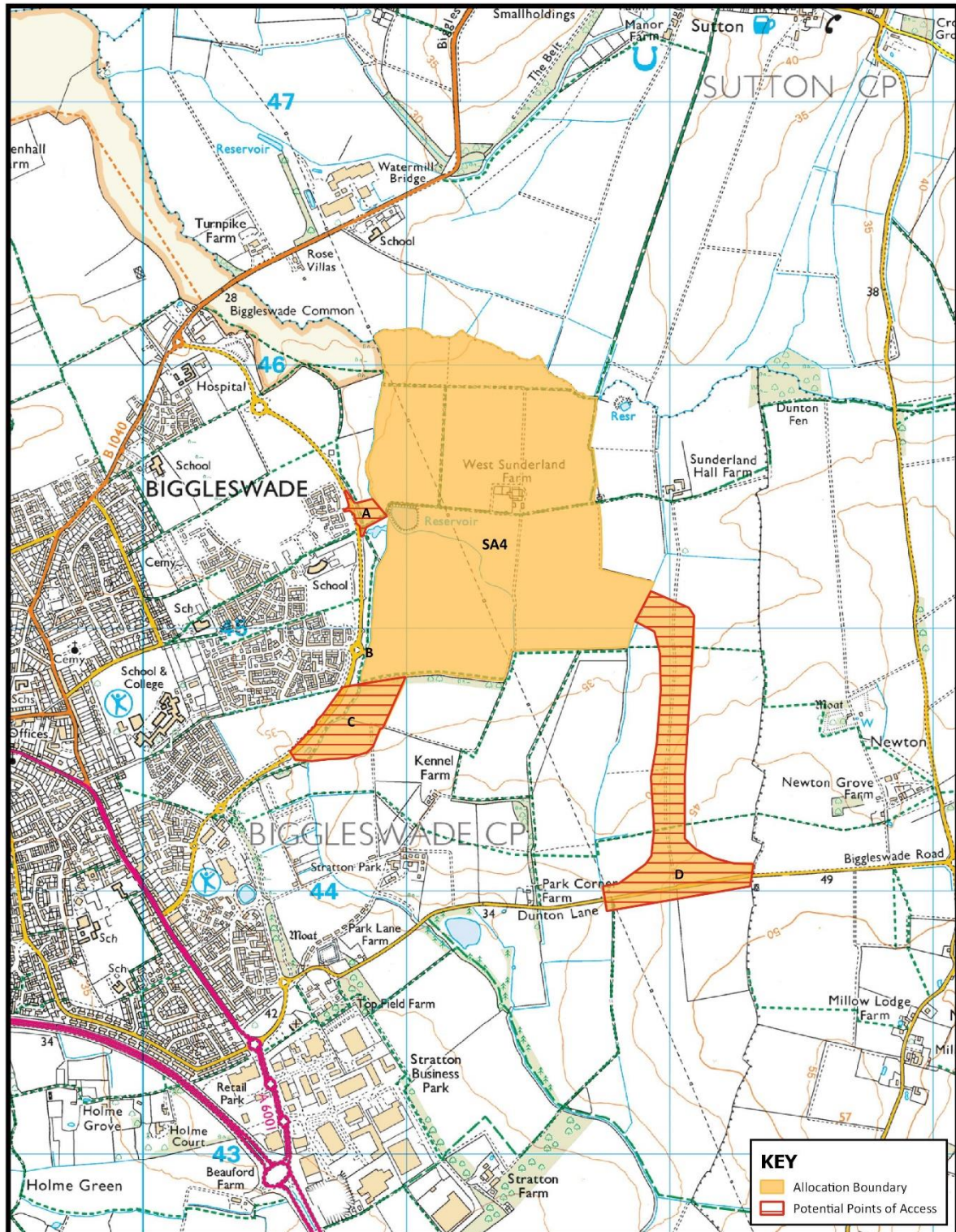
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9. The development will be designed to ensure that uses and developments within the site that are vulnerable to flood risk are located beyond areas of flood zones 2 and 3. Safe access and egress shall be provided taking into account flood risk at the site;
10. Subject to the findings of a site-specific flood risk assessment the development shall deliver strategic measures to reduce flood risk including the use of sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) to attenuate and discharge surface water run-off at least at a rate no greater than if the site were undeveloped and to reduce existing downstream risk;
11. The development will integrate and connect to existing public Rights of Way within and adjoining the site to provide routes to the wider countryside and neighbouring settlements. The development shall include pedestrian and cycleway connections to Biggleswade town centre including any highway crossings;
12. The development will be phased in accordance with the timing of supporting infrastructure and community facilities including the delivery of a comprehensive scheme of highway improvement works required to mitigate impacts on road and/or junction capacities;
13. The development will provide other supporting transport infrastructure, including proposals to mitigate the impact of traffic associated with the development, including providing for efficient public transport routes and contribution towards public transport services through the development that link with key destinations including Biggleswade train station and Biggleswade town centre;
14. The Transport Assessment will additionally need to consider the cumulative impacts of planned development in northern Hertfordshire and identify any required mitigation measures. Appropriate contributions will be secured through legal agreements in accordance with Policy HQ2;
15. Foul drainage from the development shall be connected to the mains sewerage network. The development shall demonstrate that there is adequate capacity in water recycling centre (sewage treatment works) and the foul sewerage network to serve the proposed development and that it will not have an adverse impact on surface or ground water in terms of quality and quantity. Any application for planning permission shall detail any infrastructure upgrades where required and any necessary phasing arrangements as agreed by the relevant Water and Sewerage Company;
16. The development will provide appropriate landscaping measures to create a sense of place, provide a net gain for biodiversity and shall mitigate the potential impact of development on the wider landscape; and
17. The development will incorporate measures to adapt to climate change, minimise energy use and include renewable energy technologies in accordance with policies CC1, CC2, CC3 and CC5, and any other relevant policies in the Plan.

## SA4: East of Biggleswade Garden Community

Policy SA4

East of Biggleswade Garden Community



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Central Bedfordshire Local Plan

## 7.9 Small and Medium Allocations

### Policy HA1: Small and Medium Allocations

Sites identified on the Policies Maps at Appendix 6 and listed in the table below are allocated for residential development.

In addition to the general policy requirements of this Local Plan, development of these sites must take full account of the site-specific issues which are identified and set out on a site-by-site basis where relevant.

Site Ref.	Site Name	Area	Parish	Approx. Density	Approx. Capacity	Site Area (ha)
HAS01	Land adjoining Lewis Lane	A1 Corridor	Arlesey	30	67	2.81
Additional Policy Requirements		- As there is a single point of access for both sites, development must consider the relationship with site HAS02.				
HAS02	Land r/o 214-216 High Street	A1 Corridor	Arlesey	30	20	0.61
Additional Policy Requirements		- As there is a single point of access for both sites, development must consider the relationship with site HAS01.				
HAS05	Land East of Barton-le-Clay	South	Barton-le-Clay	30	498	27.80
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provision of a Development Brief in accordance with HQ9.</li> <li>- A site-specific FRA.</li> <li>- A site should be provided to allow the delivery of a new 2FE lower/primary school with appropriate contributions.</li> <li>- Provide appropriate mitigation/compensation, to ensure potential indirect impacts, such as increased visitor pressure on the nearby Barton Hills NNR/SSSI are avoided or if this is not possible, mitigated.</li> <li>- Provide appropriate landscape mitigation, in terms of scale and character to protect the setting to and views from Chiltern's AONB. An LVIA will be required to inform the Development Brief.</li> <li>- Must be integrated with a treed landscape setting to conserve landscape character and views.</li> </ul>				

Site Ref.	Site Name	Area	Parish	Approx. Density	Approx. Capacity	Site Area (ha)
HAS06	Land North of Biggleswade	A1 Corridor	Biggleswade	40	401	16.71
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Must include appropriate landscape mitigation and GI enhancements north and north east of the site, to protect the landscape and setting of Biggleswade Common and Greensand Ridge escarpment, to create a softer edge to the development.</li> <li>- Provision of a Development Brief in accordance with HQ9.</li> <li>- A site-specific FRA.</li> <li>- Need to make an appropriate contribution towards necessary improvements to the level crossing, if required by Network Rail or other relevant authorities.</li> <li>- Site is within an MSA, a Minerals Resource Assessment will be required.</li> </ul>				
HAS07	Caddington Park	South	Caddington	50	66	1.66
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Landscape mitigation required to reduce impact from elevated views and setting to Chilterns AONB.</li> </ul>				
HAS08	Land South East of Greenway	Central	Campton & Chicksands	30	66	3.67
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Landscape buffer required to southern and eastern site boundaries to mitigate impact on rural setting and views.</li> <li>- Roadside trees and verge must be retained and enhanced, where possible, to safeguard village character.</li> </ul>				
HAS10	New Road	Central	Clifton	40	54	2.25
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- None</li> </ul>				
HAS11	East End Farm	East-West	Cranfield	30	48	3.89
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Must be integrated within a treed landscape setting, and linked to enhancement of existing woodland, to conserve landscape character and views.</li> <li>- Design of the site must be sensitive to the topography of the site particularly in the south-eastern corner.</li> </ul>				
HAS12	Land West of Lodge Road	East-West	Cranfield	From Planning App.	15	0.59
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Existing trees with Tree Preservation Orders must be protected.</li> </ul>				
HAS13	Land North of Greenfield Way	A1 Corridor	Dunton	30	37	2.07
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Site design to incorporate landscape buffering and green infrastructure on the western and northern boundary.</li> </ul>				

Site Ref.	Site Name	Area	Parish	Approx. Density	Approx. Capacity	Site Area (ha)
HAS14	Land off Eaton Park	South	Eaton Bray	30	49	2.69
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A site-specific FRA.</li> <li>- Must demonstrate the impact of development on the setting of Grade II listed Moor End Farmhouse in terms of significance has been considered and assessed. Where appropriate, applications should show how negative impacts will be avoided or mitigated through detailed design, landscaping and/or other measures.</li> <li>- Built form must be set back from north-eastern/south-eastern site boundaries with a landscape mitigation of appropriate scale and character to rural edges to protect countryside views to the site.</li> <li>- Existing hedgerows should be retained and enhanced as part of landscape mitigation.</li> </ul>				
HAS15	Green Lane	A1 Corridor	Everton	30	23	0.96
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Site design must ensure the existing boundary features are conserved.</li> <li>- Must include provision for the expansion of Everton Heath Primary School.</li> <li>- Site is within an MSA, a Minerals Resource Assessment will be required.</li> </ul>				
HAS16	Land at Manor Farm	A1 Corridor	Everton	30	19	0.81
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Must demonstrate the impact of development on the setting of Grade II listed Manor Farmhouse in terms of significance has been considered and assessed. Where appropriate, applications should show how negative impacts will be avoided or mitigated through detailed design, landscaping and/or other measures.</li> <li>- Landscape screening required to integrate open boundaries and enhance to the road frontage.</li> </ul>				
HAS17	Steppingley Road	South	Flitwick	40	216	9.00
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Woodland buffer required to north-western and south-western site boundaries to protect open countryside views. This should be of a similar nature to the existing woodland to the south-eastern boundary of the site.</li> <li>- Due to the sites proximity to Flitwick Wood, particular regard must be paid to Policy EE3: Nature Conservation.</li> <li>- Site is within an MSA, a Minerals Resource Assessment will be required.</li> </ul>				
HAS18	Land adjacent to Flitwick Garden Allotments	South	Flitwick	40	35	1.08
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explore opportunities for access through adjoining committed developments to achieve better quality design</li> <li>- A site-specific FRA.</li> </ul>				
HAS19	Land at Upper Gravenhurst	Central	Gravenhurst	30	39	1.62
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Landscape buffer required to southern site boundary to mitigate impact on rural setting and views.</li> </ul>				

Site Ref.	Site Name	Area	Parish	Approx. Density	Approx. Capacity	Site Area (ha)
HAS20	Land West of Midland Mainline Railway	South	Harlington	40	435	18.14
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provision of a Development Brief in accordance with HQ9.</li> <li>- A landscape buffer, incorporating appropriate tree planting, required to reinforce site boundaries and of an appropriate scale and character to create a new landscape edge to the settlement and form a defensible Green Belt boundary.</li> <li>- Adequate and effective landscape mitigation required across the site to integrate development within views, including any built form on rising ground and up to the eastern site boundary/railway corridor.</li> <li>- Noise mitigation to address railway.</li> <li>- A site-specific FRA.</li> <li>- A site should be provided to allow the delivery of a new 2FE primary school with appropriate contributions. It is expected that the school will operate as a 'lower tier' school in the first instance but must be capable of operating as a primary school, should this be required in the future.</li> <li>- Off-site contributions to the Newgrounds Sports Field, in accordance with the Leisure Strategy, in lieu of onsite provision.</li> <li>- Improvements to the transport network must be made to enable safe access into the site, and particularly the school, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improvements to footway provision along Toddington Road, including the railway bridge;</li> <li>- The provision of safe pedestrian crossings and traffic calming measures on Toddington Road;</li> <li>- Pedestrian and cycle access improvements on Westoning Road;</li> <li>- Traffic calming along Westoning Road; and</li> <li>- The provision of appropriate parking in close proximity to the school.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>				
HAS21	Land West of Sundon Road	South	Harlington	40	154	6.39
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Landscape buffer required to southern site boundary. Design must be complementary to the AONB setting.</li> <li>- Noise mitigation to address railway.</li> <li>- Existing hedgerows should be retained, buffered and enhanced.</li> <li>- A site-specific FRA.</li> </ul>				
HAS22	Land South of Northwood End Road	Central	Haynes	30	29	1.21
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Landscape mitigation required to the south and west, boundary hedgerows to the south to be strengthened.</li> <li>- Appropriate landscape mitigation will be required to conserve the setting of Hill Farm and the Greensand Ridge path.</li> </ul>				

Site Ref.	Site Name	Area	Parish	Approx. Density	Approx. Capacity	Site Area (ha)
HAS23	Land adjacent to Derwent Lower School	Central	Henlow	30	101	5.59
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Noise mitigation will be required for the road.</li> <li>- Landscape buffering required along rural edge.</li> <li>- A site-specific FRA.</li> <li>- Must include provision for the expansion of Derwent Lower School</li> <li>- Due to the nature of neighbouring land uses, all development proposals for this site must have regard to the prevention of major accidents and limiting their consequences, including the increase of vehicular movements on the A600.</li> </ul>				
HAS25	Land at Leighton Road	South	Hockliffe	30	14	0.99
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Landscaping will need to screen and have regard to the nearby Scheduled Monument to the north.</li> <li>- Noise mitigation will be required for nearby road.</li> <li>- Developers will need to undertake a site-specific FRA which will inform the design and layout of the site including any mitigation.</li> </ul>				
HAS26	A5 Watling Street	South	Hockliffe	30	27	1.74
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Landscaping will need to be sensitive to nearby listed buildings and the setting of the Scheduled Monument.</li> <li>- Must include provision for the expansion of Hockliffe Lower School.</li> <li>- Noise mitigation will be required for nearby road.</li> <li>- Developers will need to undertake a site-specific FRA which will inform the design and layout of the site including any mitigation.</li> </ul>				
HAS27	Wixams Southern Extension	East-West	Houghton Conquest	From Planning App.	650	68.00
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Site must have regard to the adopted Wixams masterplan.</li> <li>- A site-specific FRA.</li> <li>- Site is within an MSA, a Minerals Resource Assessment will be required.</li> <li>- Potential for combined impact pressure on Kings Wood and Glebe Meadows, Houghton Conquest SSSI, with nearby proposed development. Any proposals will need to consider the potential for cumulative impacts and the provision of appropriate and proportionate mitigation which may include the preparation of a joint mitigation strategy, as required.</li> </ul>				
HAS28	Bidwell Gospel Hall	South	Houghton Regis	40	25	0.78
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Existing trees with TPOs must be protected.</li> </ul>				



Site Ref.	Site Name	Area	Parish	Approx. Density	Approx. Capacity	Site Area (ha)
HAS29	Land East of Houghton Regis	South	Houghton Regis	40	355	14.80
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provision of a Development Brief in accordance with HQ9.</li> <li>- Must incorporate access to HRN1.</li> <li>- A site-specific FRA.</li> </ul>				
HAS30	Thistle Hill Field	A1 Corridor	Langford	30	70	3.94
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Design will need to be complementary to adjoining allocation and work with adjacent site developers to ensure the Right of Way to the east of the site is enhanced.</li> </ul>				
HAS31	Bridge Field	A1 Corridor	Langford	30	67	3.70
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Design will need to be complementary to adjoining allocation and work with adjacent site developers to ensure the Right of Way to the west of the site is enhanced.</li> <li>- Landscaping and noise mitigation will be required for the railway edge.</li> </ul>				
HAS32	Northern Chamberlains Barn	South	Leighton Linlade	40	175	16.00
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A site-specific FRA.</li> <li>- Strategic landscape mitigation required; this must have regard to with the adopted Framework Plan for East of Leighton Buzzard.</li> </ul>				
HAS33	Land North of Soulbury Road	South	Leighton Linlade	40	55	1.73
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Site is within MSA, a Minerals Resource Assessment will be required.</li> <li>- Landscape buffers required to northern and western site boundaries.</li> <li>- Due to the sites proximity to Linlade Wood, particular regard must be paid to Policy EE3: Nature Conservation.</li> </ul>				
HAS34	The Chiltern-Hunt Land	South	Leighton Linlade	40	138	5.74
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strategic landscape mitigation required; this must have regard to the adopted Framework Plan for East of Leighton Buzzard.</li> <li>- Site design to incorporate buffering and enhance the existing woodland.</li> </ul>				
HAS35	Wood End Lane	East-West	Marston Moreteyne	30	63	3.51
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Site is within an MSA, a Minerals Resource Assessment will be required.</li> <li>- As this site is within the Forest of Marston Vale, particular regard must be paid to Policy EE9: The Forest of Marston Vale.</li> </ul>				

Site Ref.	Site Name	Area	Parish	Approx. Density	Approx. Capacity	Site Area (ha)
HAS36	Land North of Clophill Road	Central	Maulden	30	25	0.74
Additional Policy Requirements		- Protection and enhancement of Maulden Wood required, including buffering.				
HAS37	Land between 129A & 131 Clophill Road	Central	Maulden	From Planning App.	21	0.70
Additional Policy Requirements		- Protection and enhancement of Maulden Wood required, including buffering.				
HAS38	Land fronting Silsoe Road	Central	Maulden	30	39	2.37
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A site-specific FRA.</li> <li>- Site is within an MSA, a Minerals Resource Assessment will be required.</li> <li>- Landscape mitigation required of appropriate scale and in keeping with the distinct landscape character of the Flit Valley to integrate development within the rural setting and protect views from open countryside to the west.</li> </ul>				
HAS39	Land at 32 Shefford Road	Central	Meppershall	30	55	3.04
Additional Policy Requirements		- A site-specific FRA.				
HAS40	Land adjacent to Park Road/ Bedford Road	Central	Moggerhanger	30	30	1.45
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The site lies within the wider setting of a Registered Park and Garden. Development should demonstrate that the impact on significance of development in the setting of Moggerhanger Park has been considered and assessed. Where appropriate, applications should show how negative impact on significance has been avoided, or will be mitigated through detailed design, landscaping and/or other measures.</li> <li>- Landscape mitigation required to provide a buffer to the open landscape to the south respecting the distinct character of Park Road.</li> </ul>				
HAS41	Land at Thorncote Field	Central	Northill	30	21	0.86
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A site-specific FRA.</li> <li>- Development proposals should demonstrate that the setting of Grade II listed No. 39&amp;41 and 43 Thorncote Road has been considered and assessed. Where appropriate, applications should show how negative impact on significance has been avoided or will be mitigated through detailed design, landscaping and/or other measures.</li> </ul>				

Site Ref.	Site Name	Area	Parish	Approx. Density	Approx. Capacity	Site Area (ha)
HAS42	The Pound, Upper Caldecote	Central	Northill	30	33	1.74
Additional Policy Requirements		- Landscape scheme required to provide a buffer to open countryside to the north and west.				
HAS43	One Acre Field, Sandy Road	A1 Corridor	Potton	30	12	0.44
Additional Policy Requirements		- Site is within an MSA, a Minerals Resource Assessment will be required.				
HAS44	Line Field	Central	Shefford	30	72	9.20
Additional Policy Requirements		- A site should be provided to allow the delivery of a new 2FE lower/primary school unless the need is met elsewhere in Shefford. Appropriate contributions will also be required.				
HAS45	Land South & East of High Road	Central	Shillington	30	15	0.63
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Landscaping scheme required to provide a buffer of an appropriate scale and character to the eastern and southern site boundaries to protect important open countryside views.</li> <li>- Existing landscape/planting features along High Road to be retained and enhanced to provide buffer to Conservation Area.</li> </ul>				
HAS46	Land r/o Station Road	Central	Stondon	30	244	11.65
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Landscape buffering required along northern edge.</li> <li>- A site-specific FRA.</li> <li>- Due to the nature of neighbouring land uses, all development proposals for this site must have regard to the prevention of major accidents and limiting their consequences, including the increase of vehicular movements on the A600.</li> </ul>				
HAS47	Land off The Pastures	Central	Stondon	30	33	1.37
Additional Policy Requirements		- Due to the nature of neighbouring land uses, all development proposals for this site must have regard to the prevention of major accidents and limiting their consequences, including the increase of vehicular movements on the A600.				

Site Ref.	Site Name	Area	Parish	Approx. Density	Approx. Capacity	Site Area (ha)
HAS48	Land South of High Street	A1 Corridor	Sutton	30	24	1.01
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A site-specific FRA.</li> <li>- Development should demonstrate that the impact on significance of development in the settings of Grade II 37 High Street and Grade II 29-35 High Street listed buildings have been considered and assessed. Where appropriate, applications should show how negative impact on significance has been avoided or will be mitigated through detailed design, landscaping and/or other measures.</li> <li>- Immediately adjacent to the southern border of the site is a traditional orchard, a Habitat of Principle Importance. Development must not have a negative impact on this asset and should seek to buffer it through careful landscaping.</li> <li>- Mature trees or hedges on the site should be protected and accommodated within the scheme.</li> </ul>				
HAS49	Land East of Leighton Road	South	Toddington	40	92	3.85
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A site-specific FRA.</li> <li>- Landscape mitigation including Green Infrastructure enhancement required to south-western site boundary to integrate development and create new landscaped settlement edge.</li> </ul>				
HAS50	Alma Farm	South	Toddington	40	159	6.61
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Landscaping required to western and southern site boundaries to integrate development within wider rural setting and green infrastructure.</li> </ul>				
HAS51	Land off Flitwick Road	South	Westoning	30	135	7.51
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Noise mitigation to address railway.</li> <li>- Landscape mitigation of appropriate scale and character required to northern, western and eastern site boundaries to integrate development within wider rural setting, to mitigate views and create a new landscaped settlement edge.</li> </ul>				
HAS52	West View Farm	South	Westoning	30	85	4.74
Additional Policy Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Noise mitigation to address railway.</li> <li>- Landscape mitigation required to southern site boundary to integrate development edge.</li> <li>- A site-specific FRA.</li> </ul>				

## 7.10 Delivery of Strategic Commitments

7.10.1 Houghton Regis North Sites 1 and 2 are existing strategic commitments. The following policies provide a site-specific policy framework to inform decision making on future planning applications. Other relevant policies within this Local Plan will also apply.

### Houghton Regis North Sites 1 and 2 Strategic Commitment

7.10.2 Houghton Regis North is a major urban extension on the northern side of Houghton Regis between the A5 and the M1 junction 11a, which will be delivered across two sites. Site 1 comprises the eastern side of the strategic commitment extending from the M1 to the A5120, whilst Site 2 is located to the east of the A5 to the A5120. The A5-M1 strategic link road provides the northern boundary for both sites.

7.10.3 A figure of around 7,000 new homes could be accommodated; approximately 5,150 on Site 1 and approximately 1,850 on Site 2. Similarly, around 40 hectares of employment is planned for, 32ha of which is on Site 1 and 8ha is on Site 2.

7.10.4 On the 2nd June 2014 Central Bedfordshire Council granted outline planning permission for Site 1. This was comprised of: up to 5,150 dwellings (Use Class C3); up to 202,500 sqm gross of additional development in Use Classes: A1, A2, A3 (retail), A4 (public house), A5 (take away); B1, B2, B8 (offices, industrial and storage and distribution); C1 (hotel), C2 (care home), D1 and D2 (community and leisure); car showroom; data centre; petrol filling station; car parking; primary substation; energy centre; and for the laying out of the buildings; routes and open spaces within the development; and all associated works and operations including but not limited to: demolition; earthworks; engineering operations.

7.10.5 On the 18th November 2015 Central Bedfordshire Council granted a hybrid planning permission for Site 2 with details relating to the main access routes, primary road network and associated drainage and also comprises outline permission for: up to 1,850 dwellings (Use Class C3); 2FE Primary School (D1); employment land (Use Classes B1 [a-c], B2 and B8); local centre comprising retail (A1, A2, A3, A4 and A5); and community/leisure uses (D1 and D2); layout of public open spaces including sports pitches and changing rooms; natural wildlife areas and all associated works and operations including engineering operations and earthworks.

7.10.6 The above developments are supported by the recently completed new A5-M1 strategic link road and the Woodside link road. Sufficient land has been identified for removal from the Green Belt in order to accommodate the full development potential of the site and the new Green Belt boundary is aligned with the new A5-M1 link road.

7.10.7 The delivery of the commitment over two sites will allow a more detailed approach to phasing to be undertaken. The two sites will be fully integrated with each other as well as with the urban area of Houghton Regis so as to provide truly sustainable development. The timely delivery of supporting infrastructure will complement and enhance existing services and facilities as well as assisting in the regeneration of the existing urban area.

7.10.8 A Framework Plan has been prepared, encompassing both Sites 1 and 2. The purpose of the Framework Plan is to provide a broad structure of the essential supporting elements of the proposed Houghton Regis North development. This includes an identification of areas for residential development, employment land and associated infrastructure. The specific location of infrastructure and land uses will be developed through the production of site and area masterplans, alongside planning applications. The Council adopted the Framework Plan for Development Management purposes in October 2012.

### **Policy SC1: Houghton Regis North Sites 1 and 2 Strategic Commitment**

Houghton Regis North Sites 1 and 2 are identified on the Policies Map.

Any development proposals for land within these designated site areas shall have regard to the broad principles outlined within the Council's adopted Framework Plan for North Houghton Regis or the latest adopted amendment to that Framework Plan.

The Green Belt boundary follows the alignment of the A5-M1 Link Road.

Any planning applications for new residential or employment developments on any other land within the red line boundary of Sites 1 and 2 shall be considered on a case-by-case basis and will be required to demonstrate an integrated approach to development within the wider context of the site. Other relevant policies within the Local Plan will apply.

#### **Site 1**

Site 1 comprises the area between the A5120 and the M1. Planning applications will be permitted where they deliver a strategic development that:

1. Provides a mix of uses necessary to achieve a sustainable community. These will include:
  - a. Approximately 5,150 homes;
  - b. Up to 30% affordable homes, subject to viability testing;
  - c. 32 hectares of new employment land in a combination of B1, B2 and B8 Use Classes;
  - d. Commercial facilities, including local centres;
  - e. Retail units, a foodstore, and a public house;
  - f. Provision of early years, primary and secondary educational facilities;
  - g. Retirement accommodation;
  - h. Provision of community, leisure and health facilities; and
  - i. Open space and green infrastructure.
2. Provides opportunities to assist in the regeneration of Houghton Regis through the timely delivery of supporting infrastructure that complements and supports existing facilities;
3. Provides the opportunity for long term integration with Site 2 to facilitate the delivery of the wider strategic development for this area;

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4. Provides for efficient public transport routes that link with Houghton Regis town centre and the Luton and Dunstable Guided Busway as well as dedicated and safe pedestrian and cycle links from the new and existing neighbourhoods to local centres, employment opportunities and social and community infrastructure;
5. Provides a green infrastructure network that links, preserves and enhances biodiversity, landscape, heritage, access and open space features within the existing urban area, the strategic allocation and the wider countryside;
6. Designed to mitigate any harm caused to the significance of all designated heritage assets in the vicinity of the site. This is required in order to ensure that the public benefits of the development outweigh the any harm caused to the significance of all designated heritage assets affected by the development;
7. Designed to preserve all designated heritage assets within the site and shall seek to mitigate the degree of harm to the significance of all designated heritage assets and shall deliver where necessary, relevant and reasonable measures to preserve those assets and their settings for future generations, to ensure the public benefits of development would outweigh the degree of harm to the significance of designated heritage assets;
8. Seeks to reduce flood risk along the Houghton Brook and further downstream in Luton by engaging with the Environment Agency to explore practical opportunities that manage flood risk and minimise surface water runoff; and
9. Incorporates measures to adapt to climate change, minimise energy use, and include renewable energy technologies in accordance with policies CC1, CC2, CC3 and CC5, and any other relevant policies in the Plan.

**Site 2**

Site 2 comprises the area from the A5 to the A5120 and extends northwards to the proposed A5-M1 Link Road. Planning applications will be permitted where they deliver a strategic development that:

10. Provides a mix of uses necessary to achieve a sustainable community. These uses will include:
  - a. Approximately 1,850 homes;
  - b. Up to 30% affordable homes, subject to viability testing;
  - c. 8 hectares of new employment land in a combination of E(g), B2 and B8 Use Classes within the plan period;
  - d. Commercial facilities including a local centre;
  - e. Provision of early years, primary and secondary education facilities;
  - f. Provision for community and leisure facilities;
  - g. Open space and green infrastructure; and
  - h. Potential opportunities for the provision of health facilities.
11. Provides opportunities to assist in the regeneration of Houghton Regis, through the timely delivery of supporting infrastructure that complements and supports existing facilities;
12. Integrates with Site 1 to facilitate the delivery of the wider strategic development for this area;

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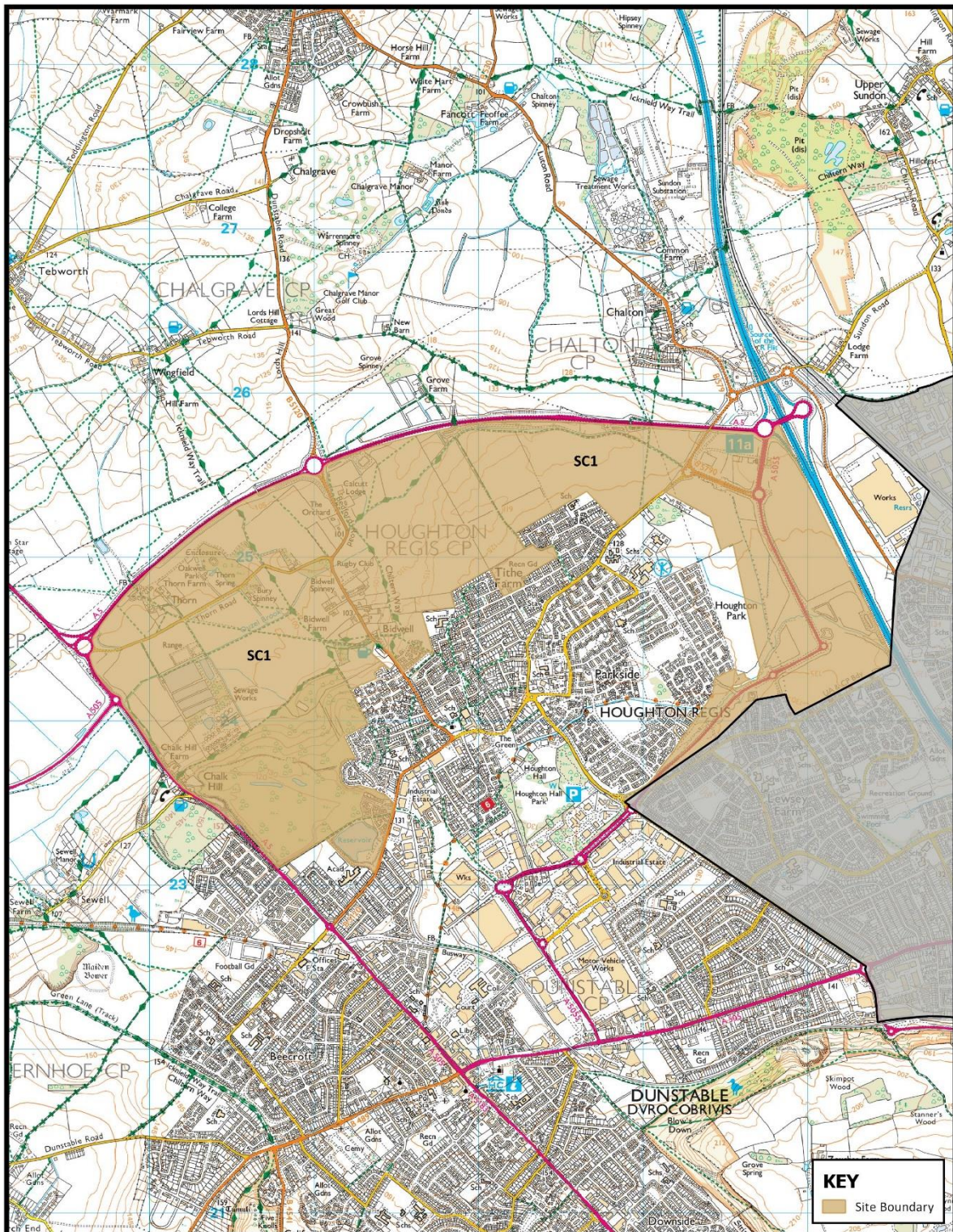
13. Provides for efficient public transport routes that link with Houghton Regis town centre and the Guided Busway as well as dedicated and safe pedestrian and cycle links from the new and existing neighbourhoods to local centres, employment opportunities and community facilities;
14. Designed to mitigate any harm caused to the significance of all designated heritage assets in the vicinity of the site. This is required in order to ensure that the public benefits of the development outweigh any harm caused to the significance of all designated heritage assets affected by the development;
15. Designed to preserve all designated heritage assets within the site and shall seek to mitigate the degree of harm to the significance of all designated heritage assets and shall deliver where necessary, relevant and reasonable measures to preserve those assets and their settings for future generations, to ensure the public benefits of development would outweigh the degree of harm to the significance of designated heritage assets;
16. Incorporates measures for the management of multimodal access both within, to and from the site including the mechanisms for their future development and funding through the development of Travel Plans;
17. Provides a green infrastructure network that links, protects and enhances the existing urban area, the strategic allocation and the wider countryside. In addition contributions will be required to mitigate the impact of development on Houghton Regis Marl Lakes SSSI and Chalk Pit CWS and ensure its long term protection. A detailed ecological assessment which will determine any potential impacts as a result of increased access to the site and all phases will be required to provide an Ecological Enhancement Scheme. Contributions will be required to mitigate identified impacts of development on the whole site and ensure its long term protection;
18. Seeks to reduce flood risk along the Ouzel Brook by engaging with the Environment Agency to explore practical opportunities that manage flood risk and minimise surface water runoff; and
19. Incorporates measures to adapt to climate change, minimise energy use and includes renewable energy technologies in accordance with policies CC1, CC2, CC3 and CC5, and any other relevant policies in the Plan.



# SC1: Houghton Regis North Sites 1 and 2 Strategic Commitment

Policy SC1

Houghton Regis North



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 Central Bedfordshire Council



Central Bedfordshire Local Plan

## 8. Green Belt, Coalescence and Settlements

### 8.1 Introduction to Green Belt

8.1.1 Formally adopted in 1980, the Central Bedfordshire Green Belt extends across much of the south and covers approximately 40% of the total plan area. It continues to serve its purposes well, safeguarding the identity of Central Bedfordshire by maintaining the openness of the countryside, preventing the coalescence of Luton, Dunstable, Houghton Regis, Leighton Buzzard, Ampthill and Flitwick, and protecting the dispersed settlement pattern characteristic of the area. The Council is committed to ensuring that the Green Belt continues to perform well into the future, continuing to prevent the towns from coalescing and retaining its key characteristics of openness and permanence.

### 8.2 Green Belt and Sustainable Development - Exceptional Circumstances for Small Scale Release of Green Belt Land

8.2.1 Nonetheless, Green Belt must be considered in the context of the wider objectives of the Local Plan and the pursuit of sustainable development. The overall purpose of this Local Plan is to meet Central Bedfordshire's objectively assessed development needs sustainably.

8.2.2 The evidence underlying the Local Plan highlights the clear need for a substantial growth in housing within the plan area. As discussed elsewhere in this Plan the Council has also made an allowance for unmet need arising from the Luton Borough Council administrative area. In assessing spatial options to meet these development needs the Council has been guided by the principle of creating 'sustainable patterns of development' as set out in NPPF paragraph 84, and has considered a range of alternatives which do not impinge upon Green Belt. This has included consideration of whether development could be met in full beyond the Green Belt; within existing urban areas; and on brownfield sites or underused public sector land etc.

8.2.3 However, evidence produced in support of this Plan, notably the Growth Options Studies, Urban Capacity Study, the Sustainability Appraisal, the Site Assessment Technical Document and brownfield register, suggests that whilst some development can take place beyond the Green Belt and within the existing urban areas, the total amount of land available is well below that needed to meet the requirements of the Plan.

8.2.4 Evidence produced in support of this Plan demonstrates that locating all growth beyond the Green Belt would have serious consequences for the sustainability of settlements both within and outside the Green Belt. For example, overdevelopment in the north of Central Bedfordshire threatens the character and identity of existing communities, and risks putting excessive pressure on existing services and facilities, and harming habitats and landscape which surround them. In addition, large areas of north Central Bedfordshire lack transport infrastructure and there is limited east/west connectivity and sustainable transport. Conversely our Green Belt settlements have seen very

limited development in the past due to the presence of Green Belt, and it is considered that some growth is needed here in order to maintain their sustainability and ensure continued provision of services and facilities.

- 8.2.5 This Plan commits to delivering Luton's current identified 'unmet need'<sup>8</sup> within Central Bedfordshire as close to the Luton conurbation as possible. Luton cannot accommodate all of its own housing need within its administrative area because its boundaries are tightly drawn and so there are limited opportunities for outward expansion. Urban capacity evidence has demonstrated that they have explored opportunities for growth within the built-up area too. Consultation and evidence prepared to inform this Local Plan told us that growth in the south was supported because of the proximity to key services in the urban centres of Dunstable, Houghton Regis and Luton. Evidence also supports a more modest Green Belt release around Large Villages that are inset in the Green Belt, have a good level of local services and where sites are available that did not impact on the openness of the Green Belt.
- 8.2.6 Whilst we have considered ways in which we can maximise the sustainable development sites beyond the Green Belt, including through site layout and optimising densities, nevertheless, given the scale of growth it will be necessary for some release of land from the Green Belt in order to ensure the delivery of balanced sustainable growth across Central Bedfordshire as a whole. These are the 'exceptional circumstances' which the Council believe justify the limited release of some Green Belt land.

### 8.3 Green Belt Release

- 8.3.1 In order to accommodate the growth required up to 2035 in a sustainable and controlled manner, allocations in Green Belt have been identified and listed in Policy SP1, SE1 and Policy HA1. These are comprised of the North of Luton strategic allocation (c. 3,600 homes), Sundon Rail Freight Interchange (RFI) and a number of small and medium allocations to our inset Green Belt towns and villages (Policy HA1).
- 8.3.2 These villages are well-placed to make a contribution to meeting wider housing need and, in many cases; development could help to improve the sustainability of the villages. Green Belt release has been guided by the principle of creating 'sustainable patterns of development' as per NPPF paragraph 84<sup>9</sup>. This means that we have sought to identify the most sustainable locations for development, having regard to the overall integrity and performance of the wider Green Belt<sup>10</sup>.
- 8.3.3 Green Belt boundaries will be redrawn around these allocated sites, and other committed sites; Land North of Houghton Regis and Land East of Leighton Buzzard, and that land formally released from Green Belt. The Council is confident that these new boundaries will be capable of enduring beyond the plan period.

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<sup>8</sup> Luton HMA Growth Options Study (ED C15)

<sup>9</sup> The Green Belt Topic Paper (ED C12) provides more detail on the Council's exceptional circumstances

<sup>10</sup> Informed by the Central Bedfordshire and Luton Green Belt Stage 1 and 2 Study (November 2016); and Central Bedfordshire Stage 3 Green Belt Study (December 2017)

## 8.4 Improvements to Green Belt Land

8.4.1 In addition to its role in preventing coalescence and urban sprawl etc., Green Belt land can also have a positive role to play in terms of environmental quality and access. It may, for example, provide access to open countryside and opportunities for quiet recreation and sport. Green Belt can also help retain valued landscapes and protect biodiversity and it provides many possibilities to protect and improve green infrastructure, especially in urban fringe locations. The Council is committed to improving the environmental quality and accessibility of its Green Belt, and will favourably consider development proposals that will actively improve the character and quality of our Green Belt.

## 8.5 Development in the Green Belt

8.5.1 Where Green Belt is retained, there is a general presumption against inappropriate development within the Green Belt. Inappropriate development<sup>11</sup> is harmful to the Green Belt by definition and should not be granted consent except in very special circumstances. Within the Green Belt (including those settlements washed over by Green Belt) the need to protect the character and openness of the landscape is a primary consideration and any development will be expected to maintain the character of the Green Belt and not undermine the reasons for including land within it. High standards of design and careful siting will therefore be essential for any development proposals.

8.5.2 Planning permission for inappropriate development will only be granted where demonstrable, very special circumstances which outweigh the harm to the Green Belt can be demonstrated as part of the application.

## 8.6 Development Within Green Belt Settlements

8.6.1 Green Belt settlements fall into two categories:

- ‘inset’; and
- ‘washed over’.

8.6.2 ‘Inset’ Green Belt settlements are excluded from the Green Belt and the inner Green Belt boundary acts as a Settlement Envelope. This means that within these settlements normal planning policy and Policy SP7 applies. The remaining settlements are ‘washed over’ by the Green Belt designation meaning that only the replacement of buildings and limited infill development will be allowed.

8.6.3 Infill development can generally be defined as small-scale development in a small gap in an otherwise built up frontage, utilising a plot in a manner which should continue to complement the surrounding pattern and grain of development. There should be no adverse impact on the setting of the site, the character of the area, and surrounding

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<sup>11</sup> Exceptions to the presumption are set out in NPPF para 89 which includes the redevelopment of brownfield land

properties and uses. High quality design principles will be applied and further detail is given in the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide.

8.6.4 Infill development will be acceptable only in circumstances where the developer can clearly demonstrate that such a development would be wholly in accordance with the surrounding character, pattern and grain of development, having regard to plot size, frontage length and dwelling size. Furthermore, it should be demonstrated that the development would not have an unacceptable impact on the open character of the site and its immediate surroundings and the village within which the site is located.

8.6.5 The table below sets out which settlements with the Green Belt are washed over or inset.

**Table 8.1: Status of Central Bedfordshire Green Belt Settlements**

Washed Over Settlements	
Aspley Heath	Billington
Chalton	East Hyde
Eggington	Eversholt
Husborne Crawley	Kensworth
Milton Bryan	Ridgmont
Stanbridge	Steppingley
Streatley	Studham
Tebworth	Tilsworth
Totternhoe	Upper Sundon
Whipsnade	Wingfield
Woburn*	
Inset Settlements	
Amphill	Barton-le-Clay
Caddington	Dunstable
Eaton Bray	Flitwick
Harlington	Heath & Reach
Hockliffe	Houghton Regis

Leighton Linlade	Toddington
Slip End	Westoning
<b>Inset and Washed Over Settlements*</b>	
Aspley Guise	
* These are settlements that are washed over by the Green Belt except for certain areas of significant built development	

## 8.7 Affordable Housing in the Green Belt

8.7.1 Within the Green Belt, as elsewhere in the area, there is a shortage of affordable housing. This can have a disproportionate effect on rural communities as many young people and families cannot afford to stay because decent homes are either too expensive or simply unavailable. This, in turn, can lead to a fall-off in demand for local services such as schools and public transport and the disappearance of local jobs, shops and public houses. Ultimately, some places risk becoming dormitory settlements with very little sense of community life. The supply of affordable housing is therefore seen as important, not just in order to provide homes for those in greatest need, but to help keep balanced communities. There is a need for affordable housing in the Green Belt settlements and the Council will consider favourably the provision of affordable housing on rural exception sites in the Green Belt.

### Policy SP4: Development in the Green Belt

The Green Belt is shown on the policy maps and generally covers the southern and western parts of Central Bedfordshire, outside the main settlements.

The Council will work proactively with developers, and landowners to enhance the beneficial uses of the Green Belt.

Within the Green Belt there is a general presumption against inappropriate development. Development proposals within the Green Belt will be assessed in accordance with government guidance contained in the NPPF and NPPG.

Within this Plan's washed-over Green Belt settlements, applicants will be expected to pay particular attention to the quality and design of development proposed, to ensure that development respects and is sympathetic to the character and openness of the settlement and its surroundings.

The redevelopment of brownfield sites within the Green Belt will be acceptable as long as the redevelopment would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt or the purposes for including land within the Green Belt than the existing development.

## 8.8 Coalescence

8.8.1 The Council seeks to preserve the separate identities of neighbouring settlements or communities. Coalescence represents the physical or visual merging of these settlements or communities in ways that harm their character and identity. The Council will resist development, including residential, employment and commercial, which would compromise the open character of the countryside that lies between settlements. This is especially relevant where the gaps between them are already limited. It is acknowledged that in some cases, whilst neighbouring communities may still have separate characters or identities, the built-up areas of those settlements are already linked, as in the case of Clifton and Shefford. The Council will resist new development that would result in further coalescence and harm to the separate character or identity of settlements that have already merged. This is expressed in Policy SP5.

8.8.2 Some settlements include 'ends' where areas of built development are physically separated from the main core of the settlement but still remain part of its identity, such as with Aspley End in Shillington. Each of these 'ends' has their own character and in these locations, the Council will resist development that would result in the coalescence of these ends.

## 8.9 Important Countryside Gaps

8.9.1 Important Countryside Gaps are areas of undeveloped countryside outside of the Green Belt, where there is a particular risk of coalescence and a potential loss of settlement identity as a result of development pressure (See Appendix 5 for locations). It is considered essential that the open nature of the countryside within these gaps is maintained in order to retain the character of these settlements and prevent the loss of their individual identity.

8.9.2 It is considered that in some instances, incremental built development, which may otherwise be appropriate to a rural area, could also cause the separate identity of settlements to be eroded or lost entirely. Proposals for all new development will therefore be assessed against their potential to cause coalescence between existing settlements, between 'ends' within a settlement and where development has the potential to cause coalescence as a result of cross boundary proposals. Three categories of Important Countryside Gap have therefore been determined. These are:

- Land where development has the potential to cause coalescence between existing settlements;
- Land where development has the potential to cause the coalescence of 'ends' within a settlement; and
- Land where development has the potential to cause coalescence as a result of cross boundary proposals.

8.9.3 Important Countryside Gaps have not been identified in relation to the Strategic Allocations because the potential for coalescence will be mitigated through the masterplanning process.

8.9.4 Within the areas defined as 'Important Countryside Gaps' or where there is a risk of coalescence, the Council will apply the following policy.

**Policy SP5: Important Countryside Gaps and Preventing Coalescence**

Within the areas defined as Important Countryside Gaps, new development will be permitted provided that it does not result in the physical or visual coalescence of settlements or settlement 'ends' and would not undermine the separate character, appearance and/or identity of settlements.

In considering applications for development outside Important Countryside Gaps, the Council will also have regard to maintaining the individual identity of towns, villages and settlement 'ends'. Proposals will only be permitted where they would not result in physical or visual coalescence, or, where it can be demonstrated that appropriate mitigation would prevent any harm arising from coalescence or to the character and appearance of the settlement.



# 9. Settlement Envelopes & Settlement Hierarchy

## 9.1 Settlement Envelopes & Settlement Hierarchy

9.1.1 To help inform where new development should take place, it is helpful to set out a hierarchy of settlements. The hierarchy takes account of local sustainability credentials such as access to a variety of services and facilities (including schools, shops and public transport links) and is based on existing provision.

9.1.2 The hierarchy, set out on the following page helps to provide a framework for considering the levels of new development to be directed through the Development Management process. It will also help to set the context for decisions on individual planning applications, and should be read in conjunction with Policy SP7: Development within Settlement Envelopes.

9.1.3 There are four tiers included in the Settlement Hierarchy - Major Service Centres, Minor Service Centres, Large Villages, and Small Villages.

### Settlement Hierarchy

<b>Major Service Centres</b>	
Major service centres are larger settlements with a highly diverse range in services and facilities, including schools, healthcare, varied retail offerings and a strong availability of public transport.	
Amphill*	Houghton Regis*
Biggleswade	Leighton Linlade*
Dunstable*	Sandy
Flitwick*	Wixams
<b>Minor Service Centres</b>	
Minor service centres are larger settlements with some diversity in the range of services and facilities available, possibly including a school, doctor’s surgery, a basic retail offer and frequent public transport links.	
Arlesey	Potton
Barton-le-Clay*	Shefford
Caddington	Stotfold
Cranfield	Toddington*
Harlington*	

## Large Villages

Large villages contain a small quantum of services and facilities, with fewer public transport links.

Aspley Guise*	Langford
Blunham	Lower Stondon
Clifton	Marston Moreteyne
Clophill (inc. Hall End Maulden)	Maulden
Eaton Bray*	Shillington
Fairfield	Silsoe
Haynes	Slip End*
Heath & Reach*	Totternhoe*
Henlow	Upper Caldecote
Hockliffe	Westoning*
Houghton Conquest	Woburn*
Kensworth*	

## Small Villages

Small villages contain few services and facilities and are limited in their availability of public transport links.

Aspley Heath*	Lidlington	Stanbridge*
Billington*	Maulden (Green End)	Stanford
Brogborough	Meppershall	Steppingley*
Broom	Millbrook	Streatley*
Campton	Milton Bryan*	Studham*
Chalton*	Moggerhanger	Sutton
Dunton	Northill	Tebworth*
East Hyde	Old Warden	Tempsford (Church End)
Eggington*	Pulloxhill	Tilsworth*
Eversholt	Ridgmont*	Upper Gravenhurst

Everton	Salford	Upper Sundon*
Flitton, Greenfield & Wardhedges	Shillington (Aspley End)	Whipsnade
Husborne Crawley*	Shillington (Bury End)	Wingfield*
Ickwell	Southill	Wrestlingworth
Settlements not identified within the hierarchy are, due to their small size and rural character, considered to be part of the countryside.		
<i>Settlements that are identified with an * are located within the Green Belt. See Section 8.6: Development within Green Belt Settlements for more detailed classification of these settlements.</i>		

## 9.2 Settlement Envelopes

9.2.1 To define the boundaries between settlements and surrounding countryside, where appropriate, the Council has defined Settlement Envelopes. Settlement Envelopes provide a distinction between the settlements and the open countryside, and in so doing enable the clear, unambiguous and consistent application of policies in the management of development within and outside settlements. They also encourage the efficient use of land within our towns and villages, including the re-use of previously developed land. Within the Green Belt, settlements fall into two categories – those which are ‘washed over’ by the designation, and those which are ‘inset’ from the Green Belt. For clarity, the inset Green Belt boundary performs the role of Settlement Envelopes for those settlements considered inset, whereas washed over settlements do not have such boundaries. One settlement, Aspley Guise, is ‘washed over’ by and is ‘inset’ from the Green Belt.

9.2.2 A small number of settlements include areas of residential development that are physically separated from the main core of the settlement, these areas are known locally as Settlement Ends. These Settlement Ends do not share the same characteristics as the substantial settlement of which, by name, they form a part, often being further from facilities and services and taking the form of a small village in their own right. As such, the Settlement Ends are individually identified within the Settlement Hierarchy as ‘Small Villages’ and have their own Settlement Envelope.

### Infill Development

9.2.3 Infill development will be acceptable in circumstances where the developer can clearly demonstrate that such a development would be wholly in accordance with the surrounding character, pattern and grain of development, having regard to plot size, frontage length and dwelling size; and that the development would have an acceptable impact on the open character of the site and its immediate surroundings and the village within which the site is located.

### Windfall Development

9.2.4 Windfall development sites are sites not specifically identified in the Local Plan. The Settlement Envelopes will be used to determine where windfall development is

appropriate. Within Settlement Envelopes, new residential development will be acceptable in principle where it is commensurate with the size, scale, role and function of the settlement where it is located. Proposals for non-residential uses will be considered against relevant Local Plan policies, including EMP3, EMP4, EE13, HQ3, HQ4 and DC4. Local Plan allocations have been included in the Settlement Envelope boundaries.

### **Policy SP7: Windfall Development**

Settlement Envelopes provide a distinction between settlements and the countryside.

Within the Settlement Envelopes the Council 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.

Within Settlement Envelopes of Small Villages, development will be limited to infill development, small-scale employment uses and community facilities.

Where an identified need exists for further community facilities (such as education, health, sports and recreation uses or mixed community uses) and there is no land available within the settlement, a site adjacent to the settlement may be granted planning permission. Such development should make the best use of available land and lead to more sustainable communities.

Outside Settlement Envelopes, the Council will recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and only particular types of development will be permitted. This includes the development of those sites allocated by this Development Plan, rural exception schemes, dwellings for the essential needs of rural workers and the re-use and replacement of existing buildings in accordance with Policies H5, DC1, DC2 or DC3. planning permission will also be granted for the redevelopment of previously developed land where the proposal does not cause the coalescence of settlements when considered against Policy SP5, the site is, or can be made, accessible to nearby services and facilities by sustainable modes of transport, there will be no detrimental impact on the built and/or natural environment, settlement character, highway network or the amenity of occupiers of neighbouring properties and where the proposal does not prejudice the deliverability of allocated sites.

Proposals for employment, tourism, leisure, rural and community uses will also be considered favourably subject to their conformity with Policies EMP3, EMP4, EE13, HQ3, HQ4 and DC4.

Limited extensions to gardens beyond Settlement Envelopes may be permitted provided that they do not harm the character of the area.

## 10. Planning for Gypsies and Travellers

10.1.1 National planning policy<sup>12</sup> requires all local planning authorities to assess the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers (G&T) alongside the settled population, and develop a strategy that addresses any unmet need that is identified.

### 10.2 The Planning Definition of Gypsy and Traveller

10.2.1 For the purposes of planning, the definition of gypsies and travellers was changed in the revised 2015 Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS). The key change to the definition was the removal of the term '*persons....who have ceased to travel permanently*' meaning that those who have stopped travelling no longer fall under the planning definition of a Traveller in terms of assessing their needs for accommodation.

10.2.2 The definition of travelling has been considered through case law and it is the understanding of the Central Bedfordshire study that the implication of these rulings in terms of applying the new definition is that it will only include those who travel (or have ceased to travel temporarily) for work purposes and in doing so stay away from their usual place of residence. As a result of the change in the definition, the need within Central Bedfordshire has reduced by 43% since the previous assessment was undertaken in 2014.

10.2.3 At the time of writing the PPTS is still relatively recent, has not been tested through the Local Plan process and only a small number of relevant appeal decisions have been issued by the Planning Inspectorate as to how the new definition should be applied. Whilst the latter support the view that households need to be able to demonstrate that they travel for work purposes to meet the new definition and stay away from their usual place of residence when doing so, once the new definition has been tested, there is the possibility that it could change, or further guidance issued as to how the new definition is implemented. The need identified for Central Bedfordshire is therefore potentially subject to change.

### 10.3 Gypsy & Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Needs

10.3.1 Local Plans are required to set pitch<sup>13</sup> targets for Gypsy and Travellers and plot<sup>14</sup> targets for Travelling Showpeople which addresses the likely accommodation needs in the area, based on local evidence. The Plan is required to:

- Identify a five-year supply of specific deliverable sites and other, developable sites to accommodate growth for years 6-10 and where possible 11-15;

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<sup>12</sup> The Housing and Planning Act, 2016; Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS), 2015; National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2012; and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), 2014.

<sup>13</sup> See glossary

<sup>14</sup> See glossary

- Ensure the number of pitches and plots, in conjunction with any existing provision, reflects the size and location of a site, and the size of the surrounding population; and
- Protect local amenity and the environment.

10.3.2 Accordingly, the Council commissioned consultants ORS to prepare a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) which forecasts Central Bedfordshire's G&T accommodation needs for the plan period 2015 to 2035. The GTAA has identified the number of pitches needed to 2035 and outlined important observations on the specific needs of the Gypsy and Traveller community in Central Bedfordshire, which have been considered in preparing this Local Plan.

10.3.3 The GTAA identifies that 29 pitches will be required up to 2035 to meet identified needs. The Council's monitoring data shows it has already exceeded this figure and that a five-year supply can be maintained over the plan period. On this basis it is not necessary to allocate land within this Local Plan for additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches. Where there is no identified need for Gypsy and Traveller pitches, the PPTS states that criteria-based policies should be included in Local Plans against which applications will be tested. Future windfall planning applications will be determined against Policy H7: Assessing Planning Applications for Gypsy and Traveller sites, and other relevant policies in this Plan.

10.3.4 With regard to Travelling Showpeople, it has been identified that there is a need for 22 plots across Central Bedfordshire to 2035. The Council's monitoring data shows it has almost achieved this figure. The remaining identified need will be met through appropriate windfall planning applications, and the Council is confident that it can maintain a five-year supply over the Local Plan period. As with Gypsy and Traveller pitches, where there is no identified need for Travelling Showpeople plots, criteria-based policies should be included in Local Plans against which applications will be tested. Future windfall applications will be determined against Policy H8: Assessing Planning Applications for Travelling Showpeople Sites and other relevant policies in this Plan.

### Policy SP8: Gypsy and Traveller, and Travelling Showpeople Pitch Requirement

#### Gypsy and Travellers

The Council has already approved a sufficient number of pitches to meet the Gypsy and Traveller accommodation need in Central Bedfordshire over the period 2015 - 2035.

Windfall Applications will be determined against Policy H7, and other relevant policies in this Plan.

#### Travelling Showpeople

The Council will facilitate the delivery of up to 22 plots to meet the need of travelling showpeople in Central Bedfordshire over the period 2015 - 2035.

Windfall Applications will be determined against Policy H8 and other relevant policies in this Plan.

# 11. Housing

## 11.1 Housing Mix

11.1.1 An appropriate and inclusive housing mix contributes to well-designed places that produce strong community cohesion and cater for a diverse range of household needs. This emphasises the importance of achieving a suitable housing mix as part of this Local Plan.

11.1.2 The main evidence base underpinning a good mix of housing will predominantly be based on the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2017. The SHMA explores the housing types, sizes, mix and tenure types needed in Central Bedfordshire, and forecasts the housing requirements for the period up to 2035. It takes into consideration population forecasts, births, deaths and migration to indicate the household need, and will highlight growth in particular groups such as the elderly and first-time buyers and self-builders. This information will form the basis of ensuring that an appropriate mix and volume of housing is achieved.

11.1.3 As a practical guide to ensuring an appropriate housing mix, the SHMA (2017) should be used unless an alternative can be demonstrated to be more appropriate. The SHMA calculates the amounts of homes the Council should be delivering by tenure, size and property type. When these figures are expressed as a percentages it serves as a guide for housebuilders and partners when determining the housing mix for a site.

11.1.4 The Council would encourage applicants to contact the Council's Strategic Housing Team at an early stage in the planning process. Additional consideration should be given to site location, context and relevance to the following evidence bases, which may result in an alternative mix being considered appropriate:

- Local Housing Market analysis;
- Waiting List Information;
- Use of housing needs assessment;
- Population projections;
- Housing Market Gap Analysis;
- Regard for the under-supply and loss of bungalows;
- Current housing market conditions;
- Existing housing mix in the locality; and
- Self and Custom Build register data.

11.1.5 Within the mix of housing, the Council need to ensure that development provides good quality housing; a variety of homes including, flats, bungalows, and family housing for all parts of the community. It is also important to ensure that homes are built to a good standard with particular attention given to well insulated and ventilated homes with adequate room, space and light.

11.1.6 The housing mix set out in the Plan has been informed by the amount of homes required to meet the Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) for both market and affordable housing within the area. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) sets out the

evidence base which supports the OAN. This assessment of need within the SHMA states that 32,000 dwellings are required in the new plan period 2015-2035, this amounts to 1,684.

11.1.7 Affordable housing can be delivered in many forms, including affordable rented accommodation and shared ownership.

11.1.8 Aside from affordable housing, other alternatives are available to help individuals access homeownership such as Right to Buy or the Help to Buy; Equity Loan scheme which has been extremely popular in the last few years within Central Bedfordshire.

### Housing requirements

11.1.9 The information from the SHMA supports a requirement for smaller homes for people to downsize into. This is particularly relevant as the implications of the Spare Room Subsidy means that many working age families have to downsize. There is still a need for family sized homes, for growing families, as demographic information from the SHMA identifies that as children grow they need their own room and space.

11.1.10 There is a need similarly for younger households, particularly first-time buyers who find it difficult to access the housing market at open market values. Smaller properties at the entry-level end of the market are needed to meet this specific demand. Housing options for younger people will include purchasing an affordable unit such as starter homes or a shared ownership property at first. Smaller units are also required for older people to downsize into – freeing up larger family homes.

11.1.11 An appropriate housing mix will need to have regard for people with specific care needs, e.g. learning disabilities and other vulnerable groups, such as Gypsies and Travellers (i.e. those that do not meet the PPTS definition) care leavers and homeless families. Properties need to be well designed, in good locations and easily adapted to suit individual's care needs.

### Empty Homes

11.1.12 Central Bedfordshire has approximately 1,200 empty homes which is only a small proportion of the housing stock and is around 1.5% of the total number of houses. However, some of these properties have been empty for many years, and through effective stock management, these empty homes could potentially provide much needed housing for several families.

11.1.13 The Council intends to continue to take a pro-active approach to bringing empty properties back into use in order to maximise housing delivery, which can be viewed in the Housing Strategy 2016-21.



### Policy H1: Housing Mix

All major\* developments for new dwellings must include a mix of housing types and sizes in order to meet the needs of all sections of the community, to encourage sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities in accordance with the housing mix set out within the SHMA, or other more up-to-date evidence, where appropriate. Other small-scale development will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Proposals should be accompanied by up-to-date evidence which demonstrates how the development meets these needs using the Council's Strategic Housing Market Assessment unless an alternative approach can be demonstrated to be more appropriate, for example where proven to be necessary due to viability constraints.

Dwellings should be delivered in various forms of tenure types, e.g. shared ownership, outright purchase, leasehold possibilities, affordable/private rented and other form of intermediate tenures and in accordance with Policy H4: Affordable Housing.

*\*As defined by Development Management Procedure Order 2010*

## 11.2 Housing Standards Review

11.2.1 The Council will adhere to the most up to date Government Legislation and new planning guidance to determine the appropriate housing standards to be applied within Central Bedfordshire. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is clear that local planning authorities should plan to create safe, accessible environments and promote inclusion and community cohesion. This includes buildings and their surrounding spaces. Local planning authorities should take account of evidence that demonstrates a clear need for housing for people with specific housing needs and it should plan to meet this need.

### Space standards

11.2.2 Where a local planning authority wishes to apply an internal space standard, they should only do so by reference to the Nationally Described Space Standard within their Local Plan. The Nationally Described Space Standard (NDSS) is the published guidance recommended from the Government's Housing Standards review. Central Bedfordshire Council will endorse the use of the Nationally Described Space standards, as prescribed by Central Government.

11.2.3 The Housing Standards Review stated that all new properties should be built to Category 1 standards as Part M of Building Regulations. Whilst this is a good basic standard of building and offers good design, it does not promote flexible or adaptable design.

11.2.4 Local planning authorities have the option to set additional technical requirements exceeding the minimum standards required by Building Regulations in respect of access. Local planning authorities will need to gather evidence to determine whether there is a need for additional standards in their area and justify setting appropriate policies in their Local Plans.

## Disabilities

- 11.2.5 The Council spent £2.132m on Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) in 2015/16. This was primarily for level access shower/wet room adaptations but also other minor adaptations. It is inevitably more costly to retrospectively fit adaptations into existing properties rather than design them into new build properties; hence the £2.1m spend on DFG on existing housing stock. The expenditure on DFG's would have been avoided if there was a good supply of flexible and adaptable homes within new delivery. As such, the Council has built an evidence base of DFG expenditure requirement for Category 2 homes in the future. Planning conditions will require the applicant to submit a scheme which details location and percentage of Cat2 as well as tenure and dwelling mix as part of a planning application in order to secure Category 2 M4 (2) dwellings on all applications.
- 11.2.6 Information from the Projecting Adult Needs and Service Information (PANSI) states that currently 13,159 people between the age of 16-64 years have a moderate physical disability and a further 3,930 people have a severe physical disability. This is set to increase to 14,518 people with a moderate disability and 4,433 people with a severe physical disability by 2030.
- 11.2.7 Category 3 M4 (3) is fully wheelchair accessible homes that specifically caters to the needs of occupants who have severe, physical mobility issues. These incorporate more extensive design requirements. The Council will analyse the need for both wheelchair accessible and wheelchair adaptable homes, bearing in-mind the projected 4,433 people that will have a severe physical disability by 2030.
- 11.2.8 This analysis of need will form the basis for individual site negotiations as a direct response to need. In requiring wheelchair accessible homes from all future development; the Council will be targeted, strategic and opportunistic about how it negotiates for wheelchair accessible homes.
- 11.2.9 The emphasis will be on an evidence-led approach which uses internal knowledge of applicants on the housing register that have a physical disability to target delivery on future new build development.

## Learning Disabilities

- 11.2.10 People with learning disabilities have the same aspirations as any other person's requirements for appropriate, accessible housing. Many people with learning disabilities do live at home until carers (parents) are deceased or the carers are no longer able to care for them. Some people come through the adult care system sooner for many different reasons and will often require help with basic life skills.
- 11.2.11 Central Bedfordshire is forecasting a rise in its learning disability population. The increase includes those people with severe learning disabilities and those presenting with challenging behaviour.
- 11.2.12 In 2017 the total population predicated to have a learning disability between the age of 18 – 64 is 4,134 and this is expected to increase by 539 people in 2035 a 11.5% increase. Older people from 65 years with a moderate to severe learning disability is predicted to increase from 143 people in 2017 up to 220 in 2035 a 35% increase.

11.2.13 People with a learning disability should have choice about where they live and who they live with. There is growing evidence to support that inappropriate housing arrangements increase the likelihood of people presenting with behaviours described as challenging, which can lead to placement breakdown and an avoidable admission into hospital. There is an expected 10% increase in the number of people with challenging behaviour from 2017 – 2035.

11.2.14 An increase in the housing options for people with learning disabilities and/or autism will enable people to access the right home and support at the right time and increase people's ability to live as independently as possible. Housing options should be based on individual need and be an integral component of person centered care and support. Everyone should either be offered their own tenancy in settled accommodation or to own their own home.

11.2.15 Supported living is becoming the preferred model of accommodation, care and support and it is where an individual's support and housing needs are built around them rather than fitting an individual into a service. It is enabling people to live life with the same choices, rights and responsibilities as other citizens. Models of supported living vary; people may have their own property within a wider development for other people who need support with some schemes offering communal living space as well. The environment could also offer a blend of services that can safely manage risks for more complex individuals living in a community setting. Accommodation for people with a learning disability and/or autism should feel well integrated within the local community, with good access to transport links, local amenities and services. As there is a limited supply of settled accommodation options available, the Council will encourage developers to come forward and bring innovative ideas in accommodating individuals with learning disabilities. All possibilities will be considered.

### Policy H2: Housing Standards

Internal space standards for all residential development will be applied to all dwelling types and tenures, including flats in accordance with the Nationally Described Space Standards.

In requiring adaptable and accessible homes from all future developments; the Council will:

1. Require all new build dwellings to deliver at least 35% Category 2 Requirement MA (2) adaptable homes (or any new or revised regulations that revoke or modify the Building Regulations); and
2. Require all new build dwellings to deliver at least 5% Category 3, Requirement M4 (3) wheelchair adaptable homes (or any new or revised regulations that revoke or modify the Building Regulations).

## 11.3 Supporting an Ageing Population

11.3.1 The demographics of Central Bedfordshire are no different from the current demographics of England, whereby there is an increase growth of people over 65+ and a further noticeable growth of the 85+. This rise becomes even more significant in the 85+ age range where the population of people is set to rise by over two- and-a-half times from 5,400 in 2015 to 13,700 by 2035. Besides the growth of the older population, residents of Central Bedfordshire have a longer life expectancy than the national average, ranging from 84 years for women to 81 years for men. (The UK Quality of Life Index – rates Central Bedfordshire 13th best place to live in the UK 2015). With later life comes increasing ill health and disability and the prevalence of health problems and frailty increases sharply in later old age. This can lead to complex and challenging care needs, and therefore requiring specialist care.

11.3.2 Central Bedfordshire is a relatively affluent area where the majority of older residents (76.9%) own their home. Of the remainder 17.0% rent from a social landlord, 3.6% privately rent and 2.5% live rent free. Research shows that older people prefer to retain the same tenure arrangement if they move. (ORS - Assessment of the Housing Needs of Older People in Central Bedfordshire March 2017)

11.3.3 As there is a lack of suitable accommodation options for older people in Central Bedfordshire Council, and the Council would like to work with the market to deliver the following:

- Mainstream homes designed for older people;
- Housing-with-care and housing-with-support schemes to meet local needs; and
- Care homes that meet modern standards and customer expectations, providing an attractive living environment as well as high quality care.

11.3.4 There is only 2% of housing that is aimed at older people and there is a need for appropriate housing for older people, and as the population grows older, there is a further demand for care and support needs. This is supported by evidence provided in the ORS report, whereby mainly older people are now relying on having support and care needs provided from external companies.

11.3.5 Providing suitable accommodation for older people is a key requirement because it provides an attractive option to encourage older people to downsize and free-up larger properties which are more suitable for families; therefore making an efficient use of current housing stock.

11.3.6 In the last ten years there has been significant research undertaken into the needs and aspirations of older people<sup>15</sup>. Emerging from them is the concept of 'downsizing' - the phenomenon of older people moving from their existing homes to smaller properties that better suit their needs thus releasing larger homes back into the pool of available housing. The need for smaller units is essential due to the particular growth of the over 65 population in Central Bedfordshire. There needs to be a mix of 1 and particularly 2 beds to cater for the older population, in the form of bungalows, mobility homes standards, possibly flatted maisonettes and other mainstream housing. As well as

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<sup>15</sup> Future of an Ageing Population; HAPPI 1, HAPPI 2 & HAPPI 3; Designing with Downsizers

various house types, a good housing mix will also incorporate various housing tenure options such as outright purchased properties, shared ownership and other available options.

- 11.3.7 There is a particular need to retain bungalows for older people, as this is one of the preferred accommodation types for people who are ageing yet want to retain a high level of independence. However, there has been a noticeable loss of these units due to existing bungalows being converted into two-storey family homes. This places an additional requirement on future new supply to compensate for the backlog of chronic under-delivery and loss of existing bungalows.
- 11.3.8 Central Bedfordshire wants more bungalows and level access homes, such as ground floor apartments and apartments with appropriate lifts to cater for people with mobility issues. However, in the last few years a number of bungalows have been demolished and replaced with two-storey family homes; therefore losing ideal homes for older people with specific needs. The authority area has seen over 19 bungalows lost in the last 3 years (2013-16 financial years) but the broader housing development market has not looked at replacing them. The ORS report also states that the need for bungalows is greatly the preferred type of accommodation for older people, however this is causing issues with affordability. The result is that during the period to 2035 there will be a demonstrable need for at least 9,050 new dwellings to be suitable for older people wishing or needing to downsize. This represents 23% of the Planned housing growth during that period.
- 11.3.9 There is demand and many people do wish to downsize to these types of properties, but older people feel that the affordability of such a unit is too costly, and therefore do not move.
- 11.3.10 Sites within existing settlements (especially those close to town centres) can be ideal for specialist housing schemes and this option should be explored before alternative uses are permitted. Downsizers have a strong preference to retain their tenure type when downsizing. In Central Bedfordshire 80% of people over 65 are owner-occupiers and this should be reflected in the tenure mix of schemes. Intermediate tenancies (shared ownership) are considered to be a downsizer option for owner-occupiers who may lack the means to access similar accommodation on the open market.
- 11.3.11 Therefore to support our ageing population, suitable and appropriate accommodation for older persons should be part of the overall inclusive housing mix. The Council would want to see developers provide housing for older people as part of their development schemes, in the form of bungalows and low-level maisonettes.

### Policy H3: Housing for Older People

All development proposals for 100 dwellings or more will be required to provide bungalows, level-access accommodation or low-density flats for older people as part of the mix of housing required by Policy H1, unless an alternative approach can be demonstrated to be more suitable having regard to site suitability or viability constraints.

On larger sites of 300 units or more, the provision of an Extra Care Facility will be required, unless an alternative approach can be demonstrated to be more suitable having regard to site suitability or viability constraints. Extra care schemes will be restricted by S106 to ensure that the occupants are those in need of care and support in perpetuity.

## 11.4 Affordable Housing

11.4.1 The NPPF sets out the Government's clear intention to provide good quality affordable housing for all. This forms part of a wider agenda to create sustainable, mixed and integrated communities.

11.4.2 The case for affordable housing is well documented both nationally and particularly within Central Bedfordshire. For example, Land Registry information highlights how the average house price within Central Bedfordshire has risen over the years rising to £270,546 as at April 2016. When this is coupled with the fact that the average household earnings have not risen in line with house prices, this gives a stark depiction of just how serious the problem is. Further evidence will be contained in the Housing topic paper.

11.4.3 Based on the results of the SHMA, this Local Plan requires that 30% of all units from qualifying sites will be for affordable housing. As part of the affordable housing requirement the SHMA outlines the Council's tenure requirements. Qualifying sites will be expected to provide 73% affordable rent and 27% intermediate tenure. For clarity, the revised NPPF (2019) includes Starter homes within the definition of intermediate tenures. This policy, together with the rural exceptions policy, should help to meet the affordable housing needs within Central Bedfordshire.

### Viability Testing Framework (LP)

11.4.4 The viability of each site will continue to be considered on a case-by-case basis and will be discussed with the applicant. The emphasis of these discussions will be to enable a viable degree of affordable housing on site.

11.4.5 The applicant will be expected to provide comprehensive supporting information to enable the Council to make an informed decision on the financial viability of the proposed development scheme. This information will include, as a minimum, a detailed cost plan and specification together with properly analysed evidence justifying proposed sales values and a detailed valuation of existing use value. The information will be assessed by the Council advised by an independent assessor as and when required, and the applicant will be expected to pay the cost of this assessment.

- 11.4.6 If a scheme is approved on the basis of a robustly evidenced affordable housing offer which is below policy requirements, the S106 agreement will include provision for a re-appraisal of viability. The purpose of this viability review will be to seek a future uplift in affordable housing provision.
- 11.4.7 Applicants should expect that a restriction on occupation of an appropriate number of market units to reflect the policy shortfall will be required to secure any further contribution from the assessment process. The applicant will be required to submit detailed evidence to the Council on an open book basis of the actual costs expended and values generated by the scheme and, where viability has improved, the applicant will be expected to make further affordable housing provision up to the maximum policy shortfall. This further affordable provision will be sought in accordance with the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan.
- 11.4.8 In order to secure delivery and provide mixed new communities, the Council has a preference for affordable housing delivery on-site. However, there may be specific circumstances relating to appropriateness of location, where a commuted sum towards off-site provision may be considered in lieu of part of the 30% requirement to complement the on-site affordable housing provision. The formal mechanisms required to secure off-site contributions will be detailed in standard clauses in the Council's S106 agreement.
- 11.4.9 Commuted sums are calculated on the basis of 50% of the open market value for each unit in question. If the policy compliant commuted sum cannot be achieved a viability assessment will be required to determine the sum.

#### Policy H4: Affordable Housing

All qualifying sites of 10 or more units will provide 30% affordable housing. The affordable housing from qualifying sites should be provided on-site.

Off-site financial contributions will only be considered where evidence is provided to confirm that on-site provision is not viable or that off-site contributions are more appropriate. This evidence must be agreed by the Council prior to independent verification. In such cases, a financial contribution will be calculated assuming 50% of the open market value of each dwelling in question.

The affordable homes should meet all of the following requirements:

1. Provide 72% affordable rent and 28% intermediate tenure or have regard to the most up-to-date SHMA\*;
2. Affordable units should be dispersed throughout the site and integrated with the market housing to promote community cohesion & tenure blindness;
3. Large clusters of affordable units should be avoided and will be considered at the design stage and determined on a case-by-case basis;
4. Affordable units to meet all nationally described space standards, in accordance with H2: Housing Standards;
5. Where policy compliant affordable housing cannot be achieved, viability will determine affordable housing provision on a case-by-case basis; and
6. Quality and design of the affordable homes must be of an equally high standard to that of the private units on site.

*\* This proportion may change in accordance with the most up to date version of the SHMA, in which event the new revised proportions will be applied.*

### 11.5 Rural Exception Sites

11.5.1 Central Bedfordshire contains a number of small settlements which are rural in character. Typically, because of their attractive rural location and character, house prices in these villages are relatively high in comparison to the more urban areas. This often makes it difficult for some households to purchase or privately rent properties within the villages.

11.5.2 Historically there has been a shortfall in the delivery of affordable housing within these rural areas, partly due to the limited opportunity for in-fill developments within these villages. Rural exception sites – sites outside of the Settlement Envelope used for affordable housing have been the most efficient way of providing affordable housing for rural communities to date. With the implications of the NPPG restricting affordable contributions on sites of 10 or less dwellings, rural exception sites are becoming more critical for the delivery of affordable housing in the rural communities of Central Bedfordshire.

11.5.3 In addition, there is also a need for additional affordable housing provision around the larger settlements. While development opportunities are greater here, so is the level of



affordable housing need. The policy below therefore enables exception sites to be brought forward around the larger settlements.

- 11.5.4 Whilst Neighbourhood Planning could potentially bring forward a degree of affordable housing, the continued delivery of exception sites will form a key part of affordable housing delivery. To help increase the delivery from exception sites, a limited number of open market dwellings can be provided if a rural exception scheme is not viable as 100% affordable. The Council will allow for up to 20% market housing on exception schemes if viability issues are demonstrated.
- 11.5.5 A careful balance must be struck in terms of having regard for a settlement's character and settlement boundaries whilst being mindful of the need to meet an identified local housing need from that settlement. The use of sites which relate well to the settlement boundary go some way to achieving this balance.
- 11.5.6 The underlying purpose of an exception site is to meet the identified housing needs of local people. It is designed to accommodate households local to the settlement in accordance with the Council's adopted Local Lettings Policy. It is envisaged that the supply of exception sites will provide a means for people who would ordinarily not be able to afford to live within that settlement to remain within their local community.
- 11.5.7 A pre-requisite of any household being eligible for these properties will be that they have a demonstrable housing need and a strong local connection to the Parish in question. The housing need will be evidenced by the household being registered with the Council, Registered Provider or alternative affordable housing provider.
- 11.5.8 A local housing needs' survey will be conducted within the settlement to evidence the level of demand for affordable housing. It will identify the number of affordable homes, the tenure and size of the property needed. The housing needs survey can be conducted by any independent, accountable body but it must present its findings within a clear report to the Council. It is suggested that the Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) would be an appropriate body to conduct such surveys. The identified housing needs and requirements will form the evidence base upon which the Council, landowners, Registered Providers, house builders and the Town or Parish Council will work-up plans for the exception site.
- 11.5.9 The sites in rural areas will usually be limited to 10 dwellings in order to preserve the character of the settlement. However, if a housing needs' survey supports a demand for more than 10 dwellings and it can be demonstrated that a larger development will not have an adverse effect on the character of the settlement, larger sites may be considered.
- 11.5.10 The exception site will be subject to a S106 agreement which will set out that the affordable properties must remain as affordable housing in perpetuity. A householder for a shared ownership property will be able to buy additional equity shares of their property. This will be restricted to a maximum of 80% equity share of the property meaning the property is not completely owned outright by the householder and remains as affordable in perpetuity.
- 11.5.11 Any re-sale of shared ownership properties will go to a household in housing need as directed by the Council's Local Lettings Policy in regard to the procedure for shared

ownership. The S106 agreement will also ensure the appropriate phasing of the affordable and open market dwellings.

11.5.12 The overall aim of the policy overleaf is to provide high quality affordable homes for local people in housing need.

#### **Policy H5: Rural Exception Sites**

Proposals for the development of Rural Exception Sites outside of the Green Belt will be permitted where:

1. They are designed to meet identified affordable housing need. Local needs must be identified and evidenced through a housing needs survey, conducted by an independent body;
2. They will provide affordable homes that will remain as affordable in perpetuity via a S106 legal agreement or Unilateral Undertaking;
3. They provide only a limited number of market dwellings expressly for the sole purpose of making the scheme financially viable. This will be subject to site specific viability testing and be limited to up to 20% of the total dwellings;
4. They are allocated in accordance with the Council's adopted Local Lettings Policy;
5. They deliver small scale development – usually limited to 10 dwellings in order to preserve the character of the settlement. However, if a housing needs' survey supports, a demand for more than 10 dwellings and it can be demonstrated that a larger development will not have an adverse effect on the character of the settlement, larger sites may be considered;
6. They will deliver a mix of tenures to be made available to meet the identified need from the housing needs survey; and
7. The site is situated outside the existing settlement boundary but relates well to the existing pattern of development and is in keeping with the surrounding character.

In the case of shared ownership, stair-casing or purchasing additional equity shares will be restricted to 80% of the properties open market value. This will ensure the property remains as affordable in perpetuity.

## 11.6 Self-Build and Custom Housing

11.6.1 The Self-Build & Custom Housebuilding Act (2015) (as amended) places a duty on local authorities to:

- Keep a register of people and groups interested in acquiring serviced plots to build their own homes;
- Have a regard to their register as a material consideration in planning decisions, and;
- To meet the demand for self-build and custom housebuilding in the Council's area within statutory time limits.

11.6.2 Self-Build and Custom Housing (SBCH) is housing built or commissioned by individuals or groups of individuals for their own occupation. A serviced plot is defined by the Act as a plot of land that has access to a public highway and has connections for electricity, water and waste water, or can be provided with those things in specified circumstances or a specified period. These definitions may be amended by future legislation and guidance from the Government. The main difference between Self-Build and Custom Build is as follows:

### Self-Build

Self-build projects are defined as those where someone directly organises the design and construction of their own home. This covers a wide range of projects from a traditional DIY self-build home to projects where the self-builder commissions a company to build their home to their specification for them. Community-led projects can also be defined as self-build.

### Custom Build

Custom build homes are where an individual or group works with a developer to deliver customised or bespoke homes. The developer may secure the plot, manage the construction of an external shell and then work with the individual to tailor the external design and internal layout to match the individual's requirements.

11.6.3 The Council operates its own Self & Custom Build Register (the register) which determines the local level of demand for serviced plots. To fulfil this demand, the Council will look to support applications for the delivery of serviced plots on suitable sites.

11.6.4 This policy sets out requirements for the delivery of serviced plots to support self and custom house building and does not set requirements for the building of dwellings by individuals on plots other than serviced plots.

### Serviced Plots Delivery

11.6.5 The Council recognises that there is a growing interest from people to influence the design and specification and even to build their own home. The Council also recognises the potential of SBCH to increase delivery of new build homes in the local area.

- 11.6.6 The national Ipsos Mori survey in 2015 showed that 53% of the adult population in the UK would like to build their own home at some stage of their lives and 14% were researching or planning on building it in the next 12 months.
- 11.6.7 For the period 2011 to 2016, only around 40 new houses a year were built as a single house on single plots of land in Central Bedfordshire. The data from the Council's own register indicates that the demand is much higher, with 150 people registered in the first year of its operation alone. The National Custom and Self Build Association cite finding a suitable plot of land as the biggest barrier to self and custom housebuilding.
- 11.6.8 To address the issue of a shortage of land, the Council will work with local partners, such as local agents and landowners, to grant suitable planning permissions in order to provide enough serviced plots to meet the local demand (as demonstrated by the register and supplementary information sources such as the Custom and Self Build Study) and help self and custom builders realise their ambitions of building their own home. The Council will support delivery of serviced plots on sites suitable for residential development within Settlement Envelopes. Delivery of serviced plots outside Settlement Envelopes will only be supported where it enables delivery of affordable housing on rural exception sites (please see Rural Exception Sites Policy).
- 11.6.9 Sites allocated in the Local Plan will be expected to deliver a minimum of 10% of the planned dwellings as serviced plots for self and custom builders. The number of plots to be delivered on each site will be determined on a case-by-case basis at the time of application, reflecting the demand demonstrated on the register and by supplementary information at that time.

#### Legal Agreement

- 11.6.10 To ensure the delivery of serviced plots to self and custom builders the Council will require developers to enter into a S106 agreement that will cover issues including timescales and phasing of plots delivery, appropriate marketing of plots to self and custom builders and length of time after which unsold plots will be returned to the developer.
- 11.6.11 All serviced plots will be required to have, or have been provided, within a specified period; access to a public highway and connection to electricity, water, and waste water as minimum required by the legislation; and gas where the gas network is present in the area and a connection is viable.

#### Meeting Housing Needs

- 11.6.12 While the Council is supportive of proposals for self and custom build projects, it is important that these applications do not compromise the ability of the Council to meet housing needs. Therefore, all applications for delivery of serviced plots must comply with all housing and other policies as set out in this Plan.

### Policy H6: Self-Build and Custom Housing

Development proposals for sites of 10 or more dwellings (excluding schemes for 100% flats or conversions) will be required to deliver a minimum of 10% of the sites dwelling capacity as serviced plots for SBCH. These plots will be counted towards market housing delivery and will be subject to viability considerations.

Where plots have been made available and appropriately marketed for at least 12 months (or an alternative timescale agreed with the Council subject to specific site delivery timescales), and have not been sold, the plot(s) may either remain on the market or be built out by the developer.

Where development is phased, the SBCH requirement should be determined at each phase and delivered on a defined parcel of land, allowing SBCH delivery alongside traditional developer-led housing. The market response at each phase can inform the decision about delivery on subsequent phases. The delivery of SBCH within each phase will be expected to be policy compliant unless there is clear market indication of lower demand.

The Council will encourage applications for the delivery of serviced plots for SBCH on sites of fewer than 10 dwellings.

## 11.7 Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Sites

11.7.1 The pitch and plot requirements for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople are set out in Strategic Policy SP8 at the head of this plan.

11.7.2 This establishes the need for those Gypsies, Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople which accord with the planning definition, as defined in Annex 1 of the revised 2015 Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS). However, the Council is also mindful of its duties under the Equality Act. In particular there may be travellers who no longer travel, and therefore no longer fall under the planning definition, but for whom the Council may still need to provide culturally suitable housing under the requirements of the Equality Act. Therefore, the following policies applies to all Gypsies, Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople.

11.7.3 New sites should be planned sensitively to take account of the needs of both the travelling and settled communities. Specific considerations include:

- The promotion of peaceful and integrated co-existence between the site and the local community;
- The wider benefits of easier access to Health Services;
- Access to local schools to enable Gypsy and Traveller children to attend school regularly;
- A settled base that reduces the need for long distance travelling, and the possible environmental damage caused by unauthorised encampments;

- Consideration of the effect of local environmental quality, such as noise or air quality, on the health and wellbeing of any Gypsy and Travellers or others as a result of the development;
- Access to local shops; and
- Access to local employment opportunities.

11.7.4 In order to benefit from access to facilities and services such as health and education, first preference should be given to sites that are located closer to existing settlements. Proposals for Gypsy and Traveller, and Travelling Showpeople sites, should be within reasonable travelling distance to these services. What constitutes a reasonable travelling distance will vary in relation to location of the site and services, and the local pattern of development. However, traditionally some Gypsy and Traveller families prefer to live in the countryside, on privately owned and managed sites. Such locations will be considered where they are constraint free, or where any constraints could be satisfactorily mitigated.

11.7.5 In addition to consideration of access to services, the effect on the landscape and on the living conditions of existing and future occupants of land and buildings is of particular importance. Proposals will be considered on their merits in the context of site size and location, and the characteristics of the surrounding area, together with proximity to other nearby traveller sites, to ensure that collectively, such sites do not dominate the nearest settled community. What constitutes the nearest settled community will vary in relation to location and the local pattern of development. This issue will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Planning permissions might restrict the size of sites and, where appropriate, recommend a “cap” on the number of people allowed to live on the site on a permanent basis or the number of caravans being stationed on a site.

### Policy H7: Assessing Planning Applications for Gypsy and Traveller Sites

Development proposals for sites for Gypsies and Travellers, including extensions to existing sites will be permitted where the following requirements, in addition to other relevant policies within this Plan, are met:

1. The scale of the site and the number of pitches would not dominate<sup>16</sup> the nearest settled community and would not place undue pressure on local infrastructure when the proposal is considered alone or in combination with other nearby traveller sites;
2. The character and appearance of the wider landscape is not detrimentally affected;
3. Provides a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;
4. Site design demonstrates that the pitches are of a sufficient size to accommodate trailers/caravans, parking, and storage and amenity space for the needs of the occupants;
5. Adequate schools, shops, healthcare, and other community facilities are within reasonable travelling distance;
6. Suitable arrangements can be made for drainage, sanitation and access to utilities; and
7. Proposals for mixed residential and business uses should have regard to the safety and amenity of the occupants and neighbouring residents.

## 11.8 Planning for Travelling Showpeople Sites

11.8.1 Travelling Showpeople's needs are distinct to the needs of the wider Gypsy and Traveller community:

- They do not share the same cultures or traditions as Gypsies and Travellers;
- Travelling Showpeople sites combine residential, storage and maintenance uses, and require secure permanent bases for the storage of their equipment; and
- Applications for Travelling Showpeople sites will be assessed against the criteria in Policy H7, and the specific criteria in Policy H8 overleaf.

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<sup>16</sup> See para 14, Policy C of the revised 2015 Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS)

### **Policy H8: Assessing Planning Applications for Travelling Showpeople Sites**

Sites for Travelling Showpeople, including extensions to existing sites will be subject to the following considerations in addition to other relevant policies within this Plan:

1. The criteria in Policy H7 are satisfactorily met;
2. Sufficient space is provided to accommodate the storage and maintenance of equipment;
3. Satisfactory and safe vehicular access to and from the public highway is provided both to allow maneuverability of living accommodation and equipment to the site and plot, and to ensure the safety of other road users with the use of traffic calming measures where appropriate; and
4. Proposals for mixed residential and business uses should have regard to the safety and amenity of the occupants and neighbouring residents.



## 12. Employment and Economy

### 12.1 Overview

- 12.1.1 Central Bedfordshire has a strong, high performing economy with record levels of employment growth which has been consistently delivered. Moving forward, it is expected that we will continue this strong economic performance reflecting national economic conditions and Central Bedfordshire's key role within the Oxford-Cambridge Arc.
- 12.1.2 The 2019 Central Bedfordshire Economic Insight (CBEI) identifies that there are a significant number of active enterprises (over 13,000) within Central Bedfordshire. The CBEI identifies that in 2018, the stock of enterprises in Central Bedfordshire grew at a rate that mirrored the national average. Within this, the number of small and medium sized enterprises grew quickly in Central Bedfordshire (+24.5% and +47.8% between 2010 and 2018 respectively). We have a dynamic and diverse economy with key sector strengths in High Performance Technology, Research and Development; Transport and Logistics; the Visitor Economy and Agriculture and Food. Our strategic location and excellent transport links as well as our high quality natural and historic environment support a growing economy.
- 12.1.3 The area is home to world leading companies such as Rockwell Collins, Lockheed Martin, Nissan Technical Centre Europe, Amazon, Whitbread, Superdrug and The Jordan and Ryvita Company. The largest employer in the area is Central Bedfordshire Council, when taking into account all education/school-based employment. Other large employers in the area include Cranfield University and airport, Millbrook Proving Ground, Woburn Enterprises, Kier and the RSPB. There are also a number of smaller and micro-businesses within our key sectors and across Central Bedfordshire which also make a significant contribution to the local economy.
- 12.1.4 Tourism is an important, rapidly growing sector and job creator within Central Bedfordshire and attractions such as the Woburn Estate, ZSL Whipsnade Zoo, Center Parcs, Wrest Park and the Shuttleworth Collection contribute significantly to the local economy.
- 12.1.5 The Council is fully supportive of the movement towards a low carbon economy and there are a number of businesses that have a vested interest or operate within the green economy. In our area the green economy is diverse, and the Council will continue to support the creation of opportunities for the development of new technologies, industries, transportation and services and will seek to support business growth in the low carbon economy.
- 12.1.6 Central Bedfordshire benefits significantly from good transportation access. The M1 and the A1 corridors run north to south through Central Bedfordshire, which provide businesses with direct access to London and the strategic road network whilst the A5, A6, A507 and the A421 create a robust internal transportation network providing local residents with access to employment opportunities across the whole area. Accessibility has been improved due to the opening of the A5-M1 link road, and will be further enhanced following the delivery of other major road infrastructure projects including

the A421 improvements, M1-A6 strategic link road, and upgrade and improvements to the A1 corridor. The Oxford to Cambridge Expressway and the central section of East West Rail as outlined within the November 2017 NIC Report, will further enhance connectivity within and across Central Bedfordshire and open up further opportunities for economic growth.

12.1.7 In order for Central Bedfordshire to achieve its economic potential, the Council is taking a positive enabling approach to creating the right conditions for our existing businesses to flourish and to attract new inward investment that supports and enhances the existing employment offer within Central Bedfordshire. The overall aim being to create a place of national and international significance where people choose to live, work and visit, and where companies choose to invest.

12.1.8 The Council has identified a number of priority sectors which experience high growth across Central Bedfordshire. These are:

- High Performance Technologies, Research & Development (R&D);
- Agri-Food;
- Visitor Economy; and
- Transport and Logistics.

12.1.9 In addition to these high growth sectors, the Council is also supporting the sectors of health and social care and construction, which are identified nationally as critical in terms of employment opportunities but are experiencing challenges.

12.1.10 The Council will be supportive of growth proposals within these sectors and will monitor and review progress throughout the plan period through the Annual Monitoring Report.

12.1.11 A number of local airfields are located in the district. Cranfield Airport is a busy general aviation airport which has world-class training facilities and provision for private charter flights for both business and recreational purposes. It also relies on links to Cranfield University, given its academic/research focus on, and wider engagement with, the aerospace sector. Other smaller airfields are also used for training and recreational use. It is recognised that these facilities all make an important contribution to the local economy by facilitating air travel for business users in the case of Cranfield Airport, and tourism in the case of Old Warden and the wider Shuttleworth Collection. The Council will therefore ensure that development proposals do not compromise their continued use for aircraft purposes.

12.1.12 The Central Bedfordshire Functional Economic Market Areas (FEMA) and Employment Land Review (ELR) (May 2016) identifies that, based on past trends; approximately 23,900 jobs might be expected within the area up to 2031. This is based upon the Experian economic forecast which estimates future trends based upon past information. However, there are a range of economic forecasts that could be considered, and the forecasts produced can be volatile. There are a number of local “real-world” factors that also need to be considered that suggests a higher jobs target is achievable than that suggested through economic modelling. These factors include our historic annual delivery of 2,180 jobs per annum (2010-2015) and our aspiration to realise fully the area’s economic potential.

- 12.1.13 As the FEMA for Central Bedfordshire is complex and overlaps with neighbouring authorities, we also need to consider any unmet economic needs arising from neighbouring authorities, and in line with the NPPF and the Duty to Cooperate, the Council has sought to ensure that economic growth within Central Bedfordshire is complementary to that in neighbouring areas. To this end, Central Bedfordshire and North Hertfordshire District Council, have committed to helping meet the unmet economic needs arising from Stevenage. This unmet economic need is identified to be met in full through an employment allocation in the North Hertfordshire Local Plan at Baldock. This Plan for Central Bedfordshire, therefore, does not need to identify land to accommodate any unmet need arising from Stevenage.
- 12.1.14 Paragraph 160 of the NPPF also highlights the benefits of councils working closely with Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) particularly in relation to prioritising infrastructure investment, for example, through the Local Growth Fund. The South East Midlands Local Economic Partnership (SEMLEP) Strategic Economic Plan (2017) sets out the intention to ensure that the South East Midlands economy not only continues to thrive, but contributes even more to the success of UK plc.
- 12.1.15 Whilst the ELR identifies approximately of 23,900 net new jobs up to 2031, wider economic conditions and historical performance indicates jobs growth could exceed this target. The Council will therefore support growth within our key sectors, ensuring that local and national business needs are catered for. This will be achieved through a series of enabling and positive policies, reflective of market demand balanced against sustainability. The ambition to deliver sustainable growth is essential, and without this minimal level of job creation the longer-term economic future of the area could be significantly hindered.
- 12.1.16 Our approach to greater economic growth across Central Bedfordshire is further supported by the National Infrastructure Commission final report (November 2017) which re-emphasised that new east-west transport links present a once in a generation opportunity to secure the area's future success, and that to succeed in the global economy, the UK must build on its strengths. The arc connecting Cambridge, Milton Keynes and Oxford, which crosses through the north of Central Bedfordshire, could be Britain's Silicon Valley – a globally recognised centre for science, technology and innovation. Central Bedfordshire Council is therefore actively engaged and working collaboratively with neighbouring authorities and partners to secure future, economic-led growth across Central Bedfordshire and the wider strategic corridor in order to achieve the Government's ambitious growth proposals.

## 12.2 Portfolio of Employment Land

- 12.2.1 In order to ensure the delivery of sustainable development, jobs should be provided where market demand has been identified, with a specific consideration of meeting local business needs, supporting a diverse range of employment opportunities for Central Bedfordshire residents.
- 12.2.2 To meet the jobs target of approximately 24,000 jobs, it is considered 470,075 sqm of floorspace is required across 118ha of land within the plan period. Land to meet local employment need comprises:

Completions since the start of the plan period (2015)	15ha
Existing Planning Permissions	12ha
Existing saved allocations (as identified in Policy EMP1)	27ha
Strategic mixed-use allocations (as set out in Policy SP1 - SA1, SA2, SA4 & SE3)	64ha
<b>Total</b>	<b>118ha</b>

12.2.3 27ha of land remains available for employment uses on sites which are allocated in the South Bedfordshire Local Plan (2004) and the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2009). These policies are not superseded by the Central Bedfordshire Local Plan (this Plan) and these sites remain suitable for employment generating uses, subject to the requirements of Policy EMP1.

12.2.4 The 64ha of land as identified in Policy SP1 via strategic allocations comprises:

- 7ha at North of Luton (SA1);
- 30ha at Marston Valley (SA2);
- 2ha at East of Biggleswade (SA4); and
- 25ha at Holme Farm (SE3).

12.2.5 Three additional sites are allocated within the Plan to contribute to the delivery of strategic employment opportunities (as identified in Policy SP1 and detailed in Chapter 7). These sites include:

- 45ha at Sundon RFI (SE1);
- 30ha at Marston Gate (SE2); and
- 38ha at Holme Farm (SE3).

12.2.6 Other than the 25ha identified specifically within Policy SE3 to meet local employment needs, these three additional sites do not contribute towards the 24,000 jobs target.

12.2.7 This approach will deliver sustainable patterns of development and will be attractive and responsive to market demand over the plan period, as well as seeking to balance labour supply and demand.

12.2.8 If market demand for E(g) and B-uses exceeds supply, the Council will consider the potential benefits in terms of job creation and local need of bringing forward the delivery of further employment land. Additional locations for the delivery of employment generating uses will be considered where it is appropriate to do so.

## 12.3 E(g) and B-Uses and Non-B-Uses

12.3.1 Employment uses are classified as either B, E(g) or non-B-uses as set out within the Use Classes Order. When allocating land for the delivery of employment generating uses, Local Plans typically identify sufficient land to accommodate the E(g) and B-Use element which includes offices, industrial and warehousing/distribution. Non-B-Uses,

such as retail, leisure and public services are much more subject to market demand and tend to grow in line with population growth. However, the Council recognises that B, E(g) and non-B employment generating uses can also be complementary and that there may be opportunities to consider their co-location where appropriate.

12.3.2 Within Central Bedfordshire it is anticipated that approximately 11,200 (47%) new jobs will be from E(g) and B-Uses and approximately 12,700 (53%) will be delivered through non B-Uses.

## 12.4 Supply of Sites

12.4.1 Central Bedfordshire has a broad range and quality of existing employment sites and premises supporting business in a wide range of activities. These sites in both urban and rural locations perform a crucial role in maintaining a steady level of employment land stock and contributing significantly to the local economy.

12.4.2 In order to continue to support the growth of the local economy, enable the growth of key employment sectors and create the right conditions for future investment, the employment land stock needs to be maintained and responsive to market demand. Availability and choice in the range and size of land and premises across Central Bedfordshire will be required to enable new business start-ups, to meet local demand for existing businesses to grow, and to encourage new inward investment from national and international businesses.

12.4.3 The 2016 Functional Economic Market Assessment and Employment Land Review (ELR) Study identifies that in quantitative terms there is sufficient existing supply of land in Central Bedfordshire to satisfy demand, but that there is a short term need to provide both sites and premises to meet local business growth. Furthermore, due to Central Bedfordshire's strategic location and excellent transport connections, there is also a strong case for contributing to meet national demand for warehousing logistics sector operations at major strategic transport locations, specifically along the M1 corridor.

12.4.4 Central Bedfordshire already has a number of existing and established employment areas which will continue to contribute to the local economy and job creation. However, in order to maintain a sustainable approach to the delivery of employment land and premises, be responsive to local market conditions and ensure a continued range of choice and quality employment sites across Central Bedfordshire, there is a need to provide additional and alternative land to accommodate employment generating uses. In line with guidance set out within the NPPF, it is also important that the Local Plan is responsive to market demand. To meet objectives of the Plan, new employment land allocations will be delivered as part of mixed-use developments as well as standalone employment sites, meeting both local and national need.

12.4.5 The 2016 ELR identifies that in the short term, Central Bedfordshire is undersupplied, and that whilst the pipeline of employment land is large, supply of market ready sites is limited. Furthermore, the current identified oversupply, does not consider qualitative deficiency in the supply.

## 12.5 Strategic Warehousing and Logistics<sup>17</sup>

- 12.5.1 Growth in the logistics and distribution sector (recognised as one of the key growth sectors by the Council) and an increased focus on larger strategic warehousing facilities now means that locations with good accessibility to the motorway network, airports and freight hubs, including rail, have become a key focus for operators and developers. Market analysis undertaken as part of the 2016 ELR shows that demand for space is likely to originate from outside Central Bedfordshire and the FEMA, and as strategic warehousing is highly footloose, it is attracted to the area due to the key strategic connectivity, particularly the M1 corridor. The provision of land for strategic uses within Central Bedfordshire is therefore likely to attract national footloose demand.
- 12.5.2 The ELR also identifies that should the strategic warehouse sector be constrained within Central Bedfordshire, by only providing sufficient land to meet the job forecast, the evidence suggests that logistics will continue to displace local demand on other sites. Strategic logistics demand will still be attracted to the Central Bedfordshire portfolio and local demand will remain unsatisfied.
- 12.5.3 For market reasons there are strong grounds to provide specific strategic B8 land within Central Bedfordshire. By making provision for strategic distribution and warehousing alongside mixed use allocations and existing employment sites, it will have the effect of enabling Central Bedfordshire to be responsive to market demands whilst also retaining existing sites for local industrial employment uses. Set within the context of the wider Oxford-Cambridge Arc, and proposals set out within the Industrial Strategy White Paper (November 2017) this approach also enables Central Bedfordshire to be pro-active in ensuring strong foundations for future growth aspirations.
- 12.5.4 In order to allow for market friction, choice and the natural turn-over of premises (churn), as well as for windfall losses, the 2016 ELR identifies that within Central Bedfordshire, a surplus pipeline of 20% of the built stock should be maintained throughout the plan period.
- 12.5.5 Further additional new-build allocations will be considered favourably to maximise the economic impact of key infrastructure proposals including East West Rail and A1 Corridor improvements if the proposed allocations are built and occupied and there is an identified market demand.

## 12.6 Employment Sites and Uses

- 12.6.1 Overall Central Bedfordshire has a broad employment offer. In order to maintain and expand this diversity, support existing business growth and to attract inward investment of both large and small businesses, the Council has adopted a flexible approach to employment provision.
- 12.6.2 So as to maintain a diverse portfolio of employment sites for E(g), B2 and B8 uses, in relation to the above identified portfolio of land, permission will generally be granted

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<sup>17</sup> For the purposes of this Local Plan, 'strategic employment' is considered to be that which is significantly large in scale and which is advantageously located adjacent, or in very close proximity to, the strategic transportation network including road and rail

for appropriate Class uses. Through the portfolio of employment sites, the Council will seek to ensure a mix of tenure, type and size of premises to support business and jobs growth, including the provision of freehold sites offered to occupiers addressing the findings of the ELR. The Council will also seek to ensure that appropriate steps are taken to enable the sites to come forward to attract appropriate interest from developers and occupiers. This may include, but is not limited to, servicing, provision of access, marketing and other such steps as required in order to bring forward or accelerate development.

12.6.3 Whilst the Council would not wish to see substantial amounts of employment land lost to other uses, it is recognised that non E(g) or B-uses can make a significant contribution to the local economy and job creation, and that some non E(g) or B-uses can complement and enhance B-uses. Consideration will be given to non E(g) or B-use employment generating proposals on allocated and existing employment land against a series of criteria which seek to ascertain that such proposals are suitable for the proposed location and will not detrimentally impact upon the delivery of E(g) and B-uses or the quantity of land available to deliver E(g) and B-uses. A minimum of 12 months marketing period would need to be undertaken, including through the Council's Inward Investment Portal, to confirm that there is no need to retain the land/site for B2, B8 or E(g) employment uses. In all occasions, marketing should be directed for both leasehold and freehold. Although the clear economic benefits of residential development are recognised, it does not qualify as an employment generating use for the purposes of Policy EMP2.

12.6.4 In instances where allocated employment land is no longer suitable for employment generating uses, detailed evidence should be provided to demonstrate that the site has been effectively marketed, as detailed in 12.6.3 above, for these uses and that no suitable interest has subsequently materialised. For existing employment sites, evidence will be sought to ensure that redevelopment for E(g) and B or non-E(g) and non-B employment uses is not viable. In cases where this can be proven, the loss of employment land to a non-employment generating use may be the only reasonable option. Sites identified within Appendix 4 to this Plan have already been identified as suitable for alternative, non-employment generating uses and therefore do not need any additional marketing to be demonstrated.

12.6.5 Central Bedfordshire has a number of town centres which play a vital role in contributing to the local economy. In order to support the role and function of the town centres, the Council would not generally wish to see inappropriate retail uses located on key employment sites or on land allocated for employment generating activities. However, the Council acknowledges that some retail uses such as 'bulky goods' provision may be more suited to out of centre locations and will need to be assessed on a site by site basis to ensure that any such provision will not detrimentally impact upon the town centres. Chapter 13 provides greater detail in relation to the appropriate location of retail uses within Central Bedfordshire and specifically the town centres.

12.6.6 In line with the Council's growth and enabling aspirations, the Council will seek to consider emerging opportunities and mechanisms to stimulate and support sustainable development, where it can be evidenced that such activities are necessary and would bring forward jobs growth that would not otherwise have happened. The types of

activity the Council will consider include Local Development Orders (LDO), masterplans, Planning and Development Briefs and innovative financing mechanisms to bring forward development.

12.6.7 LDO's have already been progressed for the Woodside Industrial Estate, Dunstable and for the Stratton Business Park, Biggleswade (as part of the food enterprise zone) and others will be put forward as appropriate. Their purpose is to make it easier for businesses to grow and expand by relaxing some planning restrictions so that specified works can be undertaken without the need to apply for planning permission. The overall aim is to help businesses to save time and money; thus placing them in a better position to respond quickly to opportunities and contribute towards the economic health of the area.



### Policy EMP1: Small and Medium Employment Sites

In addition to the strategic allocations identified in Policy SP1, the following sites, as identified on the Policies Maps, are saved allocations for employment development to meet the identified local Objectively Assessed Need of 24,000 jobs within the plan period:

- Land East of Stratton Park, Biggleswade;
- Phase 4 Stratton Business Park, Biggleswade;
- Land West of University Way/Wharley End, Cranfield;
- Arenson Way, Woodside Estate, Dunstable;
- Eyncourt Road, Dunstable;
- Robinson's Depot and Land off Steppingley Road, Flitwick;
- Stanbridge Road, Leighton Linlade;
- Chartmoor Road, Leighton Linlade;
- Eden Way/Chartmoor Road, Leighton Linlade;
- Billington Road, Leighton Linlade;
- Grovebury Road, Leighton Linlade;
- Land North of Beamish Close, Sandy;
- Land North of Sunderland Road, Sandy; and
- Land West of Girtford Bridge, Sandy.

Across these sites, and existing employment areas shown on the Policies Maps, planning permission will be granted for appropriate B2, B8 and E(g) uses where all of the following criteria are met:

1. The proposal would contribute towards meeting the overall employment needs of the district, or widening the range of employment opportunities;
2. The proposal would not conflict with neighbouring land uses; and
3. The location is appropriately accessible and the proposal would not result in unacceptable levels of traffic generation.

Opportunities to strengthen existing clusters through the delivery of complementary employment generating uses will be encouraged.

To support the role and function of the town centres, E(a, b, c) retail uses will not be considered appropriate on employment sites, except as an ancillary operation. Exceptions will be considered on a site by site basis for specialist retailing less suited to a town centre location and will be subject to the separate retail policies set out in this Plan.

### Policy EMP2: Change of Use to Non-Employment Generating Uses

Sites identified within Appendix 4 will be considered favourably for alternative, non-employment generating uses. No additional marketing of these sites is required, and they do not need to meet the criteria set out below.

Other than where permitted development allows, proposals for non-employment generating uses on identified employment land will only be considered where suitable and detailed evidence is submitted demonstrating that the following criteria can be met:

In relation to unallocated sites:

1. The site is not currently actively used for employment generating uses;
2. There is no reasonable or viable prospect of the site delivering an employment generating use;
3. A change of use will not detrimentally impact upon the deliverability of existing employment uses within the locality; and
4. The proposed use would not detrimentally impact upon existing surrounding land uses.

In relation to allocated employment land, and the existing employment areas shown on the Policies Maps, in addition to the above:

5. The site has been comprehensively marketed for at least 12 months for the current employment generating uses as well as for alternative employment generating uses and has been promoted through the Council's Inward Investment Portal. In all instances, marketing should be directed for both leasehold and freehold;
6. There is a local need for the proposed intended use; and
7. There are no strong economic reasons why the proposed intended use would be inappropriate.

All proposals for non-employment generating uses should be in accordance with other relevant policies set out within the Plan.

## 12.7 Employment Proposals Within and Adjacent to Settlement Envelopes

12.7.1 Central Bedfordshire has a diverse portfolio of employment land which offers a variety in size, type and location of land and premises. Whilst the Council has sought to ensure the range of employment land within Central Bedfordshire is significantly comprehensive to meet the needs of current and future employers, there may be instances where the portfolio of existing sites does not meet the needs of a specific proposed employment use.

12.7.2 In order to promote Central Bedfordshire as a great location for business and to ensure a variety of employment generating uses, the Council will exceptionally consider proposals for employment uses within or adjacent to Settlement Envelopes to meet

identified local need or to support growth in the Council's key employment sectors, where it is evidenced that there are no suitable alternative sites.

### Expansion of Existing Businesses

12.7.3 The Council values existing businesses within Central Bedfordshire and supports proposals for expansion which will contribute positively to the local economy and provide new jobs within the area. The portfolio of employment sites within Central Bedfordshire provides a variety of options for existing businesses to relocate to in order to expand.

12.7.4 In some instances, existing businesses may wish to expand either within their existing curtilage or onto land adjacent to their current site rather than relocate to a new location. In some instances, this may necessitate expansion within or adjacent to Settlement Envelopes into the countryside. In order to secure the retention and growth of existing businesses, the Council has adopted a flexible approach to business expansion within Central Bedfordshire.

12.7.5 Policy EMP3 applies only to sites that are outside of the Green Belt.

### Policy EMP3: Employment Development on Non-Allocated Sites

Within Settlement Envelopes, development for appropriate employment generating uses will be supported.

1. Proposals for new employment land within or immediately adjacent to the Settlement Envelopes will be supported where;
  - a. The site is not in the Green Belt;
  - b. There are no comparable existing or allocated sites, or comparable existing buildings that are available, suitable, achievable and viable within the Settlement Envelope or within another closely related settlement;
  - c. For proposals to extend existing businesses onto adjoining land, evidence is provided that intensification within the existing site is not possible or practical;
  - d. Evidence is provided of the significant economic benefits that would flow from the proposal;
  - e. The size and scale of the development proposed is appropriate to its location;
  - f. The location is appropriately accessible, and the proposal would not result in unacceptable levels of traffic generation; and
  - g. Any identified adverse impacts on the historic and natural environment, including designated sites and landscapes can be appropriately mitigated.
2. Outside Settlement Envelopes, proposals for new employment uses will be supported where, in addition to the above criteria;
  - a. They are on previously developed land; and
  - b. Will not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the local environment and residential amenity.

## 12.8 Education and Skills

- 12.8.1 Central Bedfordshire is home to a number of high-quality schools and leading higher and further education institutions, including Cranfield University, Central Bedfordshire College and Shuttleworth College (part of Bedford College). We recognise that for Central Bedfordshire to fulfil its economic potential, the importance of skills cannot be over-stated. Skills are critical to all employees and employers in all sectors: public, private and the voluntary and community sectors, a key issue highlighted as one of the five foundations which are essential attributes of every successful economy within the Industrial Strategy White Paper (November 2017).
- 12.8.2 The Council will seek to support the continued delivery of high-quality learning and education within Central Bedfordshire, and will seek to support the development of learning and higher education facilities. We will also seek to work collaboratively with key skills providers outside of Central Bedfordshire, including Bedford College, North Herts College and Milton Keynes College to ensure the needs of our current and future residents and communities are met.
- 12.8.3 The Council works closely with employers to ensure that local provision is demand-led, meeting the future skills needs of employers to ensure a local skilled workforce that is fit for purpose. This approach is also in accordance with the Central Bedfordshire All Age Skills Strategy (2016-2020) to deliver a flexible and mobile workforce that meets the needs of employers, is able to respond rapidly to economic shifts and will enable Central Bedfordshire to achieve its full economic potential.
- 12.8.4 The importance of training and apprenticeships is fundamental to the future success of the local economy as is getting people into work and providing them with useable skills. The Council actively encourages the provision of school engagement, careers advice and fairs, training, work experience and apprenticeship opportunities at all levels on development sites throughout Central Bedfordshire, and will seek to work with developers, education institutions and others to ensure this aspiration is realised.
- 12.8.5 We would also seek to work with developers to ensure that not only are skills and employment opportunities created during construction, but also that these newly acquired skills and opportunities are carried forward and utilised elsewhere within the industry.
- 12.8.6 The Council will continue to support its residents to prosper, helping all to realise their potential and ensuring that our more vulnerable residents are supported on their pathway into employment.

## 12.9 Rural and Visitor Economy

- 12.9.1 The 2011 Census has identified that 38.8% of all people employed in Central Bedfordshire are employed in rural areas. This compares to 17.5% nationally, showing the importance of the rural economy to Central Bedfordshire. In view of this, whilst recognising that agriculture and forestry remain significant in economic and land use terms, the Council supports in principle the diversification of agricultural and other land based rural businesses and the development of any related new or converted buildings, providing that they are appropriately designed.

- 12.9.2 Central Bedfordshire's attractive natural and historic environment is identified as one of the best aspects of the area by local businesses in the Central Bedfordshire Business Survey 2017.
- 12.9.3 The conservation and enhancement of the historic environment contributes to the creation of distinct high-quality places which can result in wider economic benefits through encouraging tourism, helping to create successful places for business to locate and attracting inward investment.
- 12.9.4 The visitor economy has 730 businesses in Central Bedfordshire, employing just over 10,200 people in 2015. Tourist attractions range from major facilities such as Centre Parcs, ZSL Whipsnade Zoo and Woburn Safari Park to a raft of historic towns and villages, country houses, outdoor attractions and activities for people of all ages such as the Greensands Ridge. There are also a number of high-quality hotels and restaurants across Central Bedfordshire which cater to the needs of those visiting the area for both business and pleasure.
- 12.9.5 The Council recognises that the visitor economy is a key growth sector and positive policies will help to ensure this opportunity can be taken further, although considerations such as the impact on landscape and the rural road network will continue to be taken into account.
- 12.9.6 The need to increase hotel provision, self-catering accommodation, conferencing facilities, the provision of low-cost accommodation and increasing the range and choice of food and drink establishments is supported in order to support the growth of this key sector. The Council is willing to be flexible where these can support local services and provide opportunities for rural diversification.
- 12.9.7 The re-use and adaptation of rural buildings can make a significant contribution to the local economy. Proposals for employment generating uses and tourism activities will therefore need to be mindful of the benefits that existing buildings can deliver.

### Policy EMP4: Rural and Visitor Economy

Proposals to expand existing employment generating uses within the rural area and those related to the visitor economy will be supported where:

1. They would have no adverse impact on the location, neighbouring land uses or residents;
2. The proposed use can be demonstrated to be viable;
3. There would be an increase in the number of jobs that can be delivered;
4. There would be no detrimental impact upon traffic generation, and where suitable accessibility and sustainable forms of transport can be demonstrated; and
5. Any identified adverse impacts on the historic and natural environment, including designated sites and landscapes, can be appropriately mitigated.

Proposals for new employment opportunities within the rural area, in addition to the above criteria, will be required to demonstrate that a rural location is required for technical and/or operational reasons.

The Council will seek to promote the rural area and visitor economy across the whole of Central Bedfordshire by supporting the principle of proposals for tourist and leisure developments, particularly those which will also provide opportunities for rural diversification and which are well located to support local services, businesses and other tourist and leisure attractions.

Proposals located within the Green Belt will be expected to demonstrate consistency with other relevant policies within this Plan and with National Policy.

All rural and visitor economy proposals including for static holiday and touring caravan parks and holiday chalet developments will be considered against the need to protect historic environments, valuable landscapes and environmentally sensitive sites as well as the potential impact on local residents.

In line with Policy R2, the Council will seek to retain existing public houses and shops in order to encourage diverse employment opportunities, provide tourist accommodation and in recognition of the contribution such uses make, particularly to the rural economy.

## 12.10 Significant Facilities in the Countryside and Green Belt

12.10.1 Central Bedfordshire is notable for the presence of a number of significant employment facilities in the countryside and Green Belt. These sites have the potential to provide additional jobs, which would help to meet the employment objectives and aspirations of the Plan. These facilities have been identified as Cranfield University, its airport and Technology Park, Rookery South Resource Recovery Facility (RSRRF), Shuttleworth College and Shuttleworth Collection, Millbrook Proving Ground, RSPB Sandy, DISC Chicksands, RAF Henlow, ZSL Whipsnade, Woburn Safari Park, Center Parcs, Toddington Motorway Services Area, Faldo Road Industrial Estate in Barton-le-Clay, Tempsford Hall and Lockheed Martin, Ampthill.

12.10.2 It is clear that these major sites can make a significant contribution to the local economy and that a number of these also have the potential to attract high technology orientated businesses, creating specialist markets and a cluster effect.

12.10.3 The NPPF is clear about the need to secure economic growth. It recognises that the challenges presented by a low carbon future can still be met while also delivering this core objective. In order to proactively plan for businesses within the key growth sectors and emerging sectors like the green economy, the Council supports the development of education, innovation, research and development industries, particularly around the existing cluster of high technology centres of excellence of Cranfield University (including the area formerly known as Cranfield University Technology Park), Cranfield Airport (including the Air Park) and Millbrook Proving Ground.

12.10.4 RAF Henlow has been declared surplus to MoD requirements and is due to be vacated by 2023. At that point it, will be available for redevelopment to help meet future growth requirements. It is expected that the site will be redeveloped with alternative, non-military uses. The suitability of future uses, and the redevelopment of the site will need to be carefully considered in the context of the existing and neighbouring uses, local infrastructure provision, community uses and landscape character, as well as the historic nature of the site, including on-site heritage assets such as the airfield and associated buildings.

12.10.5 In the future, major new sites may emerge in Central Bedfordshire which should also be included within the remit of this policy.

### **Policy EMP5: Significant Facilities in the Countryside and Green Belt**

The significant facilities in the countryside and Green Belt, as identified on the Policies Maps, are:

- Cranfield University (including the area formerly known as Cranfield University Technology Park and Cranfield Airport (excluding the Airpark));
- Rookery South Resource Recovery Facility (RSRRF);
- Shuttleworth College and Shuttleworth Collection ;
- Millbrook Proving Ground;
- RSPB, Sandy;

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- DISC Chicksands;
- RAF Henlow;
- ZSL Whipsnade;
- Woburn Safari Park;
- Center Parcs;
- Toddington Motorway Services Area;
- Faldo Road Industrial Estate, Barton-le-Clay;
- Tempsford Hall; and
- Lockheed Martin, Ampthill.

Planning permission will be granted for expansion, infilling or redevelopment of, significant facilities provided that the expansion, infilling or redevelopment is within the boundaries of the existing use, relates to that use and enhances the contribution to the local or national economy.

Significant expansion of existing facilities into the open countryside will be subject to the production of a Development Brief or masterplan prior to any application which will ultimately need to be endorsed by the Council. Within the Green Belt, the expansion of existing facilities will only be considered where proposals are consistent with National Policy.

All proposals for significant development at these facilities will be assessed on an individual basis and in accordance with other relevant policies within the Plan, including, but not limited to:

1. Impact on the open countryside and any heritage assets;
2. Provision of sustainable transport;
3. Justification; and
4. Scale, layout and design – which must be appropriate to the establishment and its setting.

Planning applications that are considered acceptable against these criteria and all other relevant plan policies, will be considered favourably.

In the future, major new sites may emerge in Central Bedfordshire. Any new major facilities with a similar level of importance in terms of employment or research once built, including Cranfield Airpark, will be considered under this policy as well as other relevant policies within the Plan. Where a Development Brief or masterplan for a facility identified above has already been produced and endorsed by the Council, this should be a material consideration for future planning decisions.



# 13. Retail and Town Centres

## 13.1 Retail Hierarchy

- 13.1.1 Town Centres play an important role in supporting the local economy as they provide a wide range of services, facilities and employment and act as a focal point for surrounding communities. Competitive town centres should provide customer choice; with a range of main town centre uses including retail development, office accommodation, arts, cultural and tourism development and leisure and entertainment uses.
- 13.1.2 While it is recognised that towns in Central Bedfordshire suffer from a leakage of expenditure to larger centres like Milton Keynes, Luton and Bedford that are easily accessible to Central Bedfordshire residents; the towns still play an important function for local communities. The main town centres are characterised by high occupancy rates and attractive shop fronts. The role of the retail hierarchy set out in Table 13.1 overleaf is to support the growth of new retail development in appropriate locations and at appropriate scales in order to further consolidate the existing centres.
- 13.1.3 The planned housing growth in Central Bedfordshire will lead to an increased population over the next twenty years with a large proportion of additional expenditure expected to come from the new population. In order to cater for the growing population and having regard to the recent and expected trends in the retail and leisure sectors, it is considered that an appropriate strategy for Central Bedfordshire would be to first improve its retail offer by focussing on improving the vitality and viability of the existing town centres in the short and medium term and then increasing the comparison retail need in Central Bedfordshire at the end of the plan period in line with the projected increases in population as identified in Table 13.2. This could be achieved by making the existing floorspace in the town centres work hard to attract visitors through the intensification of uses in the town centres and implementing the objectives of the town centre masterplans and frameworks.
- 13.1.4 Given the planned housing growth and resulting increase in population as well as the documented changes in the convenience goods sector, such as the change in store formats to smaller stores; Central Bedfordshire will plan for increasing the convenience retail need. Planning for an increase in convenience retail need will allow for the town centres, service centres and large villages to provide for the existing and future local need and ensure these settlements are more sustainable by reducing the need for residents to travel to the large adjoining centres.
- 13.1.5 Retail and leisure uses should also be working together to support the vitality and viability of the town centres through generating local employment opportunities and creating more attractive, diverse and healthy places catering for a range of specialist and brand retail that encourages footfall to these centres. There has been an increase in the leisure offers within the town centres, with a shift in some of the town centres towards more A3 uses (restaurant and cafes). This is considered positive as these uses increase dwell times in the town centres thus improving the vitality and viability of

them. As such, it is considered that it is appropriate to plan for an increase in food and drink uses within the designated town centres and villages.

**Table 13.1: Retail Hierarchy**

Type of Centre	Location	Principal Function
Principle Town Centres	Dunstable Leighton Buzzard Biggleswade	Provides a range of shops including many national multiple retailers and independent shops. Provides an extensive range of services, facilities and leisure uses and is home to a large number of businesses
Secondary Town Centres	Amphill Flitwick Houghton Regis Sandy Wixams	Provides a range of shops including some national multiple retailers and many independent shops. Provides a range of services, facilities and leisure uses and is home to a number of businesses
Minor Service Centres	See Settlement Hierarchy Table in Chapter 9	Provides a number of local shops and a small to medium sized supermarket
Large Villages	See Settlement Hierarchy Table in Chapter 9	Provides a small number of local shops serving a small catchment

**Table 13.2: Quantitative Need to 2035**

	2016	2021	2026	2031	2035
Comparison goods (sqm net)	0	0	0	3,127	11,927
Convenience goods (sqm net)	8,638	10,300	11,940	13,618	15,129
Food and drink uses (sqm gross)	0	1,991	4,148	6,488	8.480

13.1.6 When planning for the retail provision in the planned urban extensions, proposed strategic allocations and large settlements, it is considered that retail provision should be of a scale to meet local convenience needs in order to complement existing centres.

13.1.7 With the exception of the new settlement of Wixams, each of the Major Service Centres (principal and secondary town centres) within the settlement hierarchy have designated town centre boundaries. An appropriate town centre boundary will be identified for Wixams in the future. The purpose of the boundaries is to maximise the

vibrancy of town centres by ensuring that a high concentration of main town centre uses; particularly retail and leisure uses; are focused within the designated area. The town centre boundaries can be viewed on the Policies Maps.

13.1.8 The Council will seek to use conditions where necessary and justified to limit uses within Class E in order to maintain the predominate retail function of the Primary Shopping Areas and ensure an appropriate mix of ground floor uses in accordance with Policy R1.

13.1.9 It is envisaged that conditions could be used for sub-uses within Class E as they have traditionally been used within the previous use classes, such as within Class A; for example, a proposal for a convenience foodstore (formerly Use Class A1) might have conditions imposed to restrict its operation within former Use Class A1 to food or convenience retail use i.e. precluding it from operating as non-food/comparison store unless a further planning permission was sought. Under Class E, the Council would seek to use a similar approach where an applicant has only sought permission and demonstrated the acceptability of certain part of Class E. An example of this could be where permission is sought for office use and has only tested the impact of that use – in that instance, it could be appropriate to restrict the permission by condition to Class E(g). Any use of conditions will so be consistent with national policy and guidance.

13.1.10 Proposals for changes of use away from retail will not be supported within the Primary Shopping Area, unless it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that the units have been marketed for a period of six months, or more, with no success and where they would support positively the overall viability and vitality of the centre. In seeking to satisfactorily demonstrate that the site has no reasonable prospect of being used for retail uses, applicants will be expected to demonstrate that the site has remained vacant for at least six months. In addition, applicants will need to provide evidence relating to the marketing of the site for its present use for a minimum period of six months. This should demonstrate that despite genuine and sustained attempts to sell or let the site on reasonable terms for retail use, that there is no demand for the unit.

## 13.2 The Sequential Approach and Town Centre Viability

13.2.1 The approach of requiring new main town centre uses to be delivered in town centre locations first will be adhered to. Where this is not feasible, sites on the edge of town centres should then be considered, followed by out of centre locations. When considering out of centre sites, preference will be given to accessible sites that are well connected to the town centre.

13.2.2 It is recognised that certain types of retailing, whilst beneficial to the local economy, may not be appropriate within town centres; particularly ‘bulky goods’ retailing. In order to meet the needs of shoppers and ensure a varied retail offer within Central Bedfordshire, proposals for such uses will be considered on a case-by-case basis. They must also be supported by evidence that demonstrates that the sequential approach has been followed to ensure that new uses complement existing centres.

13.2.3 In order to maintain the vitality of town centres, uses identified within the NPPF as town centre uses and those included within Class E<sup>18</sup> should be retained where possible. Within the identified Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages, proposals for uses that relate to category E(a, b and c) will be looked upon favourably, to continue to promote retail related uses within the Primary Shopping Area. Where there are proposals for changes of use to alternative uses that do not fall within Class E, the potential impact on the town centre as a whole will be considered.

13.2.4 To further support the ‘town centre first’ approach, the NPPF gives local authorities the option to set their own floorspace thresholds for impact assessments for out of town centre retail, leisure and office proposals. The default threshold set out in the NPPF is 2,500sqm gross floorspace. Although Central Bedfordshire does have existing food stores with a gross floorspace of more than 2,500sqm, these tend to be edge or out of centre stores. In the town centres, convenience store to medium size supermarket provision together with a wide range of small independent outlets is the usual profile. In view of this, new or extended food stores in edge of centre, or out of centre locations, could have a significant impact on town centre provision especially given the scale of the rural centres. It is therefore considered that any proposals over 500m<sup>2</sup> gross floorspace, outside of designated town centres, should be subject to a retail impact assessment. In addition to the assessment criteria set out within the NPPF, impact assessments should also consider the local criteria included in Policy R1.

### **Policy R1: Ensuring Town Centre Vitality**

The Council will support and encourage main town centre uses within its town centres, service centres and large villages. The scale of development should relate to the Retail Hierarchy.

For the Principal and Secondary Town Centres, Town Centre Boundaries and Primary Shopping Areas are shown on the Policies Map.

Within the Primary Shopping Areas, the Council will seek to focus retail uses. The Council will seek to use conditions where necessary and justified to limit uses within Class E in order to maintain the predominant retail function of the Primary Shopping Areas and ensure an appropriate mix of ground floor uses.

Proposals for changes of use away from retail will not be supported within the Primary Shopping Area, unless it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that the units have been marketed for a period of six months or more, with no success and where they would support positively the overall viability and vitality of the centre.

Within the identified Town Centre Boundaries, but outside the Primary Shopping Areas, of the Principal and Secondary Town Centres, development proposals for other main town centre uses such as leisure, commercial, office, tourism, cultural, and community uses will be supported.

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<sup>18</sup> As of 1st September 2020, the Town and Country Planning Regulations on Use Classes were amended and the previous use classes A1, A2 and A3 were revoked and subsumed into an overarching class, Class E ‘Commercial, Business and Service’

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Proposals for change of use, or re-development of properties, away from these uses within the Town Centre Boundaries, but outside the Primary Shopping Areas, will be supported where they meet all of the following criteria:

1. The proposed use would be of an appropriate scale within the town centre; and
2. The proposed use would positively support the vitality of the town centre by enhancing the range of facilities offered and/or stimulating activity outside normal shopping hours.

Above ground floor level, proposals for residential use and general office space will be supported.

**Outside designated town centres**

The Sequential Test will be applied to proposals for retail uses that are outside the Primary Shopping Area and for retail and other main town centre uses that are not within a designated town centre boundary. Development proposals that fail the Sequential Test will not be supported.

Impact Assessments will be required for all retail and leisure proposals over 500sqm gross external floorspace that are outside a designated town centre boundary. Schemes that are found to have negative impact on the vitality of town centres will not be supported.

The Council will seek to use conditions where necessary and justified to limit uses within Class E in order to prevent main town centres being permitted outside Primary Shopping Areas and Town Centres without having to meet requirements of the sequential and impact tests.

### **13.3 Neighbourhood and Rural Retail and Services**

13.3.1 The Council recognises the vital role that shops and public houses play in supporting local neighbourhoods and rural communities; particularly those that are relatively isolated from town centre facilities and services. Proposals for new retail services within minor service centres and villages are therefore encouraged where appropriate; while existing services should be maintained where they remain viable.

13.3.2 Many outlying neighbourhoods and much of the rural community are poorly served by public transport, therefore if existing rural facilities within walking distance are lost; it could contribute to social exclusion, particularly for the elderly and those without a car. It is certainly the case that many local public houses and shops have been saved by strict planning policy in the past so it is increasingly vital to maintain this strong policy stance in the face of current economic pressures.

13.3.3 Retail premises such as farm shops, which are located outside of rural settlements, can also play an important role in supporting the rural economy and providing a sustainable source of locally produced food.

### Policy R2: Retail for Minor Service Centres, Villages and the Rural Economy

In order to support vibrant, sustainable and diverse neighbourhoods and the rural economy, proposals for retail uses within existing minor service centres and villages will be supported where:

1. The proposal is of a suitable scale to the service centre or village; and
2. The site does not have a negative impact on the minor service centre or village setting when considered against all relevant policies;

Proposals for the change of use or re-development of shops or public houses in existing minor service centres or villages, which would result in the loss of such facilities, will not be permitted unless:

3. There are other facilities performing the same function within easy walking distance of the community; and/or
4. The facility no longer meets the needs of the community; and
5. The applicant provides sufficient and demonstrable evidence that the facility is no longer viable in its current form.

Where the above tests are met, the site/building must firstly be considered for alternative community infrastructure uses, in consultation with the local community, and only where an alternative community infrastructure use is demonstrated to be unviable or unsuitable, may other uses be considered acceptable.

Proposals for the change of use or re-development of retail premises which are located outside of settlement boundaries, including local farm shops, shops attached to garage sites where this is the only source of retail provision in the area, and public houses, will also be considered against all of the above criteria.

## 13.4 Town Centre Development

13.4.1 Although many residents in Central Bedfordshire use the larger centres adjoining the area, the town centres in Central Bedfordshire still play a vital role in supporting the local surrounding communities by providing a range of services and facilities. It is therefore important that policies and initiatives are designed to support the town centres to withstand the ongoing economic challenges.

13.4.2 Town centre identity plays a significant role in defining its sense of place and creating a destination that is unique to its offer in Central Bedfordshire and the surrounding region. Recognising that the town centres cannot compete with larger adjoining town centres, such as Milton Keynes, Luton and Bedford, it is important that they provide retail, lifestyle and cultural experiences that create distinct destinations.

13.4.3 As well as the adopted (and emerging) masterplans and Development Briefs for the town centres to guide appropriate development, there are Strategic Delivery Frameworks (SDFs) for Central Bedfordshire's large market towns: Dunstable, Leighton-Linslade, Ampthill and Flitwick and Biggleswade. These SDFs provide a guide to the

vision, growth and development in these towns. Central Bedfordshire plays a proactive role in enabling suitable development that benefits sustainable growth.

13.4.4 Central Bedfordshire Council will continue to support and create initiatives that increase our town centres vitality and viability. The Market Town Regeneration Fund (MTRF) is one example of this approach. The MTRF has been developed to enhance market towns across Central Bedfordshire, supporting economic and cultural activities within town centres with the aim of making them more vibrant and better places to visit, live and do business in.

#### Dunstable Town Centre

13.4.5 Dunstable is an historic town located on the now de-trunked A5 which runs through the town and connects it to the M1 at J9 to the south and Milton Keynes to the north. The town as a whole has a relatively high percentage of convenience floorspace (27% compared to the national average of 18%), largely due to the presence of four supermarkets. However, the comparison offer is fairly low and consists of a range of middle to low market offer businesses. Whilst the “traditional” High Street is comparably well occupied, the number of vacant units in the town is marginally higher than the national average.

13.4.6 Significant repositioning and redevelopment is required to revitalise and reinvigorate Dunstable town centre to meet the needs of today’s shoppers. There are plans for regenerating Dunstable Town Centre, increasing pedestrian access across the town and enabling new town centre development that benefits the local economy, including new leisure, employment and educational facilities. There is potential to refurbish the Quadrant Shopping Centre and changes have been made to the configuration, which has seen an increase in occupancy. Any redevelopment will need to have regard to the heritage assets found within the town centre, notably Priory Church, a scheduled monument. These contribute to the character and history of Dunstable town centre.

13.4.7 In order to provide additional competitive and appropriate retail space in the town, it is recognised that attention might need to shift beyond the town centre to other nearby locations, such as the Grove Theatre. Another location is the already well-established White Lion Retail Park which has both larger footprint stores accommodating big box retail, and also offers restaurants and leisure uses. The recent opening of the Luton-Dunstable Busway with stops adjacent to the White Lion Retail Park also supports this change of focus and, by encouraging sustainable travel from the wider conurbation, will free up the local transport network thus reducing traffic congestion in the town centre. The completion of the A5-M1 Link Road and Woodside Connection will also alleviate traffic pressures in this location by diverting traffic, particularly heavy goods vehicles, away from the town centre and will encourage shopping in the traditional High Street shops.

#### Leighton Buzzard Town Centre

13.4.8 Leighton Buzzard is an attractive market town which grew significantly during the 1970s. The Town Council has a document entitled ‘The Big Plan’ outlining the community’s aspirations for the town. Central Bedfordshire Council is working closely

with the Town Council to deliver many of the proposals, including new sports and community facilities and traffic management schemes.

13.4.9 The town has a good comparison retail offer, largely focused around the High Street, Market Square and Waterborne Walk. The percentage of convenience floorspace in the town centre (24%) is above the national average (18%), while vacancy rates are significantly below the national average. The town centre is characterised by a good choice of independent shops alongside some national chains. Leighton Buzzard has a growing specialist economy and this will be encouraged and supported by Central Bedfordshire.

13.4.10 Development Briefs were adopted by the Council in 2012 as Interim Technical Guidance for Development Management purposes which will guide and attract development on two key sites: Land South of High Street and Bridge Meadow. Land South of High Street will create an extension to the High Street with proposed new mixed use development which will have the capacity to accommodate high quality complementary uses and enhance Leighton Buzzard's sense of place. The Development Brief for Land South of High Street will be updated and will act as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Local Plan. Bridge Meadows is a proposed waterside development that could offer a new mixed-use quarter that will strengthen the links between the combined towns of Linslade and Leighton Buzzard.

#### Houghton Regis Town Centre

13.4.11 Houghton Regis town centre contains a significant higher proportion of convenience retail units than the national average (22% compared to 9%). The majority of the retail offer is at Bedford Square, although a new supermarket has recently opened on the High Street. The physical environment of the town centre has recently undergone substantial public realm improvements along the complete length of the High Street. The public transport network has also recently undergone improvements with the opening of the Luton-Dunstable Busway and the A5-M1 Link Road and the Woodside Connection should further improve the general environment, local public transport and congestion throughout the town centre.

13.4.12 An adopted masterplan outlines how the town centre could be improved and how it could contribute to meeting the needs of a significantly increased local population. It is important that regard is had to Houghton Regis town centre when considering the masterplanning of the nearby urban extensions, particularly the location and scale of new local centres.

#### Biggleswade Town Centre

13.4.13 Biggleswade town centre has an attractive market town feel. There are a number of historic buildings in the town centre giving it character and contributing positively to the townscape. The town centre is well served by supermarkets and convenience stores. While the comparison retail offer is below average, there is still a good range of premises. Vacancy rates in Biggleswade are on par with the national average of 18%.

13.4.14 The provisions of the adopted town centre masterplan have the potential to increase the retail offer of the town, whilst improving transport infrastructure and the public



realm. A particular focus in improving the town centre offer will be initiatives designed to enhance the historical Market Square and heart of the town.

### Flitwick Town Centre

- 13.4.15 Flitwick is characterised by a disjointed town centre and a lack of public space and amenities which impacts on the attractiveness of the town centre. These issues are largely caused by the location of the main rail line going through Flitwick dividing the town centre into two distinct and poorly connected areas.
- 13.4.16 The proportion of convenience units in the centre is comparable to the national average, although there are only three units including a supermarket. The comparison offer in the town centre is extremely limited with no national retailers. There is a current need for additional and improved retail floorspace in Flitwick that has not been met to date due to the lack of appropriate sites and units capable of supporting the reconfiguration of the town centre. The redevelopment of the station area will help facilitate this reconfiguration.
- 13.4.17 The adopted planning framework and indicative masterplan for the town centre aims to guide the provision of a new focus for retailing and a significantly enhanced physical environment. A new transport interchange combining all forms of public transport will be provided at this end at Flitwick railway station which will also provide additional facilities for cyclists as well as improved public spaces and facilities for station and town centre uses. Further new and improved retail floorspace will be provided within the station area as part of a redevelopment of this area and adjacent land thereby providing space for the expansion of both convenience and comparison retailers in line with local needs. This facility will form part of a larger mixed-use development which will seek to create a clearer focal point and heart for the town centre in line with the principals of the town centre masterplan.

## Policy R3: Town Centre Development

### Dunstable Town Centre

Dunstable town centre is the preferred location for new retail development and other forms of development, such as leisure and entertainment, offices, arts, culture and tourism and should be in accordance with the Strategic Delivery Framework and emerging Regeneration and Masterplans.

Proposals should reflect the scale and characteristics of Dunstable Town Centre protect and enhance the town's heritage assets, and should be subject to a Traffic Impact Assessment, where appropriate.

### Other Town Centres

In addition to Policy R1 development proposals should be in accordance with the principle and objectives of the relevant and up to date town centre masterplans and Development Briefs.

Development proposals elsewhere in town centres should complement and not prejudice development proposed by town centre masterplans and Development Briefs.

Where town centres do not have adopted or endorsed masterplans or Development Briefs, the Council will seek to support sustainable development in town centres and retain existing retail uses in line with Policy R1.

# 14. Transport

## 14.1 Overview of the Transport Network

14.1.1 Central Bedfordshire is well served by strategic north-south road links, notably the M1, A1, A6 and A5, and east-west links in the form of the A421, A505 and A507, which provide connections between the A1 in the east and the M1 in the west.

14.1.2 There have been significant improvements to east-west highway connectivity in Central Bedfordshire with the opening of the A5-M1 link road and the Woodside Link road (A5505).

14.1.3 The major rail links are north-south orientated with the Midland Mainline, East Coast Mainline and West Coast Mainlines all running through Central Bedfordshire. There are eleven rail stations with six providing key connections to London. All mainline stations are seeing steady growth in passenger numbers and this growth is projected to continue during the plan period.

14.1.4 The only east-west route in place is the Marston Vale branch line, which connects Bedford to Bletchley, and provides a link through to Milton Keynes. There are plans to upgrade this as part of the western branch of East West Rail, with a stopping service at Ridgmont which will have direct services to Oxford.

14.1.5 Bus services operate between the main urban areas within Central Bedfordshire and to key service centres in neighbouring areas such as Bedford, Luton, Milton Keynes and the Hertfordshire towns of Hitchin and Stevenage.

14.1.6 The Luton-Dunstable Busway is a bus priority corridor between Luton and Dunstable town centres which also provides access to London Luton Airport and Houghton Regis town centre via a high frequency, high quality 6-mile link<sup>19</sup>.

14.1.7 In terms of cycling, Central Bedfordshire is connected to the National Cycle Network (NCN) via Routes 6, 12 and 51 which provide strategic cycle friendly links to the surrounding region and rest of the country<sup>20</sup>.

14.1.8 All of the authority's main towns have cycle networks in place. Route coverage is generally good albeit further investment is required at a local level to ensure that cycling becomes a more attractive choice for local journeys.

## 14.2 Local Transport Plan

14.2.1 The Local Transport Plan, or LTP as it is often known, is the formal policy document for transport which also sets out the Council's long-term framework for investment in transport across Central Bedfordshire.

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<sup>19</sup> [www.cbtravelchoices.co.uk](http://www.cbtravelchoices.co.uk)

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.sustrans.org.uk/ncn/map/national-cycle-network>

14.2.2 The LTP currently covers the period up to 2026 and there is a statutory requirement on the authority to produce and maintain the Plan. It considers the needs of all forms of transport particularly walking, cycling, buses, rail and car use.

14.2.3 The LTP establishes a strategic approach through which to deal with key transport issues, a series of objectives, and broad areas of intervention through which schemes will be identified and improvements made to the transport network.

14.2.4 The Council's Cycle Strategy forms part of the LTP, which addresses issues relevant to cyclists, detailing a hierarchy of routes, drawing out the wider linkages with other policy areas to demonstrate the importance of encouraging more cycling and details the framework of interventions through which efforts to increase the number of people cycling will be focused.

### 14.3 Overview of Transport Issues

14.3.1 A number of the issues associated with transport provision and travel choice are often long standing and complex, with many inter-related factors, often controlled by the transport operators and agencies such as Highways England. There have been improvements to transport in Central Bedfordshire particularly on the delivery of new road schemes and work on rail interchanges.

14.3.2 The main transport concerns affecting Central Bedfordshire however, can be categorised into three broad areas relating to:

#### Capacity

- Increasing demand to travel associated with a growing population, new development and an upturn in the economy;
- Localised congestion, especially in the larger towns such as Dunstable, Houghton Regis and Leighton Buzzard;
- Junction capacity issues on the local and strategic road network, and
- Parking pressures in town centres, around schools/rail stations and at other key trip generators.

#### Connectivity

- The lack of self-containment of many Central Bedfordshire communities resulting in residents travelling long distances to meet their needs;
- The limited access to sustainable transport provision particularly in rural areas, which results in reliance on the car for many journeys;
- Social exclusion and isolation for those without their own private transport or ability to fund more costly options, and
- Poor connectivity in terms of both services and infrastructure, and the ability to interchange between different modes of travel.

## Communities

- Inappropriate routing of traffic, including HGVs, through some urban areas and villages which cause severance, poor air quality and safety concerns;
- Road safety, both in terms of actual accidents and perceived safety of vulnerable road users;
- Dominance of the car in residential areas as a consequence of the poor provision and management of parking;
- A natural discouragement of cycling and walking due to lack of appropriate routes, and
- Inappropriate routing of all users to unsafe level crossings.

More general issues are also apparent and can be associated with:

- Public perceptions and overcoming ingrained transport behaviour; and
- A high proportion of cross boundary movements (partly due to high commuting levels) including within the Luton-Dunstable conurbation and between Central Bedfordshire and northern Hertfordshire and Milton Keynes over which the authority only has partial influence.

14.3.3 These issues all impact upon the ability of the transport network and services across Central Bedfordshire to contribute towards the wider aims and objectives of the authority and facilitate the growth envisaged within this Plan.

14.3.4 In view of this, all development sites will need to be designed to reduce the need for travel and to secure modal shifts towards more sustainable forms of transport while ensuring a well-functioning and efficient network in terms of connectivity and the provision and management of parking.

## 14.4 Sustainable Approach to Mitigate Impacts on the Network

14.4.1 New development needs to consider a range of measures, interventions and infrastructure improvements to demonstrate that the proposed development minimises the impact on the local transport network. Sustainable transport measures should be fully considered.

14.4.2 The Council will seek to:

- Reduce the need to travel by car;
- Embed and promote sustainable transport within new developments;
- Increase safe and convenient connectivity and accessibility particularly through sustainable travel modes;
- Make the best use of existing infrastructure and services; and
- Provide additional capacity where required and upgrade or replacement of existing infrastructure if necessary.

14.4.3 Developers will be expected to ensure that new schemes fully mitigate any adverse impact on the transport network.

## 14.5 The Central Bedfordshire and Luton Transport Model

14.5.1 The Central Bedfordshire and Luton Transport Model 2017 (CBLTM) is a key transport planning tool to inform current and future transport patterns and demand across Central Bedfordshire. It can test the strategic impact of development on the transport network and determine what, if any, mitigation would be required to accommodate that level of development. It will also be used in the validation and bidding process for funding future transport schemes.

14.5.2 Major development will be required to evidence whether there is sufficient capacity in the transport network to accommodate the increase in demand to travel. Strategic network assessments are likely to be required for those developments which have an impact on the network, including cross-boundary movement. Further detailed modelling will also be required to design and test mitigation schemes.

## 14.6 Sustainable Transport Provision

14.6.1 The sustainability of new development hinges upon the ability of sites to be accessible by a choice of means of transport to existing services such as: employment provision, education, retail, healthcare, and leisure facilities.

14.6.2 Accessibility issues are particularly important for those without access to a car. At a local level this should include encouraging walking for trips under two miles, and increasing opportunity to cycle for services within a five-mile radius.

14.6.3 To achieve this, dominance of the car should be reduced, as supported by both the Manual for Streets and the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide while not impeding access for emergency vehicles and public transport. Opportunities to reduce traffic speeds and introduce level surface street designs for example may help to encourage more walking and cycling and create safer streets.

14.6.4 At a more strategic level, due to the lack of self-containment of many settlements in Central Bedfordshire, developments will be required to facilitate links to public transport provision so that residents can access facilities further afield by means other than a car.

## 14.7 Transport Assessments and Travel Plans

14.7.1 Where a new development is likely to have significant transport implications (see relevant Department of Transport guidance and the Local Transport Plan for thresholds), a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan should be prepared and submitted with a planning application for the development.

14.7.2 Transport Assessments should include (with additional information as required):

- The planning context of the development proposal;
- Appropriate study parameters (i.e. area, scope and duration of study);
- Assessment of public transport capacity, walking/ cycling capacity and road network capacity;

- Road trip generation and trip distribution methodologies and/ or assumptions about the development proposal;
- Measures to promote sustainable travel use in the form of an accompanying Travel Plan;
- Safety implications of development; and
- Mitigation measures (where applicable), including scope and implementation strategy.

14.7.3 Travel Plans should include (with additional information as required):

- Accurate benchmark travel data including trip generation databases such as TRICS and/ or the Central Bedfordshire and Luton Transport Model where appropriate;
- Information concerning the nature of the proposed development and the forecast level of trips by all modes of transport likely to be associated with the development;
- Relevant information about existing travel habits in the surrounding area based on Census and other relevant evidence;
- An action plan detailing how sustainable travel will be promoted to residents and/or employees;
- Information on the connectivity to the nearest transport interchange;
- Information on the provision of infrastructure to support low emissions vehicles;
- A robust monitoring regime;
- Targets to reduce travel to and from the site by single occupancy car; and
- Promotion of public transport services such as mapping, cycle training, incentives and journey planning.

14.7.4 Further guidance on Travel Plan requirements is set out in the Guidance on Travel Plans and Transport Assessment available on the Council's website.

### Policy T1: Mitigation of Transport Impacts on the Network

Travel Plans, Travel Plan Statements and Transport Assessments will be required for any development which meets or exceeds the Gross Floor Area thresholds set out in the Council's Guidance on Travel Plans and Transport Assessment.

It should be demonstrated how the proposal will seek to reduce the need to travel and secure a modal shift towards sustainable forms of transport. This should be through an approach which first considers the ability to cater for walking and cycling, provide suitable public transport services, and make better use of existing highway capacity before considering the provision of additional roads.

Evidence must be provided in Transport Assessments to demonstrate:

1. The principles established to give priority to pedestrians and other vulnerable road users in new developments, together with links to local service provision<sup>21</sup>;
2. Comprehensive, convenient and safe pedestrian and cycle links to schools, local employment and service provision;
3. Connectivity with existing walking and cycling networks; and
4. Robust consideration of the cumulative impacts of planned growth, including the cross-boundary impacts where appropriate.

Transport Assessments and Travel Plans must demonstrate how the development can be served by public transport services and the frequency of the service.

Where a Travel Plan is in place, the developer and/or user will provide an annual update on their action plan, reporting progress against agreed aims and targets for a minimum of 5 years post occupation.

The Council will require developers to deliver Travel Plan measures as outlined in their approved Travel Plans, particularly in relation to sustainable travel mode share targets and in some cases, will require an up-front financial contribution to be used to fund requisite additional measures/ corrective action.

## 14.8 Highways Safety and Design

14.8.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires planning decisions to take account of whether safe and suitable access to a development site can be achieved for all people.

14.8.2 Developments should be located and designed, to create safe and secure layouts which minimise conflict between general traffic and; emergency service vehicles, public transport, cyclists and pedestrians. Suitable and safe highway measures must be provided to mitigate the impact of development and enhance the use of the local road network for all users.

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<sup>21</sup> See the principles established in the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide and other Council guidance



## Policy T2: Highways Safety and Design

Proposals for new development must not have a detrimental effect on highway safety and patterns of movement, must provide appropriate access and have regard to the Council's standards as set out in the Council's Design Guide and Highway Construction Standards and Specifications Guidance.

Development will be permitted where:

1. The proposal is, or will be, well integrated with the existing transport network within and beyond the development itself; avoiding severance of communities as a result of measures to accommodate increased levels of traffic on the network;
2. The proposal does not impede the free flow of traffic on the existing network or create hazards to that traffic and other road users;
3. The proposal retains or enhances existing footpaths, bridleways and cycleway links;
4. The proposal promotes walking and cycling permeability and ensures that linkages and publicly accessible through-routes are created to successfully integrate the development into wider networks;
5. The development provides safe and convenient access and has regard to the appropriate standards in the Council's Design Guide and Highway Construction Standards and Specifications Guidance, that promote accessibility for all users and all modes of transport and includes designs, where appropriate, that incorporate low speeds;
6. The proposal must make adequate provision for loading and unloading, circulation, servicing and vehicle turning; and
7. The proposal fully funds where appropriate, or contributes towards the costs of any measures required to cost effectively mitigate the impacts arising from the development.

Development will be refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.

## 14.9 Parking

14.9.1 The provision of car parking associated with new developments for housing and all commercial uses should have regard to the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide and the Parking Strategy which forms part of the Local Transport Plan.

14.9.2 The location, availability, cost and enforcement of parking provision can have a significant impact on the travel choices people make, the safety of the network, and even the look and feel of the urban environment.

14.9.3 Innovative approaches to parking such as the provision of electric charging points, dedicated priority spaces for car sharers and secure, covered cycle shelters all help imbed sustainable transport options within new development.

14.9.4 With respect to freight, the provision of rest and parking facilities is important to maximise highway safety, preserve local amenity, reduce opportunities for crime and address the general needs of HGV driver working conditions. Such facilities should provide adequate rest areas for drivers and allow for the safe parking of large vehicles whilst minimising impacts on other road users.

### **Policy T3: Parking**

Developers of new residential, commercial and other trip generating developments, must have regard to the car parking standards set out in the Central Bedfordshire Council's Design Guide and Parking Strategy.

Provision for cycle parking in new developments must have regard to the standards in the Central Bedfordshire Cycle Parking Annex of the Local Transport Plan.

Provision of lorry parking and waiting facilities for all new industrial and commercial units, including quarries and waste management facilities must be made on site unless suitable alternative HGV parking and waiting facilities are available within the locality.

Suitable proposals for lorry rest facilities will be supported where the applicant has demonstrated there is a commercial demand.

## **14.10 Development and Public Transport Interchanges**

14.10.1 The ability to access bus and rail services is an essential element of the transport strategy for new development. It helps support the viability of public transport services and the vitality of our market towns.

14.10.2 For Central Bedfordshire, interchanges can range from a cluster of bus stops in a market town, which enable interchange from one bus service to another, to larger bus/ rail/ walking and cycling interchanges, such as those located at Leighton Buzzard, Flitwick and Biggleswade. These larger facilities should enable interchange between bus and rail by providing a high-quality waiting area and onward travel information, enabling a connected journey for locations that are not within walking or cycling distance of a railway station. An interchange should also be served by appropriate walking and cycling routes.

14.10.3 Where new development is proposed that will create demand for public transport services outlined as part of their Transport Assessment, this will be reflected in a requirement to contribute to, or provide improvements to an appropriate transport interchange, alongside the enhancement of bus services under the requirements of Policy T1.

### Policy T4: Public Transport Interchanges

Where Transport Assessments and Travel Plans are required, in accordance with Policy T1, these should detail and promote connectivity and enhanced access to a transport interchange.

Developments that create a demand for public transport services should provide enhanced access to, and/or facilities at, an appropriate transport interchange. This may include all or some of the following:

1. Contributions to capital works to enhance interchange infrastructure, for example car and cycle parking or access for all, or provide new interchanges and/or associated facilities;
2. Connecting walking and cycling routes to enable walk/rail and cycle/rail interchange;
3. Bus stop infrastructure; and
4. Highway works to accommodate existing and new bus services.

## 14.11 Ultra Low Emissions Vehicles (ULEV)

14.11.1 The use of electric vehicles is an important measure in reducing CO2 emissions and improving local air quality and therefore the provision of necessary infrastructure which promotes the use of such vehicles is essential. Reducing CO2 emissions and our impact on climate change is a priority for Central Bedfordshire particularly in the urban areas of Ampthill, Sandy and Dunstable which are identified as Air Quality Monitoring Areas (AQMAs).

14.11.2 Ultra Low Emissions Vehicles (ULEV) and associated charging infrastructure is an area where technology, standards and best practice are rapidly evolving therefore it is important that new development seeks to encourage continued growth and respond to such change.

14.11.3 The increased uptake of ULEV could entail the provision of at least one of the following in new development:

- On-site charging points for residential dwellings with dedicated off street parking (an external charging point on a driveway or a wall mounted internal charging point in a garage). On site charging points in allocated EV parking spaces;
- A financial contribution towards developing wider local ULEV infrastructure (for example, nearby but off-site in a more suitable/strategic location)

14.11.4 In advance of prescribed standards being set out in the Local Transport Plan, requirements will be based on case-by-case negotiation between the planning authority and the developer. For commercial, retail and industrial developments the requirements for points may be set as a proportion of total parking spaces provided, ensuring adequate charging infrastructure and cabling for each marked bay.

### Policy T5: Ultra Low Emissions Vehicles

The following new developments will be required to provide active charging posts, passive provision such as cabling and electricity supply for future demand, or contributions for future installation as demand increases for Ultra Low Emissions Vehicles:

1. Residential developments;
2. Supermarkets or retail areas;
3. Employment sites;
4. Education facilities, including Universities; and
5. Other large-scale trip generating uses.

The provision of charging points will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis until standards are set out in the Local Transport Plan which will then be applied to all qualifying developments.

## 14.12 The Movement and Management of Freight

14.12.1 The routing of traffic and particularly the movement of freight is a key issue in the creation of safe and attractive communities. The volume of freight transported through an area is often a useful measure of prosperity of a local economy and it is vital that local authorities cater for this demand. However such movements can have considerable impacts, especially where vehicles move from the strategic network onto local roads.

14.12.2 The Local Transport Plan will seek to enable the efficient and reliable transportation of freight and encourage the movement of freight by sustainable modes whilst minimising the negative impact of freight trips on local communities. There are a number of freight generators in Central Bedfordshire. These include:

- Large industrial parks located close to M1 Junctions 9 through to 13 and along the A421 linking Bedford to the M1;
- Industrial parks and warehousing facilities in Ampthill, Flitwick, Sandy, Biggleswade, Houghton Regis, Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard; and
- The transportation of aggregates and waste by road from local quarries and waste management facilities throughout Central Bedfordshire.

14.12.3 A Central Bedfordshire Designated Road Freight Network (DRFN), has been identified to provide links between key freight generators and attractors within the area whilst minimising impacts on local communities. It is comprised of primary routes which run through the authority providing access to major destinations of regional and national significance; and secondary routes which link identified freight generators and destinations to the primary route network and restrict lorries to roads where a minimum of environmental and infrastructure damage will occur.

14.12.4 It is intended that freight vehicles travel only on these roads, avoiding town centres as feasible, unless servicing local communities or destinations not on the designated network. The DRFN is supported by a series of signed weight, height and width restrictions zones across Central Bedfordshire that limit freight movements. The Council's LTP includes more information on this.

#### **Policy T6: Movement and Management of Freight**

Where a development will result in the movement of freight as part of its operations, Central Bedfordshire Council will:

1. Require evidence in the Transport Assessment that realistic alternatives to the movement of freight by road-based haulage are not possible or practical;
2. Ensure that developments forecast to generate significant freight movements are located where they deliver the greatest benefit for, businesses, and the least negative impact on the environment and local communities for example within industrial areas close to the Designated Road Freight Network; and
3. Require traffic management measure and developer contributions to mitigate impacts where necessary.

# 15. Environmental Enhancement

## 15.1 Overview

15.1.1 Central Bedfordshire's environment is key to its identity and widely valued by our residents, visitors and businesses. The varied and contrasting landscape, ecology, historic environment and settlement pattern contributes to the much-valued character and nature of the area.

15.1.2 We also depend on the ecosystem services, which are services provided by the natural environment that benefit people. These include:

- The provision of food and fuel;
- Cultural services that provide benefit to people through recreation and appreciation of nature;
- Regulation of the climate, purification of air and water, flood protection; and
- Supporting services, underpinning the provision of the above ecosystem services, such as soil formation, and nutrient and water cycling.

15.1.3 This section sets out the planning policies that will be applied to ensure that development in Central Bedfordshire protects and enhances our environment (natural, built and historic) and supports the ecosystem services that it provides. Chapter 19 of this Plan addresses how agricultural land will be protected through the Local Plan.

15.1.4 This section is underpinned by the Council's Environmental Framework, which summarises a range of local studies, assessments, strategies and guidance, and forms part of the technical evidence base for the Local Plan and is the supporting document for these policies. It covers natural environment enhancement and protection and the challenge of both mitigating the impact of climate change and adapting to the inevitable impacts. It provides an overview of national policy requirements, including those for Local Plans set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and the accompanying guidance (NPPG). It also details and summarises the key elements of the environmental evidence base for Central Bedfordshire, as well as providing sign-posting to these more detailed documents.

15.1.5 The Environmental Framework was the subject of a public consultation in Spring 2016, the responses to which have helped shape the policies included in this chapter.

15.1.6 In addition, the Council has produced a Design Guide, which sets out the key principles and standards to ensure all new development is of the highest quality.

15.1.7 The Design Guide shows how to embed green infrastructure, climate change, sustainability and the broader environmental principles covered in this chapter of the Local Plan into the design and development process in order to deliver well-designed development. In addition to the policies set out in this chapter developers should refer to the Design Guide for more detailed, practical advice on how these policy requirements can be included to improve the design quality of proposed developments.

## 15.2 Green Infrastructure

15.2.1 Green Infrastructure (GI) is the network of natural and semi-natural features, green spaces, rivers, watercourses and lakes that intersperse and connect villages, towns and urban areas. Individually, these elements are GI assets, and the roles that these assets play are GI functions. 'Green infrastructure' covers biodiversity, landscape, the historic environment, access and accessible green space.

15.2.2 When effectively planned and provided for, GI is multifunctional, and has many wider-ranging benefits. These include supporting mitigation and adaptation to the impacts of climate change (extreme weather, flooding, drought and heatwaves), improving health and wellbeing, facilitating stronger and more cohesive communities, supporting economic growth and investment, regenerating land and softening the impact of development, creating a sense of place, improving access to heritage and nature, and enhancing biodiversity and natural habitats.

15.2.3 The planned GI network is set out in the GI Plans that cover Central Bedfordshire on a number of scales. GI Plans are based on the spatial analysis of existing assets for protection, and identification of opportunities to buffer, extend and create new resources across Central Bedfordshire, and linking across administrative boundaries.

15.2.4 Within Central Bedfordshire, GI Plans exist on a number of scales. These include (ranging from large scale to smaller scale):

- The strategic level Green Infrastructure Plan, covering the whole of Bedfordshire,
- District level Green Infrastructure Plans, which cover Central Bedfordshire through the former district authority areas of Mid Bedfordshire and South Bedfordshire, as well as Luton.
- Parish and community Green Infrastructure Plans for many parishes and town in Central Bedfordshire.

15.2.5 The approach to these plans is similar, but the difference is in the level of detail, and the level of community involvement which increases for smaller scale plans, and the strategic overview, which decreases for the smaller scale plans.

15.2.6 There are also plans for Green Wheels and Greenways, showing opportunities for using existing and new paths to create off road, multi-user accessible corridors, encircling one or more communities, linking areas of wildlife, heritage and landscape value.

15.2.7 The Environmental Framework provides an overview of these Green Infrastructure Plans and links to further information. The Council's Design Guide also includes information on how to link with, integrate and improve green infrastructure within developments.

15.2.8 Additionally, a wide range of tools for analysing green infrastructure (as well as ecosystem services and natural capital) have been developed. These can be used by developers to assess the impact of development proposals on green infrastructure. More information can be found on the Ecosystem Knowledge Network website in the 'Tool Assessor' section<sup>22</sup>.

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<sup>22</sup> [www.ecosystemsknowledge.net/tool](http://www.ecosystemsknowledge.net/tool)

15.2.9 The Council will review existing GI Plans in order to produce an authority wide GI strategy. The aim of this strategy will be to provide evidence for a net gain in GI to deliver an appropriate quality and quantity of natural green space. This is in order to meet identified local needs, as part of a wider open space provision and to plan positively to remedy any deficiencies.

### Policy EE1: Green Infrastructure

All major development proposals must demonstrate a net gain in green infrastructure; linking, enhancing and extending existing green infrastructure assets, and creating new ones. The Council will be supportive of applications that have regard for Green Infrastructure Plans, identifying existing green infrastructure assets (both natural and historic), and opportunities for enhancing the green infrastructure network.

Where possible high quality, multifunctional green infrastructure will be integrated within developments, incorporating sustainable drainage systems and enhancing biodiversity, the historic environment, landscape character, the Rights of Way network and design quality, and making provision for the ongoing and effective management of this green infrastructure.

Existing green infrastructure, as identified in relevant Green Infrastructure Plans should be protected from development.

Development proposals should also take account of Green Wheel and Greenway Plans, Parish Green Infrastructure Plans and Neighbourhood Plans and consider how identified assets can be protected and enhanced, and for aspirations to be delivered by development.

Development that adversely affects identified green infrastructure assets, or adversely affects the future implementation of identified strategic or significant green infrastructure projects will not be permitted.

## 15.3 Enhancing Biodiversity

15.3.1 The Council's existing biodiversity and geodiversity assets provide the building blocks for the natural environment. These features are integral parts of the high-quality environment and surroundings that makes the area a desirable place to live and for businesses to operate.

15.3.2 National planning policy places great importance to the protection and enhancement of these features. One of its objectives is to secure measurable net gains in biodiversity and increased connectivity of ecological networks. This is further defined in Natural Environment White Paper, 'Making Space for Nature', which describes ecological networks, basing them on five components which are to be implemented at a landscape scale whilst working with existing land uses and economic activities.

15.3.3 This is summarised in more detail, along with information about national biodiversity policy and the local evidence base in the Environmental Framework.



15.3.4 Development proposals should be designed around existing components of the ecological network. These include:

- Sites of strategic or local importance for nature conservation, including the Greensand Ridge Nature Improvement Area (see section 15.8);
- Habitats of principal importance, as included in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (section 41);
- Rivers and other water courses, drains and all other water bodies, such as wetlands and ponds;
- Individual trees, woodland and orchards;
- Green/open space, including commons, parks and gardens, allotments, cemeteries, village greens, and any sites designated as Local Green Spaces;
- Wildlife corridors, including hedgerows, ditches, disused railways, verges and identified networks of routes for pollinators (known as 'B-lines'); and
- Post-industrial land such as disused quarries and former landfill sites.

15.3.5 Development should be designed to integrate these features into the development site, and extend the network through improving, buffering and extending these features, and including new features such as:

- Green features within the built environment, including street trees, green roofs and gardens;
- Choice of landscaping design and species composition can enhance ecological networks, delivering net gains for biodiversity;
- Integrated bat and bird boxes and hedgehog holes in fences; and
- Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS).

15.3.6 Developers should refer to the Design Guide in preparing development proposals as this includes information on how to link with, integrate and improve biodiversity within developments.

### Policy EE2: Enhancing Biodiversity

The Council will work with developers to conserve habitats, species and sites, delivering enhancement and creation of ecological networks. Development proposals will be permitted where they provide a net gain in biodiversity through the conservation, restoration, enhancement and creation of ecological networks of habitats, species and sites (both statutory and non-statutory) or international, national and local importance.

Development proposals will be permitted where they avoid negative impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity. Where this is not possible, proposals must mitigate unavoidable impacts and, as a last resort, compensate for residual impacts; delivering a net gain in biodiversity by:

1. Incorporating and enhancing existing and creating new biodiversity features within their design; and
2. Maximising opportunities to enhance and create links between ecological networks and habitats of principal importance. Links should be created both on-site and, where possible, with nearby features.

Development proposals within, or in close proximity to, an ecological corridor should enhance the functionality and connectivity of the corridor.

Development that would impact on the strategic ecological network causing fragmentation or otherwise prejudice its effectiveness will not be permitted.

## 15.4 Nature Conservation - Designated Sites and Protected Species

15.4.1 Biodiversity and geodiversity assets are divided into statutory and non-statutory sites. Statutory sites are designated by Natural England and include, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), National Nature Reserves (NNR) and Local Nature Reserves. Non-statutory sites include County Wildlife Sites and Local Geological Sites.

15.4.2 The Council's Nature Conservation Strategy considers protected species and habitats across Central Bedfordshire. It seeks to ensure their appropriate management and explores opportunities for enhancing the wildlife resource of our area. Information about the Nature Conservation Strategy, as well as designated sites and protected species in Central Bedfordshire is set out in the Environmental Framework.

15.4.3 Planning applications may need to include details about biodiversity and geological conservation. The Council's Biodiversity Checklist shows what information needs to be provided with an application.

15.4.4 Developers must check for the presence of protected species on development sites and seek professional advice to ensure that their proposals safeguard any protected species identified. Where the presence of protected species on development sites is likely, professional advice must be sought to ensure that proposals safeguard any protected species identified. Central Bedfordshire currently holds a GCN District Licence. The aim of this licence is to reduce delays, costs and uncertainty for developers

whilst providing strategic habitat compensation to improve long-term nature conservation for Great Crested Newts.

15.4.5 Other rare or endangered species should be taken into consideration with any development proposals. These include those species identified as of Principal Importance in the NERC Act.

15.4.6 Site and species specific ecological surveys are an important part of assessing a planning proposal. This information must therefore be provided when the planning application is submitted and, in accordance with British Standard BS42020 Biodiversity - Code of Practice for Planning and Development, cannot be provided later in the process through a planning condition or other mechanism.

15.4.7 Developments that are likely to have an adverse effect, either alone or in-combination, on European designated sites must satisfy the requirements of the Habitats Regulations, determining site specific impacts and avoiding or mitigating against impacts where identified. Mitigation may involve providing or contributing towards a combination of the following measures:

- Access and visitor management measures within the SAC;
- Improvement of existing greenspace and recreational routes;
- Provision of alternative natural greenspace and recreational routes;
- Monitoring of the impacts of new development on European designated sites to inform the necessary mitigation requirements and future refinement of any mitigation measures; and
- Other potential mitigation measures to address air pollution impacts e.g. emission reduction measures, on the management measures.

### Policy EE3: Nature Conservation

Important habitats and sites of geological and geomorphological interest will be protected, maintained and enhanced.

Up to date, comprehensive ecological surveys undertaken in accordance with industry guidelines and standards will be required to support and inform development proposals that would affect sites for nature conservation, protected species, or species and habitats of principal importance demonstrating development will deliver a net gain.

Development proposals will be permitted where:

1. They do not have an adverse effect, either alone or in-combination, on European designated sites, unless they satisfy the requirements of the Habitats Regulations\*;
2. They will not adversely affect SSSIs, NNRs and Roadside Nature Reserves; and
3. They are designed to prevent any adverse impact on:
  - a. County Wildlife Sites;
  - b. Local Nature Reserves;
  - c. Local Geological or Geomorphological Sites;
  - d. Protected species; or
  - e. Species and habitats of principal importance.

The assessment of adverse impacts will apply to potentially damaging development proposals that may affect the designated area. It will include the consideration of adverse cumulative effects with other existing or proposed development. Adverse impacts, such as disturbance through increased recreational pressure can result from new development and require mitigation to prevent detrimental impacts to the ecological resource.

*\*Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992*

## 15.5 Woodlands, Trees and Hedgerows

15.5.1 Woodlands, trees and hedgerows are key features within rural and urban environments. They provide a range of ecosystem services, including flood mitigation, carbon sequestration, provision of low carbon fuel and timber, as well as contributing to landscape character, amenity and the rural economy. They also help mitigate the effects of climate change. They can provide landmarks or 'stepping stones' between otherwise isolated habitats as well as being vital wildlife corridors and habitats in their own right. Central Bedfordshire has a relatively low level of woodland and tree cover. This limited resource is under threat from disease, development and climate change.

15.5.2 Central Bedfordshire has a number of important tree collections, historic parklands and trees planted to commemorate events which contribute to the present day character. As well as the Forest of Marston Vale, one of the 12 nationally designated community forests which is covered by specific policies in section 15.9. Individual trees make a significant contribution within settlements and the countryside; the challenge is to ensure new trees planted as part of new development are chosen appropriately and managed to ensure longevity and value.

15.5.3 The Council will develop a Tree Strategy to review the existing resource and identify threats and opportunities for enhancing and extending this.

#### Existing woodlands, trees and hedgerows, and their protection

15.5.4 Ancient woodland aged and veteran trees are irreplaceable resources that are protected from development in the NPPF. Construction close to, though not directly involving destruction of an ancient or semi ancient woodland, trees and hedgerows, can nevertheless still be damaging. A minimum buffer of 15 metres should be maintained between the development boundary and the woodland edge.

15.5.5 Some trees are protected through Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs), and trees in conservation areas are also protected by law. These only cover a small proportion of the valuable trees in Central Bedfordshire, however this does not mean that other trees are not locally valued or significant.

15.5.6 The Council will use TPOs to protect threatened trees that make a valuable contribution to public amenity. The Council will also work proactively with developers to ensure that protected trees are safeguarded from development, managed in accordance with good arboriculture practices, with full regard to public amenity, ecological and historical interests.

15.5.7 The incorporation of existing hedgerows and individual trees, and their integration within the layout of new developments will be expected. This can bring benefits with regard to the immediate enhancement and contribution to the design and sense of place. Developers need to design the layout of sites at the earliest stage to allow sufficient space for these retained features to thrive; incorporating them into the public realm and protecting them from root damage and changes to soil structure.

15.5.8 Rural hedgerows are important for their historic and biodiversity value and receive protection through the Hedgerow Regulations, 1997. If removal is proposed as part of a planning application, then the impact on local heritage will be taken into account. The retention of hedgerows within development will maintain ecological and landscape connection, although it is essential that sufficient space is allowed for its future growth for maintenance.

15.5.9 Where development may have an impact upon ancient woodland or veteran trees, applicants should refer to Natural England and the Forestry Commission's Standing Advice on Ancient Woodland and Veteran Trees and its associated Assessment Guide will be used where relevant.

#### Designing trees into new developments

15.5.10 In addition to the benefits detailed above, trees and hedgerows within developments have a vital role to play in helping to offset the potential effects of climate change. This can be achieved through shading, carbon storage, reduction of pollutants, interception and storage of water. They can also help integrate development, connect with the existing landscape framework and support ecological connectivity. Opportunities should be taken to plant new large, long lived species of trees which may be of exotic origin, to help build a diverse tree stock more able to withstand disease and climate change.

- 15.5.11 Trees in the urban environment also make a significant contribution to the character of townscapes and the setting of built form by engendering a sense of interest and quality of place. Avenue tree planting, feature trees at key points, groups and stands of trees in public open spaces including car parks, can create remarkable and memorable spaces providing interest through the seasons. Trees and understorey shrubs in parks, neighbourhood copses, along boundaries and within private gardens create a green spatial structure within, and throughout, built development. This offers urban habitats for biodiversity and links quiet tranquil green spaces, benefitting health and wellbeing for all.
- 15.5.12 Urban planting schemes should include a native species especially along boundaries and include native and ornamental flowering mixes to support wildlife, including pollinators. Care should be taken to avoid the use of species which may lead to the spread of non-native plants into the countryside.
- 15.5.13 Buildings and other structures should be sited to allow adequate space for a tree's natural development, with due consideration given to its predicted height and canopy spread. A Canopy Clearance Zone is used to quantify a suitable area around the tree. The Canopy Clearance Zone should be defined as an area surrounding the tree that enables a satisfactory relationship to exist between the property and the tree and as such, is equal to two-thirds of the tree's expected mature height, with all structures avoiding any encroachment into this area. All trees also require a Root Protection Area (as set out in BS 5837 : 2012) which is the minimum area around a tree deemed to contain sufficient roots and rooting volume needed to maintain the tree's vitality and anchorage, and where the protection of the roots and soil structure is a priority.
- 15.5.14 To assist developers, the Council has developed a Design Guide, which includes information on design considerations for trees that should be reflected in development proposals. The use of professional landscape architects to design and specify schemes is recommended.
- 15.5.15 The maintenance of new trees is critical for their long-term success and all planting schemes need to be managed to ensure that they realise their design objective. Formative pruning, particularly of street trees, is an important aspect of achieving the high-quality tree planting schemes expected within Central Bedfordshire.

## Policy EE4: Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows

Development Proposals will be permitted where:

1. They do not adversely affect ancient woodland and aged and veteran trees;
2. Woodlands, including semi-natural woodlands, planted ancient woodland sites, traditional orchards, hedgerows, and specimen trees found outside woodlands are protected and buffered;
3. Existing hedgerows and trees are incorporated to enhance developments, are integrated within the public realm, and are within a suitable landscape setting to ensure longevity. Hedgerows and treed boundaries should be reinforced, safeguarded within green corridors and extended where there is scope to create linkages; and
4. Any removal of trees or hedgerows to accommodate development is justified, and lost assets are replaced within the development site with appropriate planting of suitable species of equivalent scale and character and providing equivalent canopy cover and habitat connectivity.

Developers will be expected to include new planting in developments. Proposals will be permitted where:

5. New developments are designed to include significant tree features as part of residential areas, commercial and employment sites, streets and car parks;
6. The layout of developments (including residential areas, roads, parking areas, and open spaces) is designed to provide sufficient space to enable these trees to thrive, including adequate root protection areas and canopy clearance zones;
7. Landscaping schemes will take account of local landscape character and should consider climate change, ease of maintenance and ecological enhancement. They should include the use of non-native species where appropriate. Care must be taken to avoid the introduction of invasive species into planting schemes;
8. New tree planting is designed within a green corridor of appropriate scale, as part of the site's public realm, transport network and green infrastructure, to improve ecological connectivity, enhance local character and create a sense of place, and mitigate and adapt to climate change; and
9. Any development that forms a rural edge will include an effective landscape edge consisting of native tree and hedgerow planting consistent with the local landscape character.

## 15.6 Landscape Character and Value

15.6.1 The landscapes of Central Bedfordshire are highly valued by the people who live and work within them or use them for recreation. The Council recognises the value of the landscape as a resource for local economies, for the ecosystem services that are provided by the land, biodiversity, the historic environment, cultural heritage and recreational opportunities that they provide.

## Landscape Character

- 15.6.2 Central Bedfordshire has a varied and distinctive landscape which has been described and classified in the Central Bedfordshire Landscape Character Assessment (LCA).
- 15.6.3 The LCA process is an accepted and recognised method for understanding how the landscape evolved, how it may change in the future and how that change may be managed. The LCA describes and classifies the recognisable and consistent pattern of features that makes one landscape different from another rather than better or worse. This approach considers that all landscapes are valuable and seeks to protect their essential character.
- 15.6.4 The purpose of the LCA is to help ensure change and development is of the highest quality and does not undermine whatever defines and is valued about a place. It also advises on ways of improving character.
- 15.6.5 The Central Bedfordshire LCA is the primary evidence base for planning purposes. Further information about Landscape Character in Central Bedfordshire is set out in the Environmental Framework.
- 15.6.6 The Council will protect landscapes against unsympathetic development and work to ensure new development is of a high quality that respects landscape character, including tranquillity and the historic environment. The LCA is critical in this process and particular note should be taken of the key sensitivities and the related development guidelines. Development proposals will be expected to include plans for landscape improvements in accordance with the findings of the LCA and identify and respond to landscape character at the site level.
- 15.6.7 This will apply to all landscapes but particularly to those accommodating major developments, the existing urban fringe, the built edge of other settlements and those along prominent transport corridors. Depending on the nature and/or scale of the proposals, improvements may be required on or adjacent to the development site or to contribute towards wider, strategic landscape enhancement in the affected areas.
- 15.6.8 The Central Bedfordshire Design Guide has been produced to enable high quality 'place making', a critical element in achieving sustainable development. It sets out advice to allow developers to come up with good design solutions which respond positively to their surroundings, including landscapes. The Design Guide should be used in conjunction with the LCAs in order to produce the best development for a specific location. This should include how the proposals will address the landscape and how it will provide landscape (and biodiversity) improvements, for example by protecting views or softening an inappropriate hard urban edge.

## Valued Landscapes

- 15.6.9 Whilst all landscapes are important, some will have particular value where they exhibit the specific attributes and characteristic landscape features of a specific landscape character area, meaning it is considered representative of the landscape type or has characteristics which create a strong sense of place. These landscapes will typically contain features of biodiversity or geological value, and/or have historic environment interest. The Council will consider sites and/or settings that exhibit the identified



features below as valued landscapes and will protect them from adverse impacts. Value is increased if the landscape;

- Is particularly intact in terms of its character and the condition of individual landscape attributes and features;
- Is particularly valued for recreational use;
- Is a known viewpoint or forms part of a recognised vista/ local view;
- Is relatively rare or limited in its extent, in terms of including rare attributes or landscape features;
- Has perceptual qualities/significance such as tranquillity, remoteness or natural condition;
- Contains characteristic buildings and other built features;
- Shows a characteristic pattern of planting structures (e.g. woodlands and hedgerows) that contribute to the character of the wider landscape; and
- Has historical or cultural associations.

15.6.10 Central Bedfordshire Council will work in partnership to identify landscapes of local value, for example, through Neighbourhood Planning, GI Plans and Parish Design Guides.

### Tranquillity

15.6.11 Tranquillity is associated with audible and visual peace and is a significant asset in urban and rural areas. Tranquillity is not necessarily limited to remote areas and can be comparative to location, character of space and surroundings. It can be found in many areas, from large scale tracts of open landscapes to small urban parks, garden oases and informal urban open spaces with a hint of wildness.

15.6.12 Tranquillity can be significantly impacted on by intrusive movements, sights and sounds including those from transport, power lines and lighting. It is a quality that is hard to re-instate once lost. Undeveloped horizons are becoming increasingly scarce as are natural soundscapes and dark skies at night.

15.6.13 Tranquillity can support health and well-being and be a key contributor to quality of life. Therefore, ensuring tranquil spaces are available and accessible is vital. Tranquillity is also an important component in the enjoyment of other features including biodiversity, landscapes and heritage assets.

15.6.14 The NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should identify and protect areas of tranquillity which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason.

15.6.15 Developments should consider how they would affect tranquillity, using existing tools such as Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments, Health Impact assessments and ecological surveys to assess visual, noise and biodiversity impacts (e.g. on bats and invertebrates) respectively.

15.6.16 The Environmental Framework summarises the local evidence base relating to tranquillity including mapped information. Developers should use this local information to assess the impacts of their development on tranquillity, and to demonstrate how tranquil areas have been designed into their developments. For example, through layout, screening, materials and habitat or open space creation. Developers should refer to the Design Guide for guidance on how to address tranquillity.

### Policy EE5: Landscape Character and Value

In order to safeguard intrinsic character, scenic beauty and perceptual qualities of the landscape such as tranquillity, all development proposals will need to have regard to the key characteristics and sensitivities of the site and its setting, as set out in the Central Bedfordshire Landscape Character Assessment.

All major development proposals will be required to demonstrate how they incorporate landscape enhancement, in accordance with the guidelines in the LCA, the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide and other relevant documents for specific areas. This includes the Chilterns AONB, Forest of Marston Vale and the Greensand Ridge Nature Improvement Area. Landscape and visual appraisal will be expected to support planning applications and, include the assessment of local landscape character and views.

All development will be required to respect, retain and enhance the character and distinctiveness of the local landscape by:

1. Reflecting the local character and distinctiveness in terms of the scale and pattern of the surrounding landscape and existing settlement form; and
2. Integrating on-site mitigation sympathetic to local character in scale with the landscape setting as well as the scale of the development.

## 15.7 Chilterns AONB

15.7.1 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) are the highest national landscape designation and are therefore subject to very robust protection. The National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 115 states that “great weight should be given to conserving the landscape and scenic beauty of the AONB, which with National Parks, have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty.” Further material about national policy and local information is set out in the Environmental Framework.

15.7.2 The Chiltern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty was designated in 1965 to protect and conserve scenic beauty and to encourage the understanding and enjoyment of the area’s special qualities.

15.7.3 The Chilterns Conservation Board has produced a management plan for the AONB which provides a framework within which local authorities, Government and the Board itself operate. A Chilterns Building Design Guide has also been published and the Council expects any development proposals to take this fully into account. The Council will

continue to support the management plan and provide protection against inappropriate development. This may, depending on the nature and scale of the proposals, include development outside of the AONB boundary which might threaten its unique qualities, for instance by harming views to and from the AONB and/or adding to noise and light pollution. It is also expected that developers will remain aware and proposals will have regard to any future guidance produced by the Chilterns Conservation Board.

#### 15.7.4 Development proposals in the Chilterns or their setting should demonstrate how they have considered:

- The Chilterns AONB's special qualities which include the steep chalk escarpment with areas of flower-rich down land, broadleaved woodlands (especially beech), commons, tranquil valleys, the network of ancient routes, villages with their brick and flint houses, chalk streams and a rich historic environment of hillforts and chalk figures;
- The scope for enhancing and restoring those parts of the landscape which are degraded or subject to existing intrusive developments, utilities or infrastructure;
- Locally distinctive patterns and species composition of natural features such as chalk down land, trees, hedgerows, woodland, field boundaries, rivers and chalk streams;
- The locally distinctive character of settlements and their landscape settings, including the transition between man-made and natural landscapes at the edge of settlements;
- Visually sensitive skylines, geological and topographical features;
- Landscapes of cultural, historic and heritage value;
- Important views and visual amenity, including key views from the steep north-west facing chalk escarpment overlooking the low clay vale, and foreground views back to the AONB; and
- Tranquillity and remoteness and the need to avoid intrusion from light pollution, noise, and motion.

### Policy EE7: The Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is a nationally designated landscape and permission for major developments in the Chilterns AONB will be refused unless exceptional circumstances prevail as defined by national planning policy.

Planning permission for any proposal within the AONB, or affecting the setting or appreciation of the AONB, will be restricted to proposals that:

1. Conserve and enhance the Chiltern AONB's special qualities, distinctive character, tranquillity and remoteness in accordance with national planning policy and the overall purpose of the AONB designation;
2. Are appropriate to the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the area or are desirable for its understanding and enjoyment;
3. Meet the aims of the statutory Chilterns AONB Management Plan, making practical and financial contributions towards management plan delivery as appropriate; and
4. Avoid adverse impacts from individual proposals (including their cumulative effects), unless these can be satisfactorily mitigated.

Developments in the Chilterns AONB and its setting should respond to the landscape character (having considered all the relevant landscape character assessments) and be informed by landscape and visual impact assessment to understand the impacts of the proposed development on landscape character, and what options for mitigating negative impacts are possible.

## 15.8 Greensand Ridge NIA

15.8.1 The Government introduced Nature Improvement Areas (NIAs) in its Natural Environment White Paper. These are large areas where there are opportunities to focus efforts and deliver significant improvements for wildlife and people.

15.8.2 Within Central Bedfordshire, there is currently one NIA covering the Greensand Ridge. The Greensand Ridge is a narrow, elongated, elevated area which runs in a north-east/south-west direction covering a significant part of Central Bedfordshire. It covers just over 27,300ha and forms Natural England's National Character Area 90. More information about the Greensand Ridge, and the Nature Improvement Area designation is provided in the Environmental Framework.

15.8.3 The Council acknowledges that this Greensand Ridge NIA meets the required DEFRA criteria for locally designated Nature Improvement Areas, and recognises it as a Nature Improvement Area.

15.8.4 It is not the intention to restrict development in the NIA by specifying types of development that may be appropriate, but rather to look for opportunities to enhance nature conservation through development. Growth and development in the NIA should make a lasting contribution to its valuable environment, supporting and benefiting the natural environment.

15.8.5 The Greensand Ridge Nature Improvement Area is designated because of the opportunity it provides to support a better, stronger and more robust natural environment at a landscape scale. There is the opportunity to make significant improvements to the existing ecological network in terms of enlarging and enhancing existing wildlife assets and increasing ecological connectivity between them.

15.8.6 The Greensand Ridge NIA contains a range of characteristic habitats, including;

- Heathland and acid grassland;
- Wood pasture and parkland, including veteran trees;
- Woodland, including wet woodland;
- Neutral grassland; and
- Wetlands.

### Policy EE8: Greensand Ridge Nature Improvement Area

Development proposals within the Greensand Ridge Nature Improvement Area (NIA) will be permitted where they:

1. Demonstrate how a net gain in biodiversity will be delivered, including how gains in the quality and connectivity of ecological networks within and linking to the development will be delivered;
2. Enhance wildlife networks and increase ecological connectivity through buffering, extending and linking characteristic habitats (as listed above) both within and adjacent to developments;
3. Demonstrate how provision is made for species recovery and resilience;
4. Respect the topography and landscape of the NIA and be designed in such a way that it minimises visual impacts and protects local amenity; and
5. Provide opportunities for people to access and experience the NIA in a way that is sympathetic and sustainable towards existing habitats.

## 15.9 The Forest of Marston Vale

15.9.1 The Council is a founding partner in the 40-year vision to create the Forest of Marston Vale across 61 square miles between Bedford and Milton Keynes, as one of England's Community Forests, which together form the country's largest environmental regeneration initiative. The National Planning Policy Framework provides specific support for community forests such as the Forest of Marston Vale, noting that Forest Plans may be a material consideration in preparing Development Plans and in deciding planning applications.

15.9.2 The Forest of Marston Vale is one of 12 nationally designated community forests created in the 1990s, as part of a national programme to regenerate degraded landscapes near large urban populations through tree planting. It covers approximately 61 square miles and extends into Bedford Borough in the north and to the M1 in the south. It is a strategic and regionally important environmentally led regeneration initiative providing social, economic and environmental benefits. Working with local

communities, Government and businesses, the 40-year vision is to deliver environmental regeneration that brings forward social and economic regeneration of the area, whilst providing major landscape, recreation, biodiversity and quality of life benefits.

15.9.3 The primary aim of community forests is to increase tree canopy cover from 3% to 30% by 2031, which will require the planting of around 4,000 hectares of new woodland. In the last 21 years, there has been an increase of woodland cover from 3.6% to 10.6% over the whole forest area, approximately 1,141 hectares of new tree woodland.

15.9.4 In order to help the delivery of the tree canopy cover to 30%, developments within the Forest of Marston Vale will be expected to provide new tree cover on the development site. The Council expects that a range of opportunities for tree and woodland planting throughout development sites within the Forest area are explored through the design process. This can be in the form of establishing woodland, to individual trees and hedgerows.

15.9.5 Through delivering this increase in woodland cover and landscape change, a wide range of associated benefits and objectives will be delivered. The new wooded landscape will transform perceptions of the once-degraded area, encouraging inward investment and economic prosperity, providing an attractive location in which to live and work and a revitalised area which local communities can be proud of having helped to create through extensive community engagement. Recreation and leisure opportunities will be increased through the creation of new accessible woodlands, other green infrastructure and access routes. Increased woodland cover will help mitigate the impacts of climate change by providing a local, sustainable source of biomass for use as fuel, as well as through carbon sequestration. With around 4,000 hectares of new woodland, plus other environmental improvements, the area will deliver significant biodiversity benefits, creating a landscape richer in wildlife, as well as this new well-wooded landscape stimulating the development of a woodland economy and associated job creation.

15.9.6 The creation of the Forest of Marston Vale is guided by the Forest Plan, a non-statutory plan produced through very extensive consultation. The Forest Plan is the key reference for creating the Forest of Marston Vale, setting out the vision, objectives and broad proposals for the 61 square mile area. The Forest of Marston Vale Trust is the independent registered charity dedicated to the environmental regeneration and delivery of green infrastructure throughout the Marston Vale, in accordance with the Forest Plan.

15.9.7 The Council remains committed to the Forest of Marston Vale and the approved Forest Plan. As set out in the NPPF, the Forest Plan will be a material consideration when evaluating planning applications. The Council therefore expects development proposals to demonstrate how they contribute to the delivery of the Forest Plan. This will ensure that development contributes to the environmentally led regeneration of the Forest of Marston Vale area by ensuring that development delivers a net gain in environmental quality, creates the 'forested' sense of place and character set out in the Forest Plan, and brings economic, social and environmental benefits to the area.

15.9.8 New design guidance for development within the Forest of Marston Vale will be produced jointly with Bedford Borough Council, and adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). Development proposals, delivering 30% on site tree canopy cover, should refer to this guidance on development and woodland creation in the Forest of Marston Vale. Should 30% tree canopy cover not be possible on proposal sites, this will need to be demonstrated by robust evidence and agreed by the Council. Where the Council accepts onsite provision cannot be made, provision will have to be made in accordance with the SPD, which will provide advice on alternative options.

### **Policy EE9: Forest of Marston Vale**

Central Bedfordshire Council will continue to support the creation of the Forest of Marston Vale to deliver the environmentally led regeneration of the area. Development proposals within the Forest of Marston Vale will be required to:

1. Demonstrate how they will deliver 30% tree canopy cover, within the public realm, across the development site. This can be achieved through a combination of retaining and protecting existing trees, woodlands and hedgerows, and the on-site planting of new trees, woodlands and hedgerows; and
2. Contribute to the environmentally led regeneration of the Forest of Marston Vale, in line with the aims of the Forest Plan.

Only where robust evidence agreed by the Council can demonstrate that 30% tree canopy cover cannot be delivered within the public realm on site, will alternative delivery mechanisms be considered.

## **15.10 The Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterway Park**

15.10.1 The Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterway Park is a strategic project to link the main UK waterway network with the Fens waterways of East Anglia. This will be done by linking Bedford to Milton Keynes with a new waterway that is set within a multifunctional parkland corridor. The indicative route of the waterway is illustrated on the Policies Map and is safeguarded by Policy EE10. It will provide an attractive location for businesses and a potential setting for housing growth, as well as a major tourism destination, an attractive green space destination, an ecologically rich corridor and a space for recreation and healthy living. More detail about the Bedford and Milton Keynes Waterway Park is set out in the Environmental Framework. Further guidance will also be set out in the Forest of Marston Vale SPD.

15.10.2 The Council is part of a consortium of eight organisations that have agreed to work together with the aim of delivering the Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterway Park.

15.10.3 A guidance note (A Brief Guide to Space, Design and Other Technical Issues in providing for the Bedford Milton Keynes Waterway) should be referred to by developers, with development proposals demonstrating how the design of the Waterway Park to the standards and requirements referenced has been incorporated into the development proposals.

### **Policy EE10: The Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterway Park**

Development on the route of the Bedford and Milton Keynes Waterway Park will be expected to deliver the section of the Waterway Park within the development boundary, incorporating a Waterway channel and 'towpath' for non-motorised users within a multifunctional green corridor.

Development that would adversely affect the implementation of the Waterway Park (as identified on the Policies Map), or that does not provide accommodation for the Waterway and associated infrastructure will not be permitted.

## **15.11 River and Waterway Network**

15.11.1 Central Bedfordshire includes sections of the river and canal network. The Grand Union Canal and River Ouzel run through the west of Central Bedfordshire, and the River Ivel through the east of the area. These natural and built waterways contribute to economic, environmental and social wellbeing. These different waterways have different characteristics and provide a range of functions.

15.11.2 Each waterside location needs to be considered individually, with no single design approach being appropriate in all locations. Development proposals and surface water plans for sites in close proximity to the waterways need to be designed to enhance the waterside area. Additional engagement with the Internal Drainage Board should be sought at an early stage.

### **Policy EE11: The River and Waterway Network**

Proposals for development adjacent to the river and waterway network will be permitted where they:

1. Seek to protect, conserve and enhance the waterways' heritage, built environment, landscape character and biodiversity, including the protection of flood areas, where appropriate;
2. Promote the waterway and towpath/riverside paths as part of the green infrastructure and open space network and encourage their use as a tourism destination and for leisure, recreation and healthy outdoor activity; and
3. Promote the use of the waterway and towpath/riverside paths for sustainable transport and recreational routes for walking, cycling, and horse riding, and where appropriate, provide and protect new tow and riverside paths.



## 15.12 Public Rights of Way

- 15.12.1 The public Rights of Way network offers people access to enjoy Central Bedfordshire's countryside and heritage and in the process, improve their health and quality of life. It also forms an intrinsic part of our overall transport network, providing valuable and safe access on foot and increasingly by cycle to the wider countryside, places of employment, schools, shops and other local services and amenities. More information about the access network and the Council's plans for its improvement can be found in the Environmental Framework.
- 15.12.2 The Rights of Way network provides a key alternative to car use on journeys of less than five miles. The Council will ensure that Rights of Way are protected, enhanced and promoted.
- 15.12.3 The Outdoor Access Improvement Plan details the routes for improvement and will provide the specific standards for how public Rights of Way affected by development are to be retained and enhanced. In addition, the Local Transport Plan, Leisure Strategy, Green Infrastructure Plans and other emerging policies, strategies and plans also provide information about access needs.
- 15.12.4 There will be a need for improvements to the Rights of Way network affected by development proposals in order to encourage more walking, cycling and horse riding through improved accessibility, surfacing and connectivity. Where the scale and location of development will require connections and/or lead to increased use by new and existing residents, the Council will secure appropriate contributions from the applicants. Consideration will be given to achieving off-site local pedestrian, bridleway and cycleway routes which connect development sites with open spaces, leisure/community uses and strategic access routes, make links within the wider Rights of Way network, or create circular or extended routes.
- 15.12.5 At the earliest opportunity and as part of their planned development, applicants are required to record the route of any public Rights of Way affected by proposed development and submit a Rights of Way Scheme for their improvement, accommodation or diversion in accordance with the Council's Rights of Way Standards and Guidance for Development. Rights of Way schemes should detail what is proposed for existing routes, including whether the paths are to be incorporated into the design or diverted. They must also include landscape proposals for the paths, and details regarding new routes and connections to the Rights of Way and access network. Details regarding how any Rights of Way are to be dealt with during construction must also be included.
- 15.12.6 Details about standards and guidance for development are set out in the Council's 'Public Rights of Way: Standards and Guidance for Development' document, which provides detailed information on Rights of Way and the development process, what is expected from Rights of Way schemes, and design guidance. In addition to this guidance on Rights of Way on the Council's website, developers should also refer to, the Design Guide, which provides information on design considerations for access routes that should be reflected in development proposals.

### Policy EE12: Public Rights of Way

Development proposals for sites that include a Right of Way within the site, or are for major development proposal adjacent to an existing Right of Way, will be required to submit a Rights of Way Scheme that demonstrates how the development will protect, enhance and promote the public Rights of Way network. This must include, where necessary, improvements to help restore and re-connect Rights of Way.

Where development would increase the pressure on the Rights of Way network, contributions may be sought through planning obligations for measures to protect and enhance the Rights of Way network, including the delivery of additional routes and improvements to existing public paths both on-site and off-site.

## 15.13 Outdoor Recreation

15.13.1 The NPPF identifies how the planning system can support the creation of healthy, inclusive communities through the provision of social, recreational and cultural facilities such as open spaces, community facilities and sports venues. It highlights the need for local authorities to undertake robust needs assessments to support policy for the provision and protection of leisure, sporting and recreational facilities. It also highlights that existing open space, sports and recreational land and buildings, including playing fields, should not be built on, unless clear criteria are met:

- An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
- The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
- The development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.

15.13.2 Local authorities have a critical role in ensuring new developments deliver sport, recreation and physical activity facilities and opportunities to support and promote physical activity, increase wellbeing and tackle the causes of ill health.

15.13.3 The Council recognises that sport and physical activities should be available to all, but that each person has different needs which may be addressed in different ways. To ensure the appropriate delivery of leisure, sport and recreation facilities to meet the needs of our residents, Central Bedfordshire Council engaged with residents and partner organisations to produce the three facility chapters which comprise the Leisure Strategy SPD:

- Chapter 1: Leisure Facilities Strategy - covers indoor sports facilities such as leisure centres. More detail about the Indoor Sport and Leisure Facilities Strategy is provided in Section 17.4 of this Plan;
- Chapter 2: Recreational Open Space Strategy - defines local standards for the provision of nine types of open spaces; and

- Chapter 3: Playing Pitch Strategy - sets standards and facility requirements for outdoor sports pitches, courts and greens.

15.13.4 These chapters provide the guidance and evidence to identify the quantitative and qualitative requirements for indoor sports and leisure centre facilities; nine types of outdoor sports facilities; and nine types of recreational space. These typologies were developed during the creation of the Strategy to reflect the character of facilities in Central Bedfordshire. The Leisure Strategy supports national policy through the assessment and delivery of facilities which provide equality of provision, enhance the local environment, increase people's wellbeing and create a fitter and healthier population.

15.13.5 To support the delivery of the Leisure Strategy at the local level, the Leisure Strategy GIS layer (database of maps) maps all recreation and open space sites, and this is shown on the Policies Maps. A Parish Schedule for each settlement lists existing leisure sites and identifies local facility needs. Chapter 3 is also supported by the Outdoor Sport Priority Project List which details the current projects identified to address specific sporting needs. Both provide details of projects towards which contributions may be sought in lieu of on-site facility provision.

### Recreational Open Space

15.13.6 The NPPF addresses the importance that access to open space has for the health and wellbeing of the local population. It advises local authorities to set local standards for the provision of open space and recreational facilities based on a robust assessment of existing provision and future requirements.

15.13.7 A range of high-quality green spaces from doorstep to destination sites are crucial in providing a varied setting for informal sport or casual physical activity. Such spaces: Provide opportunities for physical activity for those unlikely to participate in formal sport, they enhance the appearance of the local area, provide play opportunities for children and young people, and deliver ecological benefits particularly in an urban environment. The multiple benefits that can be derived from open spaces are being increasingly recognised. 'Being outdoors' itself is said to be more beneficial than playing a sport or doing an activity; as it is the environment which is delivers physical and mental benefits.

15.13.8 Central Bedfordshire has a diverse range of open spaces which include formal parks, urban green corridors, informal green spaces, wildlife sites and links to the countryside, as well as local greenspaces and children's play areas. The sites are owned and managed by a range of organisations, including Central Bedfordshire Council, Town and Parish Councils, environmental charities and private landowners. These green spaces form an essential part of the quality and character of Central Bedfordshire, and the Council will support their protection and enhancement to ensure that the area remains an attractive place to live.

15.13.9 The Council aims to ensure that open spaces are available within a short walking distance from peoples' homes and form 'stepping stones' on routes to key destinations such as schools and community facilities. Attractive open spaces complement and

improve the quality of new development. The Council will support the provision of new spaces of different characters and at a variety of scales including:

- Formal parks and squares, village ‘community’ greens and sports and recreation open spaces;
- Tranquil natural areas hosting habitats and wildlife or offering adventure and play; and
- Small, characterful spaces providing breathing spaces within higher density urban settings.

15.13.10 Providing a range of spaces and formal and informal activity opportunities which are accessible to all increases interest and participation in recreation, be it active or passive. Accommodating a range of activities within an open space encourages a variety of people to visit and share spaces providing vital community cohesion and enjoyment.

15.13.11 The Leisure Strategy Chapter 2: Recreational Open Space Strategy assesses the nine typologies of open space most commonly found in Central Bedfordshire. Consideration should be given to the Recreational Open Space Strategy and individual Parish Schedules which detail the provision requirements to deliver both local and strategic open spaces. The Council’s open space standards are summarised in the table below.

15.13.12 The Chapter 2 typology of open spaces includes Countryside Recreation Sites and Informal Recreation Sites, which are also important for biodiversity. For many sites, such as nature reserves, ecological benefits are the primary purpose of the site, with recreation a potential added benefit. The Leisure Strategy therefore considers the level of recreational benefit in relation to the ecological sensitivity of the site, enabling the standards to set out sufficient provision of open spaces, including natural areas, for people to use and enjoy without putting undue pressure on open space sites with sensitive environmental interests.

Type of Open Space	Quantity (per 1000 population)
Countryside Recreation Sites	3.19ha
Urban Parks	0.22ha (Major Service Centres only) 0.39ha (Minor Towns where/if required)
Large Formal Recreation Areas	1.20ha
Informal Recreation Areas	2.6ha
Small Amenity Spaces	0.55ha
Children’s Play Space	0.11ha
Provision for Young People	0.05ha (plus buffer zone of 20-30m from nearest dwelling)
Allotments	0.37ha (15 plots)
Cemeteries and Churchyards	2.03ha (burial plots)

15.13.13 The Central Bedfordshire Design Guide provides guidance on how open spaces should be designed as part of development proposals; and Children’s Play Area Guidance identifies requirements for formal play areas. Developers should have regard to this guidance as they work up and submit their proposals.

### Playing Pitches (Outdoor Sport)

15.13.14 The detailed facilities assessment of current and future needs for outdoor playing pitches, courts and greens is contained in Chapter 3: Playing Pitch Strategy. This supports the provision of accessible and locally appropriate sporting facilities and opportunities which also helps tackle physical inactivity as one of the primary causes of ill health.

15.13.15 The Council will support the delivery of new, and the enhancement of existing outdoor sporting facilities to provide a varied range of sporting facilities and opportunities for Central Bedfordshire’s growing population. The Council will assess the needs generated by a development for each sport using the Playing Pitch Strategy and the Outdoor Sport Priority Projects List.

15.13.16 For larger developments, the provision of sports facilities may be sought on the development site in line with local or strategic sporting needs. Proposals will be considered on a case-by-case basis, with reference to the Playing Pitch Strategy and the Outdoor Sport Priority Projects List. Where facilities are provided on-site, they must be designed and constructed in accordance with Sport England and National Governing Bodies for Sport (NGB) design guidance.

15.13.17 New sports facilities should be sited in accessible locations to encourage use but should be located away from residential properties to minimise disturbance to residents. New pitches should be supported by changing/pavilion facilities, car parking and other ancillary facilities in accordance with Sport England and the respective NGB requirements and local circumstances.

15.13.18 Where outdoor pitch facilities such as football and rugby are required, the Council will seek the delivery of multi-pitch sites which facilitate progression through the age groups from children to adult, and support ‘community’ clubs which are sustainable in sporting and financial terms. All facilities should be supported by changing facilities and parking and should be sited in locations which are accessible and minimise disturbance to residents. On-site outdoor sport facilities or contributions would not be sought from care home developments. For retirement developments where there is a mix of independent living accommodation and care beds, a contribution may be sought toward relevant types of outdoor sports facilities from the independent element only.

15.13.19 Where possible all new sports facilities will be sited in locations which allow the facility to expand as the club grows and/or to accommodate additional demand from additional housing growth.

15.13.20 For smaller developments where on-site sports facilities are not appropriate, the Council will seek contributions toward sporting projects identified in the Outdoor Sport Priority Project List. The List has been developed in conjunction with Sport England, National Governing Bodies for Sport and local clubs and is based on the facility needs identified in the Strategy and through ongoing consultation.

15.13.21 Contributions sought for sports projects will be calculated using the Sport England Playing Pitch Calculator (or any subsequent method) which utilises the data from Chapter 3 of the Playing Pitch Strategy to derive a locally based calculation. Sport England has developed the calculator to provide a sound method of calculating planning obligations, and this will be used by the Council to identify the level of contribution required from new development. Policy HQ4 of this Plan addresses the protection and provision of indoor sport and leisure facilities in relation to new development.

15.13.22 The Council will protect existing open spaces and outdoor sport facilities from development and support the Sport England Exceptions Policy. In accordance with the NPPF, where facilities are lost to alternative uses, replacement provision should be equal or better in terms of quantity or quality and should be in a suitable location. This should be accessible and within a similar catchment to the original facility. Contributions could also be provided for the re-provision of a facility, where land has been secured which is suitable and available.

### Policy EE13: Outdoor Sport, Leisure and Open Space

Proposals for residential development will be permitted where they provide appropriate on-site facilities or contributions towards the provision of open space and outdoor sports facilities, in line with the following criteria.

On new residential developments, the Council will:

1. Require the provision of open spaces and outdoor sports facilities in accordance with the Leisure Strategy standards (or more up to date evidence) and facility requirements; and
2. Require on-site open space and outdoor sports facilities to be an integral part of the development and incorporated into the design of the development at an early stage.

#### Open Spaces

3. Require the provision of on-site open spaces unless up-to-date evidence demonstrates alternative provision is more appropriate;
4. Require on-site open spaces to be designed to complement proposals for green infrastructure, landscaping, the historic environment, ecological enhancement, and climate change adaptation. Potential recreational damage to Habitats of Principal Importance and ecologically sensitive sites should be avoided through good design; and
5. Require contributions towards the provision, enhancement and/or extension of open spaces identified within the Leisure Strategy and the Parish Schedules, where a development does not provide open space on the site.

#### Outdoor sport

6. Require the provision of on-site outdoor sports facilities on larger developments, (over 300 dwellings) as defined by Policy HQ9, in accordance with the Leisure

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Strategy standards and facility requirements, unless up-to-date evidence demonstrates alternative provision is more appropriate;

7. Require smaller developments (under 300 dwellings) where on-site provision of outdoor sports facilities is not required, to contribute towards the provision, enhancement and/or extension of existing facilities in accordance with the Leisure Strategy and Parish Schedules; and
8. Require outdoor sports facilities which are delivered by the developer to be designed and constructed in accordance with Sport England Facility Guidance, together with the facility guidance of the relevant National Governing Body for Sport (NGB).

**Management and maintenance**

Where new open spaces and outdoor sports facilities are being delivered, the developer must provide a management scheme which details the future ownership, management and maintenance of the site. Where the asset is to be adopted by the Local Authority or Town/Parish Council, commuted sums will be paid for maintenance of the facility.

Redevelopment of open spaces and outdoor sports facilities for other purposes will only be permitted where:

9. An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
10. The facilities would be replaced by equivalent or better provision, in terms of quantity and quality, in a suitable, accessible location, within a similar catchment to the original facility, where possible; or a contribution provided for the re-provision of the facility, where land has been secured that is suitable and available for that provision; or
11. The development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the need for which clearly outweigh the loss.

In considering the loss of facilities to development, the Council will support the Sport England Exceptions Policy.

**New outdoor sport, leisure and open space facilities**

Proposals for new outdoor sport, leisure and open space facilities within Settlement Envelopes will be supported where they comply with other relevant policies within the Plan.

For sites directly adjacent to the Settlement Envelopes, proposals for new outdoor sport, leisure and open space facilities will be permitted where:

12. A need for the proposed facility be identified; and
13. It can be demonstrated that no land is available within the Settlement Envelope.

## 15.14 Local Green Space

15.14.1 The NPPF introduced the designation of 'Local Green Space'. These are areas where development is ruled out, apart from in very special circumstances. This designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open spaces, and should only be applied where;

- The green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- The green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife, and
- The green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

15.14.2 The Council supports the principle of designating Local Green Spaces through Neighbourhood Plans, where a clear and robust methodology consistent with Government guidance has been followed.

## 15.15 Restoration of Minerals and Waste Sites

15.15.1 The Council is fully committed to achieving higher standards of restoration of mineral extraction and landfill sites and changing public attitudes are also demanding these improving standards. Industry recognises the need for high quality restoration and safe and responsible management of minerals and waste management sites. Standards of restoration have generally improved in recent years although there remains scope for further improvement.

15.15.2 One way of minimising development impact is to ensure that land taken for mineral and waste uses is restored at the earliest opportunity and that it is left in a safe state capable of sustaining an acceptable after-use. 'Amenity' is the general term for being able to enjoy the countryside, for example through recreation (e.g. angling, walking, water sports etc.) and nature conservation. On larger sites restoration will be required to be progressive in nature and to take place within a reasonable timescale, so that only a portion of the whole site is disturbed by mineral extraction or waste disposal operations at any one time.

15.15.3 Applicants will normally be required to submit an aftercare scheme for a period of five years following restoration to ensure that the restoration scheme is maintained until it becomes naturally self-sustaining. In certain cases, it may be appropriate to agree a shorter or longer period, depending on the nature of the restoration scheme.

15.15.4 In a country with such a high proportion of good quality agricultural land – 34% of the agricultural land is classified as Grade 1 or 2 and 42% is Grade 3 (a and b) – the loss of such land to mineral extraction has been a major planning issue. The best and most versatile land (BMV) is classed as grades 1, 2, and 3a). In the past it was national policy to retain agricultural land in full production and to ensure that a minimum was lost to development. At a time of surpluses in agricultural production the need now is to foster diversification of the rural economy and to balance this against the continuing need to protect the countryside for its own sake without the special priority hitherto afforded to agriculture production. The Council will therefore have regard to the balance of



environmental impacts and local economic benefits in determination of planning applications on BMV agricultural land, but will only grant permission where any loss of BMV land is clearly justified.

- 15.15.5 Once land is lost to certain development it can be difficult to return it to agriculture. The best and most versatile land is seen as a national resource to be protected from irreversible loss and the current agricultural surpluses are not accepted as an argument against restoring the best and most versatile land to its original quality. The NPPF (paras 112 and 143) indicates that where there is a choice between sites or different classifications, development should be diverted towards land of the lowest possible classification except where other sustainability considerations suggest otherwise. These might include biodiversity, landscape and amenity value, heritage interest or accessibility to infrastructure, local economic diversity, and the protection of natural resources.
- 15.15.6 Certain forms of mineral and waste developments may attract large number of birds either unintentionally for example with respect to non-hazardous landfill sites or intentionally when sites are restored to a nature conservation use. Proposals for sites which might have an impact on aviation safety will need to be rigorously assessed.
- 15.15.7 The NPPF (paras 120, 121 and 143) make it clear that all development should take account of ground conditions and land instability in order to ensure that sites are suitable for its new use and that any uses do not have any unacceptable adverse impacts on the natural and historic environment or human health.
- 15.15.8 Finally, the operation of a mineral facility or waste facility may require the construction or erection of associated temporary and permanent buildings, plant and equipment (e.g. the storage of minerals and waste, minerals and waste processing/treatment equipment, construction of a haul road etc.). Permission will normally be granted for such operations where the developer can demonstrate the benefit of the development. When the ancillary development is no longer required or temporary planning permission expires, the site must be restored to its former use or to an improved scheme approved by the Council. Environmental control facilities required in connection with landfill sites such as boreholes for landfill gas and groundwater monitoring and landfill gas utilisation plant will be required beyond the period of landfill operations.

### Policy EE14: Minerals and Waste Restoration

The Council will require all proposals for non-permanent minerals or waste development to include the high-quality restoration of the site within a reasonable timescale. Opportunities for habitat creation should be considered and, where practical and desirable, provided in all restoration proposals. The MPA/WPA will support after uses which accord with the policies of the Development Plan.

All proposals for minerals and waste development will, where relevant:

1. Include the high-quality progressive reclamation and aftercare of the site;
2. Be limited to the duration of the main operation;
3. Be carried out in a manner which will preserve the long-term agricultural quality of the land at the same or higher Agricultural Land Classification Grade as that preceding the development; or
4. Where it can be shown that no known suitable alternative site of lesser agricultural value is available, and that the loss of 'best and most versatile' agricultural land is reduced as far as practicable and is clearly outweighed by other planning benefits of the proposal;
5. Include an assessment of ground stability conditions before and after completion of all site activities and demonstrate that there will not be any unacceptable adverse impacts;
6. Include an assessment of the impact on aviation safety and demonstrate that there will not be an unacceptable adverse impact;
7. Be accompanied by Ecological Impact Assessment, including consideration of hydrogeological impacts; and
8. Pay due regard to the historic environment, particularly in relation to the setting of any heritage assets (whether designated or non-designated) affected by the development proposals.

# 16. Climate Change and Sustainability

## 16.1 Overview

- 16.1.1 This section sets out the planning policies that will be applied to ensure that development in Central Bedfordshire is delivered in a way that contributes to the mitigation of climate change and embeds adaptation to the impacts of climate change in order to limit negative impacts.
- 16.1.2 The NPPF stresses that responding to challenges of climate changes is central to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, placing an emphasis on local planning authorities to adopt proactive strategies to mitigate and adapt to climate change in line with provisions and objectives of the Climate Change Act (2008).
- 16.1.3 As with the Environmental Enhancement Section, this chapter is underpinned by the Council's Environmental Framework. This document summarises a range of local studies, assessments, strategies and guidance, and forms part of the technical evidence base for the Local Plan and is the supporting document for these policies.

## 16.2 Planning for Climate Change

### Climate change mitigation: Cutting the carbon footprint of new development

- 16.2.1 The Climate Change Act (2008) establishes a legally binding target to reduce the UK's greenhouse emissions by at least 80% in 2050 from 1990 levels.
- 16.2.2 The Government's expectation set through the NPPF is that each local authority contributes to meeting this target through setting local requirements for the sustainability of buildings that are consistent with the Government's zero carbon policy, adopt nationally described standards, and promote energy from renewable and low carbon sources.
- 16.2.3 The Council recognises the benefits of using the energy hierarchy in reducing energy demand and a fabric first approach, along with use of passive solar design is recommended before deciding on appropriate renewable and low carbon technologies.
- 16.2.4 As such, the Council will require all major developments to submit a Sustainability Statement that clearly demonstrates the steps that will be taken to minimise the lifetime carbon emissions resulting from the development. This could focus cutting carbon emission by reducing energy demand through taking a 'fabric first' approach to building or the implementation of building or development based renewable and low carbon technologies.
- 16.2.5 The aim will ultimately be to reduce the impact of the proposed development by at least 10%. This will be measured through a reduction in carbon dioxide emissions rates, with the baseline for this calculation being target emission rates determined by Part L of the Building Regulations, applicable at the time of the application.

16.2.6 The Sustainability Statement will also set the strategy to address widely recognised issue of buildings not performing as designed (identified by Zero Carbon Hub as the performance gap), by confirming the proposed measures to ensure that new buildings achieve the energy performance intended at the design stage.

**Climate change adaptation: Water efficiency; flood resilience, subsidence and overheating.**

16.2.7 Climate change projections show that we will experience hotter drier summers, milder winters, and the associated extreme weather impacts of drought and flooding.

16.2.8 In 2017 the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment highlighted the need to take early action to mitigate the risks to the environment, the economy and to health, and to ensure that the UK can adapt to the changing climate.

16.2.9 The Central Bedfordshire Local Climate change Risk Assessment (LCCRA) identifies flooding, overheating, water resources shortages, subsidence and impacts on the natural environment as risks that need to be planned for and managed. These correspond with the 2017 National Climate Change Risk Assessment as priority areas for actions.

16.2.10 Adaptation to climate change is a dynamic and flexible process, with decisions that are made in the near term needing to have regard of the long lifespan of buildings and infrastructure. This includes exploiting opportunities to adapt existing built areas, for example through maximising green infrastructure or by increasing the amount of urban greenery to help absorb floodwater and make buildings and open spaces more comfortable in hot weather. Projected climate changes and their impacts should be taken into account and all developments should be designed to the current best estimate of future impacts, or where demonstrated as not practicable, development design should allow retrofit of adaptation measures, for example fitting of brise soleil to prevent overheating.

**Making development resilient to the impacts of increased rainfall and drought**

16.2.11 The design of new developments should reflect the increasing likelihood of periods of either drought or flooding, and consequently value water as a resource that can be stored in times of plenty for re-use in times of deficit. All new developments will therefore be expected to address the issue of water scarcity.

16.2.12 Consequently, all new development will be expected to achieve the higher water efficiency standard of 110 litres per person per day, as set by the Part G of the Building Regulations. All commercial development will be expected to demonstrate how water usage will be reduced and the equivalent of the BREEAM 'very good' standard for water efficiency achieved. Developments that will achieve high water efficiency standards going beyond the Building Regulations requirements and those that will include water harvesting and recycling will be looked at favourably. Measures that further promote water efficiency and aim at achieving water neutrality, such as grey water recycling and water butts, will be considered favourably.

16.2.13 Site scale adaptation measures, such as Sustainable Drainage systems are dealt with in Policy CC1, however on the individual building level, new developments are required

to use simple rainwater harvesting (for example through provision of water butts, for external use wherever practicable).

- 16.2.14 Flood risk at a site level is dealt with in Policy CC3, but it is important that where appropriate, buildings are designed to be resistant or resilient to flooding and the impacts of flooding both now and in the future.

#### Mitigating overheating and the urban heat island

- 16.2.15 Built up areas with minimal open green space may exacerbate the risks associated with the urban heat island effect, where heat absorbed by heavy man-made structures radiates at night increasing local temperatures. This risk can be minimised by increasing green space and canopy cover, use of solar reflective materials and coatings such as green roofs as well as designing ventilation paths through which hot air can be replaced with cooler air from nearby green open spaces. Providing more natural drainage systems to enhance water surfaces in urban areas also has a greater cooling effect, whereas temperatures are higher in densely developed areas with little green space around them.

- 16.2.16 The orientation of a building together with a proportion and positioning of glazing areas determine the level of transmitted solar gain. This is particularly important where solar gain cannot be absorbed (for example by thermal mass) or extracted (through purge of mechanical ventilation) internal temperatures will increase.

- 16.2.17 If managed properly, solar gain can be beneficial in reducing energy demand for heating, but equally it needs to be controlled to avoid build-up of unwanted heat leading to overheating. This can be controlled through careful orientation of the building and integration of effective solar control measures, such as brise soleil, external shutters, solar control glazing into a building and tree planting into landscape design.

#### Managing risks through good design

- 16.2.18 The Sustainability Statement, to be submitted with applications for all major developments, will also demonstrate how the above climate change risks will be addressed through design, and will set out the strategy to minimise and manage these risks through the lifetime of the development.

- 16.2.19 Good design can improve the quality of places and ensure they are adapted to a changing climate. Integrating green space and water within developments can provide many benefits for climate change adaptation including flood storage, localised climate cooling and habitat creation. Development should be designed in accordance with the Council's Design Guide, which includes information on how to consider resource efficiency and climate change adaptation in the design of developments.

#### Supporting the use of sustainability standards for development

- 16.2.20 There are a number of well recognised standards for built environment for both residential and non-residential developments, such as BREEAM, PassivHaus and the Home Quality Mark. The PassivHaus standard concentrates on energy efficiency, thermal comfort and indoor air quality while home Quality Mark and BREEAM covers much wider range of issues that affect sustainability of the development.

16.2.21 The Council will look favourably at proposals that use these standards to demonstrate their sustainability and achieve higher standards than those prescribed by the Building Regulations demonstrated by certification of relevant scheme.

16.2.22 All major developments will be required to submit a post construction verification report to confirm that the development has been delivered to the approved specification. The report should provide validation documents covering all aspects of the policy and provide as delivered evidence of compliance, for example as built energy calculations, BREEAM or PassivHaus certification, photographic evidence of implemented landscape or green infrastructure specification.

### Policy CC1: Climate Change and Sustainability

The Council requires that all new development is designed to:

1. Increase its resilience to impacts of climate change;
2. Take full advantage of opportunities to incorporate renewable energy technologies;
3. Reduce carbon emissions; and
4. Achieve the higher water efficiency standard of 110 litres per person per day.

All major developments of 10 or more dwellings or 1000sqm or more of non-domestic and commercial uses, must also provide a Sustainability Statement. This will be required to demonstrate:

5. A reduction in carbon dioxide emissions by at least 10%, based on emissions rates determined by Part L of the Building Regulations applicable at the time of the application;
6. How opportunities to use renewable and low carbon sources have been maximised;
7. The minimisation of water usage to achieve the higher water efficiency standard of 110 litres per person per day as a minimum for residential development and the BREEAM 'very good' standards for water efficiency for all other development;
8. A water sensitive approach to the design and the incorporation of measures, such as grey water recycling and water butts, that further promote water efficiency and aim to achieve water neutrality;
9. How the performance gap between built and designed energy use will be negated; and
10. Incorporate adaptation measures to achieve flood resilience to impacts of climate change.

All major developments will also be required to submit a post construction verification report to confirm that the development has been delivered to the approved specification.

The Council will support developments that can demonstrate high quality sustainability standards that go beyond the Building Regulations requirements and achieve certification to voluntary standards such as PassivHaus, BREEAM Excellent, or the Home Quality Mark.

## 16.3 Large Scale Renewable and Sustainable Energy Development

- 16.3.1 The Council recognises the importance of increasing the amount of energy generated from renewable and low carbon technologies, as well as supporting the evolving sustainable energy infrastructure that collectively will ensure that the UK has a secure energy supply, reduces greenhouse gas emissions to slow down climate change, and stimulates investment in new jobs and businesses.
- 16.3.2 The Council is taking a positive and technology neutral approach to planning for renewable and low carbon energy generation and sustainable energy infrastructure, with the basic premise being that the most appropriate technology is deployed in the most appropriate location. The Renewables Capacity Study for Central Bedfordshire (March 2014) shows that a range of technologies may be suitable for this area and are effectively placed to deliver maximum local benefits, whilst at the same time contributing to the national need to increase low carbon energy generation. These include, but are not limited to, district heating schemes, photovoltaic energy, wind, locally sourced biomass and utilisation of landfill gas.
- 16.3.3 The Council also recognises that the energy market is rapidly evolving and it is expected that new technologies and supporting infrastructure will emerge throughout the lifetime of this policy. For example, since the Renewable Capacity Study was completed there have been significant advances in Battery Storage and smart metering.
- 16.3.4 Because of the importance of the transition to a decentralised renewable and low carbon energy system for the UK, the Council will be positive in its support for applications that relate to energy technologies and infrastructure as long as they are compliant with national energy policy, have no unacceptable adverse impacts that cannot be mitigated and will benefit local communities. In particular, community energy projects and those that have community backing are encouraged and will be supported by the Council.
- 16.3.5 The strategic allocation of sites set out in this Plan presents significant opportunities for the provision of such infrastructure due to the potential for a concentration of significant demand in a single location, along with the fact that they can be integrated into the development at the initial design stage. It is recognised that applications are likely to include a portfolio of technologies that complement each other, for example generation technologies, storage and distribution infrastructure, and be co-located on one site with both residential and non-residential uses.
- 16.3.6 The Written Ministerial Statement (June 2015) states that the Local Plan should identify 'areas as suitable' for wind energy development. What constitutes a 'suitable area' (as opposed to a defined site) is based on a range of factors, including landscape character and ability to accommodate wind development, proximity to existing and future urban areas and infrastructure, grid capacity, radar and sensitive locations (such as historic buildings and sites and ecologically sensitive areas). How this is interpreted in Central Bedfordshire is set out in the Council's existing technical guidance document on Wind Farm Development, which has greater scope to take into account the latest information.

16.3.7 Additionally, the Council supports a varied approach towards the provision of sustainable energy development and therefore, supports alternative sources of sustainable energy such as solar farm developments. The development of ground mounted solar PV farms must have regard to the Council's Solar Farm Development Technical Guidance.

16.3.8 In addition to this, the role of positive community engagement is key. It is a fundamental requirement that developers engage with affected communities and stakeholders at the earliest opportunity, listen to their concerns and are able to demonstrate how these issues will be addressed. Guidance on community engagement is also detailed in the Council's technical guidance for wind.

### **Policy CC2: Sustainable Energy Development**

The Council recognises the environmental, social and economic benefits of renewable or low-carbon energy and sustainable energy infrastructure.

The Council will positively support energy developments which:

1. Are located in the suitable areas where negative impacts can be most effectively mitigated through design, scale and siting of the project;
2. Are located and designed so as to have no unacceptable adverse impacts on the historic environment, sensitive landscapes and townscapes, noise, pollution and harm to visual amenity and can provide environmental benefits; and
3. Can demonstrate engagement with affected stakeholders, including communities, in order to understand issues for objection and seek to address them.

### **Wind energy and solar farm developments**

In case of wind farm developments, the Council will support the principle of those that can demonstrate that:

4. Following consultation, the planning impacts identified by affected local communities have been addressed and mitigation provided as part of the proposal.

In case of ground mounted solar PV farms, the Council will support the principle of those developments that can:

5. Avoid locations with best and most versatile land or can provide evidence to justify the location.

## **16.4 Flood Risk Management**

16.4.1 All new development must consider the current and future risk of flooding, and shall not result in increased flood risk from any source either on the development site or elsewhere. Flood risk information should be used to inform the masterplanning of major development sites, and any sites where a site specific assessment of flood risk is required.



- 16.4.2 The likelihood and impact of flooding is expected to increase in the future due to the impacts of climate change and all new development must take this into account. This can be done through using the appropriate allowances for peak river flows and rainfall intensities when determining risk to the site and the design of flood mitigation and drainage. Likewise, new development will need to ensure people and property will remain safe from flooding for its lifetime. Proposed flood mitigation and drainage infrastructure must be designed to handle intense or extreme storm events as well as residual risks associated with exceedance or system failure, taking into account climate change projections.
- 16.4.3 To minimise the risk created to people and property from new development the NPPF instructs local planning authorities to direct development towards areas at the lowest risk of flooding, develop policies to manage flood risk from all sources, and take opportunities offered by new development to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding.
- 16.4.4 The suitability of development will be assessed by applying the Sequential Test. This will take into account all sources of flood risk. Proposals for development in areas at high risk of flooding from any source will be refused if other suitable sites are reasonably available in areas at lower risk. For development to take place in areas at risk of flooding the wider sustainability reasons for this must be demonstrated as part of the Sequential Test. If, having passed the sequential test, development is proposed in areas at risk of flooding (from all/any sources) then developers must complete an Exception Test, demonstrating suitable compensatory storage and mitigation can be provided, and that the development will result in an overall reduction of flood risk on site and elsewhere.
- 16.4.5 A sequential approach to the layout of development should be taken at the site level and all development proposals must take account of existing and future flood risk (from all sources), taking into account the effects of climate change. They must demonstrate that the developments will be appropriately flood resilient and resistant, safe for all of its users for the lifetime of the development, and that it will not increase flood risk overall. The management of flood risk in a development should be spread across a range of measures and address all sources of flooding including fluvial, surface water and groundwater. Developers will be expected to enhance green infrastructure and reduce flood risk by making space for water, avoiding, or (where unavoidable) compensating for any loss of flood storage or flow routes, and demonstrating sustainable drainage.
- 16.4.6 Where the discharge of surface water from the development site is considered to pose an increased flood risk to third parties downstream, and/or which may exacerbate an existing flooding problem, all application types will be required to provide solutions for the management of surface water run-off. To minimise the risk from surface water runoff all new development are expected to minimise areas of hardstanding and maximise the use of porous or permeable surface for infiltration, treatment and storage; for example by using permeable paving. Sustainable drainage (SUDS) should be used on all new development as detailed through Policy CC5.
- 16.4.7 In areas identified at high risk, the Council may specify requirements for mitigation measures which exceed the expectation of the NPPF, such as controlling surface water

run off to below the pre-developed rate to manage flood risk from a receiving watercourse.

- 16.4.8 Development with the potential to impede or displace floodwaters will be required to demonstrate the proposal will not increase flood risk on or off the site and flood compensation provided may be required by the Council to manage flood levels and should be provided using volume for volume earthworks. The use of voids, stilts or undercroft parking as mitigation for a loss in floodplain storage should be avoided and are not considered acceptable methods of compensation. Land that is required for current and future flood management shall be safeguarded from development.
- 16.4.9 Development should consider the potential for strategic flood risk solutions, for example flood plain restoration, construction of new upstream storage schemes linked to green infrastructure, and cross-boundary working. The information provided in the SFRA should provide the basis for this.
- 16.4.10 Any protection and flood risk management measures that are required must be implemented and maintained. Where new defences are required, the residual risks should be identified and mitigated for, and the development should demonstrate significant flood risk betterment to off-site areas.
- 16.4.11 Any proposed development located within an area protected by flood defences should identify the condition of these defences. Where they are in a 'fair' or 'poor' condition, or where the level of protection is not to the required standard, the flood defences should be improved to an agreed standard. Where a development benefits from an existing or proposed flood defence scheme, the development should contribute towards the capital and/or maintenance of these defences over its lifetime.
- 16.4.12 National policy emphasises the need to reduce flood risk, rather than solely manage it to ensure it does not worsen, development should therefore consider the potential and deliver measures to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding to the existing community. Where developments are proposed in areas with historic or ongoing flood risk issues, opportunities should be taken to reduce the existing risk of flooding. This may include reconnection of rivers to the floodplain, betterment of existing discharge rates and volumes, removal of redundant in channel structures, and integrating or retrofitting surface water measures to replace and/or augment an existing drainage system in a developed catchment.
- 16.4.13 In line with the sequential approach, flood risk on site should be reduced first by careful design to avoid the building being flooded (flood avoidance), then only if the sequential approach is not possible, constructing the building in such a way to prevent floodwater entering and damaging a building (flood resistance), then accepting that water may enter the building but designing it carefully to minimise damage and allow quick re-occupancy (flood resilience), and finally designing buildings to enable them to be quickly repaired or replaced after flood damage (flood repairable).
- 16.4.14 At the individual property level, measures to avoid site level flood risk, and improve resistance and resilience of buildings to flood risk will be required if buildings are situated in any flood risk area, in addition to safe access and egress during flooding events. This may include setting of floor levels at an appropriate level for the type and

location of the development, and the potential restriction on ground floor bedrooms, in addition to resistance and resilience measures. New buildings should be designed and constructed in a way to prevent floodwater entering the building and damaging its fabric. Where water may enter the building it must be constructed in such a way as to ensure the impact is limited with no permanent damage, the structural integrity maintained, and drying, cleaning, replacement and repair is facilitated.

### Policy CC3: Flood Risk Management

A site-specific Flood Risk Assessment will be required for any site within 20m of any watercourse (including those not shown on the Environment Agency Flood Maps), or within an area at high risk of surface water flooding.

Development will be supported where:

1. It is located in areas at lowest risk of flooding (from all sources) and the Sequential and Exception Tests (where required) demonstrate that the site is appropriate for development and its intended use;
2. A sequential approach to site layout is applied, directing the most vulnerable uses to the areas at lowest risk from all sources of flooding;
3. It will be safe for the lifetime of the development, will not increase flood risk elsewhere or result in a loss of floodplain storage capacity or impede flowpaths, and reduces the overall flood risk within and beyond the site boundary where possible. Land that is required from current and future flood management will be safeguarded from development;
4. A site-specific assessment of flood risk has been undertaken following the criteria within this policy and the NPPF, which sets out appropriate flood risk management measures;
5. Climate change implications are taken into account and occupants of the site will be safe during all flood events (including those which exceed the agreed design standard) or from residual risks or failure of the drainage system;
6. Development must consider the impacts of the layout and land use on off-site flood risk. Measures should be identified and implemented, including passive measures to improve flood risk off-site;
7. Surface water runoff is managed to pre-development rates and volumes, giving priority to the use of SUDS, and discharge locations have capacity to receive all foul and surface water flows from the development;
8. The area of impermeable surface is minimised and porous and/or permeable surfaces are used wherever reasonably practicable;
9. Mitigation measures maximise water efficiency and contribute to a net gain in water quality, biodiversity, landscape character and green infrastructure; and
10. Building level flood avoidance, resilience and resistance measures are designed into the development where appropriate.

Where necessary, planning permission will be conditional upon flood protection and/or runoff control measures being operative before other site works.

Development that increases the risk of flooding on or off the development site, or would compromise the performance of flood defences will not be permitted.

Central Bedfordshire Council will safeguard land required for current and future flood management.

## 16.5 Development Close to Watercourses

- 16.5.1 Development adjacent to, or which encompasses any kind of watercourse will be considered “close to a watercourse” and should provide opportunities to improve or enhance the water environment. This could be through river restoration, backwater creation, de-silting, de-culverting, in-channel habitat enhancement and appropriate removal of structures. When designed properly, such measures can have benefits such as reducing the costs of maintaining hard engineering structures, reducing flood risk, improving water quality and increasing biodiversity. Social benefits may also be gained by enhancing green space and access to watercourses. These watercourses will include the main river network, which fall under the Environment Agency’s remit, the Internal Drainage Board network, as well as all other watercourses. These watercourses will be subject to Environment Agency, Internal Drainage Board and Central Bedfordshire Council Land Drainage byelaws, as well as the planning policies set out below.
- 16.5.2 Building adjacent to the banks of a watercourse has the potential to cause problems to the structural integrity of the banks and the building itself and can make future maintenance of the watercourse more difficult. Development (including gardens) must therefore be set back from the watercourse and an undeveloped buffer strip of no less than 9m should be provided between the top of the bank and any proposed development, unless otherwise agreed with the Drainage Authority.
- 16.5.3 Historically, many natural watercourses have been altered in some way, for example artificially straightened or culverted. The act of culverting a watercourse tends to have mainly negative effects for flood risk management, access, maintenance and on the amenity and biodiversity value of the watercourses. The Council therefore expects existing watercourses to remain open wherever possible for both flood defence and environmental purposes, and existing culverts removed. This includes ensuring that existing natural drainage features will be retained wherever possible.
- 16.5.4 In exceptional cases where culverting is proven to be unavoidable, the length involved should be restricted to a minimum, with the hydraulic and environmental design assessed, and appropriate mitigating enhancements to the surrounding environment provided, for example opening up a length of previously culverted watercourse elsewhere on the site, enhancing other lengths of the watercourse, creation of a pond/marshy area, scrub/hedge planting. Culverts must be designed so they do not cause a restriction to flow. They must not increase the risk of flooding or prevent maintenance of the adjacent open watercourse. Consideration must also be given to overland flow paths in the event of a culvert becoming obstructed and measures implemented to ensure flows will not affect property or cause unreasonable nuisance or harm. It must also be demonstrated that other options have been thoroughly explored before culverting will be considered.
- 16.5.5 Inappropriate planting can lead to the erosion of banks and beds of a watercourse, increase maintenance costs, reduce ecological potential and may even lead to the spread of invasive alien species which are detrimental to the wider ecology of the area.

16.5.6 New development is required to ensure that any landscaping and planting will:

- Enhance of the drainage characteristics of a scheme;
- Stabilise areas that may be vulnerable to erosion;
- Enhance the visual appearance of the development; and
- Enhance the ecological potential of the local environment, including optimum levels of light/shade for the watercourse.

16.5.7 Through the above measures, development close to a watercourse should contribute to the achievement of good status and help avoid deterioration of water quality in line with the requirements of the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC). The Directive is considered in Policy CC6.

#### **Policy CC4: Development Close to Watercourses**

Development should maximise opportunities for watercourse restoration and enhancement as part of the development. New development will be supported where it can be demonstrated that it will:

1. Conserve, and where possible, enhance the ecological and flood storage value of the water environment, including the protection and enhancement of priority and protected species such as otter and water vole;
2. Incorporate and retain existing open watercourses and, where possible, open up existing culverts and create new watercourses within their site design;
3. Provide a minimum 9m wide undeveloped buffer strip for access, maintenance and natural flood storage, unless otherwise agreed with the relevant Drainage Authority;
4. Avoid the need for culverting, unless it can be demonstrated no other alternative is feasible, ensuring that any new culvert will have no detriment to flood risk, long term maintenance and operation of the drainage system, or the environment;
5. Mimic features of natural river morphology and hydrology where alterations to the bank of an ordinary watercourse are proposed or which create a new watercourse as part of a sustainable drainage scheme. Where it is not practicable to do so compensatory measures will be provided;
6. Maximise opportunities to refurbish and/or renew existing assets (e.g. bridges, culverts and river walls) to ensure their lifetime is commensurate with the lifetime of the development (an assessment of the condition of the assets will be required);
7. Not involve any building on top of a culverted watercourse, providing an easement of 3m either side, were appropriate; and
8. Make known the long-term arrangements for the management and maintenance of all watercourses, including culverts.

Development which would compromise access to watercourses, or compromise the performance of flood defence or navigation facilities will not be permitted.

## 16.6 Sustainable Drainage and Surface Water Management

- 16.6.1 The Council expects that all developments will use Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) and all development is required to provide a drainage strategy. Approaches to manage surface water that take account of water quantity (flooding), water quality (pollution) biodiversity (wildlife and plants) and amenity are collectively referred to as SUDS. Development proposals will be required to demonstrate the proposed standards of operation, construction, structural integrity and ongoing maintenance of the proposed surface water drainage system.
- 16.6.2 SUDS should be designed to slow, reduce and treat surface water flow by natural means. Where appropriate, every effort should be made to link SUDS into wider initiatives to enhance green infrastructure, improve water quality, benefit wildlife and/or contribute to the provision of the ecosystem service. SUDS should enhance water quality and biodiversity in line with the Water Framework Directive (WFD), 'end-of-pipe solutions' where runoff is directly discharged into a wetland or pond should be avoided, and source controls should be incorporated to improve water quality.
- 16.6.3 The Central Bedfordshire Sustainable Drainage Guidance (May 2015) provides technical guidance including how the Council will assess development proposals; the information required to accompany planning applications; the local requirements for SUDS; and guidance for how SUDS can be designed for the local environmental character.
- 16.6.4 The level of detail that must be provided at each stage of the planning process is also set out in the SPD. This enables informed assessment of development proposals, in order to ensure appropriate and specific flood mitigation and sustainable drainage measures are in place. Information and links to the SPD can be found in the Environmental Framework, along with further information on national policy and standards.
- 16.6.5 In addition to the above, the design of surface water drainage must also comply with the '*Non-statutory technical standards for sustainable drainage systems*' (March 2015, Ref: PB14308); Planning Policy Guidance paragraph 80, Building Regulations Approved Document H, the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide and other recognised best practice, including the CIRIA SUDS Manual and BRE 365, or as updated. Developers should also have regard to local evidence studies, such as the Marston Vale Surface Water Plan and other location specific studies.
- 16.6.6 Discharge methods for surface water runoff should comply with Planning Practice Guidance paragraph 80 and Building Regulations Approved Document H or any subsequent replacements. The preferred method should be supplemented by water re-use, via systems that collect runoff from roofs or other impermeable surfaces and make it available for non-potable uses. Discharge off site should ease pressure of the development downstream by reducing the impact of surface runoff entering a receiving waterbody or drainage network and should not exceed the greenfield equivalent rate. Brownfield sites are expected to mimic greenfield runoff rates as far as possible, evidence of why a brownfield site cannot achieve greenfield rate will be required with the nearest possible rate to this demonstrated. A detailed assessment of the downstream condition and capacity should be undertaken to ensure no detriment to

flood risk, water quality or the environment. Where necessary, remediation of existing drainage should be provided both on and off site.

- 16.6.7 Pumping of surface water is an unsustainable drainage method. Pumps present a significant residual risk if they are not maintained or fail during a storm event. The Council's preference is for gravity discharge to the surface water drainage system, mimicking the natural drainage of the site and reducing energy consumption. If it can be demonstrated that a partial or completely pumped drainage system is the only viable option the development must demonstrate how the residual risk of flooding due to the failure of the pumps would be managed.
- 16.6.8 The design of surface water drainage must reflect site-specific circumstances such as existing drainage patterns and assets, topography, underlying geology and ground conditions, as these will inform the appropriate use of SUDS. The SPD and SFRA give an indication of the constraints across Central Bedfordshire and is intended to be used at a preliminary planning stage. Detailed site investigations will therefore need to be carried out to assess the suitability of a site for different types of SUDS and their detailed design. Where site investigations indicate that infiltration SUDS are suitable, these must be designed to mimic natural infiltration as much as possible.
- 16.6.9 Infiltration SUDS will not be appropriate in areas where surface water may be subject to contamination or where assessment demonstrates that risks to groundwater are unacceptable. Some developments such as mineral extraction or landfill may be required to undertake a Groundwater Risk Assessment.
- 16.6.10 The Council will expect the design and layout of a development to promote integrated approaches to drainage and pollution control, including; the use of integrated systems, including tree pits; minimising paved area, preventing the accumulation of contaminants. Surface water drainage should ensure users will be safe from the risk of flooding, including residual risk and the risk of failure or exceedance. Measures to convey and store exceedance flow must be demonstrated with the application, making best use of the existing urban area through minor topographical changes (for example those made to the profile of a highway, footpath or kerb).
- 16.6.11 To ensure SUDS continue to function as designed for the lifetime of the development which they serve, new development proposals should include a 'management and maintenance plan'. This should set out arrangements for adoption (if applicable), maintenance activities, access to and responsibilities for public and private components of the system.
- 16.6.12 The final design to manage surface water will need to demonstrate the necessary access has been provided in the design/layout for personnel, vehicles or machinery for the required construction, operation and on-going maintenance requirements of both the surface and subsurface drainage components.
- 16.6.13 The decision on whether a sustainable drainage system would be inappropriate in relation to a particular development proposal is a matter of judgement for the local planning authority. In making this judgement the local planning authority will seek advice from the relevant flood risk management bodies, principally the lead local flood authority, including on what sort of sustainable drainage system they would consider



to be reasonably practicable. The judgement of what is reasonably practicable should be by reference to the technical standards published by Government and take into account design and construction costs.

### **Policy CC5: Sustainable Drainage**

All development that results in increase in hard standing area or impacts on surface water flow paths will be required to use SUDS to reduce surface runoff, to:

1. Reduce overall flood risk through the reduction in discharge rates and volumes to pre-development levels for previously developed sites; or
2. Reduce discharge rates and volumes for greenfield sites.

In such cases, proposals must demonstrate:

3. Priority has been given to naturalistic solutions incorporated into the soft landscape of the development;
4. Surface water drainage is compliant with local requirements and design guidance set out in the Council's Sustainable Drainage SPD, National Standards and industry best practice;
5. Integration of SUDS to deliver multiple environmental benefits, including flood risk and water quality management, biodiversity and landscape enhancement, and improve amenity, access and open space;
6. The discharge of surface water obeys the following priority order:
  - a. Firstly, to ground via infiltration;
  - b. Then to a water body at a rate no greater than greenfield runoff; and
  - c. Then to a surface water sewer at a rate no greater than greenfield runoff for greenfield sites, or at a rate to be agreed (as close to greenfield as possible, but a minimum betterment of 30% of the existing discharge) for previously developed land.
7. The condition and capacity of any receiving drainage network, demonstrating no detriment to risk, water quality or the environment;
8. An appropriate allowance for climate change and, where necessary, urban creep;
9. Surface water runoff is managed as close to its source as possible and flow and quality of the runoff is managed in stages;
10. Run-off from all hard surfaces will receive an appropriate level of treatment to minimise the risk of pollution;
11. Suitable testing has been carried out to demonstrate whether infiltration is possible and that ground water would not be polluted. This may include undertaking a Groundwater Risk Assessment; and
12. Maintenance responsibilities for the entirety of surface water drainage system are identified and a management and maintenance plan is provided, which shall include the arrangements for adoption by any public authority or statutory undertaker and any other arrangements to secure the operation of the drainage scheme throughout its lifetime.

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Discharge to a foul water or combined sewer is unacceptable, unless in exceptional circumstances where it can be demonstrated that there are no feasible alternatives and that it will not result in increased flood risk on or off site. Discharge locations must have capacity to receive all foul and surface water flows from the development.

All major applications must be accompanied by a Surface Water Drainage Strategy which demonstrates how the above criteria have been met.

In exceptional circumstances, where a sustainable drainage system cannot be provided, it must be demonstrated that it is not possible to incorporate sustainable drainage systems, and an acceptable means of surface water disposal is provided at source which does not increase the risk of flooding or give rise to environmental problems and improves on the current situation with a reduction in peak and total discharge.

## 16.7 Water Supply and Sewerage Infrastructure

- 16.7.1 The Council will seek to ensure that there is adequate water supply, surface water, foul drainage and sewerage treatment capacity to serve all new developments. The provision of new waste water treatment facilities is covered by policies in the Adopted Minerals and Waste Local Plan.
- 16.7.2 The Council's preferred approach for foul drainage disposal is that new development will connect to the public sewerage system at the nearest point where capacity exists, this may require off-site infrastructure. Other options (e.g. private sewage treatments, septic tanks, cesspits or other more sustainable forms of sewage treatment) should only be considered if it can be clearly demonstrated by the developer that disposal to the public foul sewer is not feasible, taking into account cost and/or practicability.
- 16.7.3 The local planning authority will seek to ensure that there is adequate water and wastewater infrastructure to serve all new developments. Developers are encouraged to contact the Water and Sewerage Company as early as possible to discuss their development proposals and intended delivery programme to assist with identifying any potential water and wastewater network reinforcement requirements. Where there is a capacity constraint the local planning authority will, where appropriate, apply phasing conditions to any approval to ensure that any necessary infrastructure upgrades are delivered ahead of the occupation of the relevant phase of development.
- 16.7.4 Drainage on the site must maintain separation of foul and surface flows. An existing connection to a sewer does will not automatically set a precedent and it must be demonstrated why infiltration and/or a connection to a watercourse cannot be utilised, in these instances removal of surface water currently draining to a combined sewerage system or is misconnected to the foul sewerage system is expected.

### Policy CC6: Water Supply and Sewerage Infrastructure

Planning permission will only be granted for developments where it can be demonstrated that:

1. Adequate water supply is available, or can be provided, in time to serve the development and existing water resources, and will be safeguarded from the potential impacts of development;
2. Foul flows produced by the development will be drained separately from surface water run off to an agreed point of connection to a public foul sewer or, for non mains drainage proposals, where there would be no detrimental impact on the environment; and
3. Foul sewers and sewage treatment facilities (of adequate design and capacity) are available to meet the demand created by new development or, where they are not available, can be provided in time to serve the development to ensure that the environment and the amenity of local residents are not adversely affected.

In accordance with Planning Policy Guidance, when there is a capacity constraint and improvements in off-site infrastructure are not programmed, planning permission will only be granted where the appropriate infrastructure improvements to the satisfaction of the relevant water and sewerage undertaker will be completed prior to occupation of the development.

Development which would overload available facilities and create or exacerbate problems of flooding or pollution will not be permitted.

## 16.8 Water Quality and the Water Framework Directive

16.8.1 The Water Framework Directive (WFD) and the Groundwater Directive recognises that development near water bodies can affect their quality and ecology. It establishes a legal framework for the protection, improvement and sustainable use of the water environment. This includes lakes, streams, rivers, groundwater and dependent ecosystems. The Environment Agency's River Basin Management Plans (RBMP) for the Anglian and Thames Districts (including the Ouse catchment and Lea catchment) are the lead policy documents that cover WFD matters in Central Bedfordshire, and place further constraints on new development in terms of its influence on the quality status of receiving water bodies.

16.8.2 Many of the watercourses in Central Bedfordshire already meet the 'good' overall WFD status including the Clipstone Brook, the River Ivel (upstream of Henlow) and the Ickwell Brook. However, the majority only meet 'moderate' overall status or less. It is important that developments aim to take positive measures to conform to the WFD, which can be impacted as a result of development, for example in terms of 'deterioration' in ecological status or potential. More information on water quality in Central Bedfordshire is provided by the Environmental Framework.

16.8.3 Development in close proximity or which discharges to a waterbody must carry out a WFD assessment demonstrating that it will not lead to deterioration in the overall status

of the waterbody, or prevent future attainment of good status. Where there are no apparent watercourses nearby, consideration should still be given to WFD objectives given that all water eventually makes its way into the river system.

16.8.4 Development should deliver opportunities to enhance the quality of the water environment, by:

- Integrating SUDS and green infrastructure into new development;
- Managing and where possible reducing the risk of water pollution;
- Reducing the effects of flooding and drought on water bodies, and the prioritisation of naturalistic flood defence over the provision of hard flood defences;
- Making modification to watercourses to restore 'natural' systems, including de-culverting, restoring or re-profiling rivers and naturalising river banks;
- Adopting water efficiency measures;
- Restoration of contaminated land; and
- Opportunities identified by Catchment Partnerships and flood risk management authorities should inform development proposals.

16.8.5 Early consideration of the water environment will enable water quality aims and outcomes to be secured through the planning process. By integrating SUDS into new developments and redevelopments, and through using these in sequence, it is possible to minimise pollutants which may be generated by a development. This in turn will help conform to the water quality objectives of the Water Framework Directive, as well as reducing flood risk. The design of SUDS is considered in Policy CC5.

### Policy CC7: Water Quality

Development in close proximity to or discharging to a waterbody must demonstrate through a WFD assessment:

1. That it has no adverse impact on the quality of waterbodies and groundwater, or will prevent future attainment of good status;
2. That development contributes positively to the water environment and its ecology and does not adversely affect surface and ground water quality; and
3. How they have contributed to the protection and enhancement of waterbodies identified by the Anglian and Thames River Basin Management Plan objectives, covering the Ouse and Lea catchments.

For any development that would have a direct impact on any watercourse (e.g. re-alignment of a river or work to bridges) the impact of that development on water quality must be demonstrated.

For any water body that is already in the lowest status class (including poor groundwater quantitative status) under the WFD, the Council will expect development to deliver enhancements where rivers and lakes are not achieving good ecological status or potential. Development that would result in deterioration shall not be permitted. A Groundwater Risk Assessment will be needed to support a planning application where activities could directly or indirectly pollute groundwater.

New development will be supported where it delivers opportunities to enhance the quality of the water environment, for example by:

4. Integrating SUDS and green infrastructure into new development;
5. Managing and where possible reducing the risk of water pollution;
6. Reducing the effects of flooding and drought on water bodies, and the prioritisation of naturalistic flood defence over the provision of hard flood defences;
7. Making modification to watercourses to restore 'natural' systems, including de-culverting, restoring or re-profiling rivers and naturalising river banks;
8. Adopting water efficiency measures; and
9. Restoring contaminated land.

Opportunities identified by Catchment Partnerships and flood risk management authorities should inform development proposals.

## 16.9 Safeguarding the Environment and Development from Pollution and Land Instability

- 16.9.1 An important aspect of providing sustainable development is maintaining a healthy environment and protecting public health, wellbeing and amenity, through the control of pollution. Pollution can cause adverse health risks, damage the environment and interfere with amenity. It can also adversely affect neighbouring land uses, cause long term contamination and hinder regeneration.
- 16.9.2 Some development has the potential to harm the environment and impact public health in a variety of ways, including the emission of pollutants to the air (including odour), water courses and soils (including land contamination), and the generation of noise, vibration, light, tranquillity, litter and pests. The Council will consider the possible polluting effects of a development proposal on aspects such as amenity and surrounding land uses and other receptors such as the effect on biodiversity and the water environment.
- 16.9.3 In addition to pollution, the NPPF makes it clear that all development should take account of ground conditions, including suspected or confirmed land contamination, and land instability in order to ensure that sites are suitable for its new use and that any uses do not have any unacceptable adverse impacts on human health, property and infrastructure, the natural and historic environment.
- 16.9.4 The Council will seek to maintain sustainable and healthy environments through the careful consideration of development proposals which are likely to cause or be exposed to potential sources of pollution, or, cause or be affected by land instability. Applicants will be required to submit an assessment of the extend of pollution and, or land instability that identifies possible risks and demonstrates that the conditions can be suitably mitigated for the proposed end use, as set out in the current national guidance, the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide or any site-specific Development Briefs or masterplans.
- 16.9.5 The main source of air pollution within Central Bedfordshire is generated from road transport. There are currently three Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) in Central Bedfordshire: Dunstable town centre, Ampthill town centre and at Sandy adjacent to the A1. The Council will require new development in or near an AQMA does not have a negative impact on the local air quality. New development should be consistent with the Council's relevant Air Quality Action Plan.

### Policy CC8: Pollution and Land Instability

All proposals for new development must have regard to current national guidance as well as the Council's Design Guide, Contaminated Land Strategy, Air Quality and Emissions Planning Guidance and Air Quality Action Plans in terms of pollution and land instability. Pollution includes matters in relation to noise, waste management, litter, pests, vibration, odour, surface and ground waters, light, tranquillity, soil, contaminated land and airborne pollution.

Development proposals which are likely to cause pollution or land instability, or are likely to be exposed to potential unacceptable levels of pollution or land instability will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that:

1. In or near an AQMA, development would not have a negative impact on the local air quality and that;
2. Measures can be implemented to minimise the impacts of pollution and land instability to an acceptable level without compromising the quality of life for users and occupiers, which protects health, natural and historic environment, water quality, property, infrastructure and amenity; and
3. The conditions of the site can be suitably mitigated or land can be remediated for the proposed end use and cause no adverse effects.

Where necessary the Council will use planning conditions and/or legal agreements to help limit the impact of pollution.

# 17. High Quality Places

## 17.1 Design and Local Character

17.1.1 Central Bedfordshire is a diverse area characterised by distinctive landscapes, important heritage and wildlife assets, and a variety of settlements with their own distinctive characters. It is therefore important that new developments are designed to respect this diversity and enhance the unique characteristics of the area.

17.1.2 Good design creates distinctive, functional and sustainable places for residents to live, work and enjoy. The Council has adopted its own technical guidance document on design, the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide, to ensure that new developments at all scales are of the highest design quality and enhance the area. All new development should have regard to this locally specific guidance and all relevant policies contained within this Plan. Where appropriate, conditions will be attached to planning permissions to ensure that design considerations are addressed when the development is implemented.

17.1.3 The following general principles must be adhered to in designing new schemes:

### Responding to local context

17.1.4 All development proposals will be expected to achieve a high standard of design and should be underpinned by a thorough analysis of the site and its surrounding area. The Council greatly values the distinctive areas of natural and historic character across Central Bedfordshire, and new developments should be well integrated and positively related to their surroundings, without harm to local amenity. Outstanding or innovative design will be supported provided it is sympathetic to local character, enhancing it where possible, and fits in with the form and layout of the surrounding area. Local amenity must also not be harmed.

17.1.5 On strategic sites variety across the scheme will be fundamental to creating a place with its own character, and this should be achieved by varying layouts, street types and landscaping for example.

### Placemaking

17.1.6 New developments should create well-designed spaces that support a wide variety of activities, facilitate movement and encourage social interaction. This promotes health and wellbeing and facilitates the creation of thriving communities.

### Movement and legibility

17.1.7 In designing new developments, emphasis should be placed on creating a hierarchical network of well-connected streets, which meet the needs to all street users, and prioritise pedestrians, cyclists and public transport over private motor vehicles. The layout of the street network, supported by the positioning of key buildings, should also be used to enable people to navigate through new developments easily using safe and attractive routes.



17.1.8 All new development will be expected to comply with the Council's parking standards as set out in this Local Plan.

### Sustainable design

17.1.9 All new developments should optimise the potential for sustainable design, maximising the opportunity to travel by sustainable modes and ensuring appropriate consideration is given to orientation, landscaping, SUDS, energy, water use, and potential for pollution. The sorting and segregating of waste materials by occupiers is essential to the success of recycling and reuse schemes, and new developments should provide adequate and convenient storage space for the appropriate in-house storage of recyclables.

### Materials and detailing

17.1.10 A coordinated approach should be taken to the use of materials and the design and siting of street furniture, boundary treatments, lighting, signage and public art, all of which contribute towards place making. Proposals should integrate with and enhance areas of historic or architectural sensitivity which include but are not exclusively conservation areas. Trees and other planting appropriate to the scale of development and space available should be incorporated in order to soften the streetscape and reduce the visual impact of car parking. It is important that the choice of landscaping and materials used within the public realm are durable and functional in order to accommodate both everyday and infrequent uses, such as the movement of vehicles and people or gritting. Consideration must also be given to the cost, practicalities and responsibilities for the maintenance of landscaping and materials in the long term. Consideration should be given to the Council's Highway Construction Standards and Specification Guidance which sets out technical guidance and the Council's standards and processes for proposed works by developers on existing roads or new highways.

### Community safety

17.1.11 The design of new developments is expected to address community safety concerns, for example by providing clear boundaries between public and private space and ensuring that the fronts of buildings and their principal entrances face onto the street or public space to increase pedestrian activity. Buildings and layouts should also be designed to maximise opportunities for natural surveillance and provide good quality lighting and sensible landscaping.

### Health, wellbeing and inclusive design

17.1.12 The Council feels strongly that the needs of all residents are accommodated within the built environment. This is expected to be done as part of an integrated design process from the outset, rather than as an add-on at a later stage. All new development should promote health and wellbeing, meet the needs of all residents and have a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. Special consideration should be given to the needs of people with disabilities.

## Density

- 17.1.13 Careful consideration needs to be given to the density of new schemes to ensure that they make the best and most efficient use of land available. The key to creating high quality places is not simply about achieving a certain density; it is about designing schemes that take into account the character of surrounding areas and the opportunities and constraints present in a particular location. The Central Bedfordshire Design Guide provides examples of where different densities might be appropriate in Central Bedfordshire, but all schemes will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will be required to meet the design principles identified within this Local Plan and have regard to the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide.
- 17.1.14 The Council will generally support higher densities within urban locations and along existing and potential new public transport corridors, in order to secure the provision of commercially viable services and support retail, employment and community facilities. Changes in density across a larger scheme or in urban settings can often be appropriate and add variety in character, providing that they are well designed. For edge of urban sites and those within or adjoining smaller towns and villages within the rural area, the density of the scheme will be expected to reflect the existing character of the surrounding area, and appropriate landscaping and boundary treatments will be required to provide an appropriate edge and protect open countryside.

### Policy HQ1: High Quality Development

The Council will ensure that all developments are of the highest possible quality and respond positively to their context. Development proposals, including extensions and change of use, will be permitted where:

1. Proposals take account of opportunities to enhance or reinforce the local distinctiveness of the area and create a sense of place;
2. Size, scale, massing, orientation, materials and appearance relate well to the existing local surroundings and reinforce local distinctiveness, both built and natural;
3. Careful consideration is given to the density of all new housing proposals to ensure that they make the most efficient use of the land available, whilst reflecting the existing character of the surrounding area and making provision for appropriate landscaping and boundary treatments;
4. Proposals are well connected to surrounding areas, providing safe, attractive and convenient routes that encourage travel by sustainable modes and meet the needs of all street users;
5. The distinction between public and private space is clear, with defined boundaries;
6. Proposals are complementary to the existing natural environment, taking account of the landscape setting, landscape character and tranquillity, Rights of Way, biodiversity and Green Infrastructure;
7. High quality hard and soft landscaping appropriate to the scale of development proposed should be used to integrate the proposal into the existing built, natural and historic environment;
8. Healthy lifestyles are promoted through the design and layout of the development;
9. Inclusive design is considered from the outset of the design process;
10. Layouts are designed to maximise surveillance and increase pedestrian activity within the public realm to reduce opportunities for crime and the fear of crime;
11. There is not an unacceptable adverse impact upon nearby existing or permitted uses, including impacts on amenity, privacy, noise or air quality;
12. Any lighting associated with the development does not have a detrimental impact on the surrounding area; and
13. Development supports the sustainable management of waste through the appropriate layout and design of buildings, external spaces and roads in accordance with the Design Guide for Central Bedfordshire and Waste Strategic Policy WSP5 of the Minerals and Waste Local Plan (January 2014).

All new development will be expected to have regard to the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide (and subsequent revisions).

## 17.2 Developer Contributions

- 17.2.1 All new development will be required to provide for the necessary on-site and, where appropriate, off-site infrastructure requirements arising from the proposal. Infrastructure requirements will be delivered directly by the developer and/or through an appropriate financial contribution prior to, or in conjunction with, new development. This will occur either through a S106 Planning Agreements or a Community Infrastructure Levy charge (CIL).
- 17.2.2 New services and facilities will be planned to meet the demand created by new development and be delivered at appropriate timescales. This will ensure that the needs of both the existing community and future residents are provided for. Planning permission for new development will only be granted once the proposed mechanism for the delivery of infrastructure has been secured.
- 17.2.3 The Council will work in partnership with public, private and voluntary sectors to ensure infrastructure is efficiently provided and maintained, working with a range of stakeholders.
- 17.2.4 In some circumstances, the infrastructure required to serve new growth in Central Bedfordshire may be provided in neighbouring administrative areas. Likewise in some cases it will be reasonable to seek a contribution from development from adjoining areas towards infrastructure in Central Bedfordshire. Central Bedfordshire Council will work constructively with infrastructure providers, neighbouring authorities, Town and Parish Councils and other delivery agencies in securing and delivering the necessary infrastructure to support new development.
- 17.2.5 Should a CIL Charging Schedule be adopted, CIL will be used to pool developer contributions towards a range of new and improved infrastructure necessary to deliver new development, and s106 agreements will only be used in specific circumstances. An SPD will be prepared on planning obligations in Central Bedfordshire that will provide more detail about the Council's approach to securing developer contributions. In the absence of a Community Infrastructure Levy, the Council will seek to ensure the delivery of strategic infrastructure by planning obligations and other appropriate funding sources.

## Policy HQ2: Developer Contributions

Developments will be required to make appropriate contributions to provide new physical, social and environmental infrastructure or the enhancement of existing infrastructure, where necessary to mitigate the impact of the proposals. Contributions will be made either by way of financial contributions, or direct provision of such infrastructure.

The Council will work in partnership with infrastructure providers, neighbouring authorities, Town and Parish Councils and other delivery agencies in securing and delivering the necessary infrastructure to support new development, where appropriate.

Contributions will be phased or pooled to ensure the timely delivery and implementation of the necessary infrastructure.

In the absence of a Community Infrastructure Levy, the Council will seek to ensure the delivery of strategic infrastructure by planning obligations and other appropriate funding sources.

## 17.3 Social and Community Infrastructure

17.3.1 The Council recognises the importance of facilitating social interaction and creating strong, vibrant and inclusive communities. The delivery of sufficient community facilities and accessible services to meet local needs helps to improve the health, social and cultural wellbeing of all.

17.3.2 Community infrastructure is the facilities and services that support and meet the local everyday needs of those who live or work in the locality. For example, this may include:

- Leisure, recreational or cultural facilities, places of worship and community buildings;
- Local shops, public houses and services, including those for social; educational and health use;
- Libraries and other information services that help residents to access local services;
- Integrated Health and Care Hubs; and
- Any other services or facilities supporting employment and housing growth which enhance the sustainability of communities.

17.3.3 Social infrastructure is the organisation, services and activities that support a community's need for social engagement and participation; generate and encourage strong, vibrant healthy and inclusive communities; and improve the wellbeing of those who live and work in the locality. This can include: opportunities for residents to be actively involved in their community through their participation in community activities, social networks, forums, groups and volunteering; opportunities for cultural activities, social action and community engagement; and support, advice, training and assistance with the formation of new social networks, volunteering opportunities and community groups, including the provision of 'start up' grants.

- 17.3.4 New residential development often increases pressures on social and community infrastructure. In line with national guidance, the Council will aim to protect existing community facilities whilst also working towards enhancing provision across Central Bedfordshire. Where existing facilities are not adequate to support proposed residential development, developers will be required to contribute towards or provide new or enhanced facilities.
- 17.3.5 Access to high quality well-designed community facilities and public spaces contribute to a strong sense of place, as well as a strong sense of community. Community facilities require a pattern of development that makes the fullest appropriate possible use of public transport, walking and cycling and provides ease of access to facilities and services.
- 17.3.6 A “community hub” approach is encouraged, where community facilities can be co-located and form part of wider service delivery role, meeting a range of community needs from a single location. The co-location of facilities and services in multi-purpose and flexible community space, providing shared facilities and integrated service delivery, increases foot fall and helps to make community buildings and the services more sustainable; it also reduces unnecessary journeys and means that residents can access services to better meet their everyday needs with ease.
- 17.3.7 The need for social and community infrastructure generated by new development must be planned ahead, with interim or temporary provision provided ahead of full provision made at a later date to a standard that ensures future residents are well served and that any existing community does not suffer adverse impacts. This may require certain facilities and services to be provided before dwellings are occupied or at a very early stage to establish preferred trends and would be determined on a site-by-site basis. Temporary schemes must be accompanied by a clear exit strategy that provides for overlap with the onset and transfer to permanent provision. Schemes must include an agreed timescale for the delivery of all social and community infrastructure. Developers will be required to contribute to the long-term management, running costs and maintenance of temporary and permanent community facilities and to the provision of social infrastructure to ensure future communities benefit from provision.
- 17.3.8 Social and community infrastructure requires strong working partnerships between the Council, Town and Parish Councils, developers, public sector agencies, the voluntary and community sector and the business sector. Providers will need to meet the health and social care; educational, cultural and learning; social and community development needs of residents in new and existing communities. Developers will be required to work closely with those affected by their proposals, in particular Town and Parish Councils, to develop designs and specifications and take account of the views of the community and have regard to the specific design requirements of those operating and using the facilities, at an early stage.
- 17.3.9 The Community Right to Bid provisions give local community groups such as parish councils, charities, voluntary organisations and social enterprises a right to nominate a building or other land for listing by Central Bedfordshire Council as an asset of community value. The legislation aims to help communities faced with losing local

amenities and buildings which are of importance to them. The current use of the building or land being nominated (that is not an ancillary use) must further the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community. When a listed asset is to be sold, local community groups will have a chance to make a bid and buy it on the open market.

### Community Infrastructure: Libraries

- 17.3.10 Central Bedfordshire libraries are safe, trusted spaces which act as gateways to public services and support initiatives to tackle disadvantage and exclusion. A number of recent national reports have highlighted the ability of new libraries to act as catalysts to economic regeneration within the wider community. The Central Bedfordshire Library Service has a pivotal role in both the urban and rural communities as a neutral community resource and meeting space which the whole community can use.
- 17.3.11 The Library Service in Central Bedfordshire has evolved into a flexible, multi-faceted service, which functions as an important enabler and provider of community activities and events. The Council's 12 libraries provide cultural hubs and also support other council and community agendas such as health and wellbeing, literacy and learning and education and skills.
- 17.3.12 The Council's Five Year Plan 2015-20, supports the creation of the emerging Library Strategy which will develop the Council's themes of 'creating stronger communities', 'great resident services' and 'market towns that will thrive and prosper'.
- 17.3.13 The emerging Library Strategy will set out the vision and priorities for the Council's Library Service for the next 5 years, building on the strong foundations established by the current Library Strategy (2012). The emerging Strategy sees the Council continuing to provide a comprehensive library service to all residents, whilst also ensuring that it is relevant, efficient and sustainable. Any enhancement of existing services or provision of new services will be required to support the priorities of the new Library Strategy.
- 17.3.14 The planned Dunstable Leisure Centre and Library project will see the Library Service at the heart of a multi-facility hub providing sport, leisure, library programmes and activities, Citizens Advice Bureau and adult social day care under one roof. This pilot project for the Council will help shape the future direction of leisure and library services and will inform the continuous improvement of the library service including the requirements of increased opening hours and evolving technology.

### Community Infrastructure: Integrated Health and Care Hubs

- 17.3.15 Integrated Health and Care Hubs will support the local ambition for access to modern, high quality and locality-based health and care services. These Hubs will be aligned to key spokes in our rural communities and will support networks of care providers. Central Bedfordshire population distribution and its relation to secondary care providers makes it imperative that the importance of the Integrated Health and Care Hubs approach is sustained. Services need to be more accessible to people, especially in predominantly rural areas, and should meet the requirements for delivering new ways of working in health and care services to an expanding and ageing population.
- 17.3.16 More services will be accessible to people where they live, whilst also enhancing community based and out of hospital services. These Hubs are important in helping to

meet the complex needs of an ageing and growing population, in a predominantly rural area without its own district general hospital.

17.3.17 The integrated Health and Care Hubs will be the main centres for providing proactive and preventative care, out of hospital services and care packages for people who are vulnerable or have complex care needs. These Hubs will help to reshape the primary care model which delivers primary care at scale, addressing the issue of capacity in general practice and ensuring equitable and timely access to care.

17.3.18 A locality based integrated health and care hub approach improves cooperation and joined up working which improves the access and quality of care provision. It also leads to a reduction of inappropriate hospital admissions and importantly supports the vision for integrated primary and community services at scale as set out in the General Practice Forward View.

17.3.19 As a minimum, these Health and Care Hubs are expected to serve as a base for the multi-disciplinary teams (adults and children's) being established as part of the community services redesign programme, including general medical services where possible. The co-location of health and care teams in fit for purpose facilities is central to managing demand and ensuring the future sustainability of local health and care systems.

17.3.20 Each Integrated Health and Care Hub will provide local access to a range of general medical and nursing, therapy, specialist and social care services with supporting information and advice systems. The Health and Care Hubs may also develop a range of additional or enhanced services in line with the needs of the local community. Enhanced services might include:

- Extended GP services on a 7-day basis;
- Enhanced services delivered by and across practices, e.g. minor injury and minor illness services, clinics to support patients with long-term conditions;
- Face-to-face out of hours consultations;
- Community pharmacy;
- Rehabilitation and re-enablement facilities;
- Outreach services from local acute hospitals and specialist services, e.g. outpatient appointments and other specialist consultations;
- Less complex diagnostics; and
- Public Health and prevention services, e.g. smoking cessation, NHS Health Checks, lifestyle hubs.



### Policy HQ3: Provision for Social and Community Infrastructure

Where necessary, new housing and employment development will be required to make provision for, or contribute towards existing, social and community infrastructure. The Council will support the principle of new social and community infrastructure, or the expansion or enhancement of existing infrastructure.

To deliver new facilities and services, subject to viability, the Council will work with developers, service providers and partners to:

1. Ensure an integrated approach to the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services;
2. Ensure the timely delivery and transfer of social and community infrastructure;
3. Utilise the principles of multi-functional space where appropriate, by maximising opportunities for co-location, shared facilities and integrated service delivery through community hubs where appropriate;
4. Ensure that any temporary provision, provided during construction, is replaced with permanent provision once construction is complete; and
5. Provide contributions to community development costs necessary to enable new residents to develop new networks and integrate with existing residents and social infrastructure.

Where an application fails to provide adequate social and community infrastructure without reasoned justification, or fails to make appropriate planning obligation contributions, it will be refused.

Depending on the use of the social and community infrastructure and adoption arrangements, developers may be required to make appropriate contributions towards management, running costs and maintenance.

Permission will only be granted for change of use or redevelopment where the applicant can demonstrate that:

6. The use no longer serves the community, and significant evidence is provided to demonstrate that it is surplus to requirements and there is a lack of need for any other community uses at the facility; or
7. The loss would be replaced by equivalent or better provision either on site or at a suitable accessible location; or
8. Evidence is provided which satisfactorily demonstrates that the use is no longer financially viable, and all reasonable efforts have been made to sell or let the premises for a community use at a reasonable price for at least 12 months.

Where a site or building is listed by the Council as an Asset of Community Value the Council will consider this to be a material consideration in any applications regarding its change of use.

### New social and community facilities

Proposals for new social and community facilities within Settlement Envelopes will be

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supported where they comply with other relevant policies within the Plan.

For sites directly adjacent to the Settlement Envelopes, proposals for new social and community facilities will be permitted where:

9. A need for the proposed facility be identified;
10. It can be demonstrated that no land is available within the Settlement Envelope;  
and
11. If the proposal is for a main town centre use, that the proposal meets the sequential and impact requirements of Policy R1.

## 17.4 Indoor Sport and Leisure Facilities

17.4.1 Local authorities have a critical role in the delivery of sport, recreation and physical activity facilities and opportunities, and in ensuring more people from every background regularly take part in sport and physical activity. Central Bedfordshire Council supports the health and wellbeing of its residents by enabling them to be physically active through the provision of a range of leisure and sports facilities and open spaces.

17.4.2 The Council has six multi-facility public leisure centres spread across its area which offer high quality facilities in accessible locations. In recent years the Council has secured developer contributions, in combination with capital funding, to deliver new and refurbished centres and will continue to support quality provision which keep pace with residents needs and growing demand.

17.4.3 The Council's Leisure Strategy, which was adopted as SPD in 2013/14, sets out the Councils approach to the provision of indoor and outdoor sport, recreation and open space facilities to support and promote sport and physical activity, increase wellbeing and tackle the causes of ill health.

17.4.4 The delivery of indoor sports and leisure facilities is guided by the action plan included in the strategy that identifies a range of facility requirements including the provision of a new leisure centre in Flitwick and redevelopment of Dunstable Leisure Centre. The Council is currently considering funding for subsequent leisure centre provision to address both quality and capacity and ensure its centres can meet the needs of the growing population.

17.4.5 Appropriate access to good quality sports and leisure facilities is key to creating and supporting healthy communities. It is therefore important that existing facilities are protected, and that development plays a role in delivering appropriate new infrastructure to serve our residents.

17.4.6 The Council's Leisure Facilities Strategy identifies the future facility requirements for indoor sports and leisure facilities across Central Bedfordshire. The Council will seek on-site facilities and/or contributions to support the provision of new indoor sports

facilities or the enhancement of existing facilities where appropriate in accordance with Policy HQ4.

17.4.7 For smaller developments, where on-site facilities are not appropriate, the Council will seek contributions toward sporting projects identified in the Leisure Facilities Strategy. Contributions sought for sports projects will be calculated using the Sport England Facilities Calculator (and any subsequent method) which utilises the data from the Leisure Facilities Strategy to derive a locally based calculation.

17.4.8 On-site facilities or contributions would not be sought from care home developments. For retirement developments where there is a mix of independent living accommodation and care beds, a contribution may be sought toward relevant types of indoor sport and leisure facilities from the independent element only.

17.4.9 The protection and provision of outdoor sport facilities and open space in relation to new development is addressed by Policy EE13.

#### **Policy HQ4: Indoor Sport and Leisure Facilities**

New residential developments will be required to make provision for appropriate indoor sports and leisure facilities.

On-site provision should be made, where appropriate, taking into consideration the future facility requirements, priorities and standards identified in the Leisure Facilities Strategy. When making on-site provision, the following will be required:

1. Facilities are to be designed and constructed in accordance with Sport England facility guidance, together with the facility guidance of the relevant National Governing Body for Sport (NGB); and
2. A management scheme will be provided, which details the future ownership, management and maintenance of the facilities. Where the facilities are to be transferred to the Council or the community, commuted sums are to be paid for maintenance.

Opportunities may be sought to deliver on-site indoor sports and leisure provision within a multi-use community facility.

Where appropriate and where it has been agreed by the Council that on-site provision of indoor sports and leisure facilities is not required, contributions will be sought towards the enhancement, extension or provision of existing facilities and priorities identified in the Leisure Facilities Strategy.

Any loss of existing indoor sports and leisure facilities will be resisted. Redevelopment of these sites for other purposes will only be permitted where:

3. An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
4. The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable, accessible location

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as close as possible to the original facility; or a contribution provided for the re-provision of the facility, where land has been secured which is suitable and available for that provision; or

5. The development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.

**New indoor sports and leisure facilities**

Proposals for new indoor sports and leisure facilities within Settlement Envelopes will be supported where they comply with other relevant policies within the Plan.

For sites directly adjacent to the Settlement Envelopes, proposals for new indoor sports and leisure facilities will be permitted where:

6. A need for the proposed facility has been identified;
7. It can be demonstrated that no land is available within the Settlement Envelope;  
and
8. If the proposal is for a main town centre use, that the proposal meets the sequential and impact requirements of Policy R1.

## 17.5 Communications Infrastructure

### Broadband

- 17.5.1 National policy requires Local Plans to support the expansion of electronic communications networks. The expansion and development of these networks is critical to supporting and growing businesses and improving the area's productivity; in addition to attracting new investment in knowledge based and technology intensive sectors. Such provision enables people to access services and work from home and can have wider impacts on the need to travel, accessibility and the low carbon economy
- 17.5.2 The Council's approved Joint Local Broadband Plan 2012 sets out the Council's ambition to deliver improved broadband with Next Generation Access for all by 2020. The Council has met its initial targets and further measures will support the deployment of Gigabit capable speeds for all by 2033.
- 17.5.3 The Council supports the provision of high quality communications technology offering access to places where people live, work and travel in Central Bedfordshire A key part of delivering this vision for the area is ensuring that new developments put in place the provision of digital infrastructure to support the delivery of high speed broadband services.
- 17.5.4 Technological advances means available speeds are constantly increasing and the Council wishes to ensure residents and businesses are able to benefit from increasing access speeds. New development should therefore be providing, where possible, gigabit capable speeds (1000Mbps) with minimum provision of ultrafast speeds (100mbps).
- 17.5.5 New build infrastructure can be designed to provide high rates of connectivity. The Government and the British Standards Institution have produced a Publicly Available Specification (PAS 2016) which aims to inform builders and developers about how to install digital infrastructure into all new build domestic dwellings. Likewise, builders and developers should also consider the Data Ducting Infrastructure for New Homes Guidance Note (2008) when planning digital infrastructure requirements for developments.
- 17.5.6 As such, the Council wishes to see the necessary on-site infrastructure put in place at the time of construction, to ensure future connectivity to gigabit capable services. Developers should therefore consult with telecommunications providers at the earliest opportunity in the planning process in relation to the provision of appropriate infrastructure services and the co-location of utilities and broadband. Provision should be made with fibre connections. Where this is not possible, the Developer will be required to demonstrate why fibre connections cannot be made and what other technologies have been explored to provide a reasonable alternative service connection.
- 17.5.7 It is recognised that the availability of high-speed digital infrastructure is increasingly becoming essential for residential and commercial premises. High speed connectivity can increase the value of developments. In addition to the Council's investment in enhancing existing broadband infrastructure, it is recognised that new infrastructure

enabling new communities to access broadband services can also support improved access for nearby communities. The Council would support investment that improves wider broadband connectivity where practicable.

### Radio and Telecommunications

- 17.5.8 Voice and mobile telecommunications services are increasingly critical aspects for residents and businesses, and the Council supports enhancement of indoor and outdoor telecommunications connectivity, coverage and reliability for voice services and mobile broadband across Central Bedfordshire. Telecommunications technology is rapidly evolving, as highlighted in the Government's Next Generation Mobile Technologies: A Five-Year Strategy for the UK which seeks to provide faster and more reliable communications, such as 5G, for applications from self-driving cars to the "internet of things".
- 17.5.9 In line with the Government's policy, the Council supports the principle that there should be high quality access to communications technology where people live, work and travel. The Council would be supportive in principle for 5G pilot projects that can play a key part in achieving high levels of indoor and outdoor coverage.
- 17.5.10 Central Bedfordshire Council require that existing radio and telecommunications structures and sites should be used wherever feasible. Where new installation sites are proposed, justification should be provided to demonstrate that there are no feasible opportunities for mast or site sharing.
- 17.5.11 There is a clear need to balance the social and economic benefits of any particular telecommunications development against their potential environmental impact (built, natural and historic). The principal issues that are likely to arise are landscape and visual considerations because of the height and massing of masts and equipment. However, such developments can also have an adverse impact on the historic environment and in particular the setting of heritage assets (both designated and non-designated).
- 17.5.12 Some smaller scale masts fall within 'permitted development' but require the 'prior approval' of the LPA. In such cases, the consideration of proposals will be limited to the acceptability of the proposal in relation to appearance and siting. Appearance of a mast includes its materials, colour and design, and consideration of siting will involve its impact on the ecological value of the site, the wider landscape (including the impact on the historic environment) and its proximity to buildings and housing and the availability of alternative infrastructure in the area.
- 17.5.13 The criteria at Policy HQ5 will be applied in these cases and for those more significant radio and telecommunications that do not constitute 'permitted development'.

### Policy HQ5: Broadband and Telecommunications Infrastructure

All residential, employment, education and commercial development shall provide Gigabit capable next generation broadband infrastructure or demonstrate why such provision cannot be made and what alternative will be provided.

This should, where possible, facilitate a fibre to the premises solution, or the equivalent technology, capable of providing Gigabit capable infrastructure with minimum available speeds of 100Mbps.

Provision should be made with minimal disruption and minimal need for reconstruction and allow for future growth/improvements in service infrastructure/broadband service.

Existing radio and telecommunications structures and sites should be used wherever feasible. Where new installation sites are proposed, justification should be provided to demonstrate that there are no feasible opportunities for mast or site sharing.

Any new masts or telecommunications equipment must:

1. Be sited to minimise visual intrusion and to ensure that local amenity is not significantly adversely affected;
2. Be sympathetically designed;
3. Be sited so they are not overly prominent or visually dominating within the street scene;
4. Not cause an overbearing or overshadowing impact upon neighbouring dwellings due to height, proximity and/or design of structures; and
5. Be sited so there is no significant adverse impact on the Chilterns AONB, SSSIs, identified heritage assets and any important landscape features identified in the Landscape Character Assessment 2016.

## 17.6 Public Art

17.6.1 Public Art is the term given to art projects that can be enjoyed in public spaces by residents of and visitors to a community. It should be unique, high quality and site specific relating to the place and people. Public Art can be freestanding, fixed, permanent or temporary and can include:

- Functional artwork such as street furniture, lighting, floorscapes, landscaping and architectural detail;
- Decorative artwork such as wall murals, sculptures and paintings;
- Installations or exhibitions where the local community have been involved in the creation; and
- Experiences such as performances or workshops.

17.6.2 The NPPF states that developments should take account of and support local strategies to improve cultural wellbeing for all, delivering sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs. Public Art can make a significant contribution to the cultural wellbeing of a community. It contributes to the enhancement of public

realm, promotes local distinctiveness and legibility and is a valuable tool in engaging local communities, existing and new, in the design and creative processes which assists in engendering a sense of involvement and ownership.

17.6.3 Central Bedfordshire Council has been actively encouraging the integration of Public Art into new developments across the area for a number of years and has sought provision on both residential and non-residential developments and as part of new major projects such as public spaces associated with town centre developments and transport interchanges. The need for Public Art will be considered on a site by site basis, where it is necessary to make the development acceptable. New developments should have regard to the adopted Central Bedfordshire Design Guide which includes specific guidance on the provision of Public Art.

17.6.4 Central Bedfordshire Council will encourage developers and promoters of sites to take responsibility for funding and managing the implementation of Public Art as part of development either directly or through specialist advisers and in consultation with the Council.

#### **Policy HQ7: Public Art**

The Council will encourage Public Art appropriate to the scale of development to be provided in:

1. Residential development of 100 or more units;
2. Any new development facing on to the public realm where floor area exceeds 1000m<sup>2</sup> including retail, commercial, leisure, public buildings and educational establishments;
3. New public spaces associated with town centre development and enhancement; and
4. Transport interchanges and major highways and transport infrastructure projects especially within an urban context.

All development proposals should have regard to the guidance presented in the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide.



## 17.7 Back-land Development

17.7.1 Back-land development refers to the development of land which sits behind the existing building line with little or no frontage onto the public highway, for example residential gardens. Proposals on back-land sites are often for residential development, however in some cases smaller scale office or ancillary uses are proposed.

17.7.2 The Council does not object to all back-land development, but it must be ensured that it is well designed and suitable to the existing character and context. There will however be some cases where development of back-land is not suitable, for example if it would have a detrimental impact on the character of the area or if it would depart significantly from the existing grain of development.

### Policy HQ8: Back-land Development

Proposals for the development of back-land sites will be resisted where they are against the existing pattern and grain of development and the character and appearance of the area would be harmed. Proposals will be expected to secure high-quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.

### Development Briefs and Design Codes

17.7.3 Development Briefs and Design Codes assist in ensuring new developments are designed to the highest possible quality. Their purpose is to demonstrate how a site meets national and local policies and guidance and set the parameters for the development to guide future planning applications. They provide certainty for developers, stakeholders, the local community and decision makers.

17.7.4 A Development Brief bridges the gap between the Local Plan and a planning application and enables stakeholders and residents to influence the design of the scheme from the outset. It should demonstrate how the development will meet policy requirements, address constraints and opportunities and set out the vision, objectives and key principles for the development. Development Briefs should be endorsed by the Council before the planning application is determined, and once endorsed it will be a material consideration in the determination of future planning applications. A Design Code is a detailed technical document which sets out illustrated design rules and requirements to instruct how a site should be physically developed.

17.7.5 Larger sites allocated in the Plan include a site-specific policy requirement for Development Briefs and Design Codes. In order to secure the delivery of high-quality development on windfall sites, sites in excess of 300 dwellings will also be expected to produce a Development Brief and Design Code. The Council has adopted a two-tier approach to design coding. Sites over 500 dwellings will be required to provide an overarching site wide design code, covering infrastructure requirements and key principles that apply across the whole site. This is followed by area Design Codes for particular areas or phases, where appropriate. Sites between 300 and 500 dwellings,

and commercial sites where the total floorspace exceeds 50,000sqm, will only require a site wide Design Code.

17.7.6 Smaller sites may also be required to prepare a Development Brief and/or Design Code where there are complex or sensitive issues such as:

- Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and non-designated built heritage assets of local importance and/or their setting;
- The Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB);
- Heritage assets with archaeological interest and/or their setting;
- Sites in multiple land ownership, where coordination between parties will be required to ensure the delivery of a high quality, coherent development; and
- Mixed use sites where consideration needs to be given to their integration into the surrounding area, for example urban regeneration sites within settlements.

17.7.7 The requirement for a Development Brief and a Design Code will be considered on a case-by-case basis and at the discretion of the Case Officer. Applicants are encouraged to engage with the Council through pre-application discussions to identify whether a Development Brief and/or Design Code will be required.

17.7.8 Consideration should be given to the Council's Development Brief and Design Code Guidance that sets out the requirements for their content, preparation and endorsement.

### Policy HQ9: Larger Sites, Development Briefs and Design Codes

The site allocation policies in this Plan identify the sites that are required to prepare a Development Brief and Design Code.

Any site that meets the following criteria will be required to prepare a Development Brief and/or a Design Code:

A Development Brief must be prepared by the developer and endorsed by the Council prior to the determination of a full or outline planning application, and be accompanied by an Ecological Mitigation and Enhancement Plan, to demonstrate delivery of biodiversity net gain in accordance with National Policy, where it meets one or more of the following criteria:

1. Development exceeds 300 dwellings; or
2. On sites below 300 dwellings, where there are complex or sensitive design issues.

A site-wide Design Code will be required for residential developments in excess of 300 dwellings, commercial developments where the total floorspace exceeds 50,000sqm, or for sites below this threshold where:

3. The site is made up of multiple, related sites that will be built out in phases over a long period of time; or
4. The site is in multiple ownership and coordination between the parties is necessary; or
5. The site is likely to be developed by two or more different developers; or
6. A well-considered approach to design is required due to its sensitivity or the sensitivity of the surrounding area.

Sites over 500 dwellings will also require an Area Specific Design Code for each phase of the development.

## 17.8 Small Open Spaces

17.8.1 The Council recognises the importance of retaining open spaces within our towns and villages as they can contribute to the greening of the built environment, have a positive impact on health and wellbeing, provide havens for wildlife, establish a sense of place and generally create attractive and enjoyable places in which to live and work.

17.8.2 Small open spaces can provide an attractive landscape setting, contribute to traffic calming and screen or soften views by creating buffers between different uses. These types of open spaces can also support habitat connectivity for wildlife and form a key component in sustainable drainage.

17.8.3 The Council's Leisure Strategy sets out the requirements for the creation of new open spaces in developments. It also identifies Central Bedfordshire's stock of open spaces which meet Leisure Strategy typologies and are above a threshold of 200 sqm. In accordance with national guidance these are protected by this Plan from their inappropriate redevelopment. There is however a need to resist the loss of other, often

smaller spaces within the built-up areas of or towns and villages, that are not identified in the Leisure Strategy. These spaces are important to protect as while they may not have a formal recreational function, they do contribute positively to the visual amenity, character and environment of our settlements.

#### **Policy HQ10: Small Open Spaces within Towns and Villages**

Verges, landscape strips and other areas which provide opportunities for recreation or contribute positively to the visual amenity and/or the ecological networks of the area will be safeguarded from encroachment or loss unless social, environmental or economic benefits which significantly outweigh the need to protect the land can be demonstrated.

### **17.9 Modern Methods of Construction**

17.9.1 'Modern methods of construction' (MMC) is a collective term used to describe a number of construction methods. These differ significantly from conventional construction methods such as brick and block. They are fundamentally about better products and processes which improve efficiency, quality, customer satisfaction, environmental performance, sustainability and the predictability of delivery timescales.

17.9.2 There are many types of approaches that are encompassed within MMC. These include:

- Panellised units produced in a factory and assembled on-site to produce a three-dimensional structure;
- Volumetric construction to produce three-dimensional modular units in controlled factory conditions prior to transport to site;
- Hybrid techniques that combine both panellised and volumetric approaches; and
- Floor or roof cassettes, pre-cast concrete foundation assemblies, pre-formed wiring looms, mechanical engineering composites and innovative techniques such as tunnel form or thin-joint block work.

17.9.3 This is an area of considerable innovation with new methods and products being developed on an on-going basis. To reflect this additional guidance will be provided in the Council's Design Guide.

17.9.4 The Council recognises the potential benefits in promoting and encouraging innovation in relation to modernising construction and will therefore consider applications that embrace these favourably.

17.9.5 The Council will maintain a 5-year land supply of housing delivery and in doing so will hold landowners, developers and housebuilders to account on timescales for on-site delivery. MMC could play an important role in accelerating the pace of this delivery on site. MMC is also seen as being a key approach that will be necessary to counter the increasing current and future implications in the shortage of skilled labour in the construction sector.

17.9.6 We would encourage partnerships between housebuilders, Registered Providers and MMC manufacturers with a view to achieving increased build rates and accelerated housebuilding. This will be monitored and recorded as part of the 5-year land supply calculations.

17.9.7 The Council will take an evidence-based approach to commissioning partners who can deliver quality homes at an accelerated pace. This may include manufactures that make effective use of modern building techniques and innovative methods of construction.

#### **Policy HQ11: Modern Methods of Construction**

The Council aims to encourage innovation and appropriate use of modern building techniques. Therefore, proposals that embrace modern methods of construction will be considered favourably. This will include being more flexible with regards to design and finishes whilst still maintaining high quality.

Developers will be asked to demonstrate how they have considered use of MMC in their proposal, to determine the relative benefit or appropriateness of MMC.

The Council aspires for all new development over the period of this Plan to consider the appropriateness of utilising modern methods of construction.

# 18. Historic Environment

## 18.1 Overview

18.1.1 The historic environment forms the basis of local character, plays an important role in the shaping of places and can help to create a sense of social, physical and mental wellbeing.

18.1.2 Heritage assets and their settings are a non-renewable resource and the Council is committed to their protection, enhancement and conservation so that they can be enjoyed by the whole community now and in the future and this includes seeking every opportunity to encourage a reduction in the number of Heritage Assets which the Council and Historic England consider 'at risk' on the Heritage at Risk Register. 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. It is an objective of Government policy to conserve and enhance all aspects of the historic environment. National advice on the identification and conservation of the historic environment, as well as development management decisions are set out in the NPPF and the Council will take full account of those requirements in the consideration of planning applications and allocations for development.

18.1.3 The Council is required to maintain or have access to a Historic Environment Record which contains details of all known heritage assets within the area. In Central Bedfordshire, the Historic Environment Record (HER) comprises nearly 11,000 records relating to buildings, landscapes and archaeological sites and monuments and includes designated and non-designated heritage assets. The Council will ensure that information gathered through plan making or development is made publicly accessible via the Historic Environment Record.

18.1.4 In addition, the Council may require developers to make a record of any works to a heritage asset that will be lost, wholly or in part, as a result of any permitted development, and to make that information publicly accessible, through the Historic Environment Record. The Council also supports the distribution of information about the historic environment to the community through a variety of media; including public open days, displays, the internet and leaflets.

18.1.5 Understanding the value and significance of a place is essential to inform decisions about its future. The degree of significance a heritage asset holds will determine what, if any, protection, including statutory and local designation, is appropriate for heritage sites.

## 18.2 Archaeology

- 18.2.1 The Historic Environment Record (HER) contains information on around 5,000 archaeological sites and monuments. Prospective developers should contact the Council's Archaeology Team in order to establish whether there is potential archaeological interest at a proposed development site and to determine the type of information about the archaeological resource that will be required to be submitted as part of a planning application.
- 18.2.2 Where it is deemed that there is archaeological potential developers will be required to submit an archaeological desk-based assessment for the site. Appropriate expertise may be necessary to ensure that the work is carried out to the correct standard and all the relevant issues are appreciated and understood. In some cases, developers will be required to commission an archaeological field evaluation to define the character, extent and condition of any remains.
- 18.2.3 Central Bedfordshire also has 83 Scheduled Monuments, protected under the terms of the 1979 Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act. The Council will maintain a presumption against development that will result in harm to or loss of significance of any Scheduled Monument. This includes loss of significance caused by inappropriate development in the setting of a Scheduled Monument. Any development that has the potential to impact upon a Scheduled Monument or its setting will have to demonstrate that the harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits which outweigh the harm or loss of significance and will have to comply with paragraphs 132 to 134 of the NPPF.
- 18.2.4 Non-designated heritage assets with archaeological interest that are demonstrably of equivalent significance to Scheduled Monuments will be subject to the policy requirements applied to designated heritage assets. Developments that will result in the destruction of non-designated upstanding archaeological remains or archaeological earthworks will not generally be supported.

### Policy HE1: Archaeology and Scheduled Monuments

Development proposals that affect known heritage assets with archaeological interest (whether designated or non-designated) or areas which have the potential for heritage assets with archaeological interest must be accompanied by an Archaeological Heritage Statement.

Archaeological Heritage Statements must:

1. Describe the significance of the heritage assets with archaeological interest that will be affected by the development and if appropriate, consider any contribution made by their setting to that significance; and
2. Assess the level of impact that the development proposals will have on those assets including, where necessary, an assessment of the impact of the development proposals on their setting.

Exceptions will be made where advice from the Council's Archaeological specialists indicates that an Archaeological Heritage Statement is not necessary.

Where development proposals will impact upon heritage assets, with archaeological interest, where possible, the Council will seek the preservation of those remains *in situ*.

Where preservation *in situ* cannot be achieved, a scheme of archaeological investigation, recording, analysis and publication (i.e. preservation by record) will be required prior to the completion of the development. This scheme will be approved in writing by the Council in advance of development and include provision for the long-term curation of any resulting archive and appropriate publication. This is required in order to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets with archaeological interest that will be lost (wholly or in part) as a consequence of the development.

The Council will support proposals that include provision for the enhancement, conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment by the creation of appropriate management and interpretation schemes. Schemes that will result in a reduction of the number of heritage assets on the Heritage at Risk Register will be encouraged.

Development proposals that will result in the total loss of, or which would cause substantial harm to the significance of heritage assets with archaeological interest or their settings (whether designated or non-designated), will be refused unless the harm or loss of significance is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh the loss of significance or the harm.

## 18.3 Historic Landscapes and Development

18.3.1 A particular feature of Central Bedfordshire is the presence of a high number of historic Registered parks and gardens. The 13 registered parks and gardens within the area include those of exceptional interest and international importance; namely Woburn Abbey, Wrest Park, Silsoe, Old Warden Park (including Swiss Garden), Luton Hoo Park and Southill Park. There are also many non-designated historic parks and gardens across



Central Bedfordshire and these are recorded in the Historic Environment Record. All of these assets make an important contribution to local distinctiveness both in terms of landscape and historic development of the area. Historic parks and gardens often contain other heritage assets such as Listed Buildings or Scheduled Monuments. Therefore, any development proposal that affects a park and garden will need to take a holistic approach to the impact on the landscape and collective of heritage assets as a whole.

18.3.2 Applications that affect registered parks and gardens will need to be accompanied by a Historic Park and Gardens Heritage Statement. On some occasions applications that affect non-designated historic parks and gardens will need to be accompanied by a Historic Parks and Gardens Statement. Prospective developers should contact the Council's specialist advisors in order to establish whether a Historic Park and Gardens Heritage Statement should be submitted as part of any planning application.

### **Policy HE2: Historic Parks and Gardens**

Development proposals that affect Registered Parks and Gardens (or their settings), and known non-designated historic parks and gardens of equivalent significance to registered Parks and Gardens must be accompanied by a Historic Parks and Gardens Heritage Statement. The Historic Parks and Garden Heritage Statement must:

1. Describe the significance of the designed landscape that will be affected by the development and if appropriate, consider any contribution made by its setting to that significance; and
2. Assess the level of impact the development proposals will have on the designed landscape, including, where necessary, consideration of the impact of the development proposal on its setting.

Exceptions will be made where advice from the Council's specialist advisors indicates a Historic Parks and Gardens Heritage Statement is not necessary.

The Council will support development proposals that encourage the conservation, enhancement and restoration of the Historic Parks and Gardens (both designated and non-designated). Proposals that will result in a reduction of the number of heritage assets on the Heritage at Risk Register will be encouraged. Development proposals that will degrade the character and appearance of a Registered Park and Garden, or known non-designated historic park and garden of equivalent significance, or which will cause substantial harm to the significance of these assets (including through inappropriate development in their setting), will be refused unless it can be demonstrated that the harm is necessary to achieve substantial public benefit that would outweigh the loss of significance or the harm.

## 18.4 Built Heritage

18.4.1 Central Bedfordshire has 61 Conservation Areas, 1,938 Listed Buildings, 290 historic rural settlements and 9 historic towns. These are a key indicator of local distinctiveness. The Council recognises the need to conserve and enhance all of these important features, which make up an essential component of the character of the area.

## 18.5 Listed Buildings

18.5.1 When considering applications for Listed Buildings (including for change of use), proposals for building, repair, renovation, alteration and extension should not compromise the building's special interest and significance. It is important to guard against unnecessary change or over-restoration or loss. In any change, materials should be sympathetic and appropriate to those used in the original building. The Council will resist applications that result in the removal and replacement of traditional local features such as long straw thatched roofs, locally manufactured clay tiles and bricks and local stone.

18.5.2 Substantial harm or loss will only be accepted where it can be clearly demonstrated that the harm or loss is necessary and outweighed by the substantial public benefits in accordance with national policy. In cases where Listed Buildings have become vacant and/or derelict, including as a result of deliberate neglect, there is a presumption in favour of their retention. Consent to demolish will be wholly exceptional and will only be allowed if all other options have been thoroughly explored and it is demonstrated that the loss is necessary to deliver substantial public benefits. In exceptional cases where there is no alternative to demolition, the Council will require an appropriate record to be made and the appropriate salvage of materials.

## 18.6 Conservation Areas

18.6.1 Conservation Areas are designated not on the basis of individual buildings but because of the overall quality of the area, its mix of uses, historic layout, characteristic materials, scale and detailing of buildings and open spaces.

18.6.2 Designation also takes into account the need to protect existing trees, hedges, walls, railings and other characteristic features, including open space. Once designated, special attention must be paid in all planning decisions to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. The boundaries are identified on the Policies Map.

18.6.3 The Council will require new development to provide a level of visual interest that is equivalent to the existing buildings in the Conservation Area. Choice of materials and detailed design are vital elements in achieving new buildings worthy of the local character and interest which typifies Central Bedfordshire's Conservation Areas.

18.6.4 Further detailed guidance on conservation and heritage issues are contained in the Central Bedfordshire Design Guide and can be obtained from the Council's specialist officers.

### Non-designated Built Heritage Assets

- 18.6.5 In addition to the 1,938 Listed Buildings Central Bedfordshire's historic market towns, villages and landscapes contain a significant number of distinctive buildings and structures which are not offered statutory protection. Many of these buildings are recorded on the Historic Environment Record and include; vernacular cottages, farm houses, town houses, artisan houses, barns, onion sheds, model farms, and watermills. These buildings usually have few architectural pretensions and are simple in form and detailing. Their building materials were generally sourced from the locality. The Council recognises the need to conserve and enhance all of these important features, which make up an essential component of the character of the area.
- 18.6.6 Applications that affect Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas will need to be accompanied by a Built Heritage Statement. On some occasions applications that affect non-designated buildings and structures will need to be accompanied by a Built Heritage Statement. Prospective developers should contact the Council's specialist advisors in order to establish whether a Built Heritage Statement should be submitted as part of any planning application.

### Policy HE3: Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and Built Heritage

Development proposals affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets of local importance will be granted provided they:

1. Where possible, preserve, sustain and enhance the special character, significance, appearance and/or special architectural or historic interest of the asset/s in terms of scale, form, proportion, design, materials and the retention of features in accordance with national planning policy and legislation;
2. Preserve the setting of the asset/s and its historic significance, and include hard and soft landscape proposals, where appropriate, that respect the character and appearance of the heritage asset; and
3. Developments that will result in a reduction of the number of heritage assets on the Heritage at Risk Register will be encouraged.

Development proposals that affect the significance of any heritage assets must be accompanied by a Built Heritage Statement. The Built Heritage Statement must:

4. Describe the significance of any heritage assets that may be affected by the development;
5. Assess the level of impact that the development proposals will have on those assets, including where necessary an assessment of the impact of the development proposals on their setting; and
6. Demonstrate that opportunities to avoid harmful impacts have been explored, and where this is not possible, set out necessary mitigation measures.

Where development proposals will lead to harm to designated or non-designated heritage assets they will be assessed against the relevant criteria in the National Planning Policy Framework, taking into account the scale of harm and the impact on the significance of the heritage asset.

# 19. Development in the Countryside

## 19.1 Overview

19.1.1 Community Planning across Central Bedfordshire has shown that preserving the countryside and landscape is an important issue to local people. Central Bedfordshire has a varied and contrasting landscape, ecology and settlement pattern, all of which contribute to the much-valued countryside and rural nature of the area. Development in the countryside is sometimes necessary and it is therefore important that it is delivered in accordance with sustainability principles and is appropriate to the character and appearance of the local landscape.

## 19.2 Re-use and Replacement of Buildings in the Countryside

19.2.1 The re-use and adaptation of rural buildings has an important role to play in ensuring the sustainability of rural areas. Making efficient use of land, including through re-use of previously developed land, is central to the approach to delivering sustainable development. It can assist in agricultural diversification, avoid dereliction, improve the visual appearance of the landscape, reduce demands for new building in the countryside, provide opportunities for tourism and recreation and produce local employment.

19.2.2 In the interests of promoting the rural economy, the re-use of existing building in the countryside to employment generating uses will be particularly encouraged by the Council. The Council, whilst recognising the benefits of the re-use of rural buildings, wishes to ensure that development in the countryside is properly managed. The original building or group of buildings to be converted should therefore be appropriate to the rural setting in terms of scale and appearance. Purely functional buildings such as glasshouses and metal framed buildings will not be considered suitable candidates for conversion to residential use. Applicants for the re-use of agricultural buildings erected under permitted development rights will be carefully examined to ensure these rights are not abused and to avoid the proliferation of farm buildings.

### Policy DC1: Re-use of Buildings in the Countryside

The Council will support the re-use of existing buildings in the countryside, subject to proposals complying with the following criteria:

1. The existing building or group of buildings are of permanent and substantial construction that is capable of conversion as evidenced by a supporting structural survey;
2. The re-use is sympathetic to the setting of the site within the countryside and would reinforce local distinctiveness and would not detract from local tranquillity;
3. The re-use would be of a high quality and lead to an enhancement of the immediate setting; and
4. The proposed use is suitable and would not be of detriment to the existing communities.

The conversion of glass houses and/or polytunnels to residential use will not be permitted.

### Policy DC2: Replacement Dwellings in the Countryside

The Council will support the principle of replacement of existing dwellings in the countryside subject to proposals complying with the following criteria:

1. There would be no net increase in the number of dwellings;
2. The replacement dwelling is not disproportionately larger in scale and massing than the original unless the proposed dwelling would result in an improvement to the character of the area; and
3. The replacement building is sympathetic to the setting of the site within the countryside and would reinforce local distinctiveness.

Relevant national and local policies will apply to developments within the Green Belt.

Planning permission will not be granted for the replacement of temporary dwellings, mobile homes, caravans or other dwellings constructed of short life materials, with a permanent dwelling.

## 19.3 Rural Workers Dwellings

- 19.3.1 To sustain and enhance the rural economy, the Council will seek to support the growth of the rural economy. Agriculture and forestry have a key role to play in the countryside, underpinning both the rural economy and the landscape character of those areas. Long term conservation objectives are also sometimes best served by environmentally friendly forms of farming and forestry.
- 19.3.2 The NPPF makes clear that isolated new houses in the countryside require special justification for planning permission to be granted. One of the few circumstances in which isolated residential development may be justified is when accommodation is required to enable agricultural, forestry and other full-time workers to live at, or in the immediate vicinity of, their place of work.
- 19.3.3 The Council's preference for rural worker dwellings is for such workers to reside in nearby towns or villages or in existing properties nearby their place of work, which would avoid the need for new dwellings in the countryside. The Council accepts however that there may be cases where the nature and demands of the workers role requires them to live at or very close to the work place. Such instances will be judged on the needs of the workplace and not the personal preferences of the specific individuals.
- 19.3.4 A functional need will have to be established. If a new dwelling is essential to support a new farming activity, whether on a newly-created agricultural unit or an established one, it should, for the first three years be provided by temporary accommodation such as a caravan. Any temporary or permanent dwelling permitted will be restricted to occupancy of the worker on the establishment.
- 19.3.5 The design and external appearance of agricultural and forestry residential development can be visually harming on the landscape and can result in the loss of important features including those of historic and nature conservation value. Accordingly, any proposal would be considered against design policies set out in the document.

### Policy DC3: Rural Workers Dwellings

Permanent new dwellings for the use of rural workers will be supported in the countryside where:

1. There is a clearly established, existing functional need for agricultural, forestry and other full-time workers to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;
2. The unit and the agricultural activity concerned have been established for at least three years, have been profitable for at least one year, are currently financially sound and have a clear prospect of remaining so;
3. The need could not be fulfilled by another existing dwelling on the unit, or any other existing accommodation in the area which is suitable and available or could be made suitable and available for occupation through conversion and change of use; and
4. The scale of the proposed dwelling is no larger than that required to meet the requirements of the enterprise.

The Council will consider favourably a temporary new dwelling if it is essential to support a new farming or forestry activity. The dwelling should meet the functional test above and/or be supported by a comprehensive business plan and should:

5. Only be provided for up to three years; and
6. Be provided as a caravan, a wooden structure that can be easily dismantled, or other temporary accommodation.

Where rural worker dwellings are proposed in the Green Belt, or Chilterns AONB , the other relevant policies will be applied in addition to the above.

## 19.4 Equestrian Development

19.4.1 By its very nature, equestrian and livestock development requires a countryside location. These activities can make a considerable contribution to sustainable recreation, conservation grazing and the rural economy through diversification of agricultural holdings in the area. However, intensive private activity as well as commercial activities can be visually harmful in the countryside, so it is important that environmental quality and landscape character is respected. As such the Landscape Character Assessment should be employed to inform development proposals.

19.4.2 Larger commercial livery yards may be restricted on the grounds of sustainability and accessibility as well as the impact on the landscape and surroundings and ideally should be based on an existing holding.



### Policy DC4: Equestrian Development

Horse-related facilities and small-scale extensions to existing equestrian enterprises in the countryside will be supported subject to the following criteria:

1. New freestanding stables and provision for vehicle parking must be well screened from the surrounding countryside, should avoid adverse impact on the public Rights of Way network and must not interfere with the amenity of adjoining residents;
2. New buildings for indoor equestrian use will only be considered acceptable when located adjacent to existing buildings or where suitable screening is existing or can be provided;
3. Any proposals for equestrian development including jumps, schooling areas, floodlighting and new buildings/extensions will be considered in the context of the Landscape Character Assessment; and
4. The design, scale, siting and use of materials should respect the rural setting including biodiversity interests.

Proposals which are located within close proximity to the bridleway network will be considered more favourably.

Additionally, proposals for larger scale private or commercial enterprises (comprising ten horses or more) can have severe highway impacts and will only be considered where the applicants can demonstrate the sustainable nature of their location by means of a traffic impact assessment.

## 19.5 Protecting Agricultural Land

19.5.1 Soils are a very valuable and vital component of the environment. The NPPF requires that local planning authorities should take into account the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land. It states that where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, local planning authorities should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of higher quality.

19.5.2 Farmland is important to Central Bedfordshire in a number of ways. Not only does it have value in terms of food production and as an industry but it also has important environmental value. In the past intensive agricultural practices have often harmed biodiversity but fortunately modern farming methods are increasingly geared to redress past damage and balance environmental needs with those of food production geared to redress past damage and balance environmental needs with those of food production.

19.5.3 Central Bedfordshire has a valuable resource of good to excellent quality agricultural land. The most valuable and productive agricultural land is classified as Grade 1, Grade 2 and 3a and in Central Bedfordshire this is predominantly limited to areas along the River Ivel and Great Ouse corridors. In light of the pressures for development, the Council will seek to protect the best and most valuable agricultural land from development.

#### **Policy DC5: Agricultural Land**

Development that would result in the significant loss of Grades 2 and 3a agricultural land will only be permitted where; it can be demonstrated that the location of the proposed development is necessary in order to provide a scheme that is of a valuable public benefit that overrides the need to protect the land.

Any development within these areas will need to be supported by an Agricultural Land Classification Assessment

When considering the significance of the loss; the grade of the land, the size of the proposed site and the quantum of 'best and most versatile' land in the surrounding area will be taken into account.

## Appendix 1: List of Acronyms and Technical Terms

Term	Definition
Affordable Housing	Social and affordable rented and intermediate housing provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the open market
Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)	Air Quality Management Areas are designated by Local Authorities where air quality objectives are not being met
Authority Monitoring Report (AMR)	Report produced by the Council on the extent to which local plan policies and requirements are being achieved. It is a statutory requirement to provide an AMR
Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land	Land which is classified as Grades 1, 2 or 3a in the Agricultural Land Classification system
Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)	A strategy prepared for a local area aimed at conserving biological diversity. Since 2001 the Bedfordshire and Luton Wildlife Working Group has been developing and maintaining the individual plans for species and habitats as part of this county's Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP). The current plans are all available at <a href="http://www.bedscape.org.uk/BRMC">www.bedscape.org.uk/BRMC</a>
BREEAM	Building research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method - for assessing, rating and certifying the sustainability of buildings, infrastructure and masterplanning projects
Brownfield Land	See previously developed land
Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford Arc	A corridor for growth as set out in the National Infrastructure Commission's report (November 2017)
Category M4(2)	An optional technical standard of Building Regulations which relates to accessible and adaptable standards which can be adapted to meet the occupants need
Category M4(3)	An optional technical standard of Building Regulations which relates to Wheelchair adaptable standards to meet the needs of a household including wheelchair users
CBLTM	Central Bedfordshire and Luton Transport Model

Term	Definition
Climate Change Mitigation	Action to reduce the impact of human activity on the climate system, primarily through reducing greenhouse gas emissions
Climate Change Adaptation	Action taken to adjust to actual or expected climatic factors or their effects, including changes in rainfall and rising temperatures, which moderate harm or exploit beneficial opportunities
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
Design Code	A detailed technical document which sets out the illustrated design rules and 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 Development Brief for a site or area
Development Brief	A document that demonstrates how a site meets national and local policies and guidance and sets the parameters for the development to guide future planning applications. Once endorsed it will be a material consideration in the determination of future planning applications
Duty to Cooperate	Duty to Cooperate is a legal test that requires the cooperation between local authorities and other statutory bodies to maximise the effectiveness of policies for strategic matters within local plans
Energy Hierarchy	An approach to reducing carbon dioxide emissions in the built environment. It consists of three steps: Be Lean – reduce the need for energy; Be Clean – supply and use energy in the most efficient manner; Be Green – supply energy from renewable sources
Fabric First Approach	An approach to reduce the amount of energy needed for space heating in buildings through increased insulation of the buildings
Five-Year Housing Land Supply	A calculation of whether there is a deliverable supply of homes to meet the planned housing requirement (or local housing need) over the next 5 years
Freight	Goods transported in bulk by lorry, train, ship, aircraft or pipeline. Includes the transportation of minerals and waste
Framework Plan	A high-level masterplan that sets out the broad development principles and structure of a strategic proposal. This includes an identification of areas for residential development, employment land and associated infrastructure. The specific location of infrastructure and land uses will be developed through the production of specific site and area masterplans and design codes

Term	Definition
Gigabit Capable Infrastructure	Gigabit broadband means any technology that can deliver speeds of at least 1 gigabit per second (1000 megabits per second). 1 gigabit per second allows a high-definition film to be downloaded in under one minute
Greenfield Land	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
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	The collective name for a range of gases that trap some of the sun's warmth within the earth's atmosphere, these include water vapour, carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, ozone and chlorofluorocarbons
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
Grey Water Recycling	System for re-using the wastewater from shower/bath, washbasin or washing machine, for example to flush toilets
Habitat of Principal Importance	Habitats which are recognised in Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 as of "principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity"
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 National, European and International 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
Home Quality Mark	A rating system that gives the overall picture of a home's quality and a set of indicators on individual aspects of its performance, such as build quality, running cost and health benefits
Housing Needs Study	A study that assesses the future housing needs of the area, in terms of the size, type and affordability of dwellings
HSE Major Accident Hazard Pipelines	Pipeline systems that include the transmission of high-pressure natural gas supplies, or dangerous fluids such as oils, chemicals and other gases.
Inclusive Design	Designing a building or space to ensure that it can be accessed and used by everyone

Term	Definition
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 designated heritage assets (as defined by the National Planning Policy Framework – NPPF)
Local Development Scheme (LDS)	A public statement setting out which documents will be prepared in relation to the Development Plan, and when they will be produced
Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)	A locally owned partnership between local authorities and businesses. A LEP plays a central role in deciding local economic priorities and undertaking activities to help drive economic growth and create local jobs
Local Planning Authority (LPA)	The public authority whose duty it is to carry out specific planning functions for a specific area. Central Bedfordshire Council is the local planning authority for Central Bedfordshire
Local Transport Plan (LTP)	The transport strategy prepared by the local transport authority. Central Bedfordshire Council is the Local Transport Authority for Central Bedfordshire
Material Consideration	Any matter that should be taken into account in the determination of a planning application
Mechanical Ventilation	Uses powered system of ducts and fans to extract stale air from the inside of the building and provide fresh air from the outside
Minerals Safeguarding Area (MSA)	An area designated by a Mineral Planning Authority which covers known deposits of minerals which are desired to be kept safeguarded from unnecessary sterilisation by non-mineral development
Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS)	The minimum internal space standards and gross internal areas for residential developments
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	The overarching core document which identifies National Planning Policy

Term	Definition
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
Non-Designated Heritage Asset	A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified by the local planning authority as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Non-designated heritage assets do not have statutory protection but are often recorded on the Historic Environment Record or local lists
Objectively Assessed Need (OAN)	The total calculated need of an authority area for both affordable and market housing
Passive Solar Design	An approach to designing buildings to take advantage of the sun's energy for the heating and cooling of occupied spaces by exposure to the sun
PassivHaus	A voluntary standard for energy efficiency in buildings. Buildings delivered to this standard have a good indoor air quality and require little energy for space heating and cooling
Part L of the Building Regulations	An Approved Document that details the minimum standards that new-build buildings are required to meet
Part G of the Building Regulations	An Approved Document that provides guidance on the supply of water to a property, including water safety, hot water supply, sanitation and water efficiency
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
Planning Obligations (or Section 106 Agreements)	Planning obligations is a negotiable, yet legally binding charge agreed between an applicant and the Local Authority with the granting of planning permission. These agreements are a way of delivering or addressing matters that are necessary to make a development acceptable in planning terms. They are used to support the provision of services and infrastructure, such as highways, recreational facilities, education, health and affordable housing

Term	Definition
Policies Map	The Policies Map illustrates on a base map (reproduced from an Ordnance Survey map to a registered scale) all the policies contained in Development Strategy. It is thus site and location specific, unlike the Key Diagram. The Policies Map will be revised each time a new Strategy is prepared which has site specific policies or proposals and will always reflect the up-to-date planning strategy for the area
Post-construction Verification Report	A document submitted by a developer to provide evidence that their development was built to agreed standards and is policy compliant
Purge Ventilation	Is provided through openings such as windows and doors, allowing warm, moist internal air to be passively replaced by a cooler air from the outside
Previously Developed 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
Primary Shopping Areas	Represent identified locations with a high concentration of retail provision. The boundary for Primary Shopping Areas differ to the Town Centre Boundary
Public Realm	This is the space between and within buildings that are publicly accessible including streets, squares, forecourts, parks and open spaces
Rail Freight Interchange (RFI)	A Rail Freight Interchange is a rail-connected warehousing and container handling facility providing pick-up/drop-off access to the rail network. The aim of an RFI is to optimise the use of rail in the freight journey by maximising rail trunk haul and minimising the distribution by road
Rainwater Harvesting	System for collecting and re-use of rainwater in buildings for non-potable purposes. For example, for flushing toilets or irrigating gardens



Term	Definition
Renewable and Low Carbon Technologies	Produce energy either from an endless, renewable source, such as the wind and the sun, or provide a significantly higher energy output to input and have low or zero carbon emissions through their operation
Resource Efficiency	This means using the Earth's limited resources in a sustainable manner while minimising impacts on the environment
Rural Exception Sites	Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. Small numbers of market homes may be allowed at the local authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding
Registered Park and Garden	A historic landscape that is included on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens in England. Registered parks and gardens are designated heritage assets (as defined by the National Planning Policy Framework – NPPF)
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 1979 (1). Scheduled Monuments are designated heritage assets (as defined by the National Planning Policy Framework – NPPF)
Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006	Requires the Secretary of State to publish and maintain lists of species and types of habitats which are regarded by Natural England to be of "principal importance" for the purposes of conserving biodiversity in England
SBCH - Self-Build & Custom Housebuilding	A residential dwelling built or commissioned by individuals or groups of individuals for their own occupation
SEMLEP – South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership	An organisation which brings together businesses, universities and colleges, community groups, social enterprises and local government in Aylesbury Vale District, Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire, Cherwell District, Corby Borough, Daventry District, Kettering Borough, Luton Borough, Milton Keynes, Northampton Borough and South Northants, Wellingborough District and East Northamptonshire District. Together these partners are working closely with Government to support inward investment, innovation, economic growth, new enterprise and job creation

Term	Definition
Settlement Envelopes	Settlement Envelopes define the boundaries between settlements and surrounding countryside. They are generally tightly drawn around the current built form, including sites that are allocated for development within this plan
Setting of a Heritage Asset	The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	Sites designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
Solar Gain	The increase in temperature of a building, object or space that is caused by solar radiation
Sustainability Appraisal (SA)	The process by which social, environmental and economic issues are integrated into the production of the Development Plan. The process is iterative and takes place alongside the production of the documents, informing the decisions made
Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)	Document setting out how and when stakeholders and other interested parties will be consulted and involved in the preparation of Development Plan Documents (and in the consideration of individual planning applications)
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 Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)	A document which identifies the level of housing need in the local area
Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)	Documents which add further detail to the policies in the Local Plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design. Supplementary planning documents are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the Development Plan
Sustainable Drainage System	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, the speed of the water flow is controlled, and pollutants are removed

Term	Definition
Sustainability Statement	A document that provides information on sustainability measures incorporated into the development to achieve or exceed policy compliance
Target Emission Rate	Sets a minimum allowable standard for the energy performance of a building and is defined by the annual carbon dioxide emissions of a notional building of same type, size and shape to the proposed building. TER is expressed in annual kg of CO <sub>2</sub> per sq. m
Thermal Mass	A property of the mass of a building which enables it to store and give back heat, providing mechanism for balancing internal building temperatures against the daily fluctuations of outside temperatures
Transport Assessment (TA)	A comprehensive and systematic process that sets out transport issues relating to a proposed development. It identifies what measures will be required to improve accessibility and safety for all modes of travel, particularly for alternatives to the car such as walking, cycling and public transport and what measures will need to be taken to deal with the anticipated transport impacts of the development
Transport Statement (TS)	A simplified version of a transport assessment where it is agreed the transport issues arising out of development proposals are limited and a full transport assessment is not required
Travel Plan (TP)	A long-term management strategy for an organisation or site that seeks to deliver sustainable transport objectives through action and is articulated in a document that is regularly reviewed
Ultrafast Broadband	Ultrafast broadband is connection with speeds of more than 100Mb
Ultra-Low Emission Vehicles	Ultra-low emission vehicle (ULEV) is the term used to describe any vehicle that uses low carbon technologies; emits less than 75g of CO <sub>2</sub> /km; or can operate in zero emission mode for a range of at least ten miles
Urban Heat Island Effect	Sun heat and waste heat from human activities are absorbed by man-made materials and this leads to temperatures being often a few degrees higher in urbanised areas such as town and cities than they are in their surrounding rural areas.
Water Efficiency	Reducing water use and wastage through installation of water efficient fitting, such as dual flush toilets, and water efficient appliances, such as washing machines and dishwashers
Windfall Sites	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

## Appendix 2: List of Superseded Policies

The table below sets out the policies that are to be superseded by this Local Plan. These policies will no longer be part of the Development Plan for Central Bedfordshire once the Local Plan is adopted.

Central Bedfordshire (North) Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD (2009)				
Policy Ref.	Policy Name	Saved	Superseded	Superseded by:
<b>Core Strategic Policies</b>				
CS1	Development Strategy		✓	SP1
CS2	Developer Contributions		✓	HQ2
CS3	Healthy and Sustainable Communities		✓	HQ4, EE13
CS4	Accessibility and Transport		✓	T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6
CS5	Providing Homes		✓	SP1
CS6	Housing Delivery and Timing		✓	SP1, HA1
CS7	Affordable Housing		✓	H4
CS8	Exceptions Schemes		✓	H5
CS9	Providing Jobs		✓	SP1
CS10	Location of Employment Sites		✓	SP1, EMP1
CS11	Rural Economy and Tourism		✓	EMP4
CS12	Town Centres and Retailing		✓	R1, R2, R3
CS13	Climate Change		✓	CC1
CS14	High Quality Development		✓	HQ1
CS15	Heritage		✓	HE1, HE2, HE3
CS16	Landscape and Woodland		✓	EE4, EE5
CS17	Green Infrastructure		✓	EE1
CS18	Biodiversity and Geological Conservation		✓	EE2, EE3
<b>Development Management Policies</b>				
DM1	Renewable Energy		✓	CC2
DM2	Sustainable Construction of New Buildings		✓	HQ1, HQ11
DM3	High Quality Development		✓	HQ1
DM4	Development within and Beyond Settlement Envelopes		✓	SP7
DM5	Important Open Space		✓	EE13
DM6	Development within Green Belt Infill Boundaries		✓	SP4

DM7	Development in Town Centres		✓	R1
DM8	Village Shops and Pubs		✓	R2
DM9	Providing a Range of Transport		✓	T1, T4, T5
DM10	Housing Mix		✓	H1
DM11	Significant Facilities in the Countryside		✓	EMP5
DM12	Horticultural and Redundant Agricultural Sites		✓	DC1, DC5
DM13	Heritage in Development		✓	HE1, HE2, HE3
DM14	Landscape and Woodland		✓	EE4, EE5
DM15	Biodiversity		✓	EE2, EE3
DM16	Green Infrastructure		✓	EE1
DM17	Accessible Greenspaces		✓	EE1, EE13
DM18	Equestrian Development		✓	DC4

### Site Allocations (North) Development Plan Document (2011)

Policy Ref.	Policy Name	Saved	Superseded	Superseded by:
DM5a	Important Open Space		✓	EE13, HQ10
E1	Safeguarded Key Employment Sites		✓	EMP1

### Housing Allocations

HA1	Land at Potton Road, Biggleswade	NA	NA	Completed
HA2	Former London Road Council Offices, Biggleswade	NA	NA	Completed
HA3	Former Meller Beauty Site, Sunderland Road, Sandy	NA	NA	Completed
HA4	Land West of Abbey Lane, Ampthill	NA	NA	Completed
HA5	Land North of Church Street, Ampthill	NA	NA	Completed
HA6	Land at Former Hostel Site, Houghton Conquest	NA	NA	Completed
HA7	Land Rear of Central Garage, Cranfield	NA	NA	Completed
HA8	Land at High Street/Lodge Road, Cranfield	NA	NA	Completed
HA9	Land East of Sutton Mill Road, Potton	✓		
HA10	Land at Stanford Road, Shefford	NA	NA	Completed

HA11	Land at Shawmer Farm, Stotfold	✓		NA
HA12	Land at Arleseey Road, Stotfold	✓		NA
HA13	Land at Roker Park, The Green, Stotfold	✓		NA
HA14	Land at Roecroft School Site, Stotfold	✓		NA
HA15	Land off Barford Road, Blunham	NA	NA	Completed
HA16	Land at New Road, Clifton	NA	NA	Completed
HA17	Land Adjacent to Castle Hill Court, Clophill	NA	NA	Completed
HA18	Land Rear of 122-124 High Street, Clophill	NA	NA	Completed
HA19	Land off Boot Lane, Dunton	NA	NA	Completed
HA20	Sandy Road, Everton	✓		NA
HA21	The Heath, Everton	NA	NA	Completed
HA22	Land Rear of the Wrestlers Public House, Langford	NA	NA	Completed
HA23	Land off Church Street, Langford	NA	NA	Completed
HA24	Land at Moor Lane, Maulden	✓		NA
HA25	Land Rear of High Street, Meppershall	NA	NA	Completed
HA26	Land Rear of The Guinea Public House, Bedford Road, Moggerhanger	NA	NA	Completed
HA27	Land at High Road, Shillington	NA	NA	Completed
HA28	Land Rear of Station Road and Bedford Road, Lower Stondon	NA	NA	Completed
HA29	Peckworth Industrial Estate, Bedford Road, Lower Stondon, Henlow	✓		NA
MA1	Land West of Station Road/New Road, Sandy	NA	NA	Completed
MA2	Land at Steppingley Road and Froghall Road, Flitwick	✓		NA
MA3	Land South of Wixams	✓		NA
MA4	Land at Moreteyne Farm, Marston Moreteyne	✓		NA
MA5	Land East of Biggleswade Road, Pottton	✓		NA
MA6	Land at Bridge Farm, Ivel Road, Shefford	NA	NA	Completed

MA7	Land at Former Pig Development Unit, Hitchin Road, Stotfold	NA	NA	Superseded by approved application for residential development
MA8	Land at Chase Farm and Land West and NE of High Street, Arlesey	✓		NA
MA9	Cranfield University Campus, Silsoe	NA	NA	Completed
<b>Town Centre Policies</b>				
TC1	Town Centre, Biggleswade		✓	R1, R3
TC2	Town Centre, Flitwick		✓	R1, R3
<b>Recreation Policies</b>				
RA1	Flitwick Football Centre, Ampthill Road, Flitwick	NA	NA	Completed
<b>Employment Allocations</b>				
EA1	Land East of Stratton Business Park, Biggleswade	✓		NA
EA2	Land North of Beamish Close, Sandy	✓		NA
EA3	Land at Doolittle Mill	✓		NA
EA5	Land West of University Way and Wharley End, Cranfield	✓		NA
EA6	Land Between A421 and Marston Gate Distribution Park, Brogborough	NA	NA	Completed
EA7	Land Adjacent to 29 Clophill Road, Maulden	✓		NA
EA8	Land at Quest Pit, Ampthill Road, Houghton Conquest			Planning permission lapsed, policy out of date
<b>South Bedfordshire Local Plan</b>				
<b>Policy Ref</b>	<b>Policy Name</b>	<b>Saved</b>	<b>Superseded</b>	<b>Superseded by:</b>
<b>Sustainability Principles &amp; The Development Strategy</b>				
SD1	Sustainability Keynote Policy		✓	SP1, SP2
<b>Green Belt Policies</b>				
GB1	Control of Development in the Green Belt		✓	SP1, SP4, EMP5

GB2	Major Development in the Green Belt		✓	SP1, SP4, EMP5
GB3	Green Belt Villages		✓	SP4, SP7
GB4	Safeguarding Land for Long-Term Requirements ('White' Land)		✓	SP4
<b>Natural Environment Policies</b>				
NE1	Location and Design of Development in the Countryside		✓	EE1, EE2, EE3
NE2	Control of Development in the AONB		✓	EE7
NE3	Control of Development in Area of Great Landscape Value		✓	EE5, EE7
NE4	The Protection and Enhancement of Trees and Woodlands		✓	EE4
NE5	Control of Development affecting Watercourses		✓	EE11
NE6	Biodiversity and Nature Conservation		✓	EE2, EE3
NE7	The Protection and Enhancement of Nature Conservation Sites		✓	EE2, EE3
NE8	Control of Development affecting Protected Species		✓	EE3
NE9	Countryside Management		✓	EE3, EE4, EE5
NE10	Diversifying the Use of Agricultural Land		✓	DC1, DC5
NE11	Controlling Horse-Related Development		✓	DC4
NE12	The Re-Use and Adaptation of Rural Buildings		✓	SP4, DC1
NE13	Control of Agricultural and Forestry Development in the Countryside		✓	DC3, DC5
<b>Built Environment Policies</b>				
BE1	Control of Development affecting Scheduled Monuments and Areas of Archaeological Importance		✓	HE1
BE2	Control of Development affecting Listed Buildings		✓	HE3



BE3	Building Preservation Notices		✓	HE3
BE4	Control of Development in Conservation Areas		✓	HE3
BE5	Control of Development in Conservation Areas (cont.)		✓	HE3
BE6	Control of Development in Areas of Special Character		✓	HE3
BE7	Conservation and Enhancement of Historic Parks and Gardens		✓	HE2
BE8	Design Considerations		✓	HQ1
BE9	Contaminated Land		✓	CC8
BE10	Advertisement Control	✓		NA
<b>Transport Policies</b>				
Transport Policies	Controlling the Location and Traffic Impact of Development		✓	T1
T1	Traffic Management Schemes		✓	T1, T2
T2	Maintenance and Improvement of Bus Services and Facilities in the District		✓	T4
T3	Public Transport Services along Former Luton/Dunstable Rail Line	NA	NA	Completed
T4	Improving the Pedestrian Environment		✓	T1, T2
T5	Provision of Cycle Routes and Facilities		✓	T1, T2
T6	Controlling the Supply of Public Car Parking		✓	T3
T7	Controlling the Supply of Public Car Parking (cont.)		✓	T3
T8	Parking Outside Town Centres		✓	T3
T9	Controlling Parking in New Developments		✓	T3
T10	Securing Contributions for Alternatives to Parking		✓	T3, HQ2
T11	New Road Construction		✓	T1, T2
T12	Safeguarding the Routes of Proposed Roads	NA	NA	NA
<b>Population &amp; Housing Policies</b>				
H1	Making Provision for Housing and Accompanying Schedule of Proposed Housing Sites		✓	

H1 (1)	Carter's Scrapyard, French's Avenue, Dunstable	NA	NA	Completed
H1 (2)	Hartwell Trucks, Skimpot Road, Dunstable	NA	NA	Completed
H1 (3)	Balkan Cars, High Street North, Dunstable	✓		NA
H1 (4)	Gas Works Site, North Station Way, Dunstable	✓		NA
H1 (5)	Regent Street/Manchester Place, Dunstable	✓		NA
H1 (6)	Car Park – south end of Renault site – Carter's Yard and adjoining areas, Luton Road, Dunstable	NA	NA	Completed
H1 (7)	Hartwell Ford, Station Road, Dunstable	NA	NA	Completed
H1 (8)	Three Valleys Water Premises, High Street South, Dunstable	✓		NA
H1 (9)	Brooke Engineering Union Street, Dunstable	NA	NA	Completed
H1 (10)	Former Car Auction Site, Stanbridge Road, Leighton Buzzard	NA	NA	Completed
H1 (11)	Camden Motors Site, Adjacent Bell Close, Lake Street, Leighton Buzzard	NA	NA	Completed
H1 (12)	Dunham and Haines Site, Leighton Road, Linslade	NA	NA	Completed
H1 (13)	Land at RAF Stanbridge, Stanbridge Road, Leighton Buzzard	✓		Under construction
H1 (14)	Pratts Pit, Billington Road, Leighton Buzzard	NA	NA	Completed
H1 (15)	Pratts Quarry, Billington Road, Leighton Buzzard	NA	NA	Completed
H1 (16)	Weston Avenue Allotments, Linslade	NA	NA	NA
H1 (17)	Land at Grovebury Farm, Leighton Buzzard	NA	NA	Completed
H1 (18)	Car Storage Site, Grove Road, Slip End	NA	NA	Completed
H1 (19)	Land at Dunstable Road and Folly Lane, Caddington	✓		NA

H1 (20)	Land between Waddington's Yard and White Horse Close, Hockliffe	NA	NA	Completed
H1 (21)	A5 Garage, Watling Street, Hockliffe	NA	NA	Completed
H1 (22)	Land between Faldo Road and Bedford Road, Barton	NA	NA	Completed
H1 (23)	Renault Sports Ground, Park Road North, Houghton Regi	NA	NA	Completed
H1 (24)	Avery's Garage and Land at Rear of 71-81 Plantation Road, Leighton Buzzard	NA	NA	Completed
H1 (25)	Land off Baker Street/Rear of 55-69 North Street, Leighton Buzzard	NA	NA	Completed
H1 (26)	Nursery Gardens, Rear of Wing Road, Linslade	NA	NA	Completed
H1 (27)	Former Railway Sidings, Wing Road, Linslade	✓		NA
H1 (28)	Land at Grove Road, Slip End	NA	NA	Completed
H1 (29)	Land between Conger Lane and Recreation Ground, Toddington	NA	NA	Completed
H1 (30)	The Paddocks', Dunstable	NA	NA	Completed
H1 (31)	Brickyard Quarry, Leighton Buzzard	✓		NA
H2	Making Provision for Housing via 'Fall-in' Sites		✓	SP4, SP7
H3	Meeting Local Housing Needs		✓	H1, H2, H3, H4
H4	Providing Affordable Housing		✓	H4
H5	Providing Affordable Housing in Rural Areas		✓	H5
H6	Housing Density		✓	HQ1
H7	Controlling the Loss of Residential Accommodation		✓	
H8	Control of Extensions to Dwellings		✓	Permitted Development Rights, HQ1
H9	Controlling the Conversion of Property to form Dwellings		✓	Permitted Development Rights, HQ1, DC1
H10	Control of Agricultural Workers Dwellings		✓	DC3
H11	Sub-Division of Agricultural Holdings and Proposals for		✓	DC2, DC3

	New Agricultural Workers Dwellings			
H12	Controlling Infilling in Villages		✓	SP7
H13	Extensions to Dwellings in the Green Belt		✓	SP4
H14	Replacement Dwellings in the Green Belt		✓	SP4
H15	Mobile Homes and Residential Caravans in the Green Belt		✓	SP4
H16	Control of Gypsy Sites		✓	H7
<b>Employment &amp; Economic Regeneration Policies</b>				
E1	Providing for B1-B8 Development within Main Employment Areas (Category 1)		✓	EMP1, EMP3
E2	Control of Development and Employment Land outside Main Employment Areas (Category 2)		✓	EMP1, EMP2, EMP3
E3	Industrial and Commercial Development in the Rural Area		✓	EMP4
E4	Industrial and Commercial Development in Villages Excluded from the Green Belt		✓	EMP1, EMP4
E5	Restricting the Expansion of Non-Conforming Employment Uses		✓	EMP1
E6	Relocating Non-Conforming Uses		✓	EMP1
<b>Town Centres &amp; Shopping Policies</b>				
TCS1	Sustaining and Enhancing the District's Town Centres		✓	R1, R3
TCS2	Main Shopping Areas		✓	R1, R2, R3
TCS3	Houghton Regis Town Centre		✓	R3
TCS4	Town Centre Regeneration Sites in Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard		✓	R3
TCS5	Houghton Regis Town Centre Enhancement		✓	R3
TCS6	New Provision of an Extensions to Major Retail, Leisure, Entertainment and		✓	R2

	Service Developments Outside Town Centres			
TCS7	Local and Village Shopping Facilities		✓	R2
TCS8	Local and Village Shopping Facilities (cont.)			R2
TCS9	Shop Fronts		✓	R1, R2, R3
<b>Recreation, Leisure &amp; Open Space Policies</b>				
R1	Encouragement		✓	EE13
R2	Proposed Areas of New Urban Open Space in Dunstable	✓		NA
R3	Proposed Areas of New Urban Open Space in Houghton Regis	✓		NA
R4	Implementation of the Ouzel Valley Park, Leighton Linlade	✓		NA
R5	Ouzel Valley Park Proposals: North of Bridge Street	✓		NA
R6	Ouzel Valley Park Proposals: South of Bridge Street	✓		NA
R7	Proposed Areas of New Urban Open Space in Leighton Buzzard and Linslade and Enhancement Proposals of Existing Open Space	✓		NA
R8	Proposed Area of New Urban Open Space in Caddington	✓		NA
R9	Proposed Area of New Urban Open Space in Hockliffe	✓		NA
R10	Children's Play Area Standard		✓	EE13
R11	Provision of New Urban Open Space in New Residential Developments		✓	EE1, EE13
R12	Protection of Recreational Open Space		✓	EE13
R13	Protection of Recreational Open Space in Rural Areas		✓	EE13
R14	Protection and Improvement of Informal Recreational Facilities in the Countryside		✓	EE13
R15	Retention of Public Rights of Way Network		✓	EE12

R16	Control of Sport and Formal Recreational Facilities in the Countryside		✓	EE13
R17	Provision of Specialist or Indoor Sport Facilities in the Main Urban Areas		✓	HQ4
<b>Infrastructure &amp; Community Services Policies</b>				
IS1	Controlling Development Which May Affect the Quality of Ground or Surface Water		✓	CC6
IS2	Controlling Water Abstraction for Development		✓	CC6
IS3	Controlling Development in Areas at Risk of Flooding		✓	CC3
IS4	Controlling Surface Water Run-off from Development		✓	CC5
IS5	Sewerage and Sewage Disposal to Serve Development		✓	CC6
SI6	Controlling Telecommunications Development		✓	HQ5
IS7	Improvement of Community Based Care Facilities		✓	HQ3, H3
<b>Implementation, Monitoring &amp; Review</b>				
IMP1	Using Legal Agreements and Planning Obligations to Implement the Plan		✓	HQ2
<b>Mid Bedfordshire Local Plan (2005)</b>				
<b>Policy Ref.</b>	<b>Policy Name</b>	<b>Saved</b>	<b>Superseded</b>	<b>Superseded by:</b>
	<b>List of saved policies from the Mid Beds Local Plan in the Core Strategy (2009)</b>			
CS21	Important Countryside Gaps		✓	SP5
H08 (1)	Land East of Lidlington	NA	NA	Completed
H08 (2)	Land at Stewartby (Houghton Conquest Parish)	✓		NA
H08 (2A)	Land at High Street, Houghton Conquest	NA	NA	Completed
H08 (3A)	Land East of Bedford Road, Marston Moreteyne	NA	NA	Completed
H08 (5)	Land Adjacent to Swaffield Close, Ampthill	NA	NA	Completed

H08 (6A)	Land at Tavistock Avenue, Ampthill	NA	NA	Completed
H08 (8)	Land East of Biggleswade	✓		NA
H08 (9)	Hitchin Street, Biggleswade	NA	NA	Completed
H08 (10)	Land South of Stotfold	NA	NA	Completed
H08 (11)	Land at Queen Street, Stotfold	NA	NA	Completed
H08 (12)	Fairfield Hospital, Stotfold	NA	NA	Completed
H08 (13A)	Land West of High Street, South of Cricketers Road, Arlesey	NA	NA	Completed
H08 (14A)	Land at Garfield Farm, Langford	NA	NA	Completed
H08 (15A)	Land to the East of the Dairy, Henlow	NA	NA	Completed
H08 (19)	Shefford Town Football Club	NA	NA	Completed
H08 (22A)	Land East of the Woodlands Estate, Greenfield	NA	NA	Completed
H08 (25A)	Land to the Rear of Braybrooks Drive, Potton	NA	NA	Completed
H08 (26)	College Farm, Silsoe	NA	NA	Completed
H08 (26A)	Home Farm, Cranfield	✓		NA
H010, H011	Travelling Showpeople		✓	SP8, H8
H012	Gypsies		✓	H7
EMP4 (1)	Stratton Business Park, London Road, Biggleswade	✓		NA
EMP4 (2)	Land North of Sunderland Road, Sandy	✓		NA
EMP4 (3)	Land West of A1, Girtford Underpass, Sandy	✓		NA
EMP4 (4)	Land at Arlesey Brickworks, Arlesey	NA	NA	Completed
EMP4 (6)	Cranfield Technology Park	✓		NA
EMP4 (10A)	Land Adjoining 29 Clophill Road, Maulden	✓		NA
EMP 12	Local Airfields and Airstrips	✓		NA
TCS8	Biggleswade – Land at London Road	NA	NA	Completed

## Appendix 3: Local Plan Policy Monitoring Framework

The Council will assess the performance and effectiveness of individual policies within the Local Plan through the monitoring of indicators identified within the Monitoring Framework. The results of this monitoring will be reported annually in the Council's Authority Monitoring Report.

Policy	Strategic Objective	Monitoring Indicator
<b>The Spatial Strategy</b>		
SP1a Partial Review of the Local Plan		Progress of the Plan review
SP1 Growth Strategy	SO1, SO2, SO5, SO6, SO7	Amount of homes and employment floorspace delivered annually Number of homes delivered to meet Luton's unmet need
SP2 National Planning Policy Framework – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development	SO1, SO2	Number of applications approved contrary to the Local Plan in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF
SP3 Generic Requirements for Strategic Housing Allocations	SO1, SO2	Strategic sites to be monitored separately (see below)
SA1 North of Luton	SO1, SO2	Annual Monitoring of site delivery against indicative trajectory
SE1 Sundon Rail Freight Interchange (RFI)	SO5	Monitoring of progress of site delivery
SA2 Marston Vale New Villages	SO1, SO2	Monitoring of site delivery against indicative trajectory



SE2 Marston Gate Expansion	SO5	Monitoring of progress of site delivery
SA3 East of Arlesey	SO1, SO2	Monitoring of site delivery against indicative trajectory
SA4 East of Biggleswade	SO1, SO2	Monitoring of site delivery against indicative trajectory
SE3 Holme Farm, Biggleswade	SO5	Monitoring of progress of site delivery
HA1 Small & Medium Allocations	SO1, SO2	Monitoring of site delivery against indicative trajectory
SC1 Houghton Regis North Sites 1 & 2 Strategic Commitment		Monitoring of site delivery against indicative trajectory
<b>Green Belt, Coalescence &amp; Settlements</b>		
SP4 Development in the Green Belt	SO4, SO12, SO13	Amount of homes and commercial floorspace delivered within the Green Belt
SP5 Important Countryside Gaps and Preventing Coalescence	SO3, SO4	Number of applications approved in Important Countryside Gaps
SP7 Windfall Development	SO1, SO2, SO3, SO4	Number of homes delivered on windfall sites Number of homes delivered on windfall sites within Settlement Envelopes and in settlements inset from the Green Belt
SP8 Gypsy and Traveller & Travelling Show People pitch requirement	SO1, SO2	Monitoring of progress towards meeting requirement
<b>Housing</b>		
H1 Housing Mix	SO8	Number of completed dwellings with a breakdown of housing type/tenure mix

H2 Housing Standards	SO8	Percentage of housing approvals which achieve 35% Category 2 requirement Percentage of housing approvals which achieve 5% Category 3 requirement
H3 Supporting Older People	SO8	Amount of accommodation delivered to accommodate the needs of older people on sites of 100 dwellings or more Number of Extra Care facilities approved and delivered on sites of 300 dwellings or more
H4 Affordable Housing	SO8	Number of completed affordable dwellings showing tenure split
H5 Rural Exception Sites	SO8	Number of dwellings completed on rural exception sites
H6 Self and Custom Build Housing	SO8	List the number of people on the register Number of self-and custom build plots permitted
H7 Assessing Planning Applications for Gypsy and Traveller Sites	SO8	Number of approved Gypsy and Traveller pitches
H8 Assessing Planning Applications for Travelling Showpeople Sites	SO8	Number of approved Travelling Showpeople sites
<b>Employment</b>		
EMP1 Small & Medium Employment Sites	SO5, SO6, SO7	Net gain/loss of B2/B8 and E(g) employment floorspace on small and medium allocated sites
EMP2 Change of Use to Non-Employment Generating Uses	SO5, SO6, SO7	Number of applications approved on unallocated employment sites and non key sites for non-employment uses Number of applications approved on allocated employment land and key sites for non-employment uses

EMP3 Development on non-allocated sites	SO5, SO6, SO7	Number of applications approved for employment uses adjacent to Settlement Envelopes Number of applications approved for employment uses outside of the Settlement Envelopes
EMP4 Rural and Visitor Economy	SO5, SO6, SO7	Number of applications approved for tourist, leisure and employment developments in the rural area
EMP5 Significant Facilities in the Countryside and Green Belt	SO5, SO6, SO7	Number of applications approved for the expansion or redevelopment of the Significant Facilities in the Countryside and Green Belt
<b>Town Centres &amp; Retail</b>		
R1 Ensuring Town Centre Vitality	SO1, SO2	Net change in retail floorspace for town centre uses at ground floor level within the Primary Shopping Areas Net change in retail floorspace for town centre uses at ground floor level within Town Centre Boundaries outside the Primary Shopping Area Net change in retail floorspace outside of Town Centre Boundaries Total floorspace completed for retail, office and leisure development on developments of over 500 sqm gross external floor space that are outside the designated town centre boundary
R2 Retail and Minor Service Centres, Villages and Rural Economy	SO1, SO2	Number of applications for retail uses in minor service centres Number of applications for change of use or re-development of shops or pubs in minor service centres or villages
R3 Town Centre Development	SO1, SO2	Number of permissions for new development identified in Development Briefs and masterplans Total financial contributions secured for town centre improvements

Transport		
T1 Mitigation of Transport Impacts on the Networks	SO9, SO10	Number of applications approved for 80 dwellings of more that have a Transport Plan or Travel Plan Level of road traffic growth by vehicle type
T2 Highway Safety and Design	SO9	Refer to Local Transport Plan for monitoring information Rate of road/traffic incidents Expansion of lower speed limit zones
T3 Parking	SO9	Refer to Local Transport Monitoring information
T4 Public Transport Interchanges	SO9, S10	Total financial contributions secured to improve interchange infrastructure
T5 Ultra Low Emission Vehicles	SO13	Number of applications approved that provide car charging points
T6 Management of Freight	SO10	Refer to Local Transport Monitoring information
Environmental Enhancement		
EE1 Green Infrastructure	SO11, SO12, SO13	Total financial contributions secured for GI or Quantity of green infrastructure gained/lost through planning permissions
EE2 Enhancing Biodiversity	SO11, SO12, SO13	Number of applications with a condition for enhancing biodiversity
EE3 Nature Conservation	SO11, SO12, SO13	Number of applications with a condition for nature conservation
EE4 Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows	SO3, SO4 SO11, SO12, SO13,	Total number of TPOs and TPOs lost as a result of development Number of applications approved with landscaping conditions
EE5 Landscape Character and Value	SO3, SO4, SO11, SO12, SO13	Number of applications refused on landscape character grounds

EE7 Chilterns AONB	SO3, SO4, SO11, SO12, SO13	Number of major applications approved within the AONB boundary
EE8 Greensand Ridge Nature Improvement Area	SO3, SO4, SO11, SO12, SO13	Number of major applications approved within the NIA
EE9 The Forest of Marston Vale	SO3, SO4, SO11, SO12, SO13	The percentage of tree cover in the Forest of Marston Vale
EE10 Bedford & MK Waterway Park	SO11, SO12, SO13	Progress of the delivery of the waterway park Total financial contributions for the Waterway Park
EE11 The River and Waterway Network	SO9, SO10, SO11, SO12, SO13	Financial contributions secured towards the river and waterway network
EE12 Public Rights of Way	SO1, SO2, SO11, SO12, SO13	Total financial contributions to protect and enhance the Rights of Way network
EE13 Outdoor Sport, Leisure and Open Space	SO1, SO11, SO12	Net gain/loss of outdoor sport, leisure and open space
EE14 Applications for Minerals and Waste Development		Number of sites restored and their new use
<b>Climate Change &amp; Sustainability</b>		
CC1 Climate Change and Sustainability	SO13	Number of applications approved where a Sustainability Statement is submitted
CC2 Sustainable Energy Development	SO13	Number of applications approved for sustainable energy development schemes

CC3 Flood Risk Management	SO13	Number of developments applications permitted contrary to the Environment Agency advice
CC4 Development Close to Watercourses	SO12, SO13	Number of applications including or adjacent to watercourse granted contrary to advice
CC5 Sustainable Drainage	SO13	Number of applications required to provide sustainable surface water drainage, secured through a condition
CC6 Water Supply and Sewerage Infrastructure	SO1, SO13	Number of applications permitted contrary to the EA and Anglian Water advice
CC7 Water Quality	SO1, SO13	Number of applications permitted contrary to EA advice
CC8 Pollution and Land Instability	SO13	To monitor designated Air Quality Management Areas
<b>High Quality Places</b>		
HQ1 High Quality Development	SO1, SO2, SO3, SO4, SO9, SO10, SO11, SO12, SO13	Number of applications refused on poor design grounds Design awards won
HQ2 Developer Contributions	SO1, SO2	Planning obligations monies received in the monitoring year
HQ3 Provision for Social and Community Infrastructure	SO1, SO2	Number of new community facilities approved Number of community facilities lost through demolition, conversions or redevelopment
HQ4 Indoor Sport and Leisure Facilities	SO1	Amount of planning permissions resulting in the loss or gain of indoor sport and leisure facilities
HQ5 Broadband and Telecommunications Infrastructure	SO1	Compliance with Building Regulations

HQ7 Public Art	SO3, SO4	Number of applications approved
HQ8 Back-land Development	SO3, SO4	Number of dwellings delivered on back-land development
HQ9 Larger Sites	SO2	Number of applications with a Development Brief Number of applications <del>of</del> with a design code
HQ10 Small Open Spaces within Towns and Villages	SO4, SO11, SO12, SO13	Number of completed developments involving a loss of a small open space
HQ11 Modern Methods of Construction	SO1, SO2, SO13	Number of applications that show modern methods of construction
<b>Historic Environment</b>		
HE1 Archaeology and Scheduled Monuments	SO3, SO4	Number of applications refused as they cause total loss or substantial harm Number of applications approved with an Archaeological heritage statement Number of heritage assets on the Heritage at Risk Register
HE2 Historic Parks and Gardens	SO3, SO4	Number of applications approved with a Historic Parks and Garden Heritage Statement Applications refused on HE2 Policy grounds Number of heritage assets on the Heritage at Risk Register that are within historic parks and gardens
HE3 Built Heritage	SO3, SO4	Number of applications refused on HE3 grounds Number of applications approved with a Built Heritage Statement Number of buildings on buildings at risk register
<b>Development in the Countryside</b>		
DC1 Re-use of Buildings in the Countryside	SO3, SO4	Number of buildings reused in the countryside

DC2 Replacement Dwellings in the Countryside	SO3, SO4	Number of completed replacement dwellings in the countryside
DC3 Rural Worker Dwellings	SO8	Number of completed rural worker dwellings
DC4 Equestrian Development	SO3, SO4	Number and type of equestrian developments permitted
DC5 Agricultural Land	SO3, SO12, SO13	Agricultural land (Grades 1,2 and 3a) lost to development on non-allocated sites

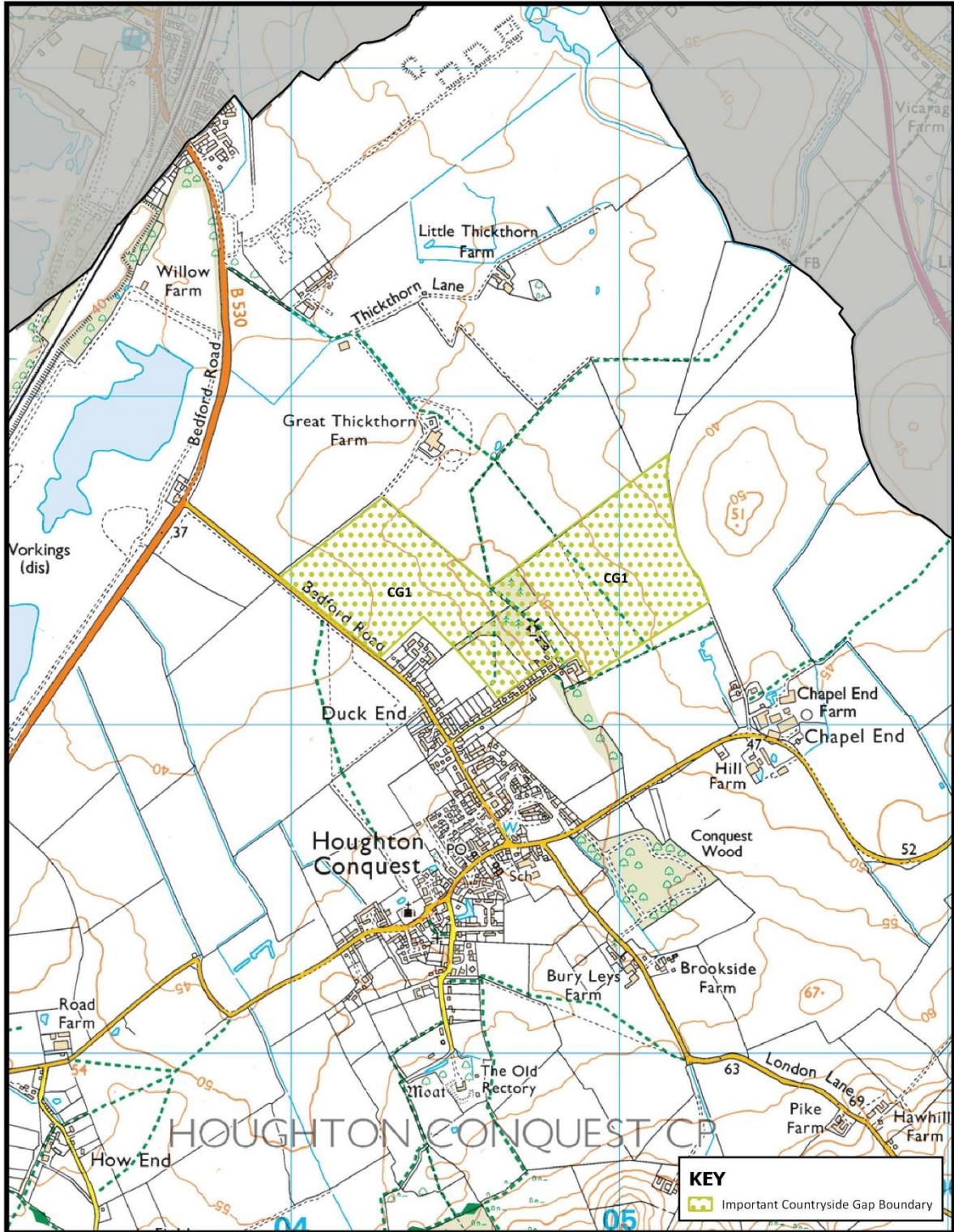


## Appendix 4: Existing Employment sites and land that should be considered favourably for alternative (non-employment) uses

As identified within the 2016 Employment Land Review:

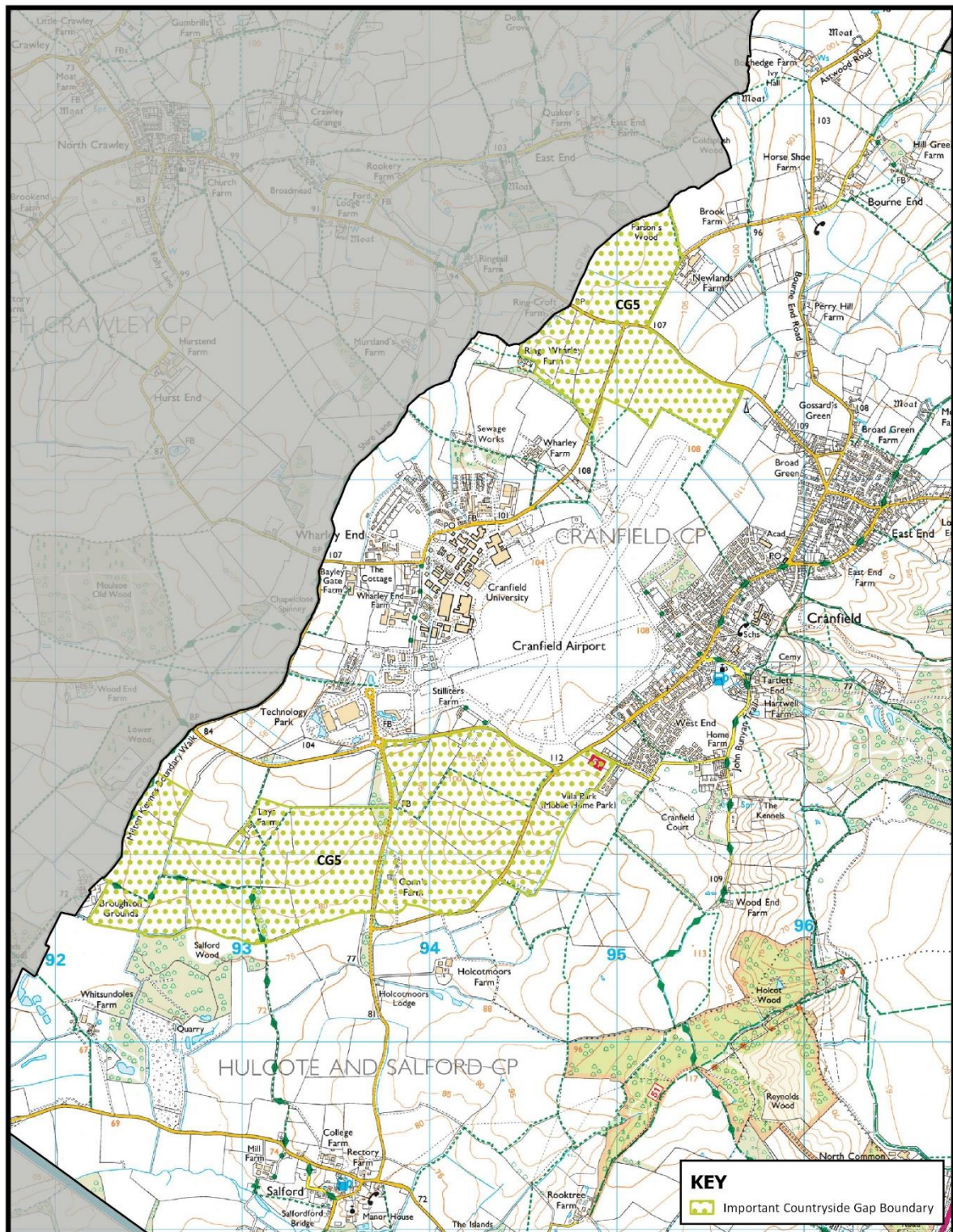
- Hampden House, Arlesey
- Land East of Arlesey (Chase Farm) [*as identified by Policy MA8 of the Central Bedfordshire (North): Site Allocations DPD (2011)*]
- Land South of Stotfold [*as identified by Policy HO9(10) of the Mid Bedfordshire Local Plan (2005)*]
- Former Pig Development Unit, Fairfield
- Luton Road, Dunstable
- Ludun Close, Dunstable
- Tavistock Place/Street, Dunstable
- French's Avenue, Dunstable
- Land Adjacent to 29 Clophill Road, Maulden
- Land at Doolittle Mill, Flitwick
- Russell Farm, Maulden
- Steppingley Road/Froghall Road, Flitwick [*as identified by Policy MA2 of the Central Bedfordshire (North): Site Allocations DPD (2011)*]
- Land South of Wixams [*as identified by Policy MA3 of the Central Bedfordshire (North): Site Allocations DPD (2011)*]
- Land East of Biggleswade Road, Potton [*as identified by Policy MA5 of the Central Bedfordshire (North): Site Allocations DPD (2011)*]
- Land East of Bedford Road, Marston Moreteyne
- Land at Moreteyne Farm, Marston Moreteyne

## **Appendix 5: Important Countryside Gaps**



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Central Bedfordshire Council



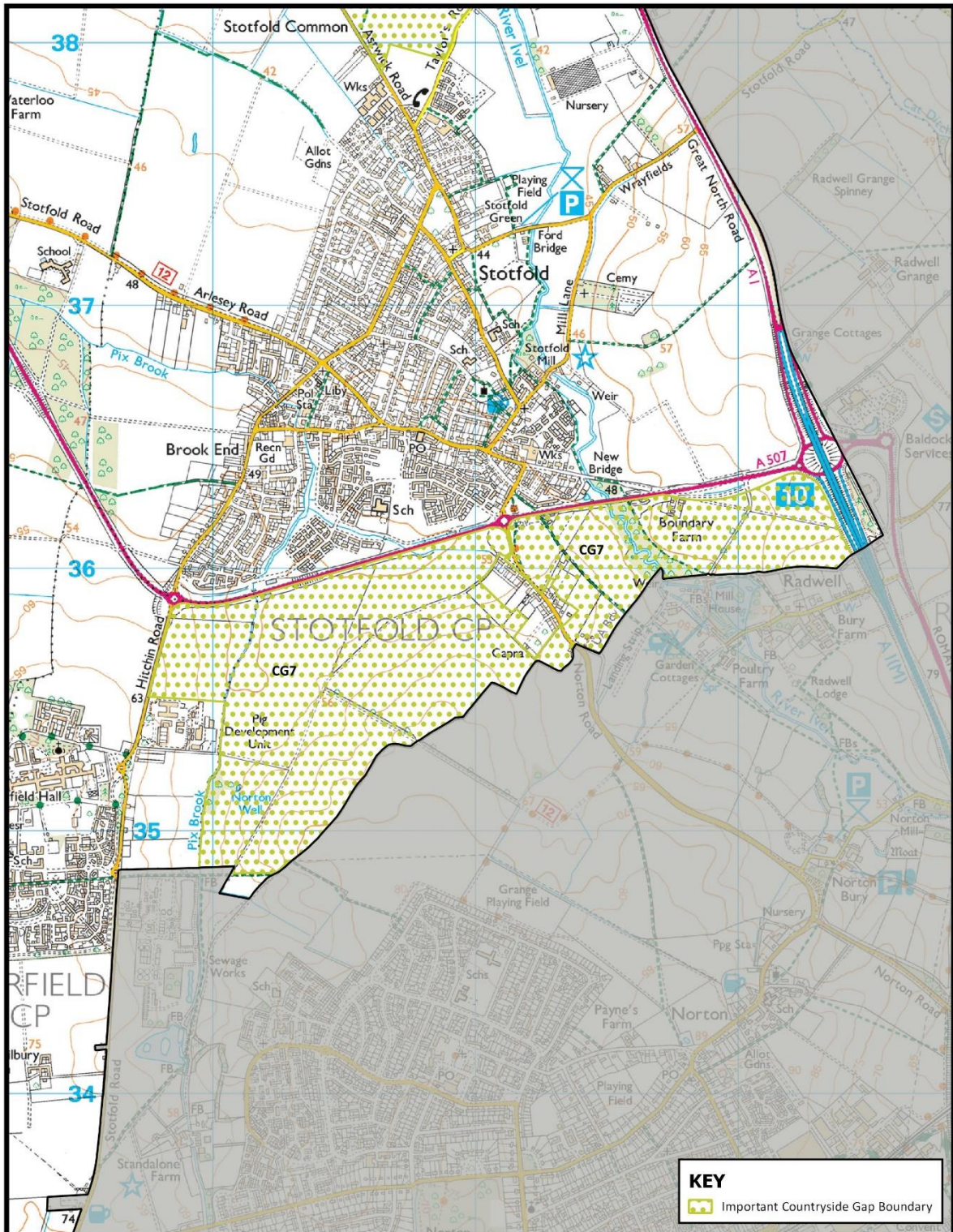


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Central Bedfordshire Council



**KEY**  
Important Countryside Gap Boundary

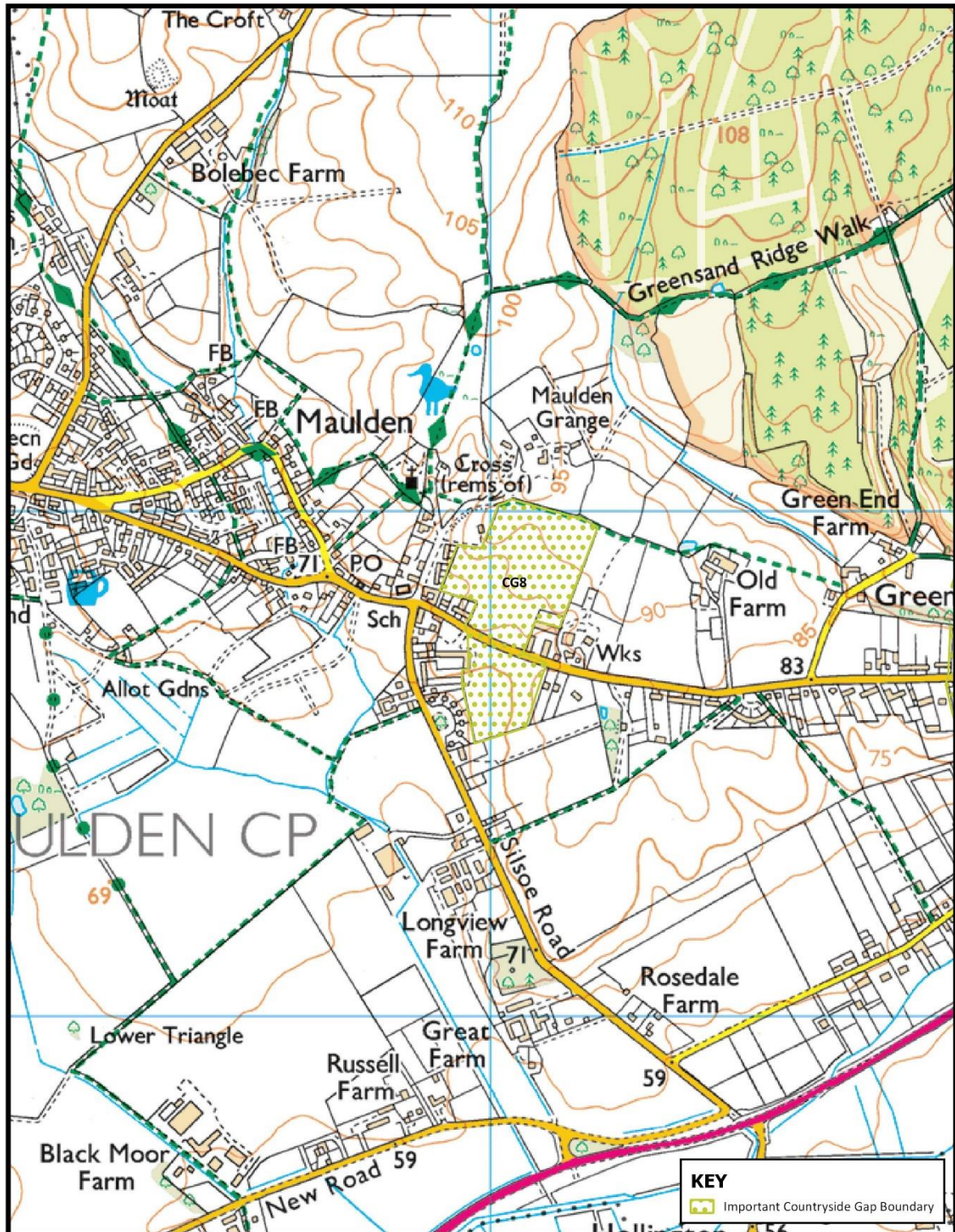
Central Bedfordshire Local Plan



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Central Bedfordshire Local Plan

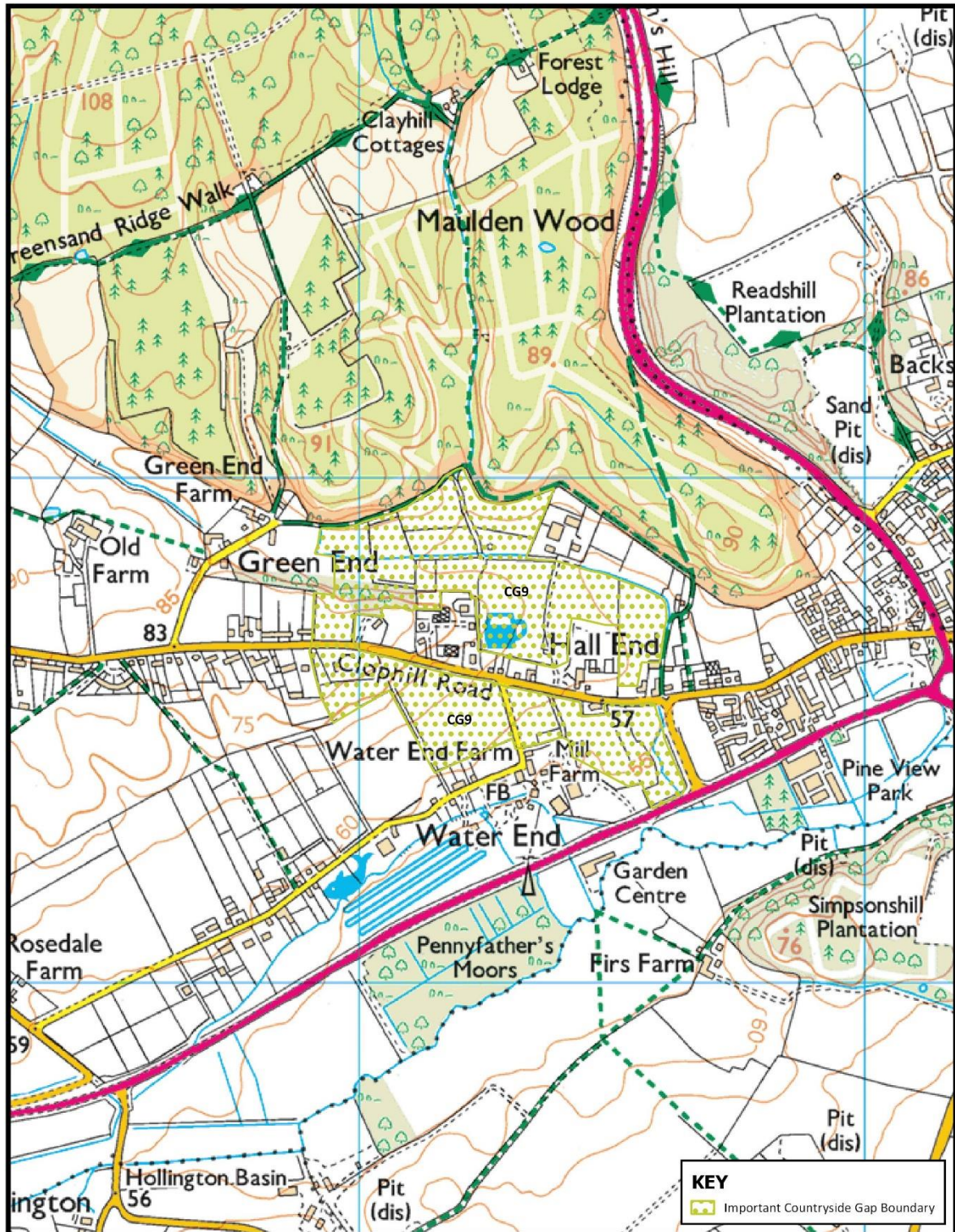


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**KEY**  
Important Countryside Gap Boundary

Central Bedfordshire Local Plan

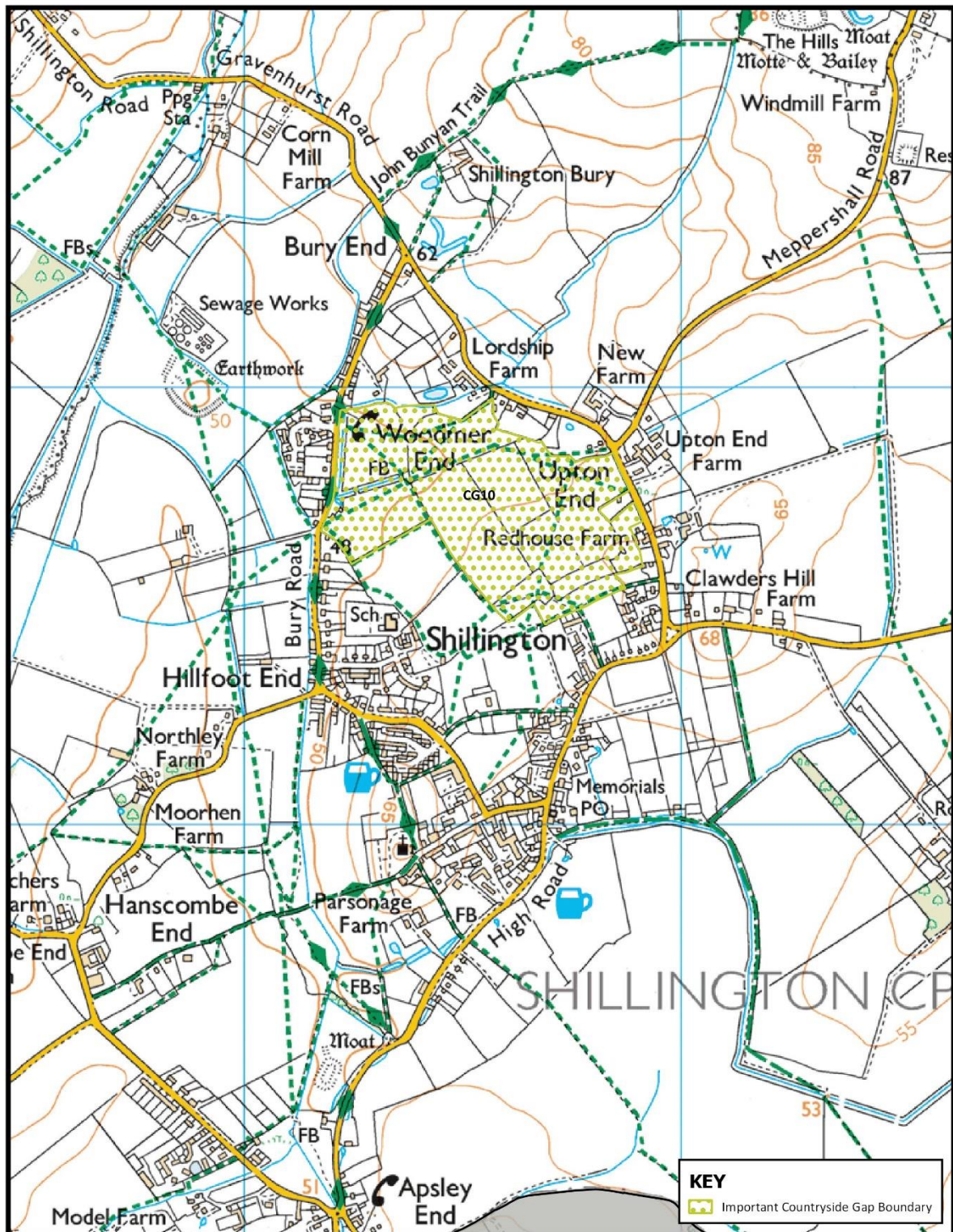


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Ordnance Survey 100049029  
Central Bedfordshire Council



**KEY**  
Important Countryside Gap Boundary

Central Bedfordshire Local Plan



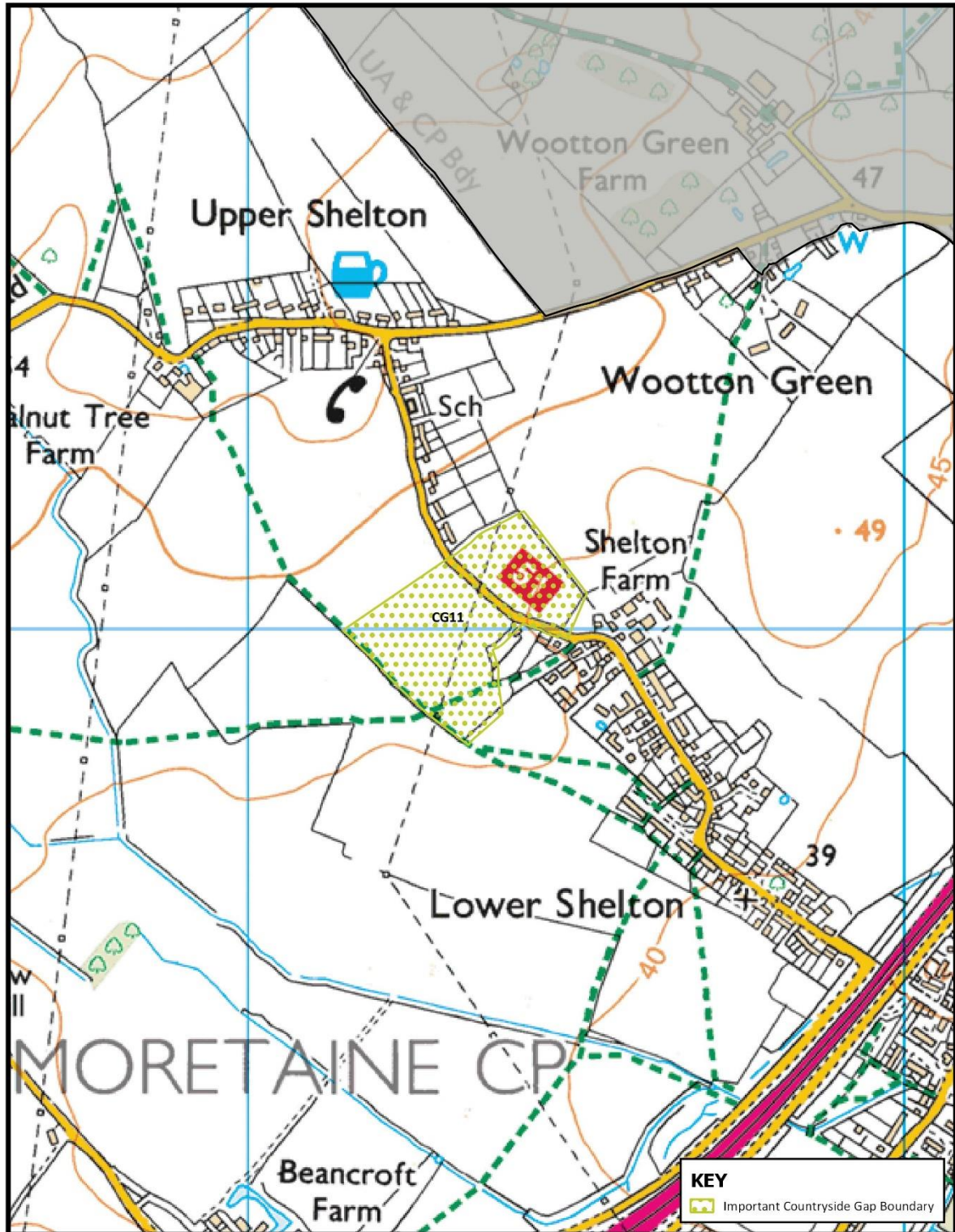
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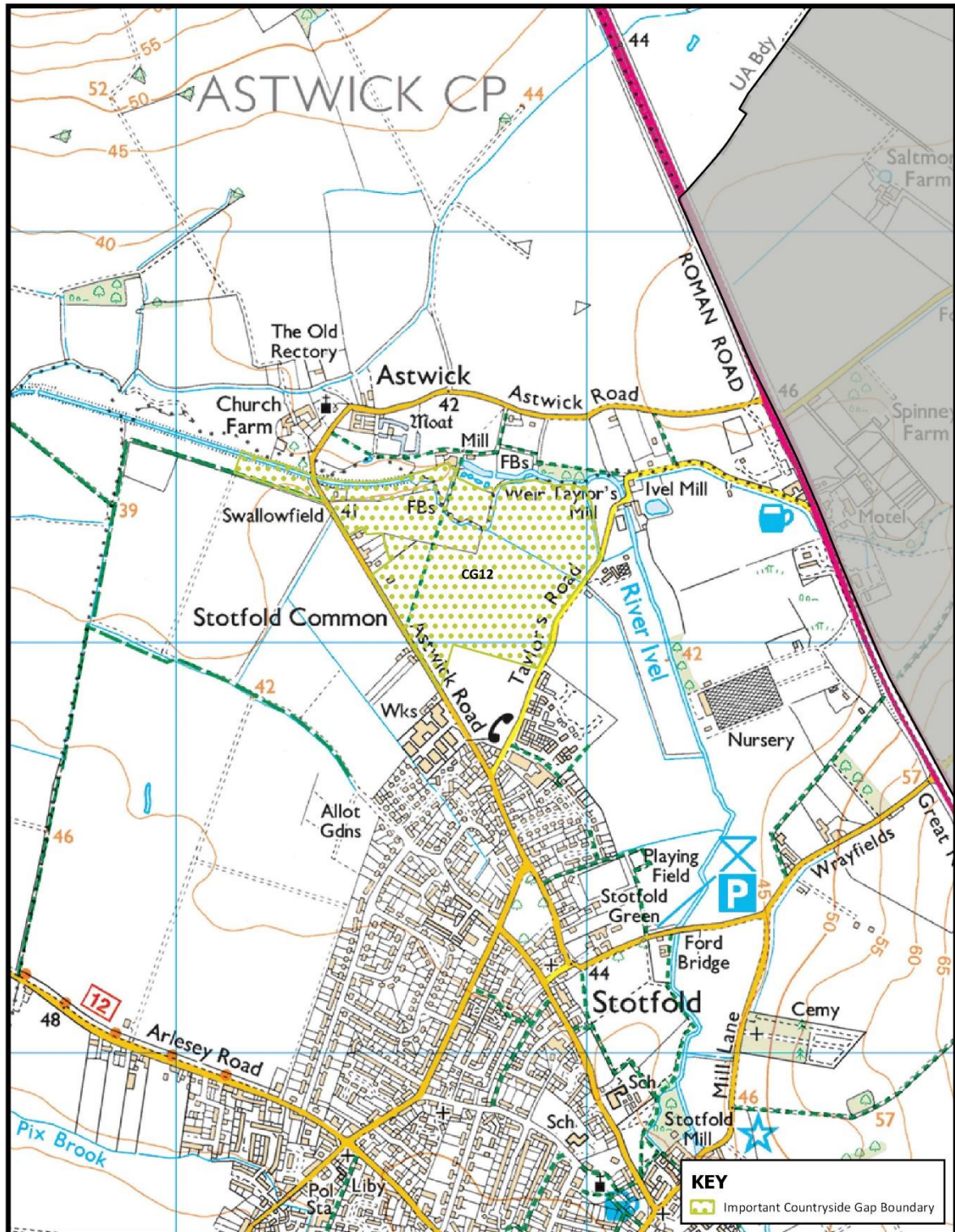


**KEY**  
Important Countryside Gap Boundary

Central Bedfordshire Local Plan





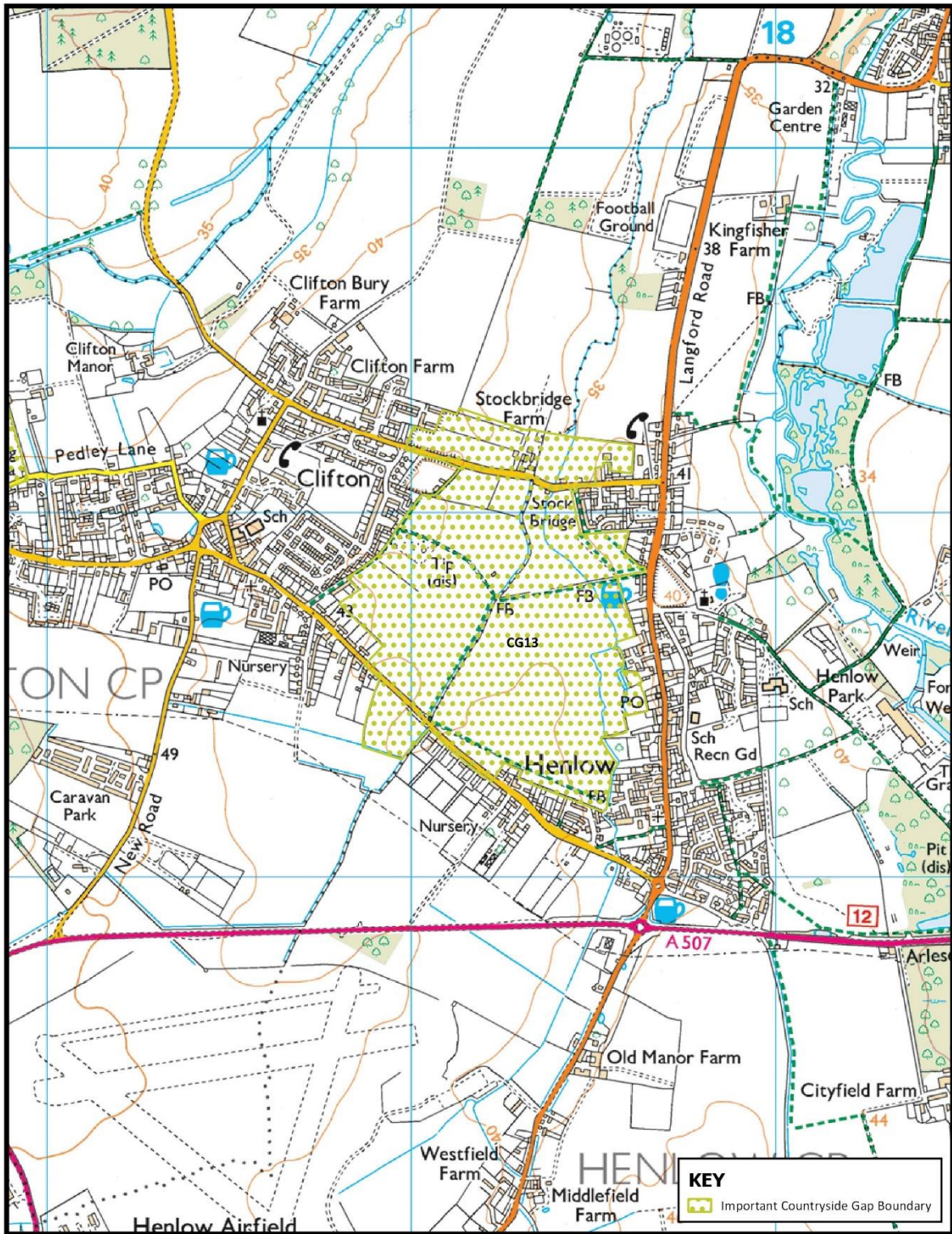


**KEY**  
 Important Countryside Gap Boundary

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Central Bedfordshire Council

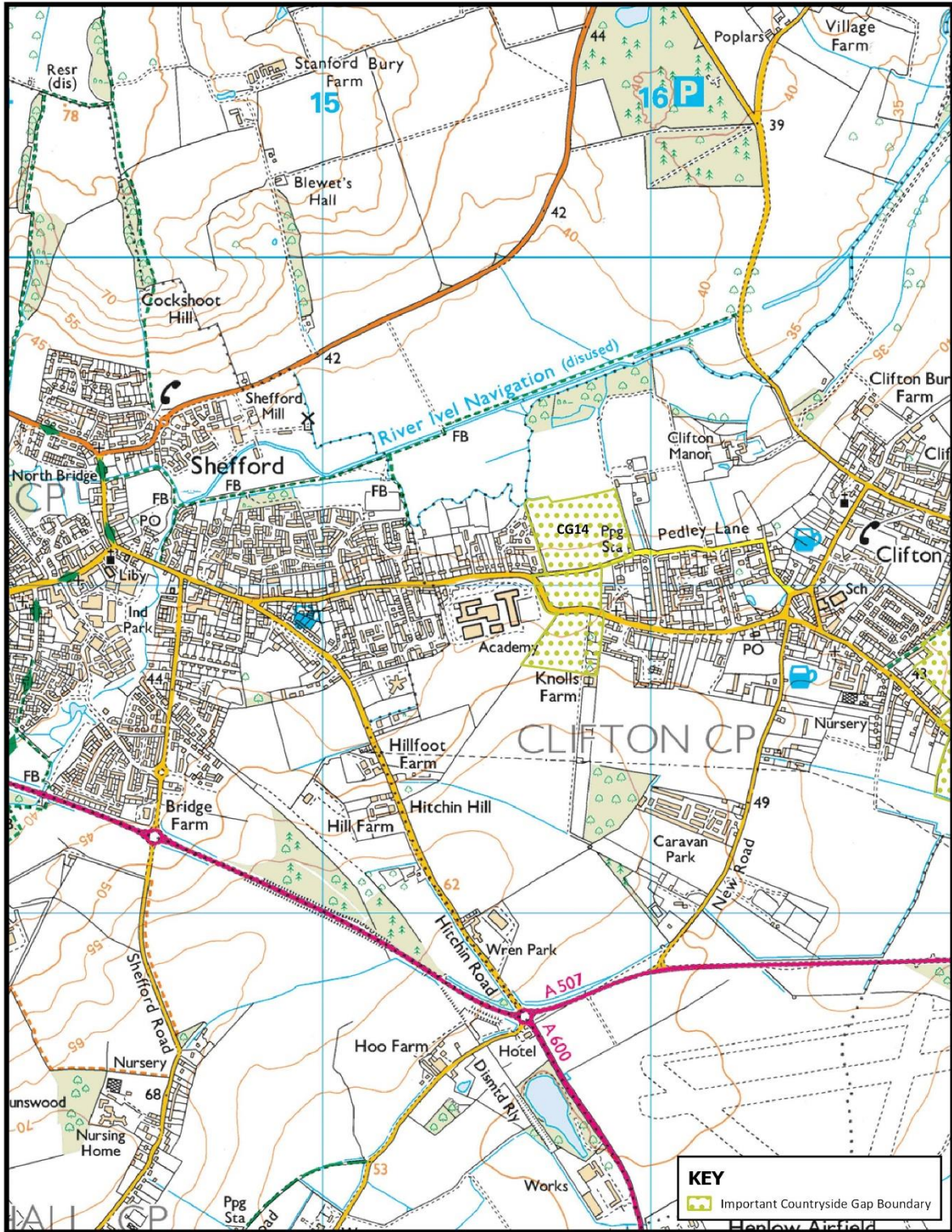
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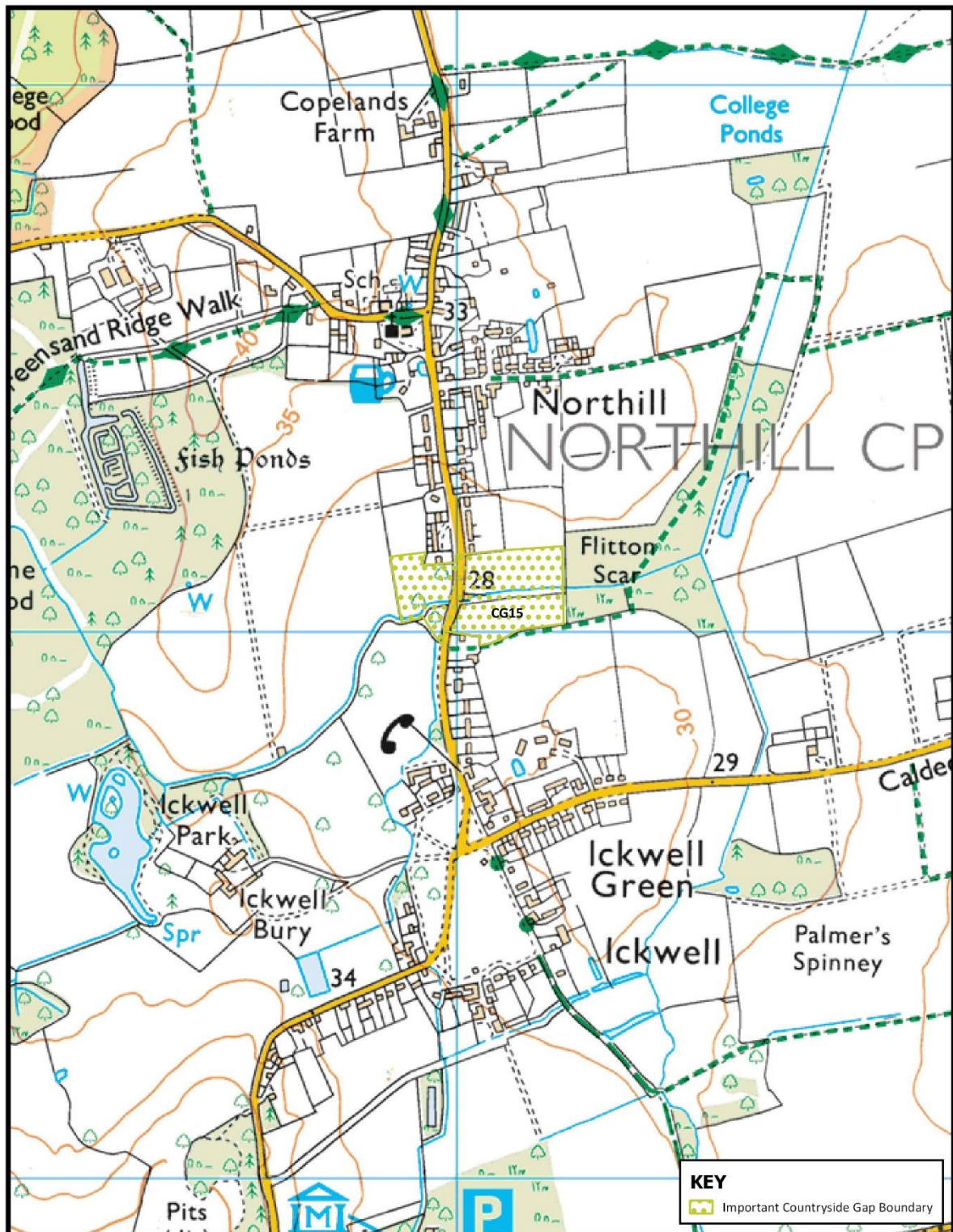
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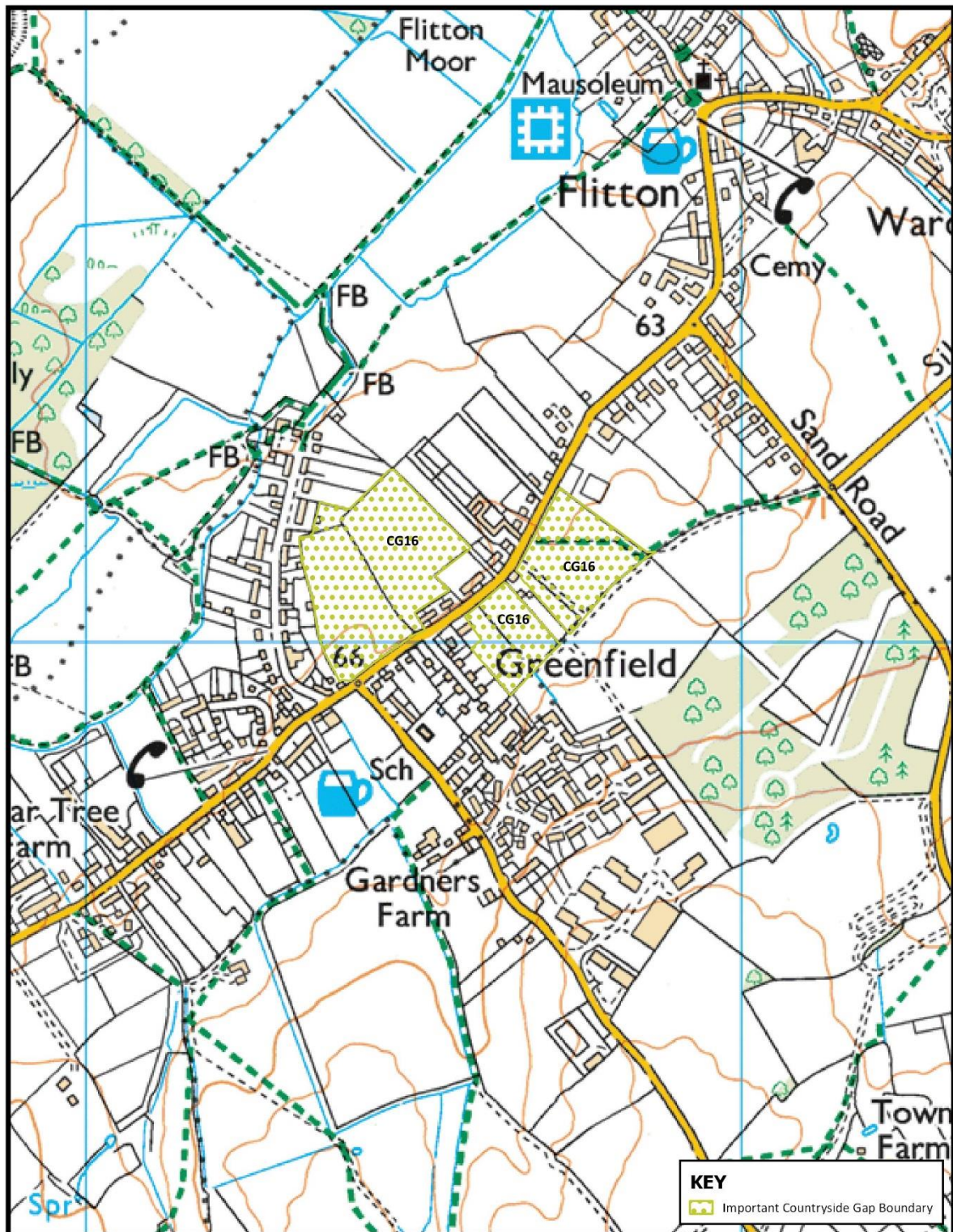
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Central Bedfordshire Council



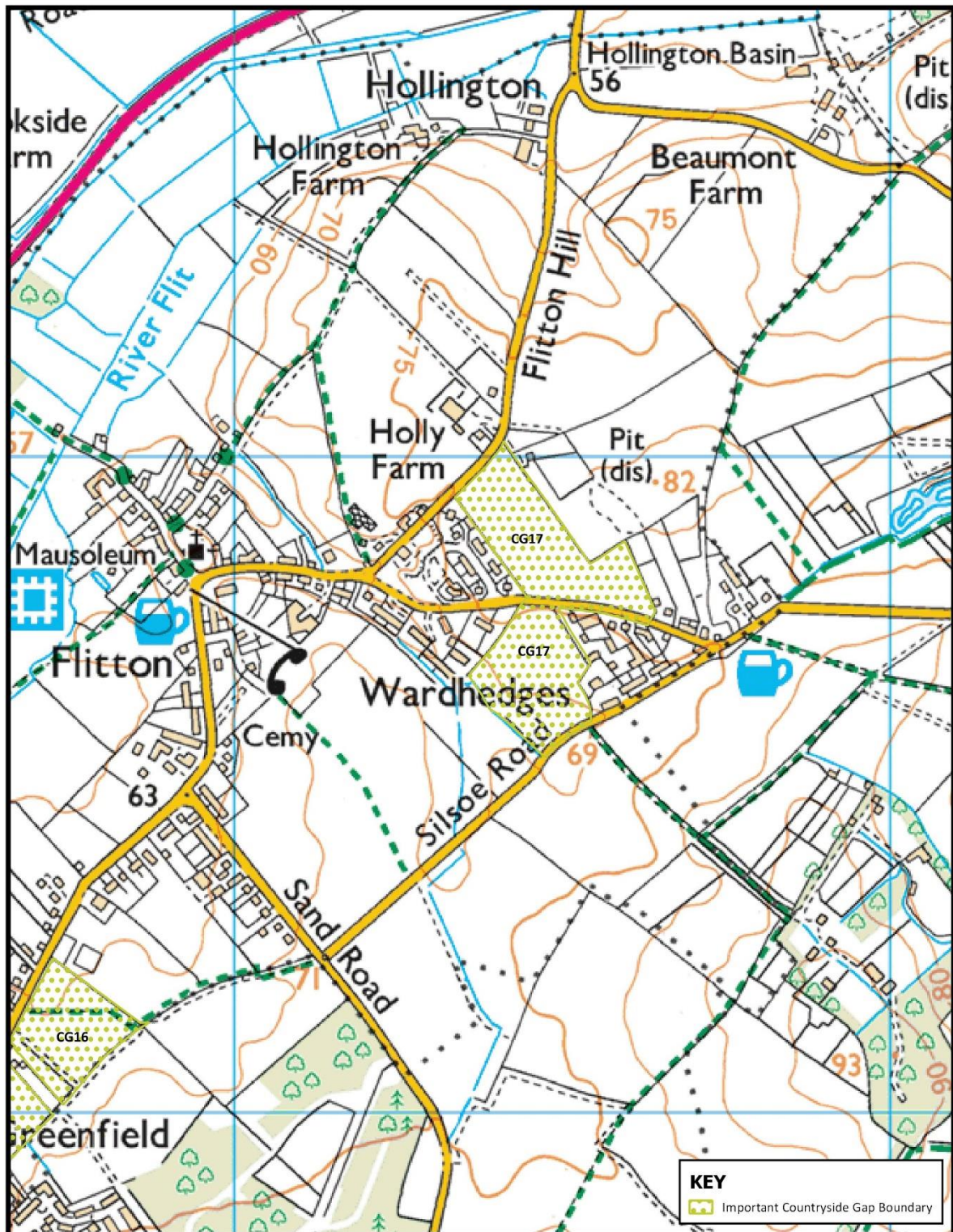
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Central Bedfordshire Council



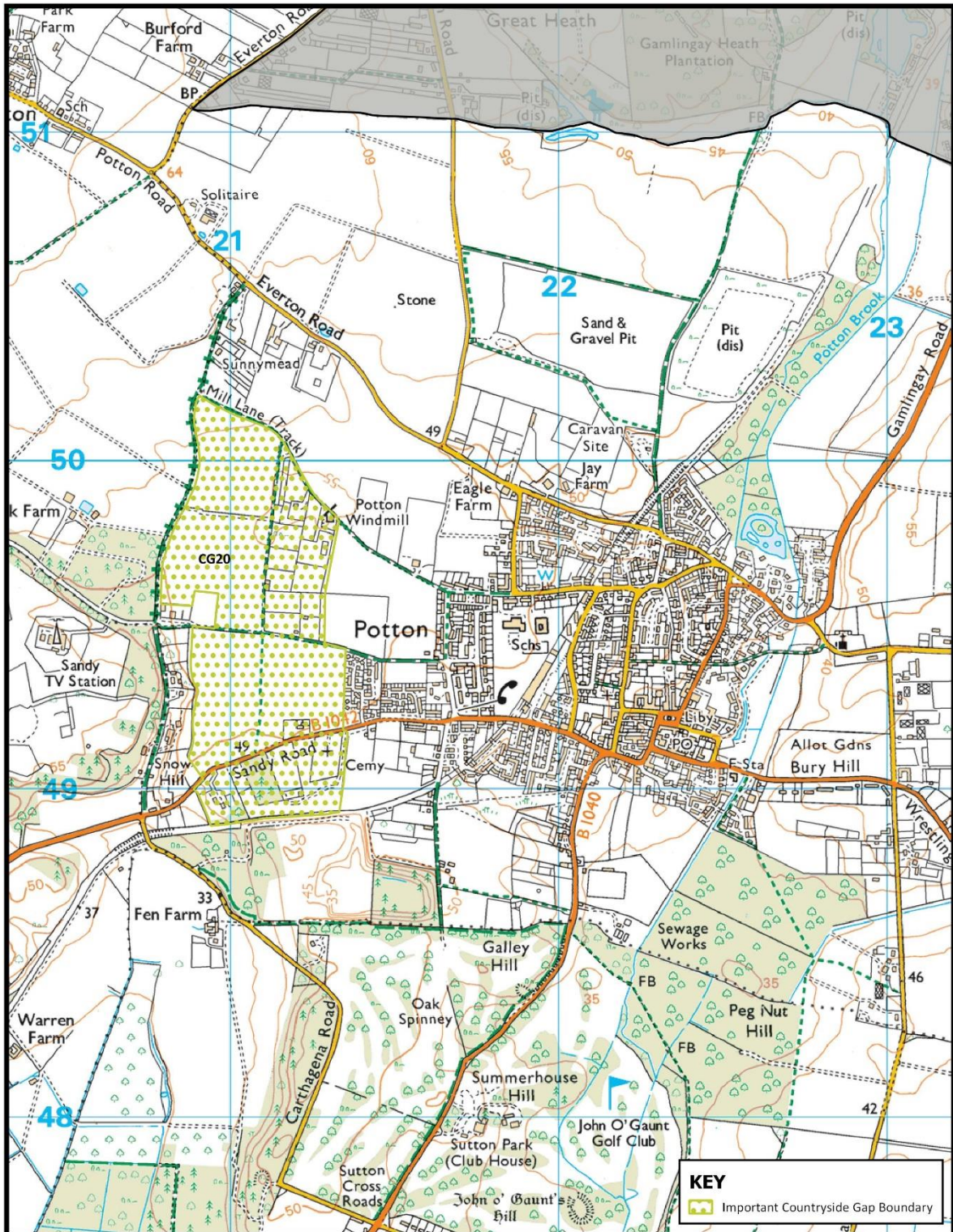
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Central Bedfordshire Local Plan



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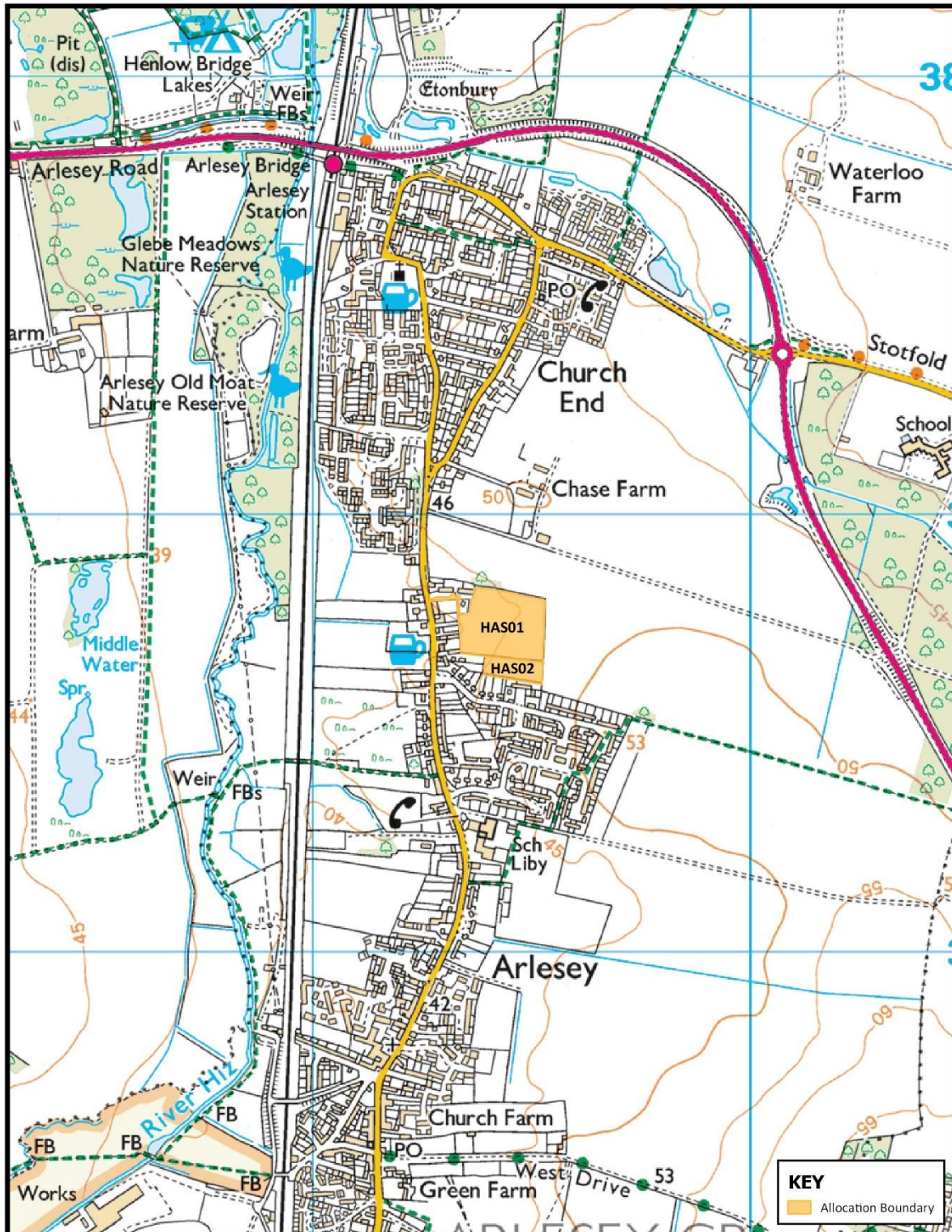
**KEY**  
 [Green dotted pattern] Important Countryside Gap Boundary



## **Appendix 6: Small and Medium Site Allocations**

HAS01  
HAS02

Land adjoining Lewis Lane, Arlesey  
Land r/o 214-216 High Street, Arlesey

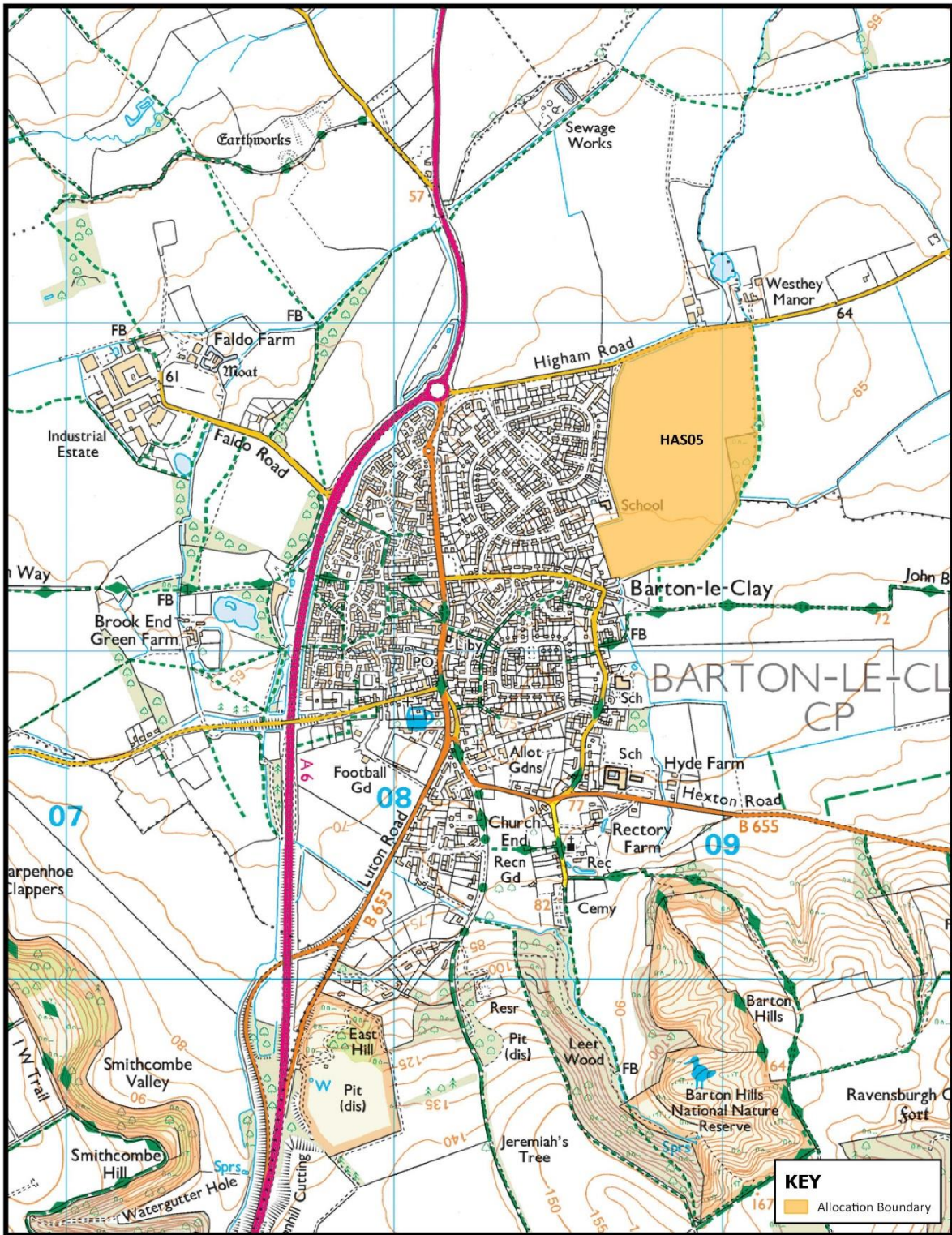


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Central Bedfordshire Council

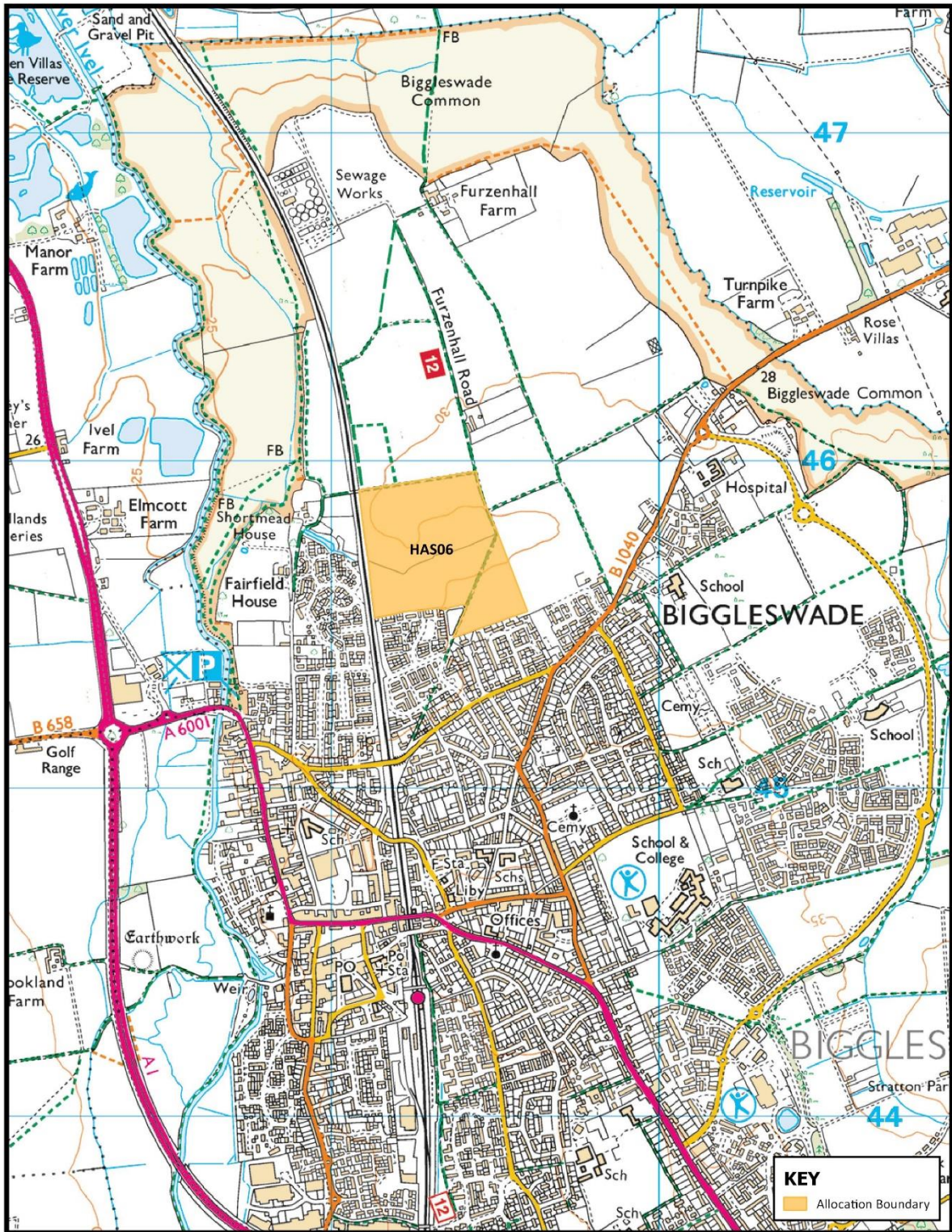
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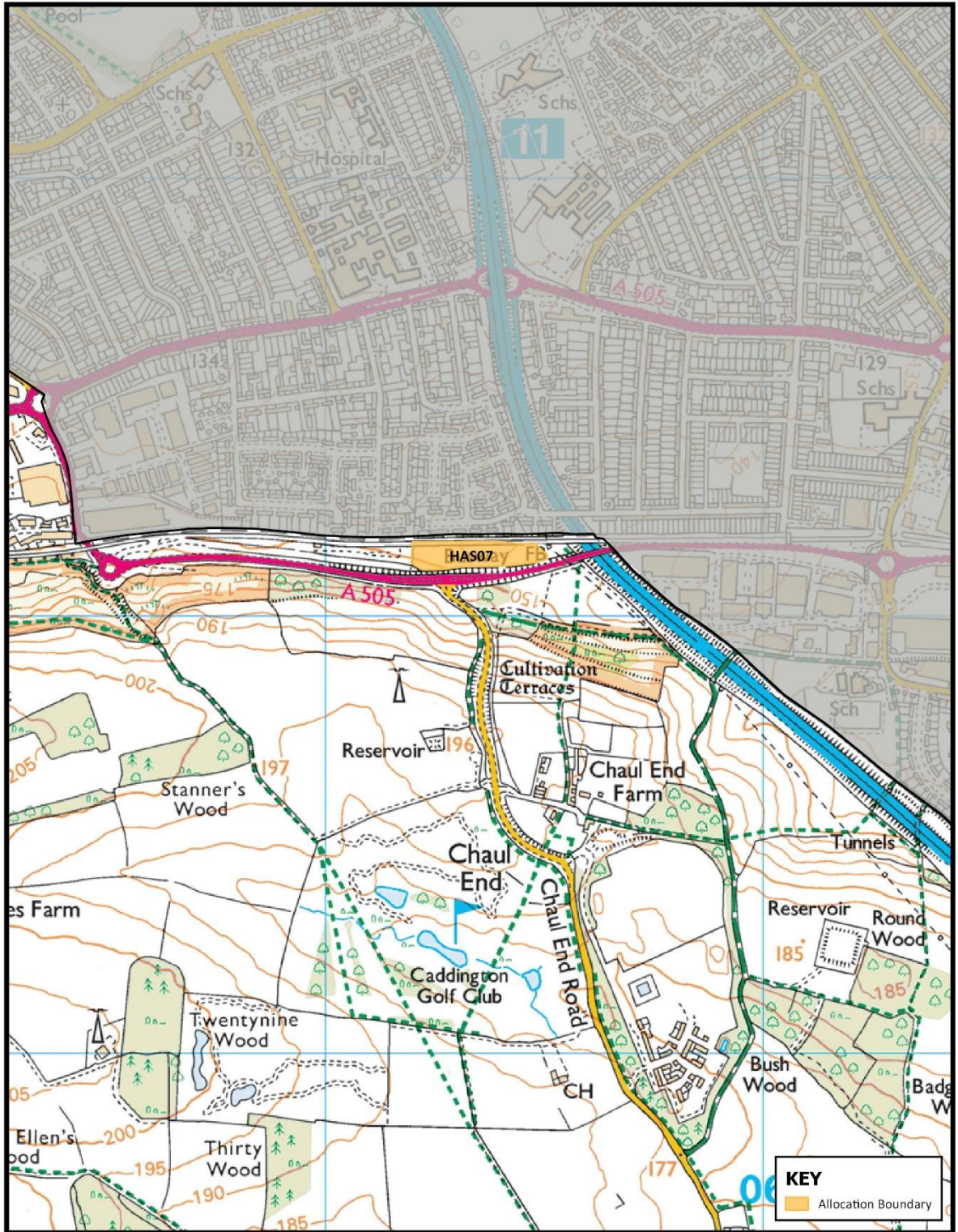
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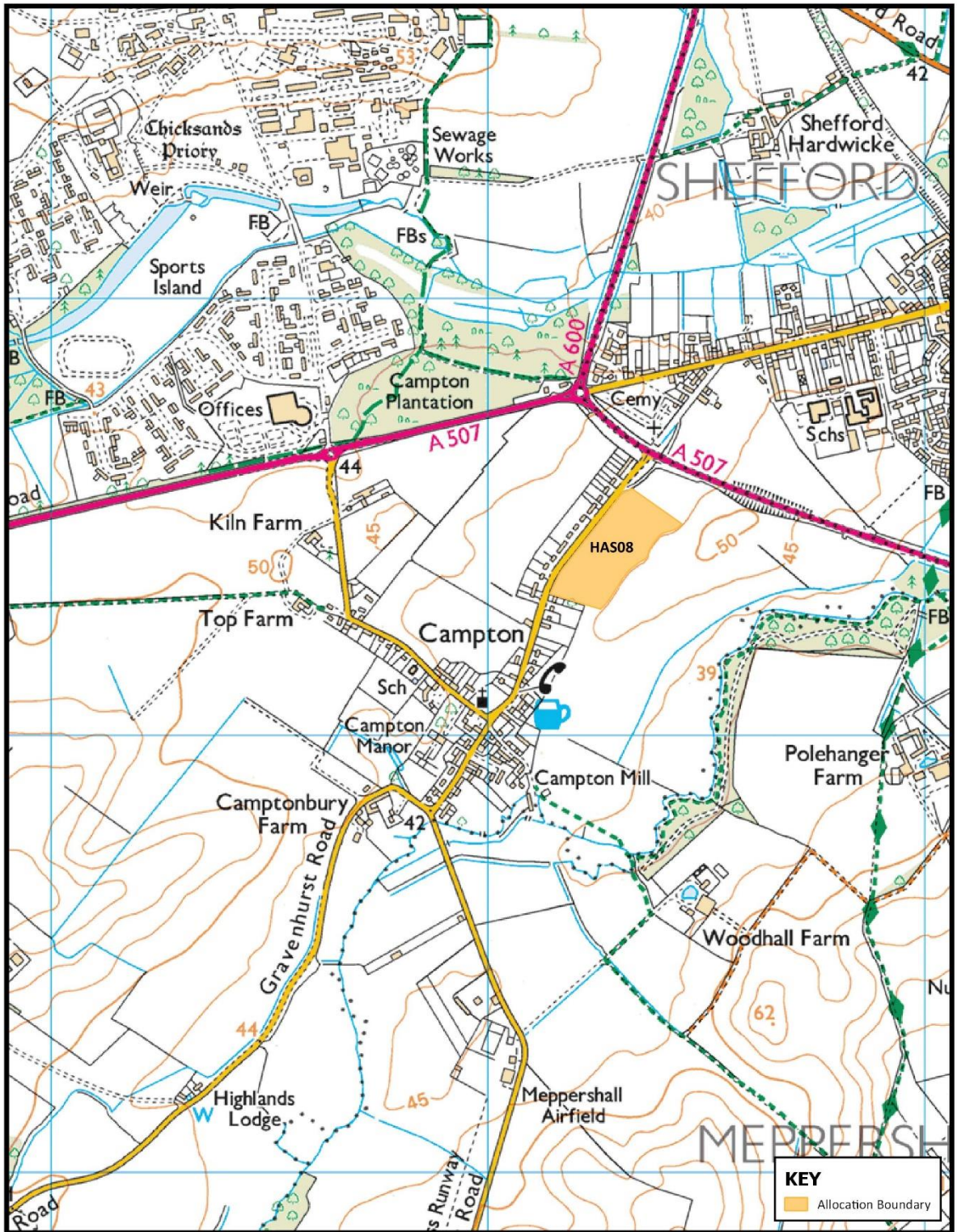
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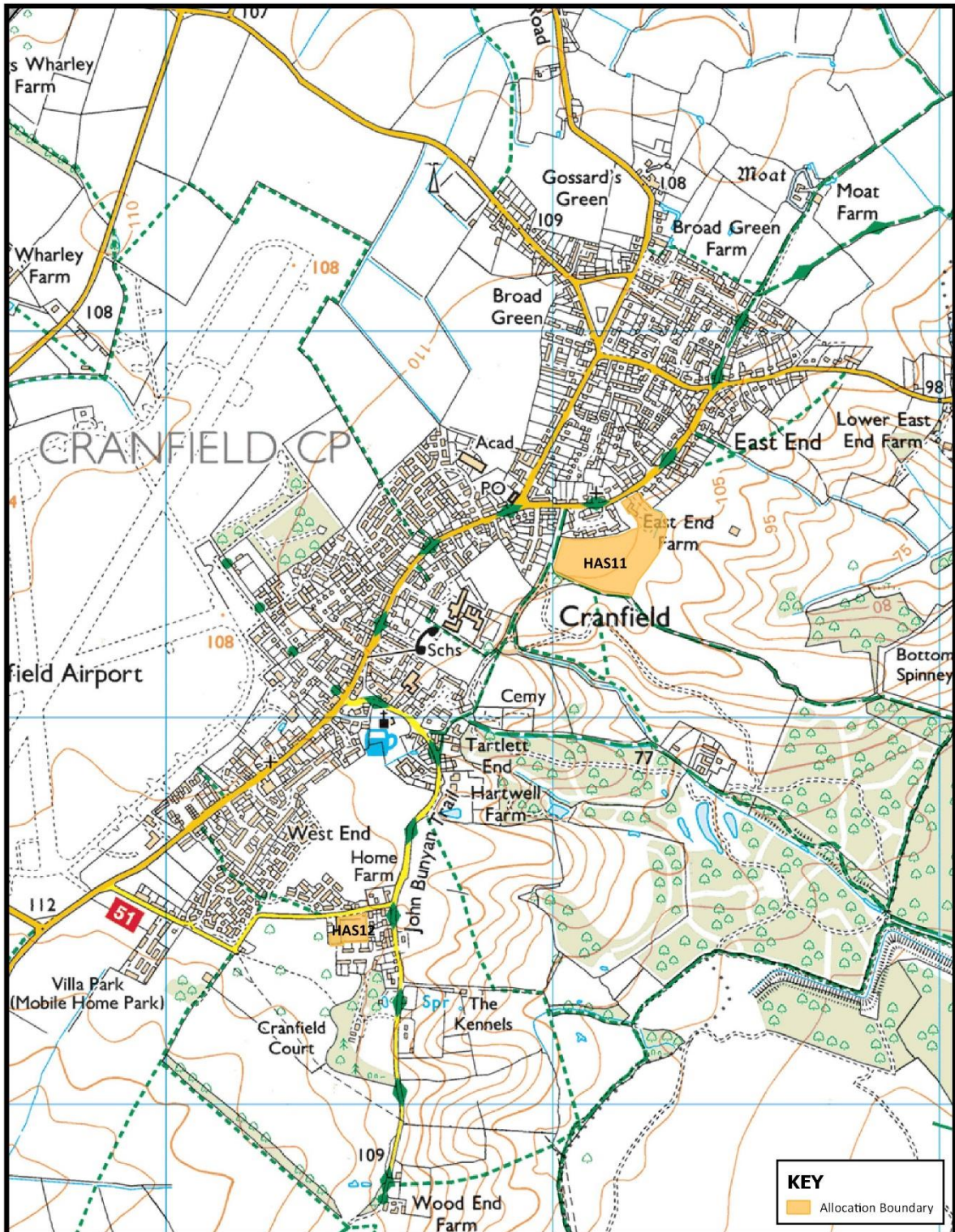


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HAS11  
HAS12

East End Farm, Cranfield  
Land West of Lodge Road, Cranfield

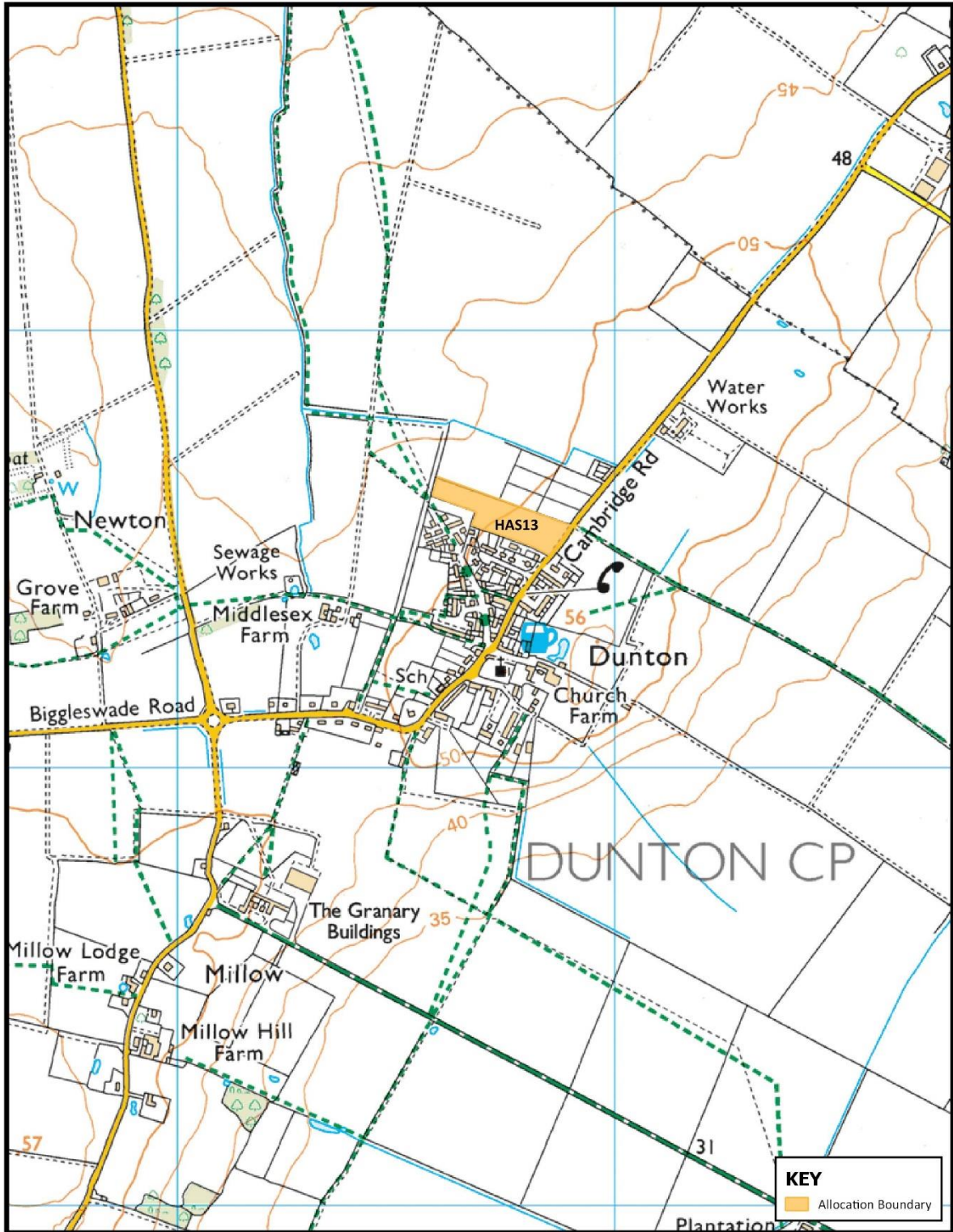


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Central Bedfordshire Council

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Central Bedfordshire Local Plan

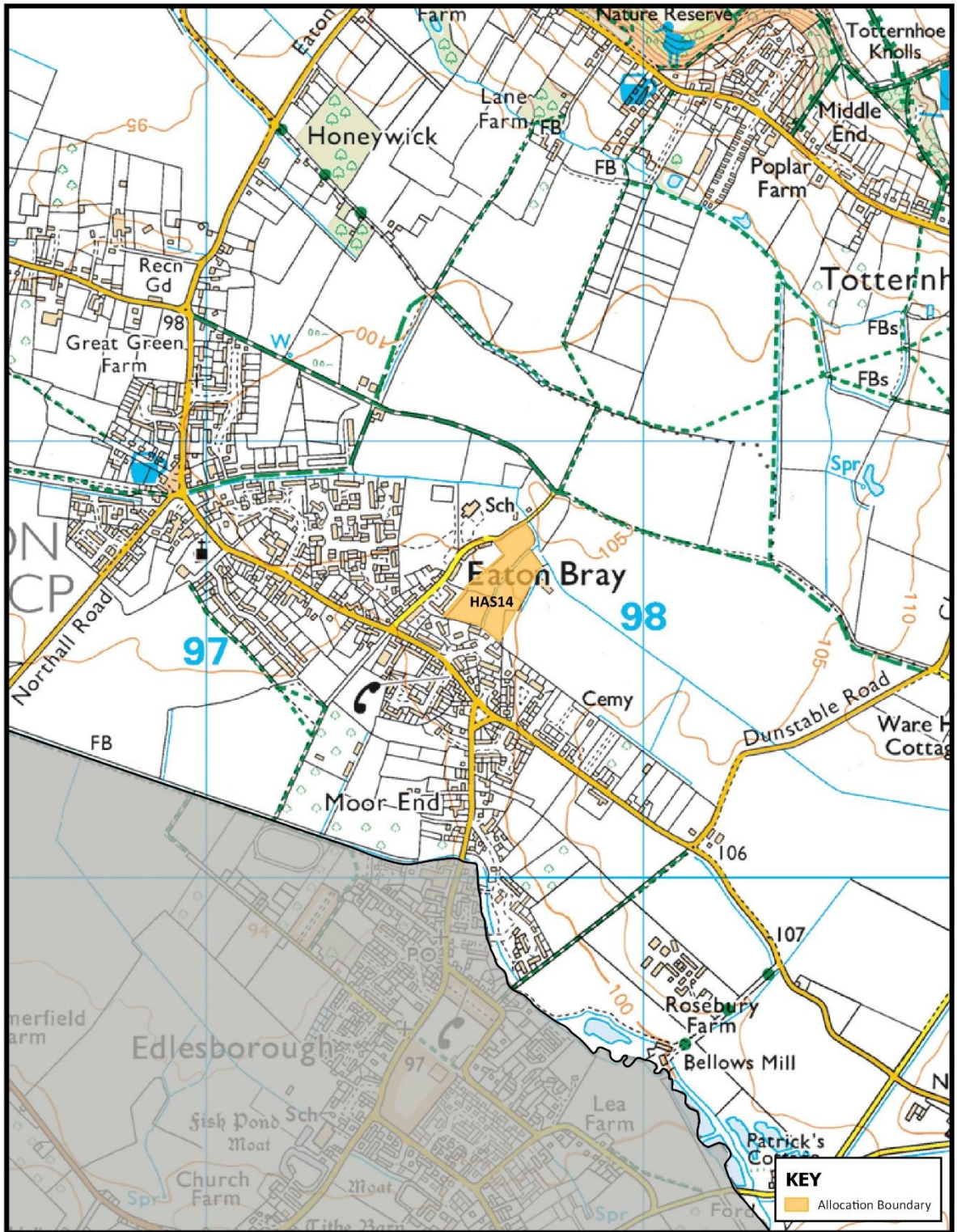




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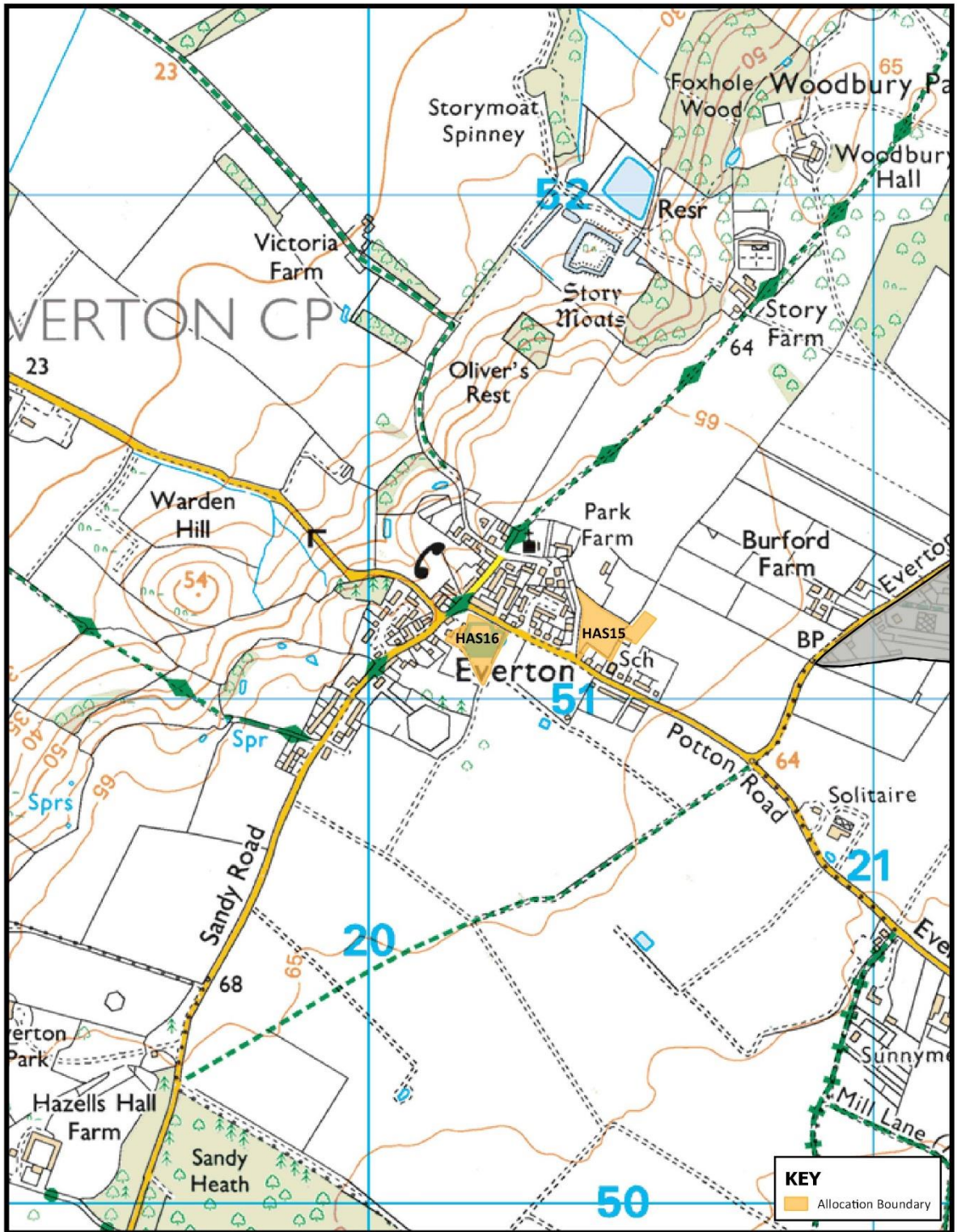
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HAS15  
HAS16

Green Lane, Everton  
Land at Manor Farm, Everton



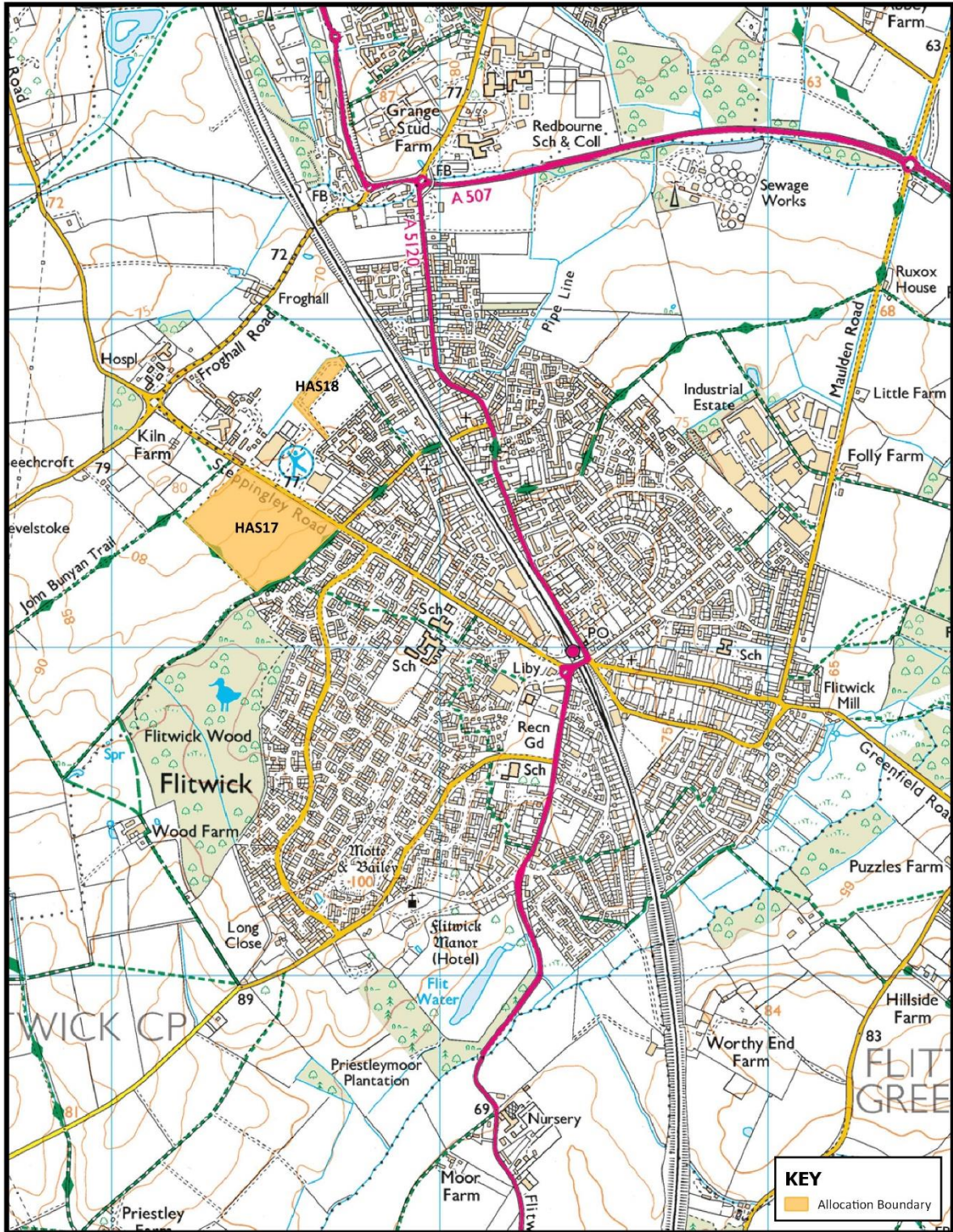
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Central Bedfordshire Local Plan

HAS17  
HAS18

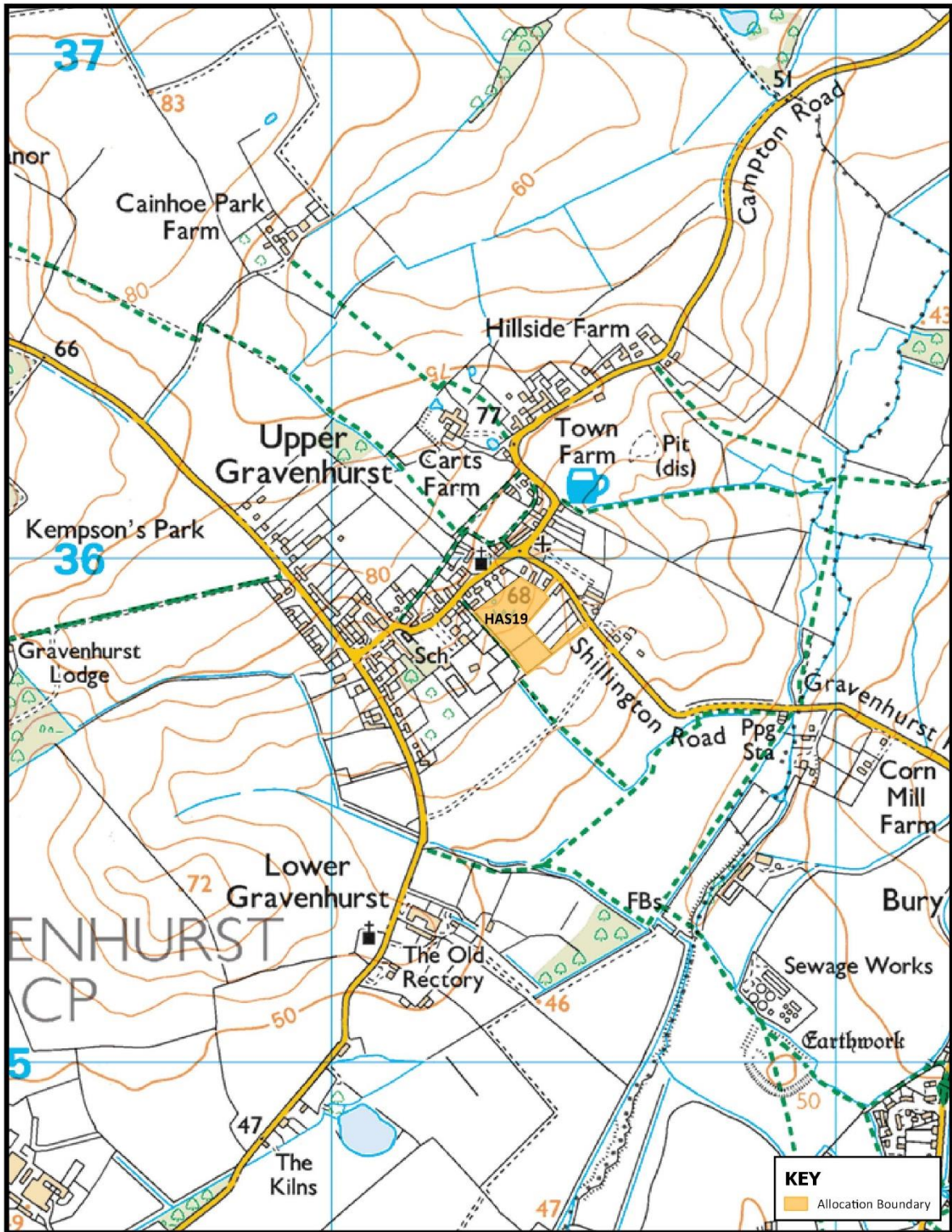
Steppingley Road, Flitwick  
Land adjacent to Flitwick Garden Allotments, Flitwick



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Ordnance Survey 100049029  
Central Bedfordshire Council



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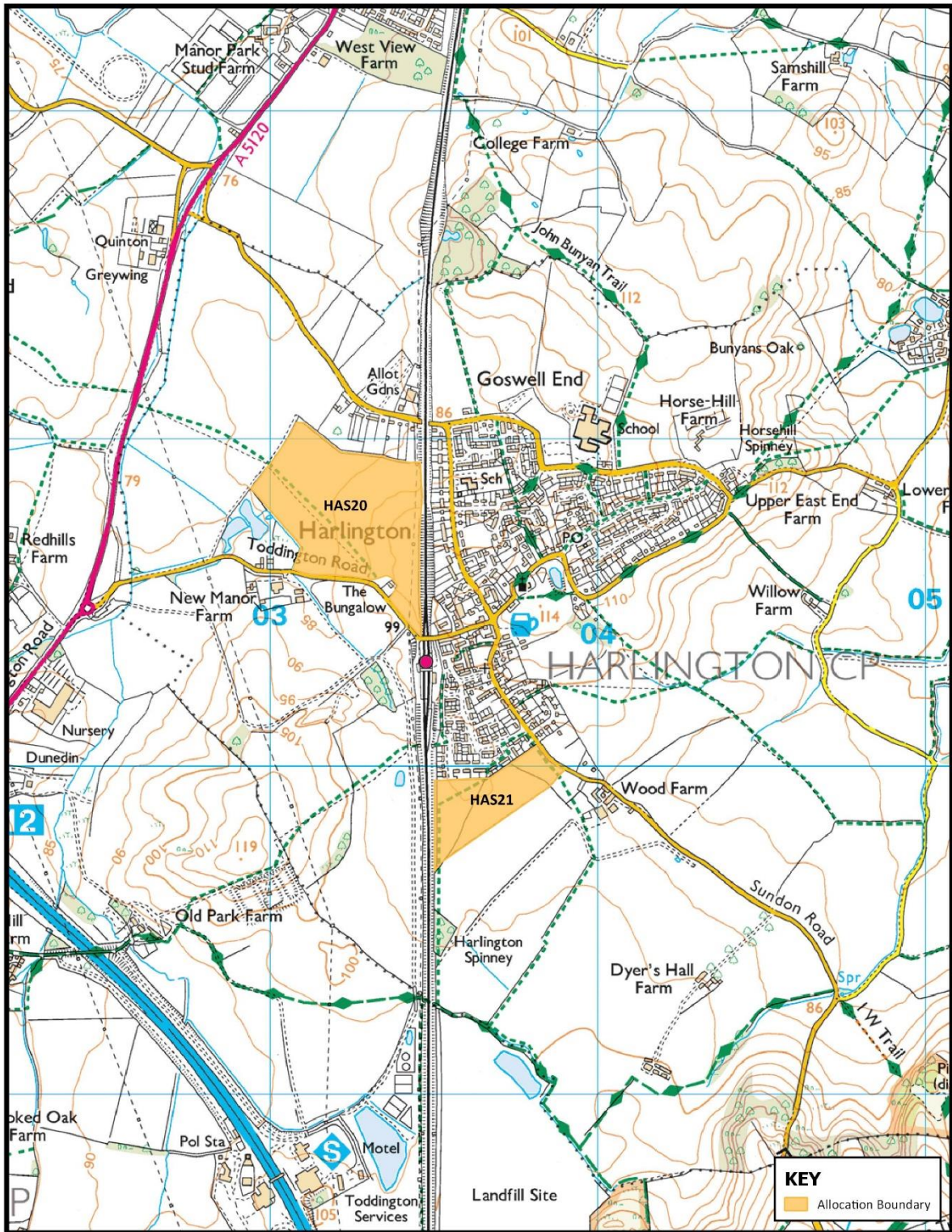


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HAS20  
HAS21

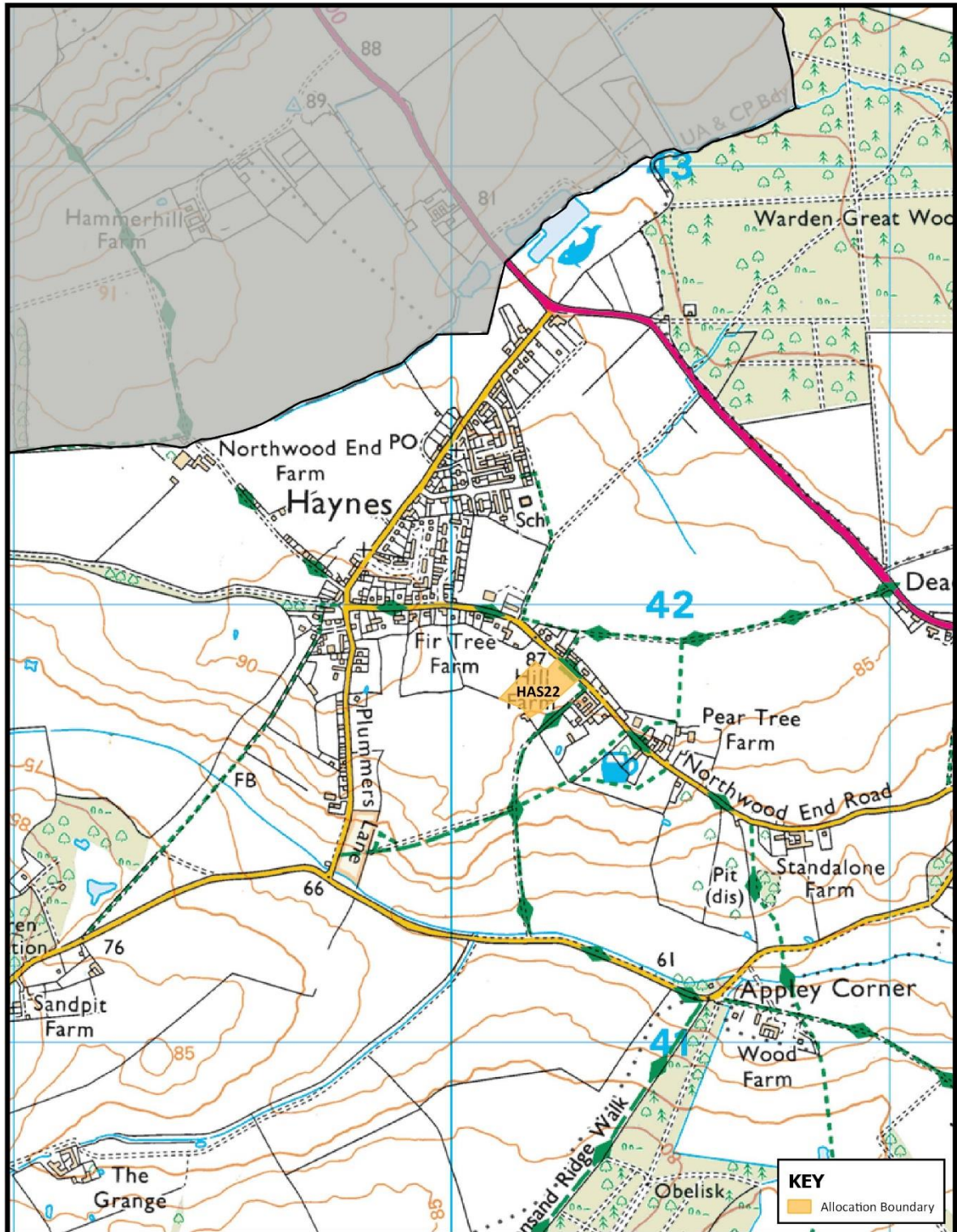
Land West of Midland Mainline Railway, Harlington  
Land West of Sundon Road, Harlington



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Central Bedfordshire Council

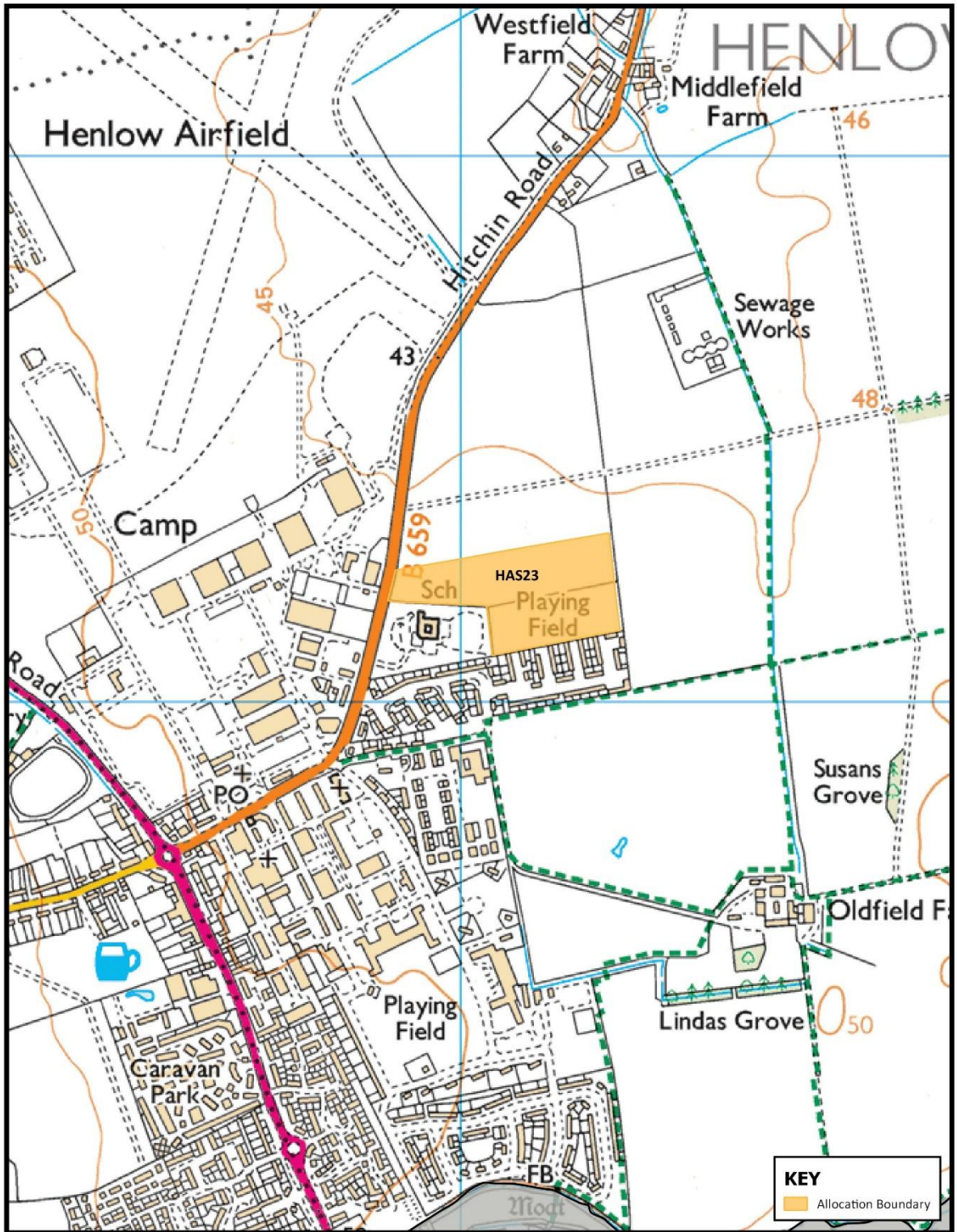
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Central Bedfordshire Local Plan



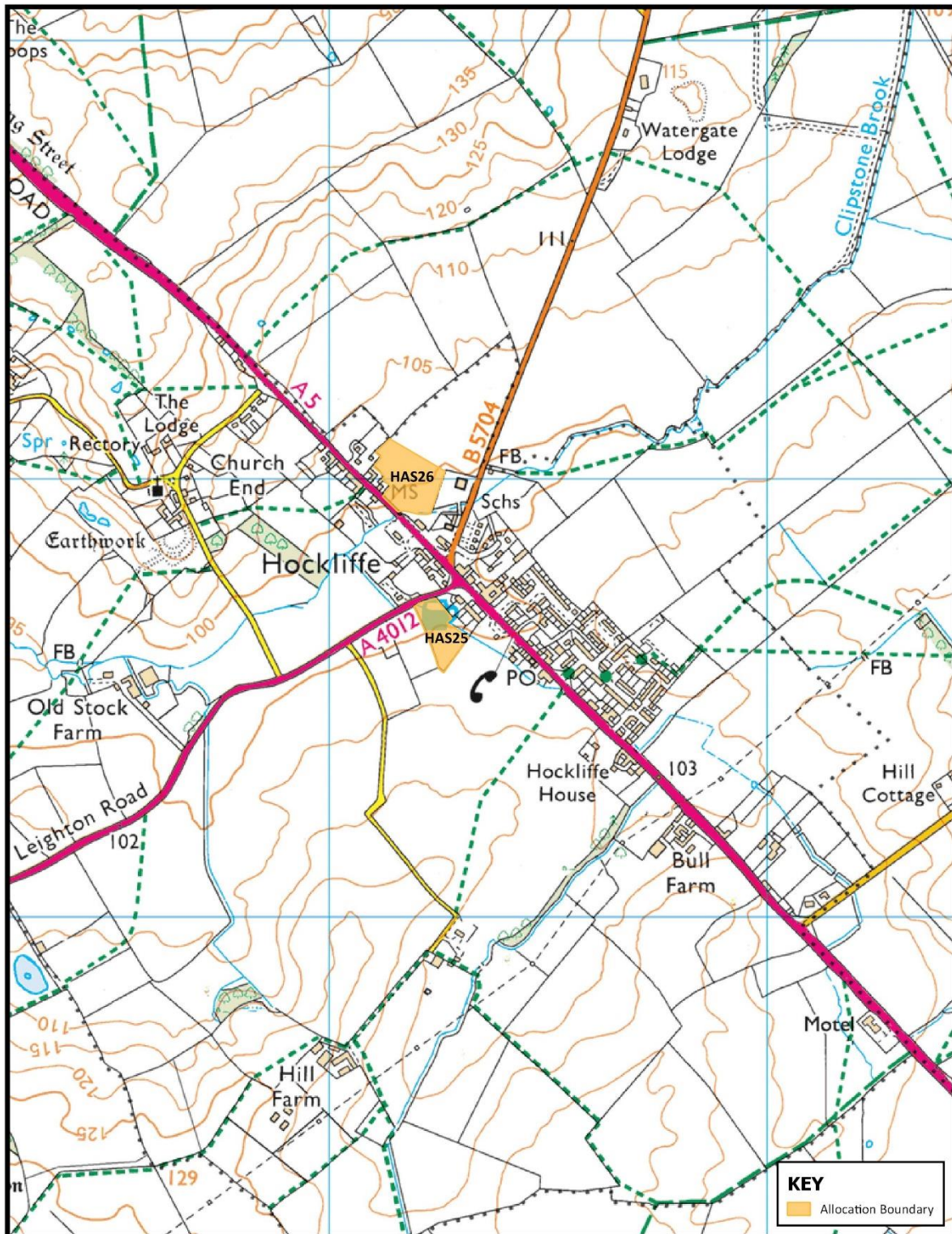
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Central Bedfordshire Council





HAS25  
HAS26

Land at Leighton Road, Hockliffe  
A5 Watling Street, Hockliffe

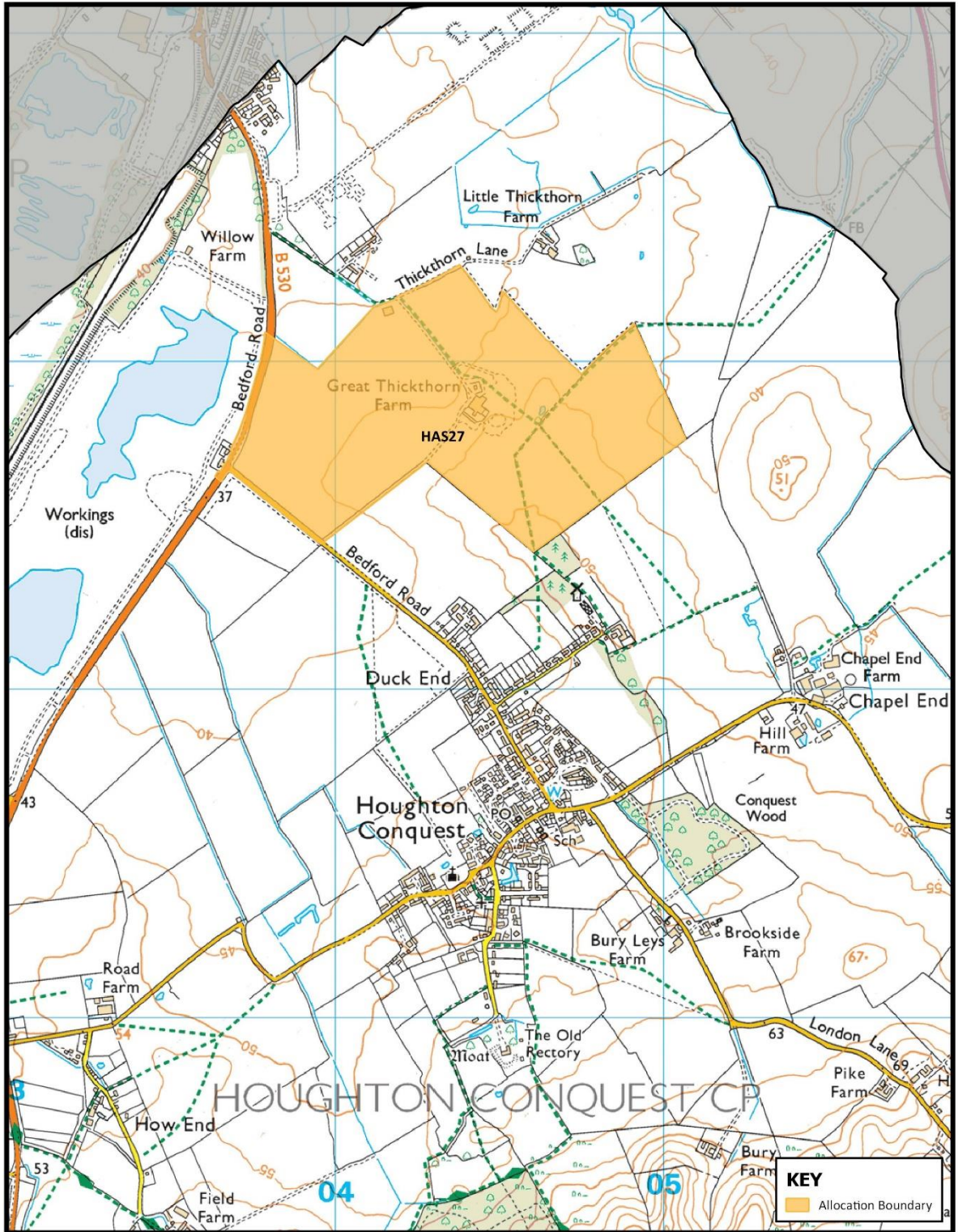


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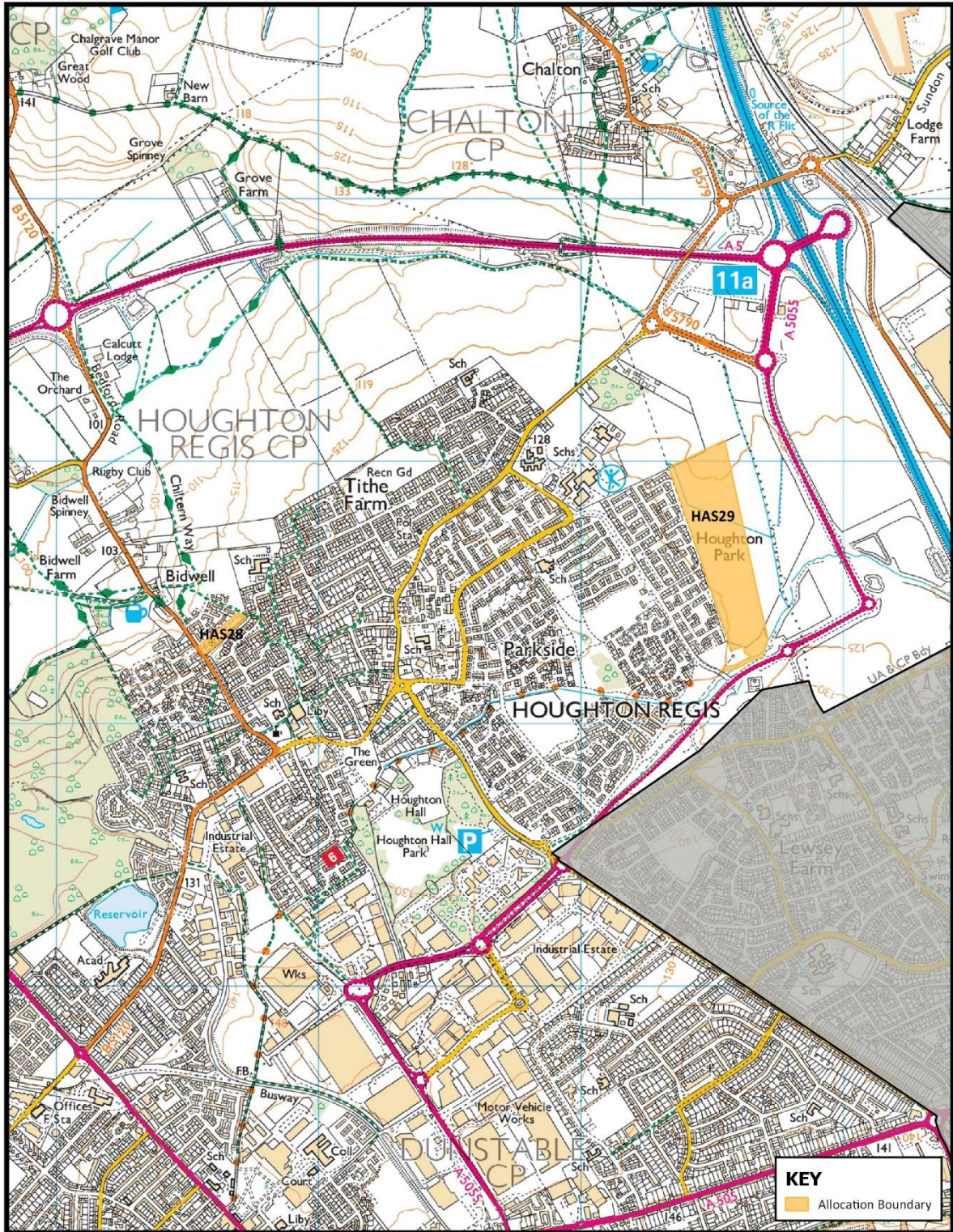


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HAS28  
HAS29

Bidwell Gospel Hall, Houghton Regis  
Last East of Houghton Regis



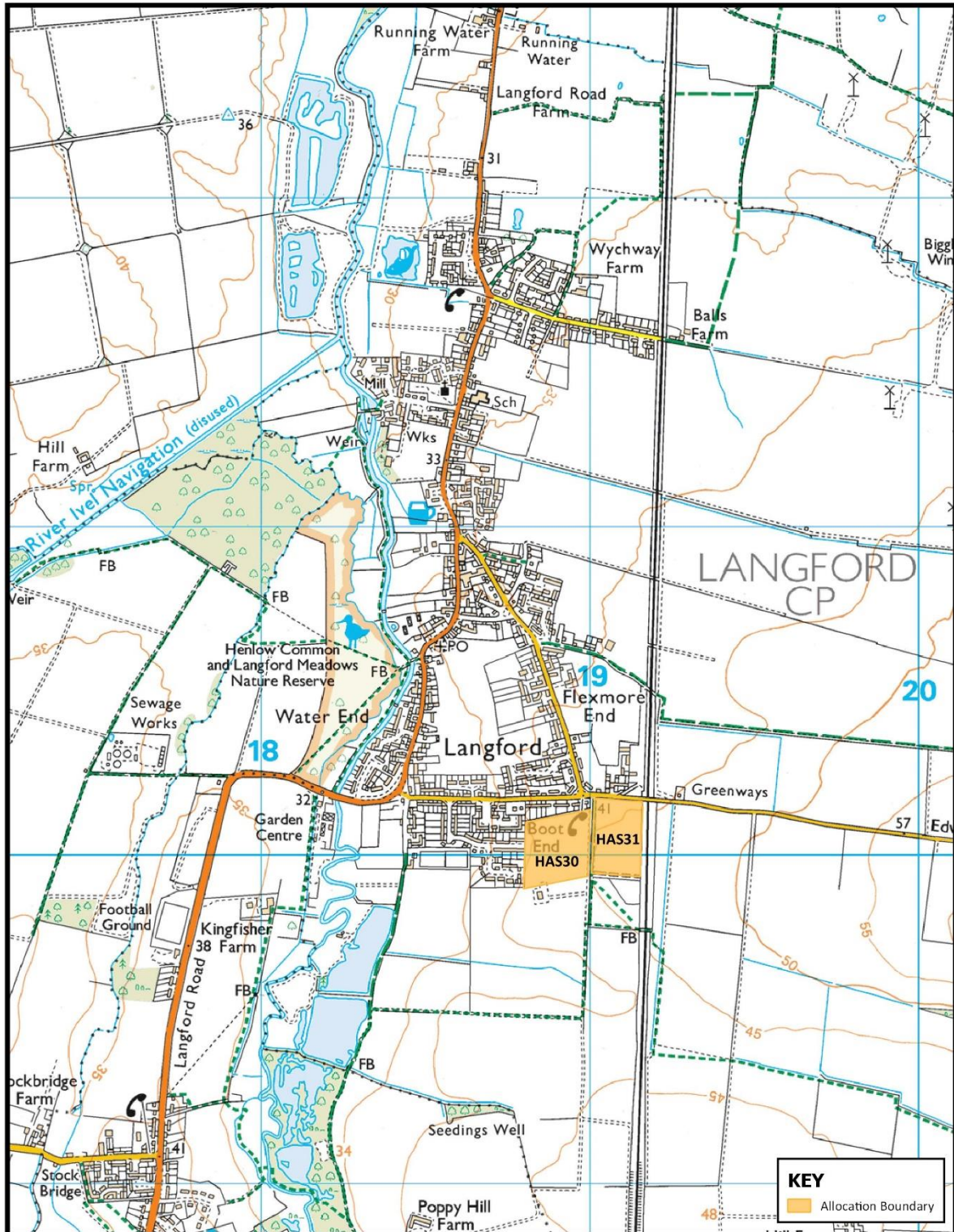
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HAS30  
HAS31

Thistle Hill Field, Langford  
Bridge Field, Langford



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Central Bedfordshire Council

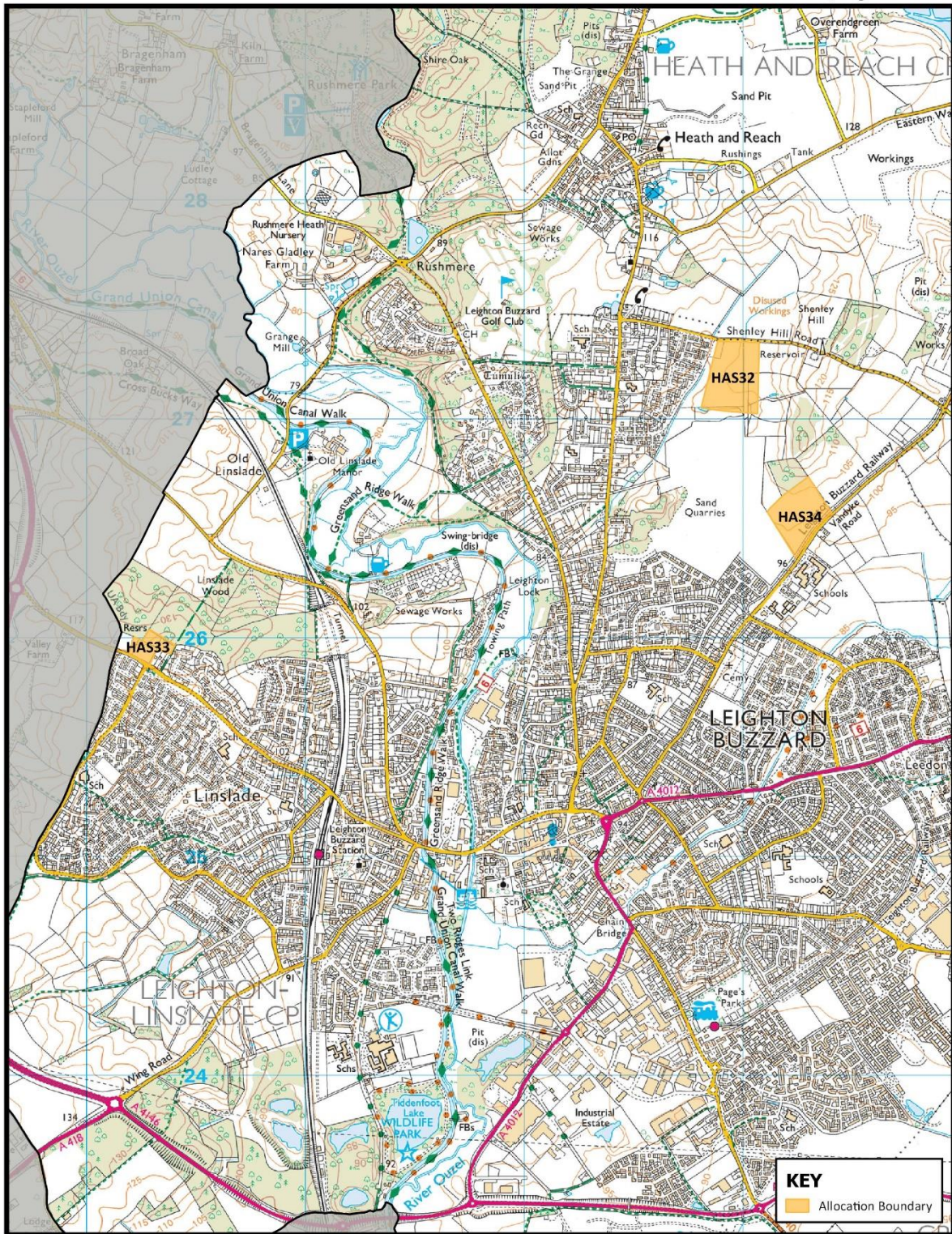


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Central Bedfordshire Local Plan

HAS32  
 HAS33  
 HAS34

Northern Chamberlains Barn, Leighton Linslade  
 Land North of Soulbury Road, Leighton Linslade  
 The Chiltern-Hunt Land, Leighton Linslade



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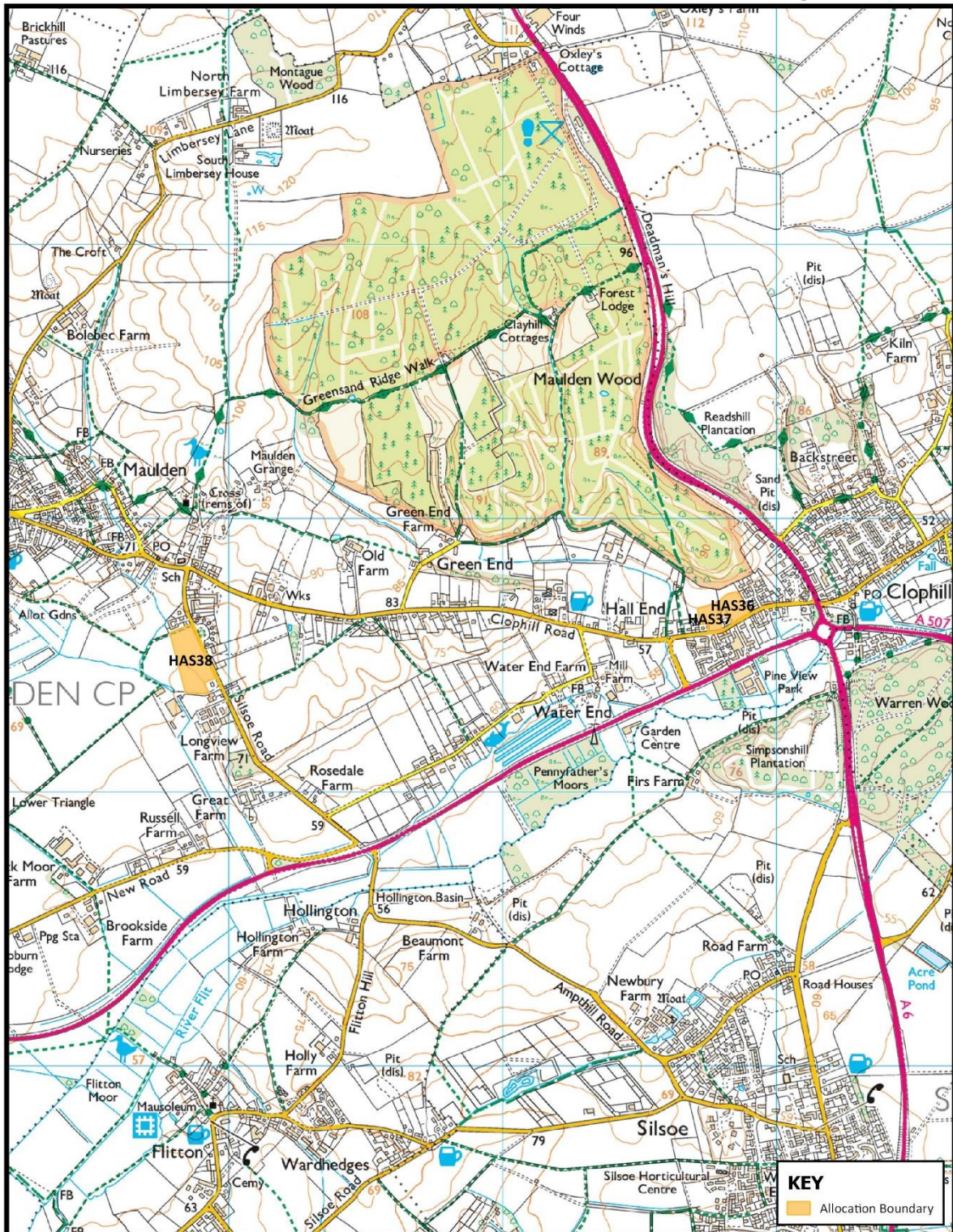
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HAS36  
HAS37  
HAS38

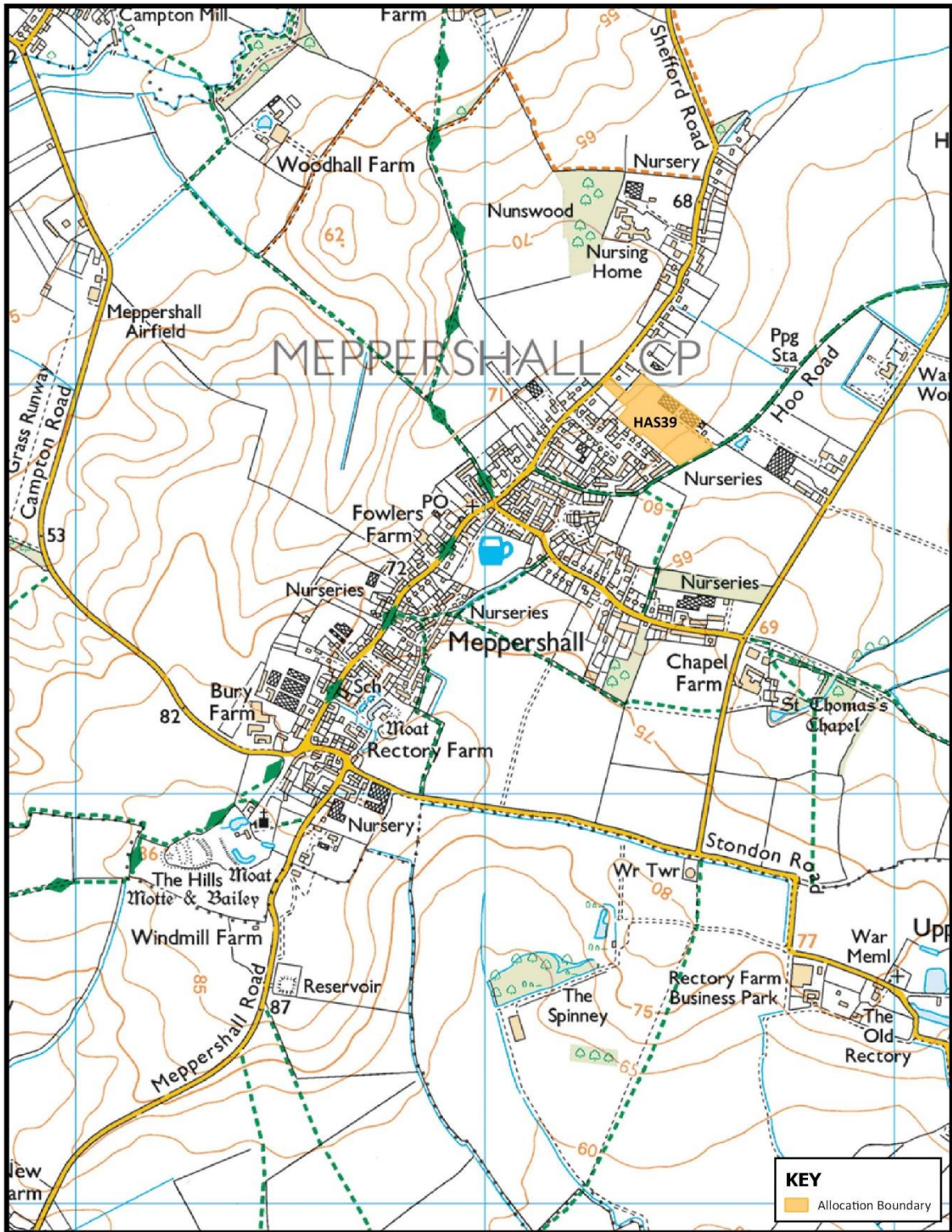
Land North of Clophill Road, Maulden  
Land between 129a & 131 Clophill Road, Maulden  
Land fronting Silsoe Road, Maulden



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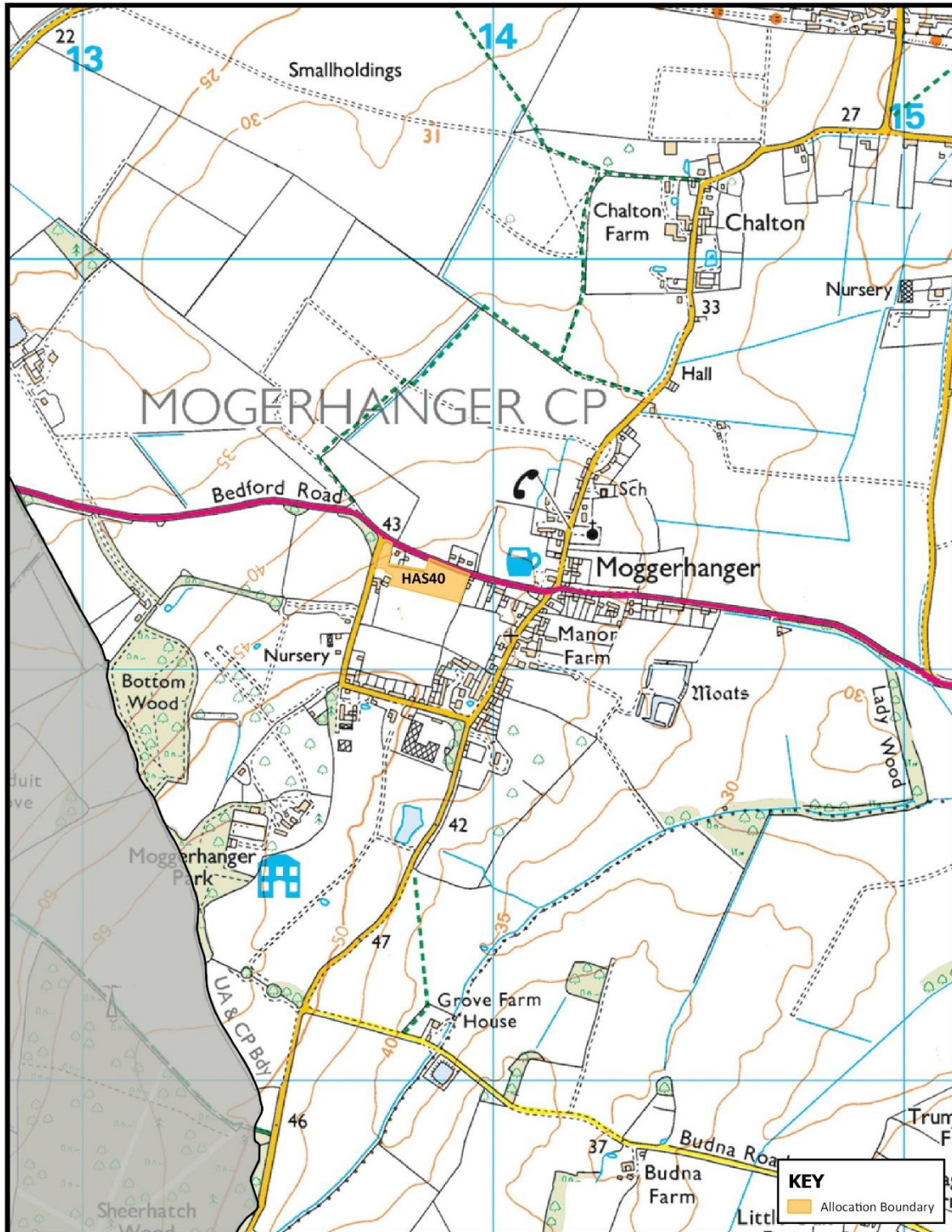


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Central Bedfordshire Council

Central Bedfordshire Council

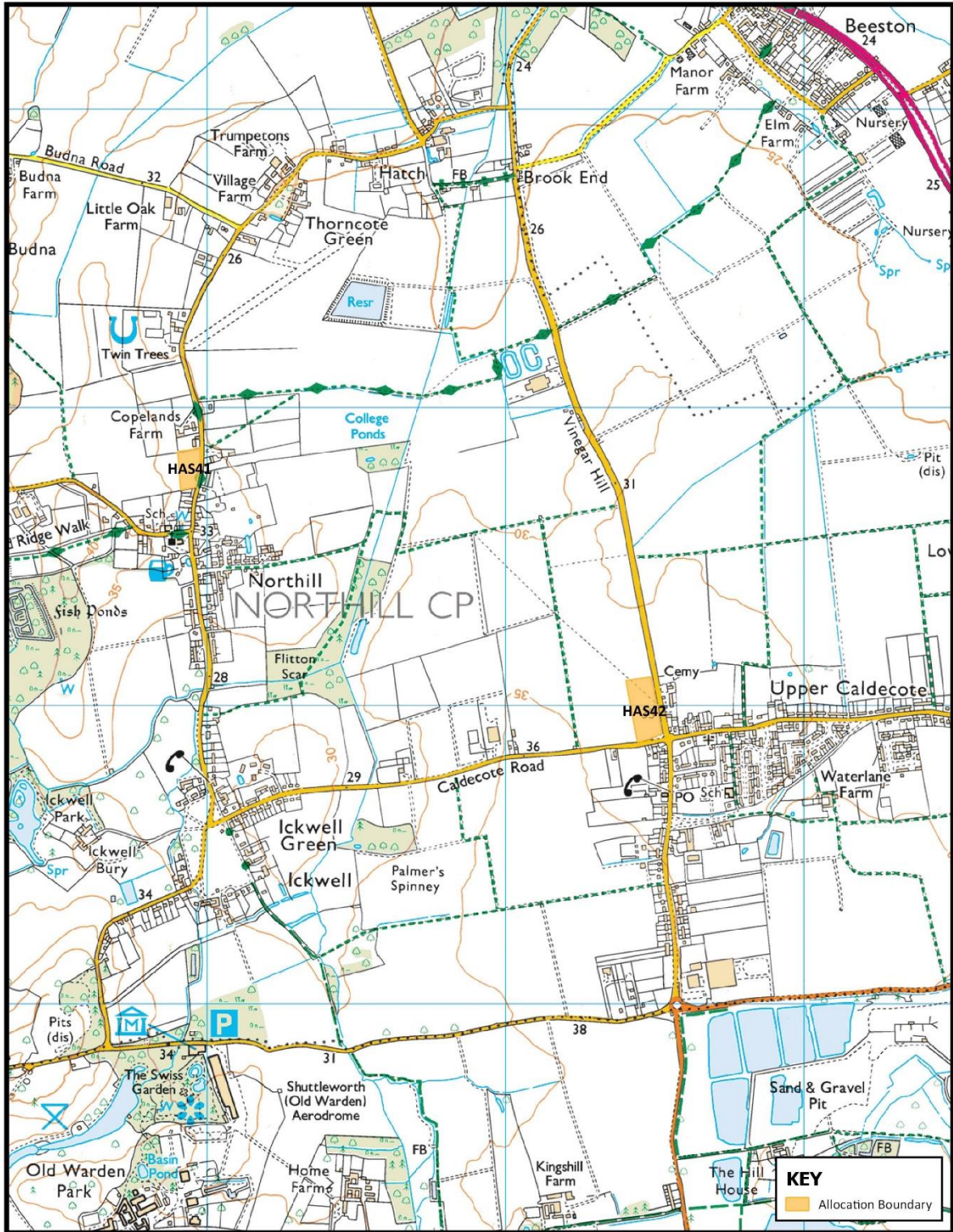
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HAS41  
HAS42

Land at Thorncote Field, Northhill  
The Pound, Upper Caldecote, Northhill



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Central Bedfordshire Council



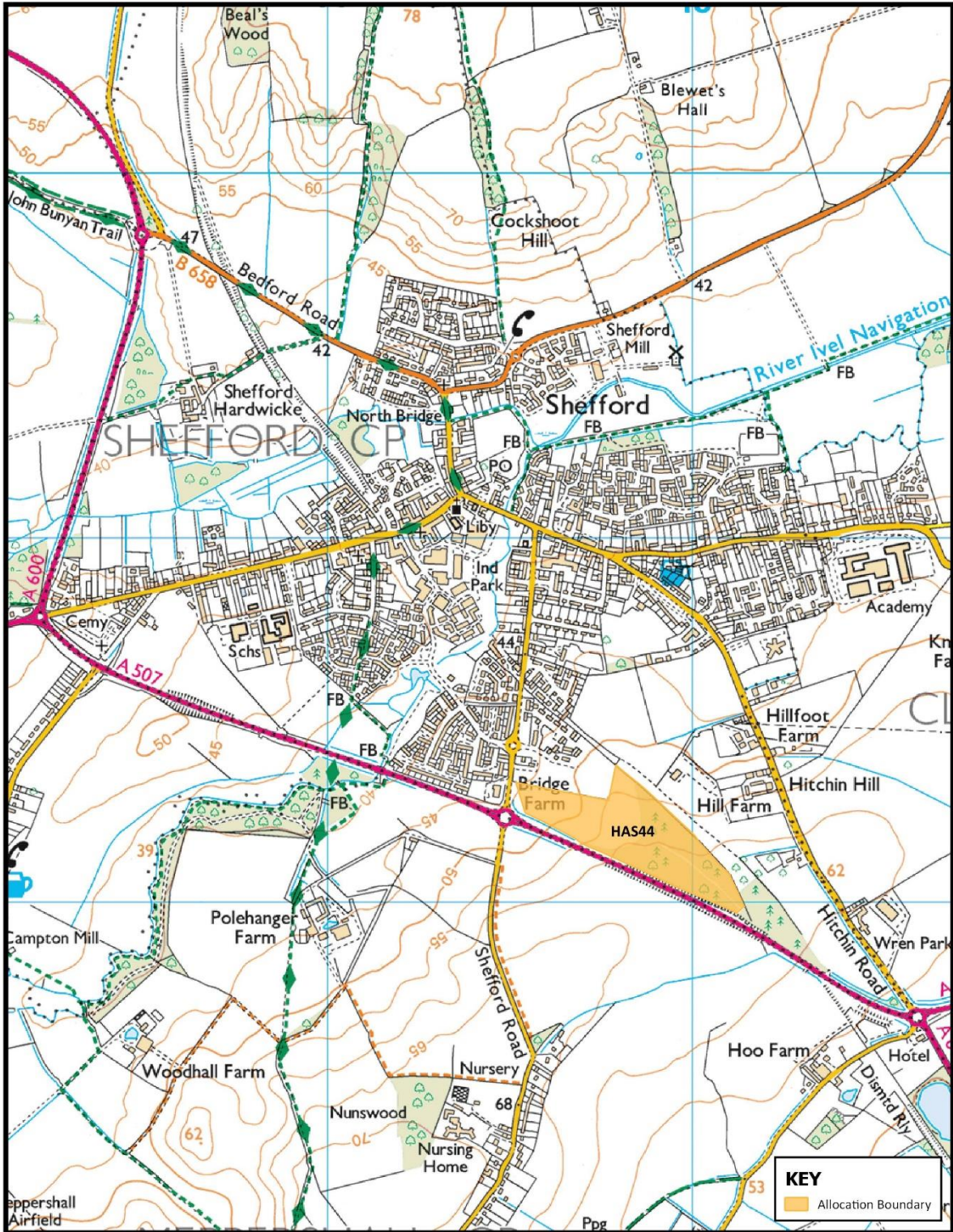
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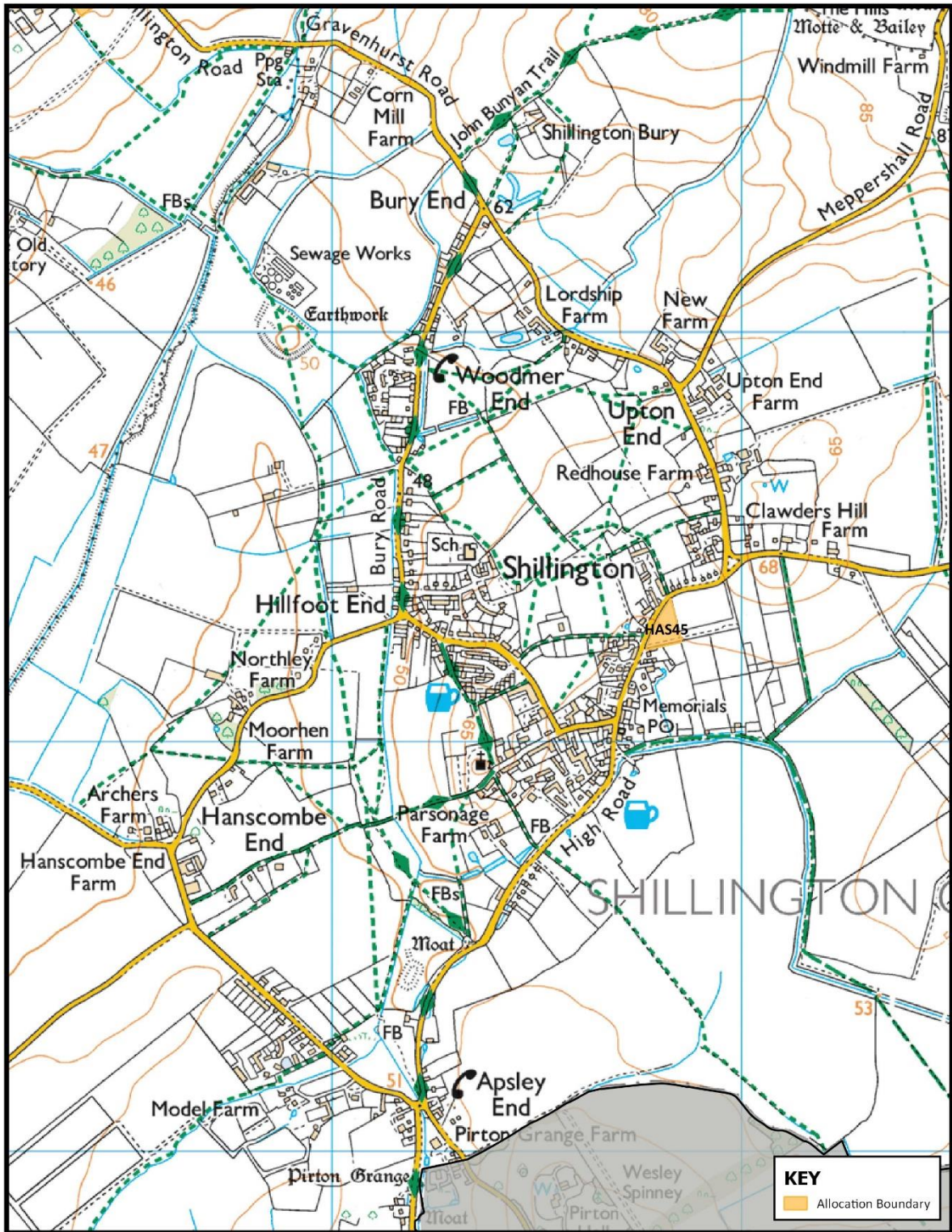
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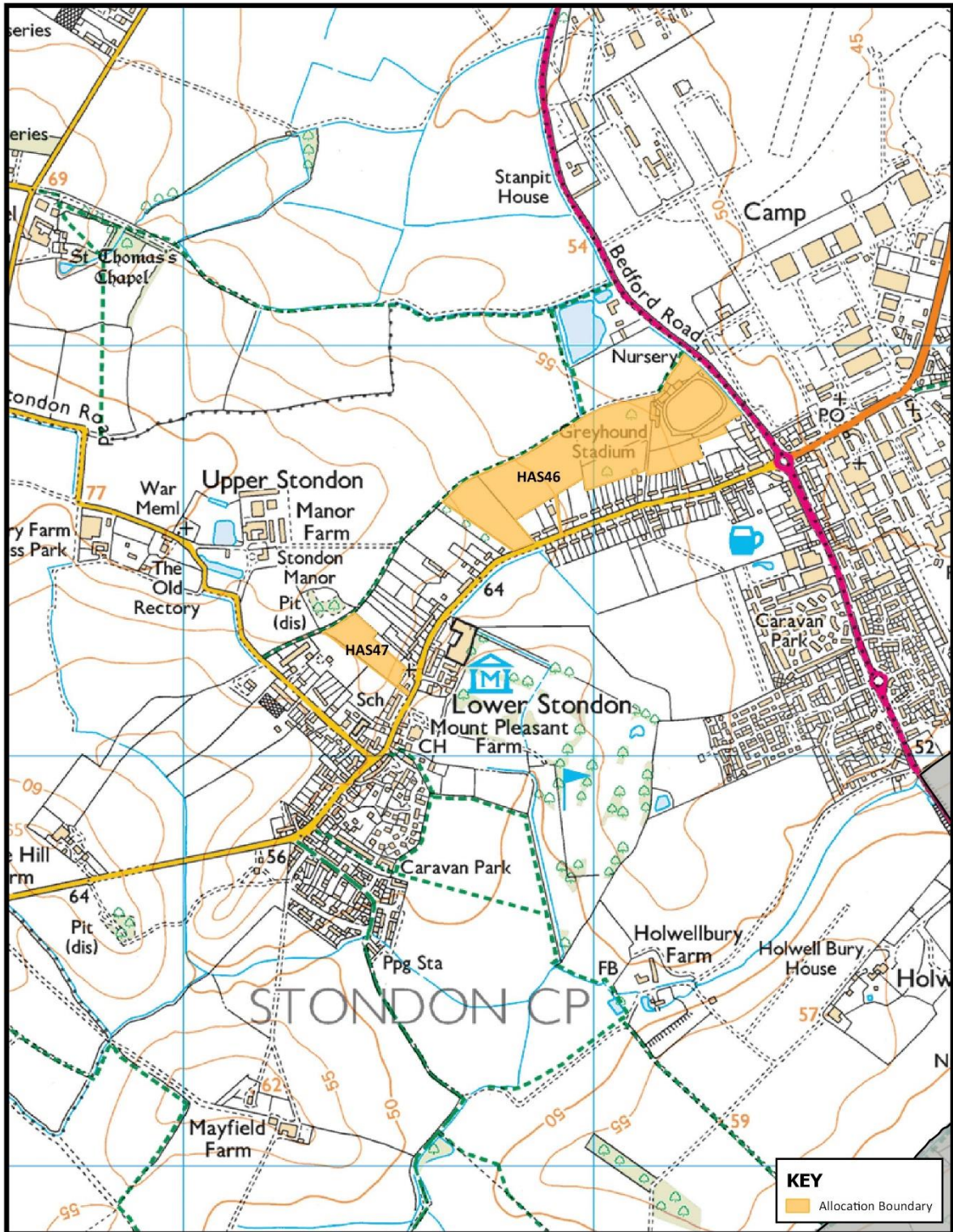
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HAS46  
HAS47

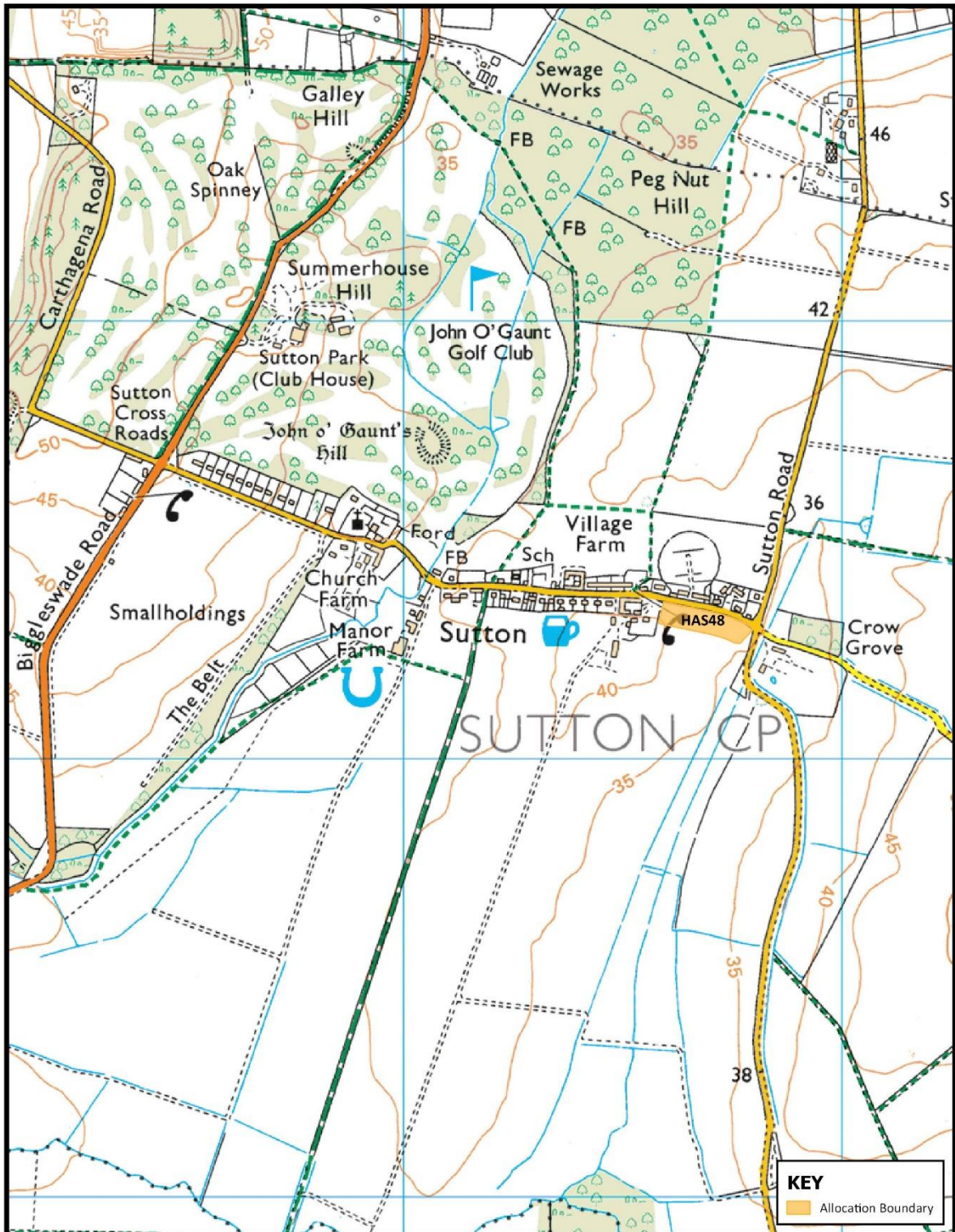
Land r/o Station Road, Stondon  
Land off The Pastures, Stondon



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Central Bedfordshire Council

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Central Bedfordshire Local Plan



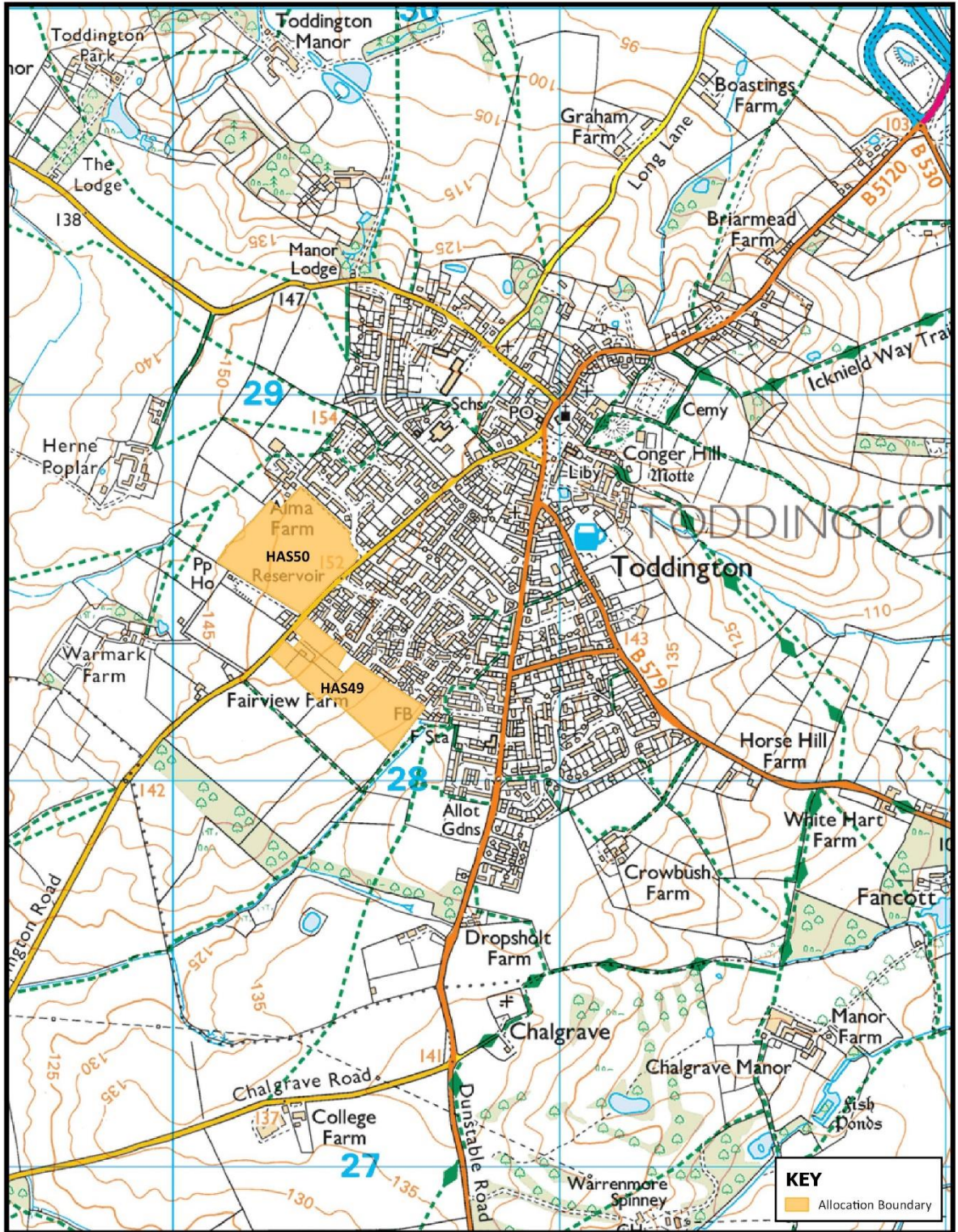
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HAS49  
HAS50

Land East of Leighton Road, Toddington  
Alma Farm, Toddington



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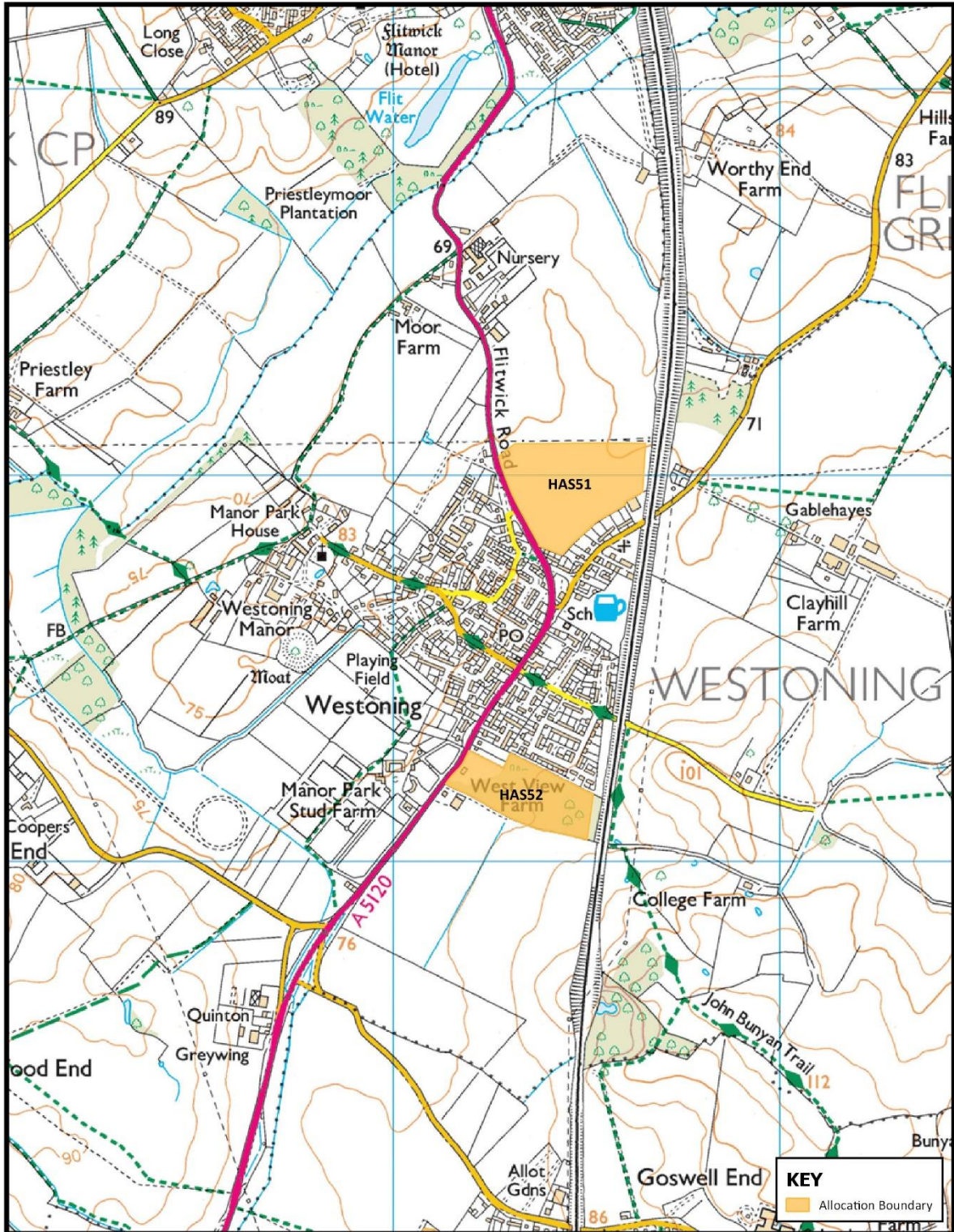


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HAS51  
HAS52

Land off Flitwick Road, Westoning  
West View Farm, Westoning



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# Appendix 7: Housing Trajectory

## SUMMARY TRAJECTORY April 2020

Source of Supply	Total	Year																			
		2015 to 2016	2016 to 2017	2017 to 2018	2018 to 2019	2019 to 2020	2020 to 2021	2021 to 2022	2022 to 2023	2023 to 2024	2024 to 2025	2025 to 2026	2026 to 2027	2027 to 2028	2028 to 2029	2029 to 2030	2030 to 2031	2031 to 2032	2032 to 2033	2033 to 2034	2034 to 2035
Local Plan Requirement	39350	1968	1968	1968	1968	1968	1968	1968	1968	1968	1968	1968	1968	1968	1968	1968	1968	1968	1968	1968	1968
Cumulative requirement	39350	1968	3935	5903	7870	9838	11805	13773	15740	17708	19675	21643	23610	25578	27545	29513	31480	33448	35415	37383	39350
Shortfall	-388.5	342	195	-136	-135	-655															
Adjusted requirement*	39350	1626	1773	2103	2102	2622	1942	1942	1942	1942	1942	1942	1942	1942	1942	1942	1942	1942	1942	1942	1942
with 5% bufer moved forward from later in the plan period	39350	1626	1773	2103	2102	2622	2039	2039	2039	2039	2039	1893	1893	1893	1893	1893	1893	1893	1893	1893	1893
Existing Commitments and Completions	27696	1626	1773	2103	2102	2622	1882	2063	2173	183	1320	1292	1214	969	861	788	724	742	634	521	456
Strategic Allocation: North of Luton							0	0	0	110	220	250	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280
Strategic Allocation: East of Arlesey							0	0	0	0	0	50	100	100	150	150	150	150	150	150	150
Strategic Allocation: Marston Vale New Villages							0	0	25	64	150	186	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300
Strategic Commitment: East of Biggleswade							0	0	0	75	140	140	140	150	150	150	150	150	150	105	0
<b>Strategic Allocation/Commitment Total</b>	9025						0	0	25	249	510	626	820	830	880	880	880	880	880	835	730
<b>New Small / Medium Site Allocations</b>	5162						21	172	565	754	811	874	874	646	419	26	0	0	0	0	0
Total Windfall Allowance	2873						0	0	40	84	109	164	200	274	284	285	286	286	287	287	287
<b>Total Sum</b>	<b>44756</b>	<b>1626</b>	<b>1773</b>	<b>2103</b>	<b>2102</b>	<b>2622</b>	<b>1903</b>	<b>2235</b>	<b>2803</b>	<b>2918</b>	<b>2750</b>	<b>2956</b>	<b>3108</b>	<b>2719</b>	<b>2444</b>	<b>1979</b>	<b>1890</b>	<b>1908</b>	<b>1801</b>	<b>1643</b>	<b>1473</b>
Cumulative delivery		1626	3399	5502	7604	10226	12129	14364	17167	20085	22835	25791	28899	31618	34062	36041	37931	39839	41640	43283	44756
Cumulative Surplus/shortfall (basic)		-342	-536	-401	-266	389	324	592	1427	2378	3160	4149	5289	604	6517	6529	645	6392	6225	590	5406
Total Contingency Including windfall	5406																				
% uplift on 39,350	13.74%																				
5 year requirement	10193																				
5 year supply	12609																				
No. Years	6.18																				

\* As there is no shortfall, the remaining requirement is divided by the number of years left in the OAN period.



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