



# Castlethorpe Neighbourhood Plan 2020-31



Castlethorpe  
Neighbourhood  
Plan 2020-31

Submission Plan  
(as modified April 2020)  
Draft version 1.7.3



# **Castlethorpe Neighbourhood Plan 2020**

## **Draft version 1.7.3, April 2020**

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# Foreword

I am very pleased to introduce our updated Castlethorpe Neighbourhood Plan.

The Plan is important because it defines how we want our village to look over the next 11 years in terms of development, building design, important buildings to be protected and Local Green Spaces.

The Plan is powerful because, while it complies with national and Milton Keynes Planning Policies, it defines local policies which must be followed by Milton Keynes Council when considering planning applications.

The update was necessary to bring the Plan in line with the new Milton Keynes Council Local Plan, Plan:MK, to strengthen some design protections and to include Gobbey's Field as a Local Green Space.

Additionally, the village has some beautiful and important houses which are not formally Listed. The Plan identifies these houses as "Buildings of Local Interest" and a new Policy created to protect them from proposals that would harm them and in particular to protect the frontage.

The update also ensures that the Plan maintains its Planning Policy authority even if MKC is unable to maintain its Housing Land Supply which would reduce the protection afforded by Plan:MK.

It has taken a considerable amount of time and effort to produce the Plan and we were fortunate

to obtain grants which have enabled us to engage professional help to write the Plan.

We have also sought the views of our residents to ensure that the Plan reflects their wishes including an Open Day so that we could explain the updates to our original 2017 Neighbourhood Plan.

When we wrote the Plan, about one in six homes in Castlethorpe was affordable and there are nine low-cost homes with planning permission in Station Yard.

However, 83% of respondents to the survey indicated a desire for additional housing with support for mainly smaller as well as some larger homes but with particular emphasis on affordable and retirement/sheltered homes.

As a result, the settlement boundary was amended and the field we call "Maltings 2" was designated for housing. This site is bounded by Paddock Close, Maltings Field, the railway and the extension of Fox Covert Lane.

We felt that our Neighbourhood Plan should designate this field for housing of the type requested in the survey. There will be a minimum of ten further affordable houses in Maltings 2.

I would like to thank everyone who has helped to put the plan together and especially those who gave comments at the Open Day. Your contribution has been invaluable in helping us to create the future for our parish.

**Philip Ayles**, Chair, Castlethorpe Parish Council

April 2020





## List of Land Use Policies

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| CAS1  | Settlement Boundary                              |
| CAS2  | Housing Development at Maltings Field            |
| CAS3  | Housing Need                                     |
| CAS4  | Design Guidance                                  |
| CAS5  | Buildings of Local Interest                      |
| CAS6  | Climate Change                                   |
| CAS7  | Community Facilities                             |
| CAS8  | Local Green Spaces                               |
| CAS9  | Lodge Farm Business Centre<br>and Balney Grounds |
| CAS10 | Cosgrove Leisure Park access                     |
| CAS11 | Surrounding Countryside & Landscape              |





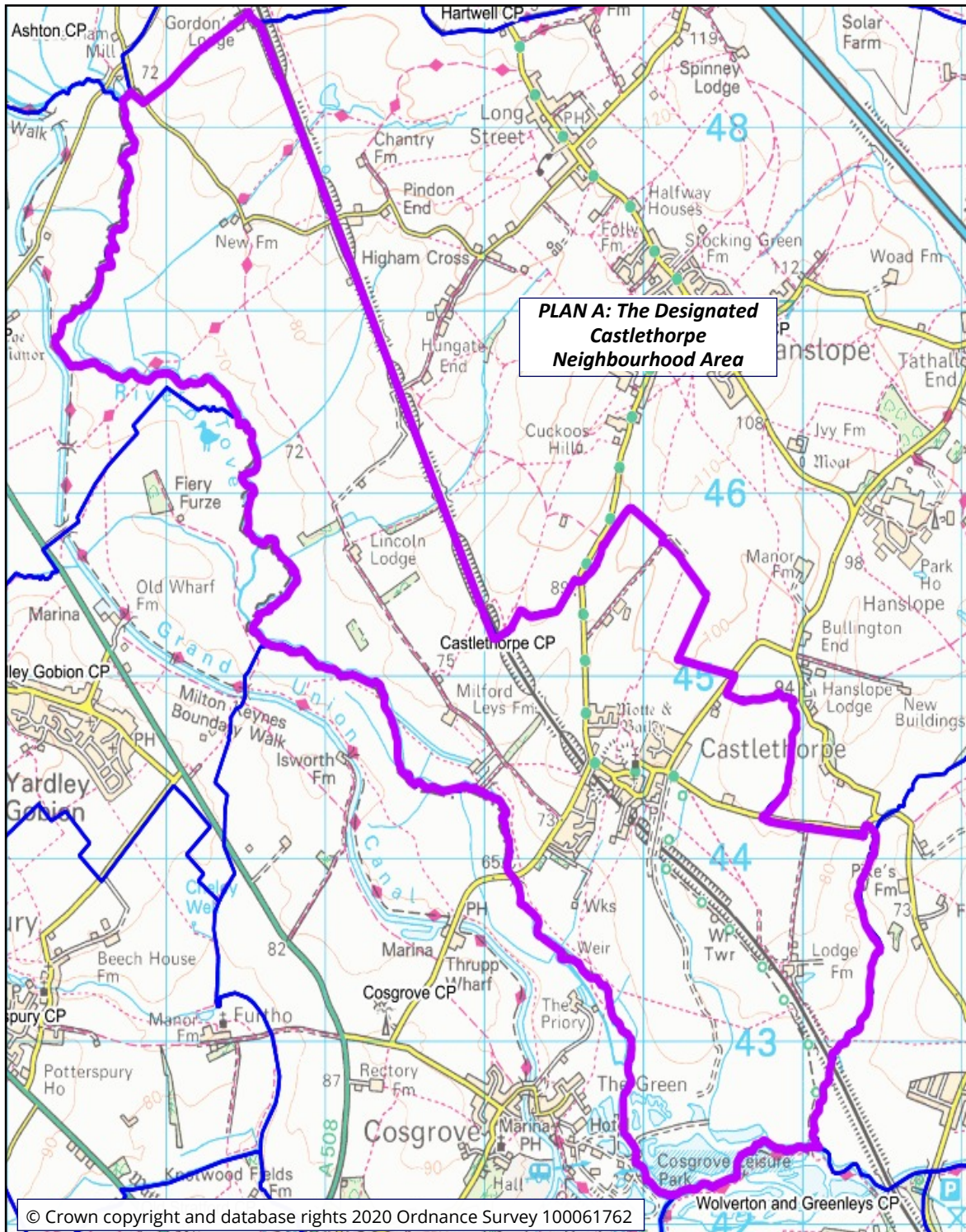
# 1. Introduction and Background

1.1 Castlethorpe Parish Council (CPC) is updating its Neighbourhood Plan for the area designated by the local planning authority, Milton Keynes Council (MKC), under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 and of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The designated area is shown in Plan A below.

1.2 The purpose of the Castlethorpe Neighbourhood Plan (CNP) will be to make planning policies that can be used

to determine planning applications in the area. In some cases, its policies will encourage development proposals for the benefit of the local community. In others, its policies will aim to protect the special character of the Parish.

1.3 Neighbourhood Plans provide local communities with the chance to shape the future development of their areas. Once “made” by MKC, the Neighbourhood Plan



becomes a statutory part of the Development Plan for the area and will carry significant weight in how planning applications are decided. Neighbourhood Plans can therefore only contain land use planning policies that can be used for this purpose. This often means that there are important issues of interest to the local community that cannot be addressed in a Neighbourhood Plan if they are not directly related to planning.

1.4 Although there is considerable scope for the local community to decide on its planning policies, Neighbourhood Plans must meet some 'basic conditions'. These are:

- have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State it is appropriate to make the Neighbourhood Plan.
- the making of the Neighbourhood Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.
- the making of the Neighbourhood Plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the Development Plan for the area of the authority.
- the making of the Neighbourhood Plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with EU obligations.
- the making of the Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European Site either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

1.5 In addition, CPC must be able to show that it has properly consulted local people and other relevant organisations during the process of making its Neighbourhood Plan and has followed the 2012 Neighbourhood Planning Regulations.

1.6 These requirements will be tested by an independent Examiner once the Neighbourhood Plan is finalised. If satisfied, the Examiner may recommend to the MKC that the Plan goes to a referendum of the local electorate. If a simple majority of the turnout votes for the Plan then it becomes adopted as formal planning policy for the area.

## The Pre-Submission Plan

1.7 The Pre-Submission Plan is the opportunity for CPC to consult on the emerging policies and proposals of the Neighbourhood Plan. It has reviewed existing national and local planning policies and how they may affect this area. And it has already sought the local community's opinions on local planning issues that the Neighbourhood Plan might help address.

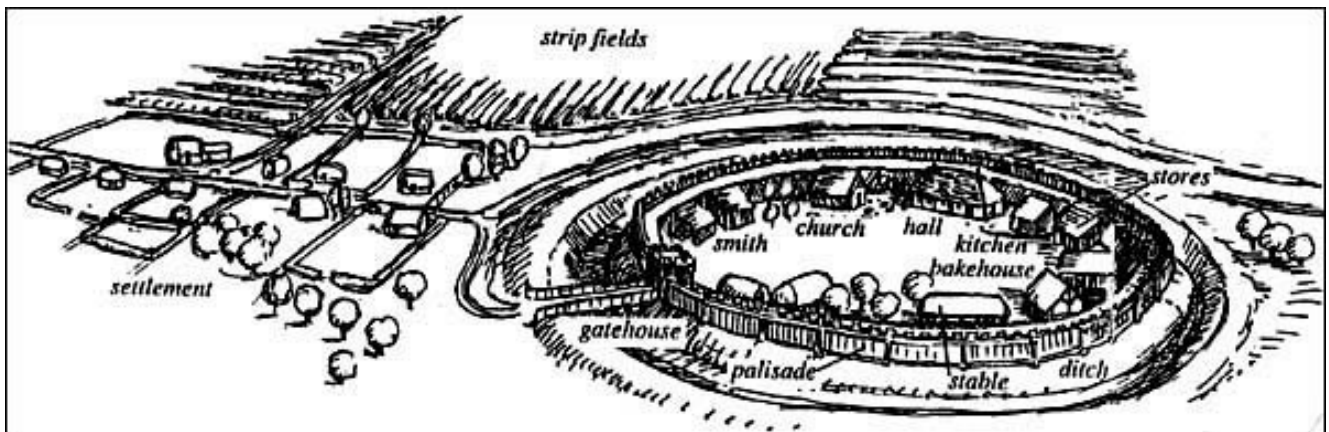
1.8 The contents of this Plan are therefore presented to obtain the views of the local community and other organisations on its proposed vision, objectives and land use policies. The final version of the Plan will take into account the representations received on this version.

## History and Development of Castlethorpe Parish

1.9 Castlethorpe is a village with a population of around 1,100 near Milton Keynes, about three miles north of Stony Stratford and seven miles north of Milton Keynes City Centre. It is separated from the county of Northamptonshire by the River Tove. There is evidence that the area was inhabited as early as the Bronze Age, with a Bronze Age dagger being found in a nearby field. Roman jewellery was also discovered during the archaeological survey carried out during preparation work for a new housing development.

1.10 The village itself was first created around a motte and bailey castle built by Winemar the Fleming who was granted the manor of Hanslope by William I after the Norman Conquest. A settlement of servants and manual workers grew up around the castle and this became the village of Castlethorpe (thorp being the old Scandinavian for hamlet or secondary settlement).

1.11 The castle was destroyed in 1215 during the Baron's Revolt against King John. The castle, despite suffering some disturbance, remains a well-preserved and impressive earthworks complex, which is preserved in a public open space as a Scheduled Ancient Monument, Castle Field, in a play area in the old fish ponds of the castle, and the north-west section of Gobbey's Field.



**PLAN B: The settlement as it might have looked in the 11th Century**





**PLAN C: The Inner Bailey c. 1900**

1.12 Castlethorpe developed around the church and some traditional old stone cottages at the centre of the village which is now a Conservation Area. With the coming of the London and North-Western Railway in 1882, Castlethorpe enjoyed a prominent position on the West Coast line and the village expanded with new housing in Station Road and North Street. The village

had its own station until it was closed in 1964. Castlethorpe ponds were an important water pickup for steam trains on the main line from Euston to the Midlands and the North-West. The water tower that remains is one of only two in the country. The Grand Union Canal also runs by on the outskirts of the village, and it is a short walk along the towpath to the neighbouring village of Cosgrove.

1.13 Castlethorpe has always had a strong agricultural sector. However, the working farms are now at the edges of the village and have declined in number over the past 20 years but still remain an important influence on the village. Two of the farms have diversified into business units and this now plays a significant part in the local economy.

1.14 The development of Milton Keynes itself and the opening of Milton Keynes Central railway station in 1982 created opportunities for both short and long-distance commuting. Most of the working villagers now commute out of the village but, nevertheless, the village has retained its rural character and the local facilities critical to the existence of a local and thriving community.



**PLAN D: Some photographs of Castlethorpe in days gone by**





### Facilities in the village

1.15 The community facilities in the village include a nursery, First School, the parish church of SS Simon and Jude, a village shop and Post Office, a public house (currently awaiting refurbishment) and Village Hall. The Village Hall is the centre for a number of community activities from Pre-School Group to short mat bowls and Women’s Institute. A well-equipped sports ground includes a cricket and football pitch (both with well-established home teams) and a hard court area for tennis, football and basketball.

### Environmental Designations

1.16 The main environmental designations in the parish are the variety of heritage assets in the village centre, notably the Scheduled Ancient Monument former castle area, the Conservation Area, which contains the Grade I listed church and 18 Grade II listed buildings. In addition there is a Grade II listed mill on the River Tove.

### Planning Policy Context

1.17 The parish lies in the Borough of Milton Keynes in the ceremonial County of Buckinghamshire and adjoins the parishes of Hanslope, Haversham & Little Linford, Wolverton and Cosgrove.

1.18 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published by the Government in February 2019 is an important guide in the preparation of local plans and Neighbourhood Plans. The Neighbourhood Plan must demonstrate that it is consistent with the provisions of the NPPF. The following paragraphs of the NPPF are especially relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan:

- Supporting a prosperous rural economy (para 83)
- Promoting healthy and safe communities (para 91)
- Protecting local green spaces (para 99)
- Achieving well-designed places (Chapter 12)

- Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change (Chapter 14)
- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment (Chapter 15)
- Conserving and enhancing the historic environment (Chapter 16)
- Neighbourhood planning (paras 13, 14, 29, 30, 37, 65, 66, 69)

1.19 MKC has planning policies and proposals that are helping to shape the strategy and policies of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Development Plan as required by the 2012 Neighbourhood Planning Regulations. The strategic policies of the Development Plan are contained within Plan:MK (adopted March 2019). The Neighbourhood Plan will look to the reasoning and the evidence base of Plan:MK.

### Plan:MK

1.23 Plan:MK sets out MKC’s strategic planning policies for the period up to 2031. CPC has looked to the evidence informing Plan:MK in preparing the Neighbourhood Plan.

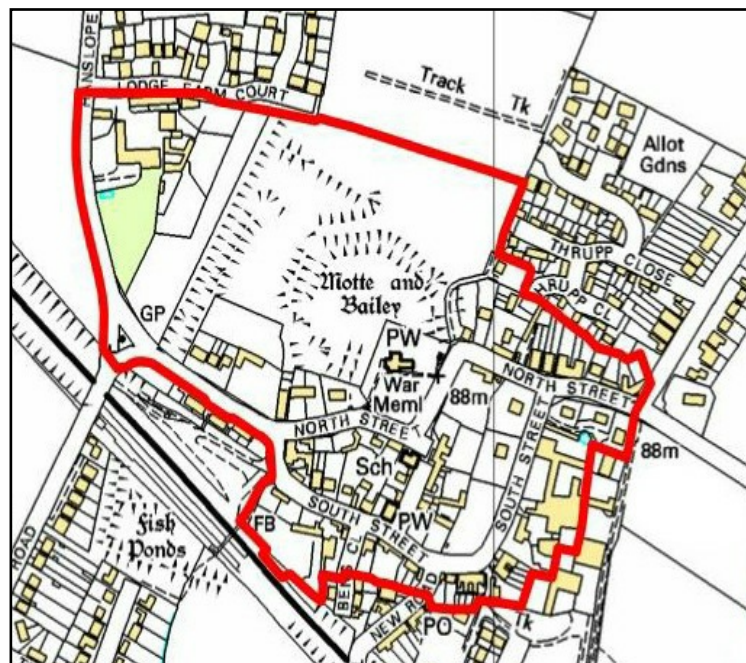
### Conservation Area

1.24 The central part of the village has special character and, in 1972, it was designated a Conservation Area under the powers of the Town and Country Planning Act 1971. Designation of a Conservation Area carries with it the responsibility to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

1.25 The Neighbourhood Plan will further seek to sustain the above and to ensure that future development will respect the setting and view in and out of the Conservation Area to retain the character of the village.

**PLAN E: Castlethorpe Conservation Area**

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## 2. Community Views

2.1 CPC has consulted the local community during the course of the Plan preparation process, and the Neighbourhood Plan is based upon the results of these consultations, which have included meetings, open days and community surveys.

2.2 A questionnaire was distributed throughout the village in 2014, as well as being available online. A summary has been prepared by a working group of residents and Parish Councillors from the responses and comments made. A total of 139 responses were received, 18 of which were second or third responses from the same household. It is reasonable to assume that 121 households responded out of a total of 470 in the parish – a household response rate of 26%.

2.3 The key headlines from the survey questions were:

- 69% of respondents thought it was important or very important that affordable homes are available.
- 74% of respondents thought it was important or very important that young people and key workers can afford to live in Castlethorpe.
- 54% of respondents thought Castlethorpe will need more homes by 2026.
- The percentage in favour of different types of home is as follows:
 

|                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| ○ Smaller homes                   | 69% |
| ○ Larger family homes             | 53% |
| ○ Affordable homes                | 63% |
| ○ Homes for rent                  | 33% |
| ○ Homes for rent for local people | 77% |
| ○ Retirement/sheltered homes      | 73% |
- Over the Plan period, 83% of respondents thought that additional homes are appropriate for Castlethorpe. This would include individual plots as well as small scale developments.
- There were large majorities in favour of:
  - preserving the surrounding countryside and landscape
  - avoiding spoiling the look of the rural setting
  - providing sufficient infrastructure to support any new housing (e.g. school, water supply, recreation, road capacity etc.)
  - any new housing respecting the existing style and character of the village.
- It is not desirable for Castlethorpe to have any new settlement on its boundary.
- Castlethorpe should minimise light pollution and conserve energy by turning some street lighting off at reasonable times.
- As fuel costs are predicted to rise, new homes should have access to sufficient land for home growing, helping households manage their food bills.
- There is a small majority who object to renewable energy generation but, of the large minority that support it, most are against wind turbines but supportive of solar panels providing they are not intrusively sited.
- A large majority of residents was hostile to commercial development within the settlement boundary.
- Of those respondents who favoured some commercial development, only one respondent was in favour of warehousing and distribution, there was more support for light industrial units, general office / commercial and business start-up and even greater support for specialist sector (creative & media/science/marketing).
- The main concern was about increased traffic movements especially of HGVs caused by any future development.
- For new small employment buildings, responses were evenly spread among being away from all existing buildings, mixed in with homes or alongside existing employment.
- For medium and large new employment buildings, respondents did not want them mixed with new homes and, for larger buildings, respondents wanted them to be in completely new sites or alongside existing employment buildings.
- The main areas thought suitable were the Station Yard (if the currently approved residential development did not proceed) or at the existing business centres.
- More than 85% of respondents wanted to see the Carrington Arms reopened with 6% against it and 8% don't know. The main uses were to retain as a pub, convert to a café / restaurant or use as a community



facility. A small minority favoured residential development.

- A small majority of respondents was in favour of a pub/ club at the Sports Ground if the Carrington Arms was not reopened as a pub 84% of respondents did not want any new sport or play facilities.
- There was a wide range of comments but a common theme was that agriculture and countryside should be preserved around the village.
- 61% of respondents felt more traffic calming was needed and there were a lot of comments about excess speed. Suggestions included 20 mph areas in the village centre and in Shepperton Close, Station

Road and Bullington End Road. There were also some concerns raised about hazards involving agricultural vehicle movements in North Street.

- Other responses mostly reiterated comments made elsewhere, covering topics such as the need for affordable housing, restricting social housing to those with a connection to the village, preserving the village, speeding, parking, dog fouling, repairing the Fishponds play area, moving the cycleway to Fox Covert Lane and improving the MKC landscaping service. These comments will be reviewed by CPC to see if further action can be taken. Some are already ongoing actions.



# 3. Vision & Objectives

## Vision

3.1 The vision for Castlethorpe in 2031 is:

6 A visitor to Castlethorpe in 2031 would see incremental rather than revolutionary change from his previous visit in 2020. The approach to conservation would appear very similar but with a greater consistency in the detailing of items such as streetlights, bollards and waste bins. Any building modifications or extensions would have been made in a sympathetic manner in accordance with strict design guidelines to reflect the character of the village.

The visitor would be able to enjoy a drink at the Carrington Arms with no change of use permitted under its protection as a Community Facility. In summer, he might take his drink onto the green opposite with its restyled layout including additional and much needed parking facilities. On occasion, he might join village celebrations on the green. Opposite, the Village Hall would be as recognisable as it had been 140 years previously following its gift to the parish, after the village school had moved to its new position in 1891 where it still flourishes as Castlethorpe First School. The school looks across to the Norman church of SS Simon and Jude in its elevated position, surrounded by an impressive stone wall.

Outside the Conservation Area, the visitor would see new building development in the old Station Yard providing low cost housing and a mixed development, including affordable housing, in Maltings 2 where the settlement boundary has been amended. He would also see other infill housing at the corner of North Street and Fox Covert Lane and the “buff room” conversion near the Carrington Arms. Generally, minor developments and extensions and modifications to existing buildings will have been constructed in materials and designs matching existing and adjacent buildings.

Particular care will have been taken to retain the character of areas such as the row of railway cottages on Station Road, the houses on the west side of Bullington End Road and the newer developments in Shepperton Close, Lodge Farm Court and Thrupp Close.

New development will have been constrained to be within the settlement boundary of 2020 with the population of around 1,200 being able to sustain the Assets of Community Value of school, church, pub and shop as well as allotments and the play areas at the Fishponds and at Thrupp Close/Bullington End Road. Leisure amenities have been protected by the designation of the Recreation Ground, Gobbey's Field and South Street Paddock as Local Green Spaces for the enjoyment of residents and visitors alike.

Finally, the visitor would note continued expansion of the Lodge Farm Business Centre which, together with continuing farm diversification and home based businesses, have allowed the village to retain a balance between its residents of working age and employment opportunities within the parish. The visitor would note with pleasure a parish with a village at its centre in a rural setting, protecting its heritage but sustainable in terms of employment and leisure. 9

## Objectives

3.2 To achieve this vision a number of key objectives have been identified as follows:

1. To ensure sympathetic development through design guidelines to reflect the different areas of character of the village and to ensure the historic buildings and structures are maintained and where necessary enhanced.
2. To enable the use of community facilities such as the shop, school, allotment, playing areas, church and the pub, the latter through enabling parking by the village pub.
3. To provide housing, including low cost housing outside the Conservation Area, to meet local need.
4. To protect the Recreation Ground, Gobbey's Field and South Street Paddock through designating these as Local Green Spaces for the enjoyment of residents and visitors alike.

5. To encourage the expansion of the Lodge Farm Business Centre and Balney Grounds, continuing farm diversification and home-based businesses to maintain employment opportunities within the parish for all age groups and type of skills.

## Monitoring & Review

3.3 The Neighbourhood Plan will be monitored by Milton Keynes Council and CPC on an annual basis using data collected in planning monitoring reports. The objectives will form the core of the monitoring activity but other data collected and reported at a village level relevant to the Plan may also be included. It is expected that the Neighbourhood Plan will be formally reviewed on a five-year cycle or to coincide with the development and review of the Milton Keynes Local Plan if this cycle is different.





## 4. Land Use Policies

### Policy Issues

4.01 The context for this Neighbourhood Plan sets out some clear historic and environmental constraints, for example the Conservation Area and Scheduled Ancient Monument covering a large part of the village in the centre, and the wildlife corridor that runs along the railway. In addition, the main reason for the small growth planned by Plan:MK in the Parish is due to its rural location and the focus of growth in the City on its main urban area and other larger settlements like Newport Pagnell, Olney and Woburn Sands. The focus of the Neighbourhood Plan is therefore very much on managing the future of the village of Castlethorpe, and to an extent the nature of its immediate neighbour to the south, the city of Milton Keynes.

4.02 Given the Community Views as expressed above in 2.3, residential housing development will be permitted on the land adjacent to Paddock Close as shown on Plan H. CPC will seek to obtain housing in line with the wishes of the community.

4.03 The Lodge Farm Business Centre and Balney Grounds farm diversification have a number of employees and are expected to continue to be successful given their locations. Therefore the CNP sets out a policy that is more permissive of employment development at the sites without compromising the surrounding countryside or limited highways access.

### Land Use Policies

4.04 Land use policies are used to determine planning applications made for development proposals. They can establish the principles for retaining or changing the use of land in settlements and in the countryside. They can also set out the conditions against which development proposals will be judged in terms of their design, access etc.

4.05 The purpose of these policies is to shape and direct future change within Castlethorpe. Policies must be clearly written so they can be easily applied when considering planning applications.

4.06 This Neighbourhood Plan deliberately avoids repeating existing national or local planning policies where there is no Castlethorpe-specific case to make. The proposed policies therefore focus on a relatively small number of key development issues in the area. For all other planning matters, the national and local policies of other planning documents – the National Planning Policy Framework, Plan:MK – will continue to be used. In addition, there are some outcomes of the community survey which the Neighbourhood Plan cannot address as a land use planning document. Some issues are covered in Section 5 of the Neighbourhood Plan; these and others will be taken forward by CPC separately from the Neighbourhood Plan.

4.07 Set out below are the proposed policies of the Neighbourhood Plan. Each policy has a number and title and the policy itself is written in bold italics for ease of reference. There is also a short statement explaining the intention of the policy and any other relevant background information. At the end of this document is the Policies Map – where a policy refers to a specific site or area then it is shown on the Map.

### 4.1 Policy CAS1: Settlement Boundary

***The Neighbourhood Plan defines the development boundary at the village of Castlethorpe, as shown on the Policies Map, for the purpose of containing the physical growth of the village over the plan period.***

***Development proposals within the development boundary will be supported, provided they comply with the provisions of the Neighbourhood Plan and the Development Plan.***

***Development proposals outside of the development boundary will only be supported if they comply with the provisions of the Development Plan in respect of the control of development in the countryside.***

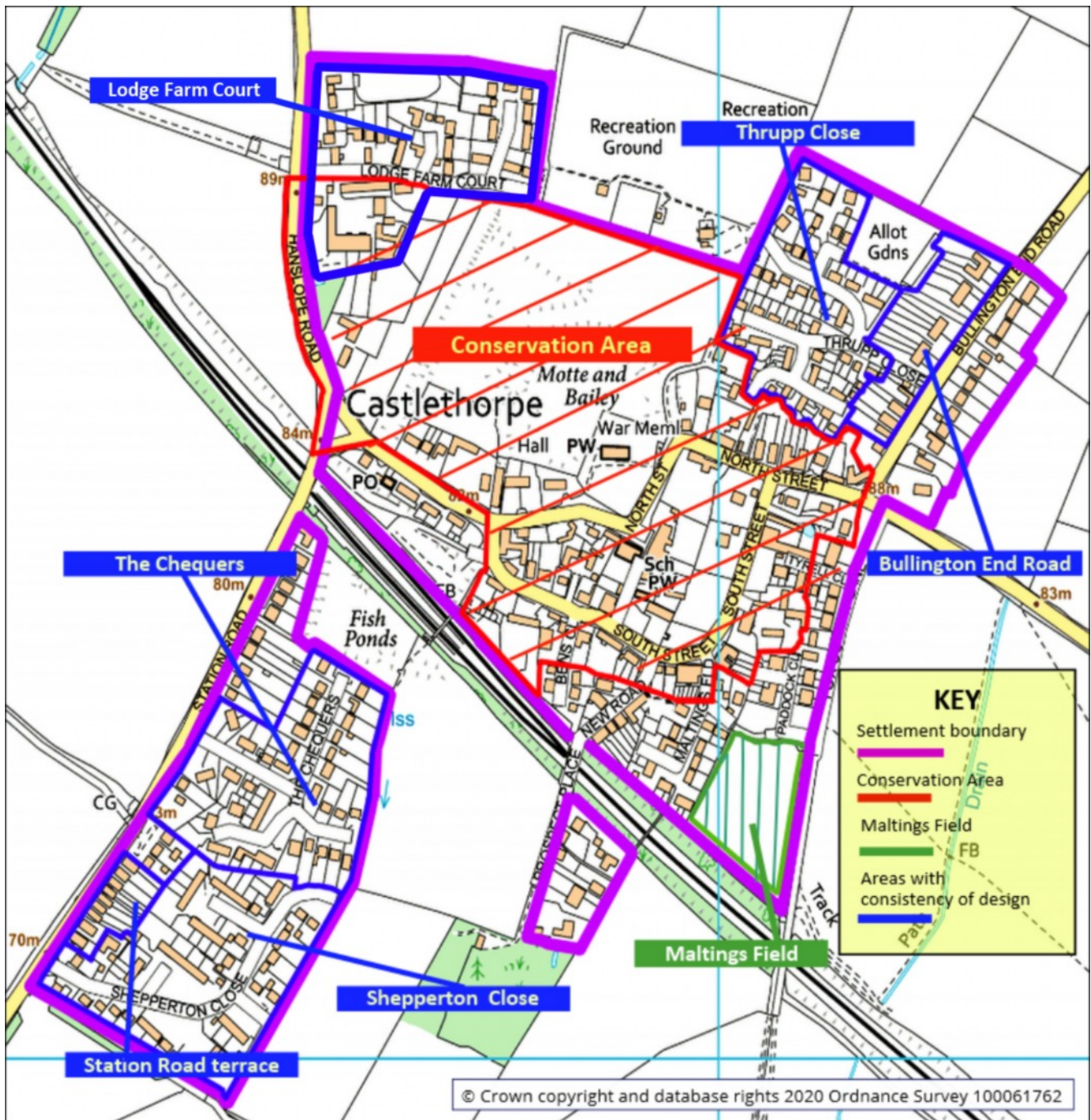
4.1.1 This policy defines the development boundary of Castlethorpe village and accords with the boundary shown on the Proposals Map of the Milton Keynes development plan, pursuant to Policy DS1 of Plan:MK that sets out the strategy for the rural area of the district.

4.1.2 The policy is consistent with Policy DS1 in only supporting housing development within the newly-defined boundary, as Castlethorpe is identified in the settlement hierarchy of Policy DS1 as a “Village and rural settlement” . In such villages, new development will occur at locations identified in made neighbourhood plans . Although the site to the rear of Maltings Field lies on the edge of the village, it is well-contained within the structure of the village. The eastern boundary of the village has been re-established in recent years with the housing schemes at Fox Covert Lane and Paddock Close. This site lies within the natural physical lines of that boundary and of the railway line cutting to its south.

### 4.2 Policy CAS2: Housing Development at Maltings Field

***The Plan allocates Land at Maltings Field, on the south-east edge of Castlethorpe village, as shown on the Policies Map, for a housing scheme of approximately 30 dwellings, which will have an emphasis on smaller open market and affordable homes, especially starter homes and downsizer homes.***

***Development proposals for this site will be supported, provided they accord with all of the following principles:***



**PLAN F: Plan of the design character areas and the Maltings Field development**

- i. The scheme provides, at a minimum, an ungated, made-up pedestrian access from Maltings Field along the line of the existing footpath;*
  - ii. The built form, materials, boundary treatment and arrangement of car parking, provided at a minimum of two off-street spaces per dwelling, is of a similar character to the adjoining residential scheme at Paddock Close.*
  - iii. The scheme layout is prepared in consultation with Network Rail and provides for an appropriate noise and visual buffer to the railway line along its southern boundary;*
  - iv. The landscape scheme creates a strong, attractive and defensible boundary to the open countryside to the east of the site; and*
  - v. Where investment in physical and social infrastructure is shown to be necessary as a result of the development and relevant to it this will be secured through a S106 planning obligation which complies with policy INF1 of Plan:MK .*
- 4.2.1 A high proportion of the Castlethorpe community identified a need for housing in the village, particularly smaller, low cost housing and housing available to meet the needs of those wishing to downsize from larger family properties. The opportunities to provide this housing within the settlement boundary as originally defined in 2005 and revised in 2013 would be extremely limited and the CNP proposes a modest housing allocation at Maltings Field on the edge of Castlethorpe for a small-scale housing scheme, as provided for by





**PLAN G: Houses in Shepperton Close, left, and Thrupp Close, right have a consistency of design and materials**



the amended development boundary of Policy 1 of the extant Neighbourhood Plan. The land is in a single ownership and has now been made available for development within the plan period.

4.2.2 The Maltings Field site has been assessed in terms of its sustainability and found to be the more sustainable option of two considered. Development would be largely contained by new housing in Paddock Close and Maltings Field, by the railway and the boundary hedge along Fox Covert Lane. It is well connected by footpaths and within walking distance of the services the village offers and is an appropriately-scaled housing site to meet the housing needs of the local community in the context of Castlethorpe and the settlement hierarchy set out in Plan:MK. Given the shortage of smaller houses for starter and downsizer homes within the village it would be expected that two-thirds of the homes would be two-bedroom dwellings. The site can be accessed from Maltings Field, which serves a small number of other houses in this part of the village, as well as Fox Covert Lane, and should be similarly capable of accommodating car parking without causing problems beyond the site.

4.2.3 A high-quality scheme is required, given the location of the site within the setting of the Conservation Area to its immediate north and west along Maltings Field. The recent housing scheme at Paddock Close is regarded as a successfully designed scheme and this should act as a clear cue for the design of this scheme, which should have the same Edwardian style, including bay windows, sash windows, stone window lintels and recessed front porch to be as close as practically possible to the design in Paddock Close.

Here, however, its relationship to the open countryside to the east requires a strong landscape buffer and defensible boundary to be established that will prevent any further encroachment into that countryside. The scheme should also provide for an effective buffer to the busy railway line to its immediate south.

Finally the policy also requires that development meets the costs of social and physical infrastructure improvements that are directly related to the development and that this will be secured through a S106 planning obligation.

4.2.4 Prior to a planning application being submitted the area should be subject to an archaeological field evaluation comprising trial trenching. This will enable any necessary mitigation (excavation or avoidance of significant buried archaeology) to be agreed and secured via a condition on the eventual planning permission.

4.2.5 A foul drainage strategy should be submitted with any planning application which demonstrates that infrastructure capacity is available or there will be sufficient capacity to serve the development.

### **4.3 Policy CAS3: Housing Need**

***The Neighbourhood Plan will provide for about 40 new homes to meet the housing needs of the parish over the plan period 2020 – 2031.***

***New housing will be supported on sites that lie within the Settlement Boundary of Castlethorpe as shown on the Policies Map in accordance with other relevant policies of the development plan.***

***New housing will be delivered through:***

- ***Dwellings which have planning consent at January 2020;***
- ***Windfall opportunities in accordance with Policy CAS1, Plan:MK Policy DS5 and the NPPF;***
- ***The housing allocation for about 30 dwellings at Maltings Field under Policy CAS2.***

4.3.1 Plan:MK does not outline a housing requirement for each neighbourhood area. However, Milton Keynes Council has published a briefing note as an interim position to provide an indicative housing figure for those preparing new neighbourhood plans, in accordance with paragraph 66 of the National Planning Policy Framework, 2018 (NPPF). The indicative housing figure for the CNP area is one home, although, in the interests of positive planning, plans are encouraged to allocate land for more homes.

4.3.2 A high proportion of the Castlethorpe community identified a need for housing in the village, particularly smaller, low-cost housing and housing available to meet the needs of those wishing to downsize from larger family properties, as in 4.2.1 above, and the Plan allocates a site at Maltings Field. As of March 2020, there were planning permissions for 10 dwellings in the Neighbourhood Plan area, not including the housing allocation at Maltings Field.

### **4.4 Policy CAS4: Design Guidance**

***Development proposals will be supported, provided their scale, density, massing, height, landscape design, layout and materials, including alterations to existing buildings, reflect and enhance the architectural and historic character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape in their***





*specified character area, as shown on the Policies Map, as follows:*

**Both character areas:**

- **Two storeys building height;**
- **Roof pitch ranging from 35° to 45°; and**
- **Window openings are small in relation to the elevation of the building.**

**Character Area 1:**

- **Building materials are Lincolnshire/ Northamptonshire limestone, which has weathered to a creamy grey colour, and red brick;**
- **Roofing materials are thatch and dark blue slate, the former being found only on buildings constructed in stone;**
- **Roof pitch between 25° and 35°.**

*In Character Area 2, proposals should be constructed from materials similar in colour and texture to the materials and design found on adjacent buildings. Extensions and other building works to existing buildings will be required to be constructed from materials and design matching the existing building and particular attention should be paid to conformity of form and design with the adjacent buildings.*

4.4.1 This policy requires all development proposals to deliver high-quality schemes that reflect the distinct character of the Parish. It also acknowledges the Conservation Area, which covers a large part of the parish and therefore the design of any proposals for housing development in Character Area 1 that must be appropriate to a Conservation Area. Similarly, proposals in Character Area 2 that form the setting of the Conservation Area must also have this same regard. A description of the character of the area is set out in the Parish Plan adopted in 2008. The preservation of boundary walls, hedges and front gardens is essential.

4.4.2 **Character Area 1** coincides with the designated Conservation Area. New buildings and other works within the Conservation Area are therefore required by the policy to be constructed from stone or red brick similar in form, colour and texture to the materials on the older buildings in the village. It is expected that extensions or other building works to existing buildings will be required to be constructed from materials matching the existing buildings.

4.4.3 **Character Area 2** forms the rest of the built-up area of the village outside the Conservation Area and within the settlement boundary. The policy requires new buildings to be constructed from materials similar in colour and texture to the materials found on adjacent buildings. It is expected that extensions and other building works to existing buildings will be constructed from materials matching the existing building.

4.4.4 The following areas are observed to have a consistency of design and materials and the policy requires that proposals for infill or redevelopment in these five locations have regard to the common building form, plot size, building line and materials in each location

and particular attention should be paid to conformity of form and design with the adjacent buildings in each location:

- The west side of Bullington End Road (Nos 1-45);
- Terrace of railway cottages in Station Road (Nos 39-53);
- All properties in Shepperton Close; The Chequers; Thrupp Close; and Lodge Farm Court.

## **4.5 Policy CAS5: Buildings of Local Interest**

*The Neighbourhood Plan identifies Buildings of Local Interest as listed below and as shown on the Policies Map and described in Annex D. These buildings and structures are considered to be non-designated heritage assets as defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF. Proposals that will result in harm to, or unnecessary loss of, a Building of Local Interest, will be resisted, unless it can be demonstrated that there is a public benefit that outweighs the harm or loss. This applies especially to the frontage and front roof line of the building.*

4.5.1 The Neighbourhood Plan requires Buildings of Local Interest to preserve their front roof line so that roof windows, whether rooflight, dormer, box, other types or solar panels will not be permitted at the front of the properties. Generally, the frontages of these buildings, currently largely unchanged, should be preserved. It is intended to seek an Article 4 Direction so that permitted development rights will be removed and planning permission will be required for any changes.

### **4.5.2 Buildings of Local Interest:**

#### **Bullington End Road**

- Nos 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11 (which may be included in the Conservation Area in the forthcoming review)

#### **North Street:**

- No 22 (Holmstead House)
- Row 25, 27, 29, 31,33, 35, 37, 39 (Carrington Terrace)
- The First School
- The Village Hall

#### **School Lane:**

- Row of houses from No 20 North Street to No 7 School Lane. This includes two Grade 2 listed buildings which already have restrictions.

#### **South Street**

- Row 40, 42, 44, 46 (Maltin Row)
- Row 22, 24, 26, 28, 30 32 (Pretoria Terrace)
- 17 (Acorn Nursery)

#### **New Road:**

- All houses to the east of the road.

#### **Station Road**

- Nos 39-53

The water tower on the railway to the south-east of the village.

Two historic dry stone walls around the churchyard and around the paddock in South Street.



## Policy CAS6: Climate Change

*The following proposals to adapt to and to help mitigate climate change locally will be supported, provided they are consistent with other relevant policies of the Development Plan:*

- *To install public electric vehicle charging points*
- *To protect and improve the Sustrans cycle track to Haversham, as shown on the Policies Map;*
- *To require any new external lighting required of new developments to use LED technology;*
- *To install a solar farm or wind turbines, provided it can be demonstrated they would not have an adverse impact on residential amenity or the essential character of the landscape and would not adversely affect the significance of a heritage asset or its setting*

*New development should aim to meet a high level of energy efficiency where achievable, by:*

- a) exceeding the target emission rate of Building Regulations Part L 2013 for dwellings.*
- b) meeting the relevant design category of Buildings Research Establishment BREEAM building standard "excellent" for non-residential development.*

The Neighbourhood Plan recognises the global crisis due to climate change and is supportive of actions which will help to mitigate the impact.

4.6.1 This policy therefore supports Policy CT6 (E) of Plan:MK which seeks to maximise the use of sustainable modes of transport and to prepare for a likely significant increase in the use of electric-powered vehicles over the next few years.

4.6.2 It further supports the maintenance and improvement of the Sustrans cycle track to Haversham as a means of reducing vehicle use as well as encouraging exercise.

4.6.3 CPC has already installed a number of LED streetlights as part of improvements within the Conservation Area. It will further support any efforts by MKC to replace the remaining streetlights with LED lanterns and will seek to

install heritage style streetlights, as in the Conservation Area, at least on the main access roads of Bullington End Road and Station Road. Reflectors and shading will be used to avoid light pollution complementing Plan:MK Policy NE6(i).

4.6.4 Policy CAS10 below reflects that the landscape is not well suited to urban type infrastructure and large structures like wind turbines that would disrupt that essential character. Nonetheless, to mitigate the impact of climate change, the Neighbourhood Plan encourages renewable energy projects providing they are of the right type and in the right location. A good example is the proposed wind turbine at Lodge Farm Business Centre which was opposed by CPC due its proximity to dwellings and historical assets and its replacement by a solar farm which was supported by the Parish Council.

4.6.5 The Planning and Energy Act 2008 allows local planning authorities to set energy efficiency standards in their Development Plan policies that exceed the energy efficiency requirements of the building regulations. Such policies must not be inconsistent with relevant national policies for England. Section 43 of the Deregulation Act 2015 would amend this provision, but is not yet in force. The Written Ministerial Statement on Plan Making dated 25 March 2015 clarified the use of plan policies and conditions on energy performance standards for new housing developments. The statement sets out the government's expectation that such policies should not be used to set conditions on planning permissions with requirements above the equivalent of the energy requirement of Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes (this is approximately 20% above current Building Regulations across the build mix).

4.6.6 The Neighbourhood Plan supports initiatives to improve the biodiversity of the area and CPC will engage with Ecology and Biodiversity experts to identify areas for improvement in the village.



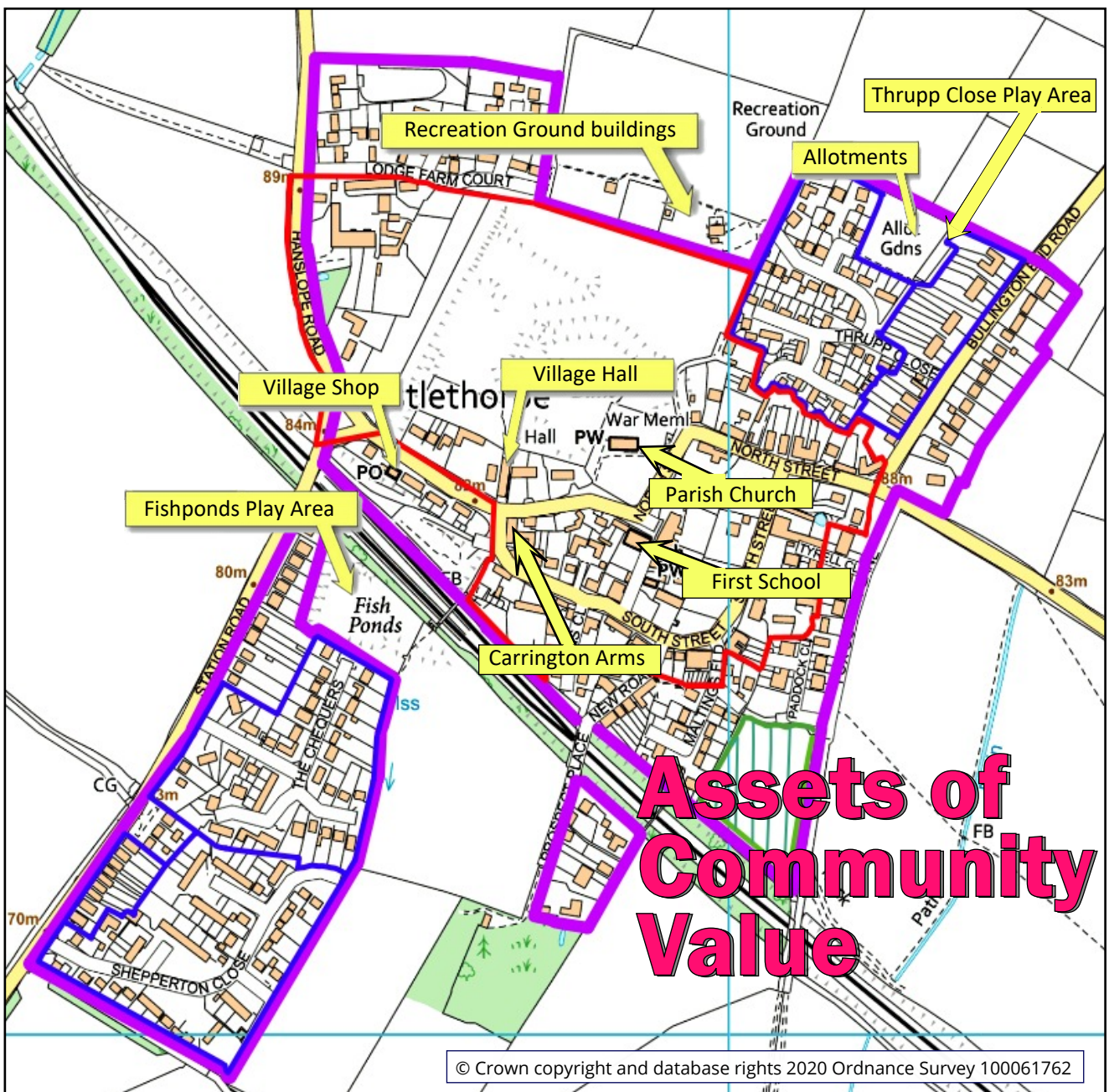
### 4.7 Policy CAS7: Community Facilities

Proposals to improve the viability of an established community use of the following buildings and facilities by way of the extension or partial redevelopment of existing buildings will be supported, provided the design of the scheme and the resulting increase in use are appropriate in design terms and will not harm the amenities of adjoining residential properties and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area :

- i. Village Hall;
- ii. Castlethorpe First School;
- iii. Parish Church of SS Simon and Jude;
- iv. Carrington Arms public house;
- v. Village Shop;

- vi. Allotments
- vii. Recreation Ground buildings and the wildlife area;
- viii. Fishponds Play Area; and
- ix. Thrupp Close Play Area.

4.7.1 CPC intends to apply to MKC so that the buildings and facilities listed in this policy will become Assets of Community Value. The Plan also seeks to protect community facilities from disuse or change of use in accordance with Paragraph 83 of NPPF ‘Supporting a Prosperous Rural Economy’ by promoting “the retention and development of local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship”.



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PLAN H: Plan of the village's proposed Assets of Community Value





**PLAN I: Castlethorpe's Community Facilities. From the top, the Village Hall, the First School, the Parish Church of SS Simon and Jude, the Carrington Arms, the Cricket Pavilion – one of the Recreation Ground buildings – the Village Shop, the Allotments and the Fishponds and Thrupp Close Play areas**







PLAN J: Plan of the village's Local Green Spaces and Scheduled Ancient Monument

## 4.8 Policy CAS8: Local Green Spaces

The Neighbourhood Plan designates Local Green Spaces in the following locations, as shown on the Policies Map:

- i. Castle Field;
- ii. Recreation Ground;
- iii. South Street Paddock; and
- iv. Gobbey's Field

Proposal for development in a Local Green Space will be resisted unless there are very special circumstances to justify it.

4.8.1 This policy proposes a number of important green spaces in the parish to be protected from development by the designation as Local Green Spaces in accordance with the NPPF.

4.8.2 In each case, the green spaces are an integral part of the settlements in the Parish and are therefore regarded as special to the local community. The Neighbourhood Plan Local Green Spaces study and the Addendum (Annex B in the evidence base) sets out the case for each site to be designated. Once designated the policy will resist all proposals for development other than in very special circumstances.





***PLAN K: Castlethorpe's Green Spaces – a cricket match being played on the Recreation Ground, above, and the Outdoor Gym, left; the South Street Paddock, below Gobbey's Field and Castle Field, below***





## 4.9 Policy CAS9: Lodge Farm Business Centre and Balney Grounds

*Development proposals to expand the Lodge Farm Business Centre and to diversify further at Balney Grounds will be supported, provided:*

- i. they are confined to redevelopment of existing buildings or infilling between existing buildings or the development of new build development immediately adjoining existing buildings.*
- ii. they include a landscape scheme that will effectively screen the site from the surrounding countryside;*
- iii. In all cases the scale of new buildings should not exceed that of existing buildings on the site; and*
- iv. Their design conforms with other policies of the Development Plan and in particular Policy CAS10 of the CNP*

4.9.1 The Business Centre at Lodge Farm is supported as a provider not only of local employment opportunities but also as a 'stepping stone' for home-based businesses into small offices as they expand.

4.9.2 The continuing development of the Lodge Farm Business Centre and Balney Grounds is supported and applications for further development should be regarded as permissive in accordance with Policy ER8 'Employment Uses and the Rural Economy' (Plan:MK) which allows for necessary new employment buildings as part of farm diversification schemes

4.9.3 The principal constraints are that development should be within the area defined by the map and that construction should follow the same design format as the existing buildings.



**PLAN L: Lodge Farm Business Centre**

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**Plan M:  
Balney Grounds**



### 4.10 Policy CAS10: Cosgrove Leisure Park Access

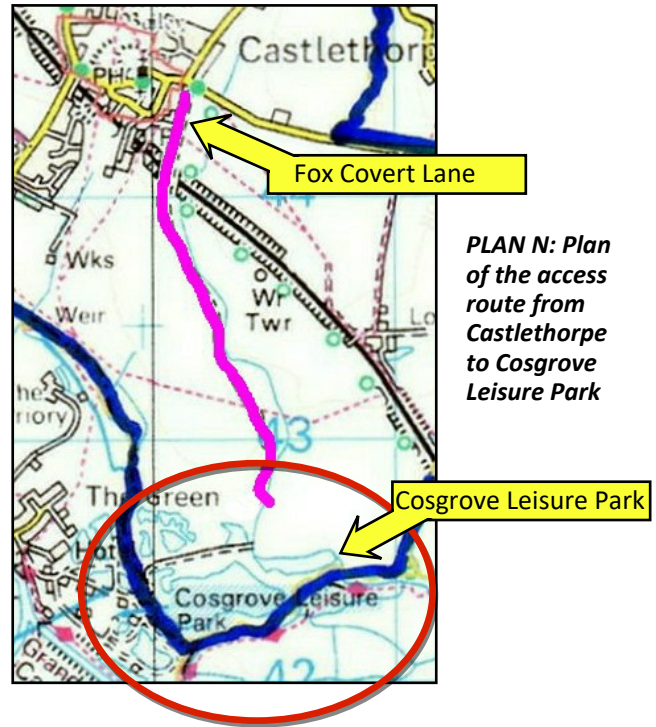
*Development proposals at Cosgrove Leisure Park, as shown on the Policies Map, will be resisted if they will result in the use of Fox Covert Lane in Castlethorpe as a new vehicular access for customers. The occasional use of this means of access for the removal of mobile homes will continue to be supported.*

- 4.10.1 The Cosgrove Leisure Park, although associated with the neighbouring village of Cosgrove in Northamptonshire, lies partly within the Neighbourhood Plan area. Most notably, the site is served by an access to Castlethorpe village – Fox Covert Lane – that is occasionally used to move mobile homes, for which the main site access into Cosgrove is not well suited.
- 4.10.2 This occasional use is accepted but any use of the access for Leisure Park by car for its customers will not be acceptable. The Lane is not well suited for that purpose and such a proposal will harm the amenities of the residential areas that adjoin the Lane.

### 4.11 Policy CAS11: Surrounding Countryside and Landscape

*Development proposals that will harm the open character and landscape value of the countryside that surrounds Castlethorpe village will be resisted.*

*Proposals for wind turbines will only be supported where they would not have an adverse impact on the landscape of the Parish and would not adversely affect the significance of the parish’s heritage assets and their settings*



4.11.1 The village of Castlethorpe has significant historic interest and importance in the open landscape north of Milton Keynes. The landscape setting to the village plays a crucial role in defining its character in sharp contrast to the major city settlement to the south. That landscape is therefore not well suited to urban type infrastructure and large structures like wind turbines that would disrupt that essential character.

## 5. Implementation

5.1 The Neighbourhood Plan will be implemented through a combination of the Local Planning Authority’s consideration and determination of planning applications for development in the parish, and through steering public and private investment into a series of infrastructure proposals contained in the plan.

### Development Management

- 5.2 Most of the policies contained in the Neighbourhood Plan will be delivered by landowners and developers. In preparing the Plan, care has been taken to ensure, as far as possible, that the policies are achievable.
- 5.3 Whilst the local planning authority will be responsible

for development management, CPC will use the Neighbourhood Plan to frame its representations on submitted planning applications. It will also work with MKC to monitor the progress of sites coming forward for development.

5.4 Implementation of some of the Plan policies will require some planning obligations to be entered into as part of planning consents to finance and deliver specific infrastructure projects relating to the development scheme in order to make the scheme satisfactory in line with Paragraphs 54-57 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

## 6. Community Projects

*In approaching the issues which the community identified as important it was evident early on that achieving answers to some of them through the policies and proposals of the Neighbourhood Plan would not be possible. CPC therefore has identified a number of community proposals which it will seek to achieve alongside the statutory Neighbourhood Plan.*

### Assets of Community Value

6.1 CPC wishes to see the following buildings and land in Castlethorpe designated as Assets of Community Value in order to provide CPC or other community organisations with an opportunity to bid to acquire the asset on behalf of the local community once placed for sale on the open market.

1. Allotments
2. Carrington Arms public house
3. Church of SS Simon and Jude
4. Fishponds Play Area
5. Recreation Ground buildings
6. Thrupp Close Play Area
7. Village Hall
8. Village School
9. Village Shop

6.2 The proposal acknowledges the Neighbourhood Plan itself cannot undertake such a task.

### Salvage of Materials and Street Furniture

6.3 Over the years, the village has acquired a number of road signs, posts, notices, seats, bins and other street furniture, each often provided by a different agency and sited without regard to each other. The scheme will propose the rationalisation of these, in some cases removing signs and in others re-siting them. Where these occur on private land, Milton Keynes Council will negotiate with the owner to bring about improvements.

6.4 The streetlights within the Conservation Area have, since the publication of the 2017 Neighbourhood Plan, been replaced with “heritage” style. In addition,

- The Parish Council will seek to replace streetlights on Bullington End, Wolverton and Station Roads with heritage style in due course and, on the estates, with a suitable style of streetlight.

- The Parish Council will seek to replace street name signs with a rural style and set this as the standard for future replacements.
- Bollards in the Conservation Area will be of the black and gold traditional style, as implemented in the 2014 Village Centre highways scheme.
- Waste bins in the village as a whole will be of the black and gold traditional style.

### Infrastructure Projects

6.5 CPC proposes some or all of the following projects for investment of future Section 106 financial contributions or Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding allocated by the Local Planning Authority (MKC) and to the Parish Council. Note: MKC is not currently intending to prepare a Community Infrastructure Levy:

1. Increase of capacity at Castlethorpe First School;
2. Improvements to the Village Hall;
3. Creation of a footway from Paddock Close to South Street;
4. Surface the Sustrans cycle path between the Lodge Farm Business Centre railway bridge and the village;
5. Construct further speed reduction measures;
6. Expansion of Hanslope Surgery, which serves the village;
7. Allotments improvements;
8. Improvements to Burial Grounds;
9. Improvements to Early Years Provision;
10. Expansion of the community owned village shop;
11. Provision of additional social / recreational facility
12. Improvements to or new social/recreational infrastructure.

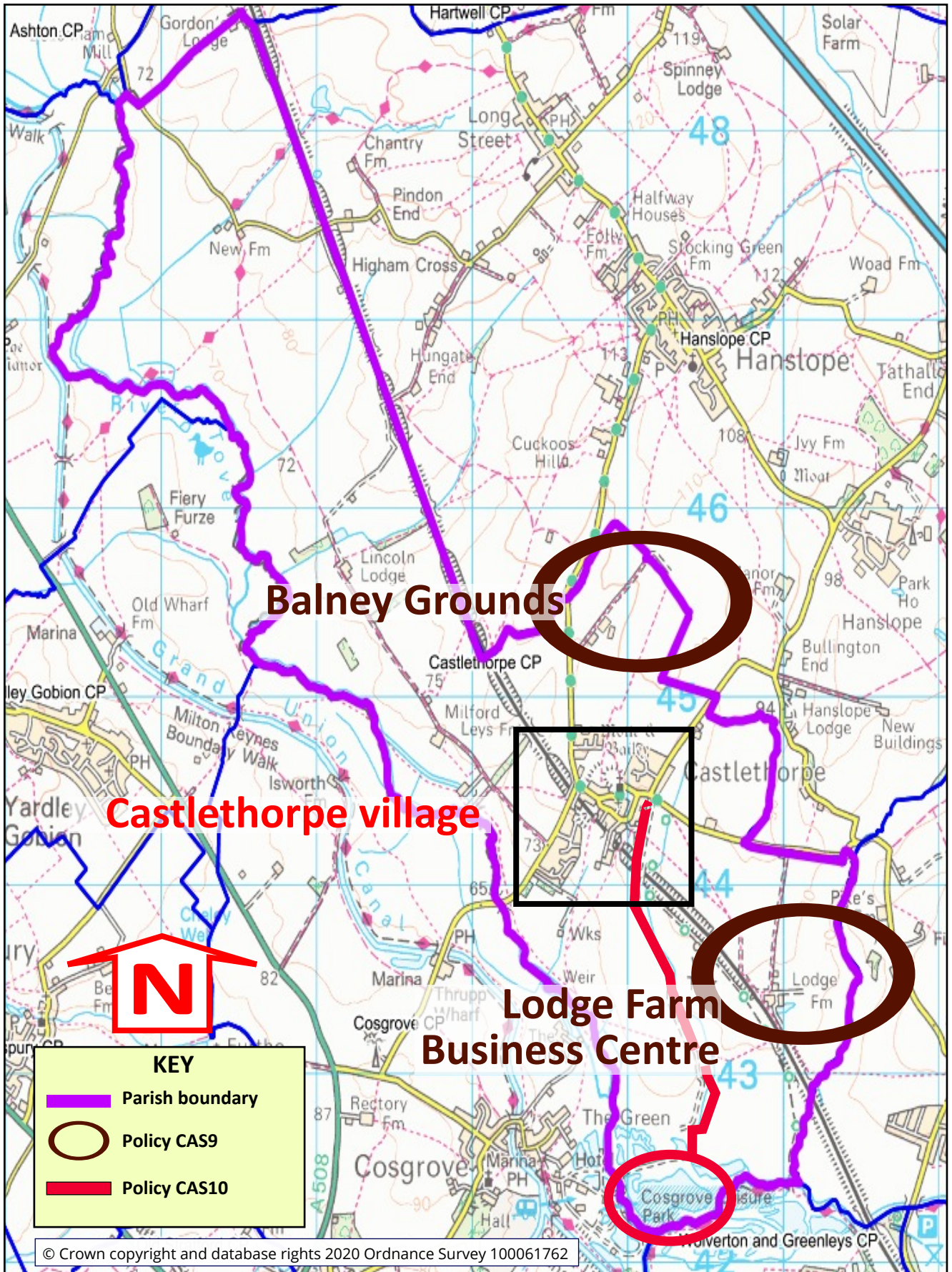
This is not an exhaustive list and will be reviewed by CPC during the life of the Plan. Other projects may be included later.

6.6 This series of local infrastructure projects will be prioritised for investment should development in the Parish result in the availability of Section 106 financial contributions or should Milton Keynes Council prepare a Community Infrastructure Levy in the future.

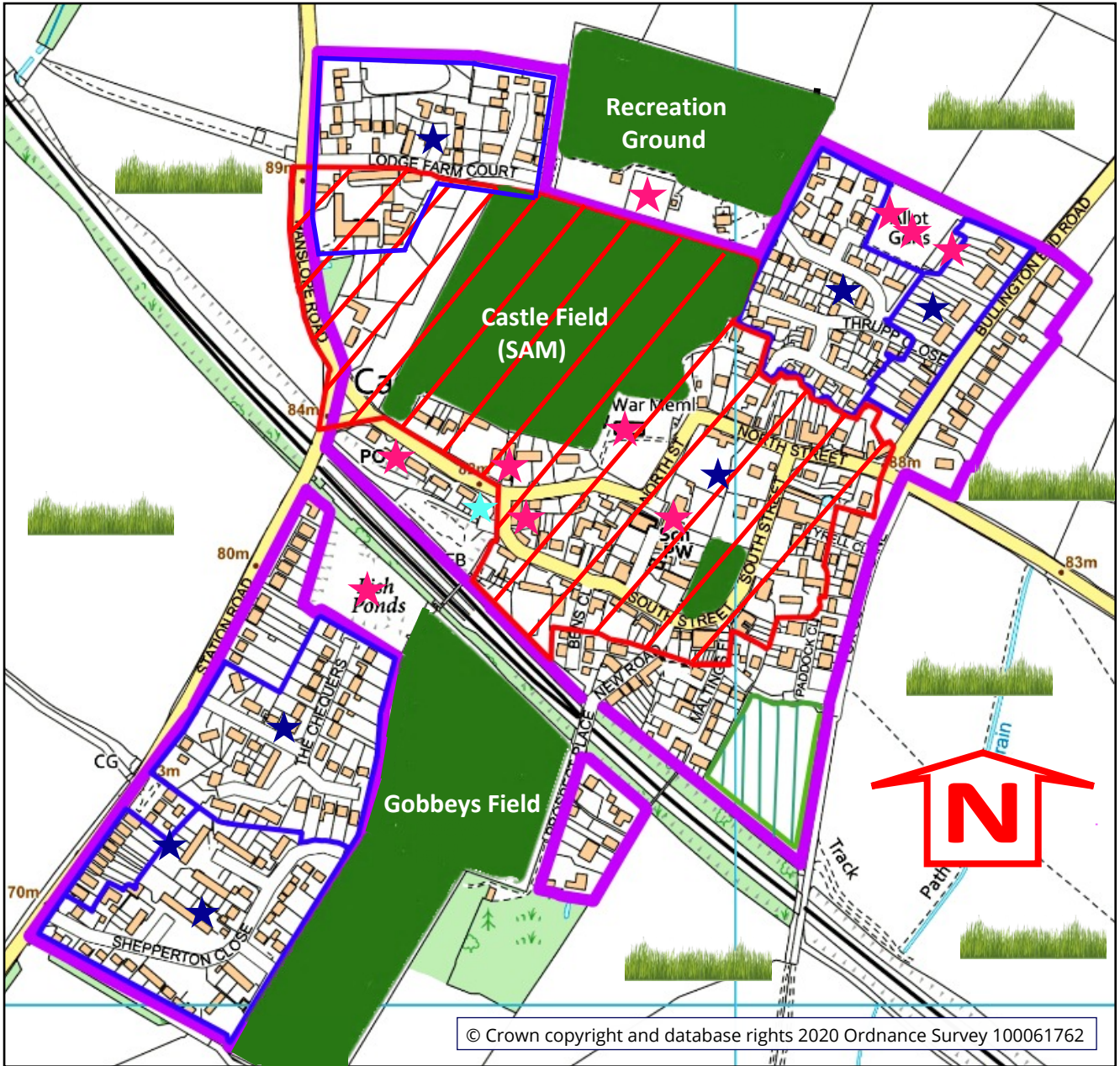




# Policies Map














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**KEY**

|   |                     |   |                   |
|---|---------------------|---|-------------------|
|  | Settlement Boundary |  | Conservation Area |
|  | Policy CAS2         |  | Policy CAS8       |
|  | Policy CAS4         |  | Policy CAS11      |
|  | Policy CAS7         |   |                   |



# Annex A – Evidence Base

The list below contains all those documents collected and reviewed in the process of preparing this plan.

|  |
|--|
| <b>Castlethorpe Parish Plan (2008)</b>   |
| <b>A Plan for Castlethorpe (1982)</b>  |
| <b>Castlethorpe Neighbourhood Plan (2017)</b>  |
| <b>Castlethorpe Neighbourhood Plan: Local Green Spaces Study (2020) – Annex B of this Plan</b>   |
| <b>LGS Evidence Report<br/>containing ‘Observations Summary’ and<br/>‘List of Large Sites designated as Local Green Spaces’</b>                  |
| <b>Castlethorpe Neighbourhood Plan: Assets of Community Value (2020) – Annex C of this Plan</b>  |
| <b>Castlethorpe Neighbourhood Plan: Buildings of Local Interest (2020) – Annex D of this Plan</b>  |
| <b>Plan:MK (2019)</b>  |
| <b>Castlethorpe Neighbourhood Plan Submitted Basic Conditions Statement<br/>(including Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Opinion)</b> |
| <b>Environment Agency Flood risk maps (2015)</b>   |
| <b>Ecological report BSG Ecology – Lodge Farm Single Turbine (2013)</b>  |
| <b>Castlethorpe Castle (MK HER MMK653 and<br/>Historic England Listing 1011219)</b>  |





# Annex B - Local Green Spaces Study

## 1. Introduction

The village of Castlethorpe falls within the rural area of the Borough of Milton Keynes, close to the boundary with Northamptonshire. It lies on the northern edge of the Tove River Valley, which is designated as being landscape of Special Character.

The surrounding countryside is of an undulating nature, populated by relatively small and ancient villages with little urbanisation and a large population of designated Ancient Monuments and Listed Buildings.

Within and close to the curtilage of the village there are a number of parcels of land whose use justifies their classification as a "Local Green Space" within the Neighbourhood Plan.

The purpose of this study is to provide the rationale for their inclusion in this category.

## 2. The Parcels of Land

These are: the Recreation Ground, the South Street Paddock and Gobbey's Field. In addition Castle Field, which, together with part Gobbey's Field, is the Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) Historic England registration 1011299 and thus already has protection against development, is well used by village residents and visitors alike.

## 3. Rationale for designations as a Local Green Space

**The Recreation Ground** has become an important leisure and sporting facility since its inception in 1998.

It has high-quality playing surfaces and changing facilities for football, cricket and tennis and is probably one of the superior facilities of its type in Milton Keynes villages of a similar size.

It is a high-quality public space which supports two cricket teams (a Saturday and a Sunday team) and two "veterans" (over 35) football teams. About 30 residents regularly use the tennis facilities, which are also used by casual users from the village and local area.

The facilities are owned by the Parish Council and managed by the Castlethorpe Sports Association, which represents the main users, and there are maintenance contracts in place to ensure the facilities are continually in a good condition.

There is a clear pedestrian route through the facilities, which also include parking for vehicles. Easy access is available for pedestrians from Lodge Farm Court, North Street and Thrupp Close. Paved vehicular access is available from Thrupp Close.

The football and cricket matches attract a large number of enthusiastic supporters from the village and local area, so it is a focus for social interaction and meetings

which would otherwise not take place. It is safe, accessible and promotes healthy sporting and exercise activities within the community and is an important asset for the well-being of the village.

The Recreation Ground has become an asset of great local significance, encouraging the local population to be active, exercising and playing sport within their own community.

**South Street Paddock** is an ancient grazing area which for many years has been used for grazing ponies, geese and other livestock. It sits right in the heart of the village, within the Conservation Area, close to the ancient listed farmhouses of Maltings Farm and Manor Farm.

Recent archaeological studies by the Castlethorpe Historical Society found the remains of a late medieval fish pond and of a well-used cart track in the paddock, pointing to its ancient roots.

Its location on South Street means that it adjoins the circular highway route made up of North Street and South Street at the core of the village and consequently there are a great many passers-by. The grazing animals there are a constant source of interest to passers-by, particularly children.

It is a tranquil, green and pleasant and provides a great many opportunities for social interaction and meetings which would otherwise not take place.

It gives a special character to the core of the village, a historic reminder of Castlethorpe's ancient farming roots when several active farms operated within the village. It is now surrounded by housing, so it provides an excellent example of the advantages of mixed use in forming the character of the village.

**Gobbey's Field** (the Field) has been special to the village of Castlethorpe for a very long time. In the 1972 Castlethorpe Village Plan it was given particular status due to its heritage, amenity and landscape value, being described as a "tongue of green fields leading into the centre of the village".

In preparation of the extant 2017 Castlethorpe Neighbourhood Plan (CNP), the Parish Council designated the Field as a Local Green Space (LGS) but, following objections from the landowners, the designation was not made and this Annex addresses those objections as well as demonstrating compliance with paragraph 100 of the NPPF (Feb 2019) that it is:

(a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;

(b) 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

(c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

**1. Evidence that the Field is demonstrably special to the community, and that it holds a particular local significance.**

The Field’s special character and particular local significance derives from the northern section of the Field containing part of the most important Heritage Asset, the Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM Historic England registration 1011299), Castlethorpe Castle, a Norman motte and bailey castle from which the name of the village is derived. The Field abuts the Fishponds children’s play area which also forms part of the SAM. Together they contain the southern part of the earthworks of the motte and bailey and the fishponds which were intersected by the London to Birmingham railway when it was constructed in 1838. The SAM is part of the historical core of the village, very close to the central Conservation Area with the Grade 1 listed church and 18 Grade 2 listed buildings.

The Field is very strong in local sentiments, forming part of that historical core. Castlethorpe Castle and its supporting settlements was the most important Norman settlement in the region in the 12th to 13th Centuries.

The view south from the earthworks in the north-eastern section of the Field is by far the most historically significant and attractive in the Parish. A person standing today on the raised SAM earthworks, looking south, sees a very attractive open view of the Tove river valley, largely as it would have been seen in Norman times, as modern development has not seriously impacted on the vista. In the distance is the ancient settlement of Cosgrove.

Its special character and significance is further defined by regular, unhindered use as a recreational and leisure facility by villagers for at least 50 years. It is tenanted agricultural grazing land, used intermittently for grazing, and that activity has co-existed happily with the recreational and leisure use by the village. Grazing tenants have never raised any objections to the recreational and leisure use.

Not until December 2016, when the original proposal for LGS designation was made, did the owners of the Field make any attempt to discourage use by the public of the whole Field, beyond the footpath, a public right of way (PROW), which crosses the Field diagonally from the north-west corner to the south-east corner. With the substantial growth of the village in population from 530 in 1972 to around 1,100 currently, its use has increased proportionally.

It is not a large tract of land, 4.8 hectares in total, just outside of the settlement boundary, divided in the centre by a row of low-standing ancient trees. It is bordered by the settlement for the majority of three sides. The terrain slopes gradually from north to south.

**TABLE A: PROTECTED SPECIES SIGHTINGS**

| Date       | Reference | Species                |
|------------|-----------|------------------------|
| 20/04/2019 | 9826517   | Red kite               |
| 02/09/2018 | 7789361   | Red kite               |
| 04/08/2019 | 7497589   | Red kite               |
| 14/10/2017 | 6045108   | Sparrowhawk            |
| 08/07/2017 | 5292838   | Common lizard          |
| 03/03/2017 | 4858483   | Common pipistrelle bat |
| 24/09/2016 | 4082140   | Sparrowhawk            |
| 06/05/2016 | 4021372   | Chiroptera bat         |

Source: Biological Records Centre

The area for LGS designation is about 4.3 hectares as about 0.5 hectares in the north-west corner is designated as part of the SAM.

At the northern end, the PROW footpath connects directly to footbridge over the railway into South Street in the central historical core of the village. At the southern end, the PROW connects to other popular PROWs southwards to the River Tove and northwards to the eastern side of the settlement.

There are multiple, well-used informal access points to the Field from The Chequers and Shepperton Close developments on the western perimeter and Prospect Place on the eastern perimeter.

An ancient copse provides its perimeter for about 150 metres on the south eastern side. This is replete with wildlife, particularly bats and birds.

Table A above contains a sample of some protected species sightings recorded in the Field on the Biological Records Centre database.

Ecological research was carried out by an ecological consultancy, BSG Ecology, in 2013 and in following years with regard to a proposal for a wind turbine on a site about one kilometre to the south east of the Field.

This confirmed that at least six species of Bats are common in the area surrounding the Field: common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*, brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*, Daubenton’s bat *Myotis daubentonii*, Natterer’s bat *Myotis nattereri* and noctule *Nyctalus noctula*. Records received from the Northamptonshire Bat Group also confirmed the presence of a similar range of species within 5-10km of the proposed turbine location.

All UK bat species require careful consideration given the protection they receive under European and National legislation. The ancient copse abutting the Field is one of the few areas of woodland which remain locally and is an ideal roosting site for bats which are a very common sight in Castlethorpe. About three quarters of UK bat species roost in trees. A recent new housing development in the village had a planning condition placed on it that bat roosting boxes must be incorporated in the buildings.



Hence the Field’s special historical, ecological and amenity significance to the village and the village’s desire to retain its character with LGS status.

**2. Empirical evidence of its amenity value and usage by the community and that its usage is not, in general, restricted to the public right of way.**

To support the 2017 application for LGS status, a formal paper survey on the Field’s usage was carried out by the Parish Council. Nearly half of the households in the village responded that they used the Field with many using the whole Field, rather than just the PROW.

For the 2019 update of the CNP, the Parish Council has had access to data from a resident’s video security camera which overlooks the lower 2.2 hectare section of the Field and incidentally records activity in part of the Field.

Analysis of the data, acquired randomly during daylight hours over several months has created a body of empirical evidence of actual usage by the public. Over 130 hours of footage clearly shows that over half of usage is not confined to the PROW, and that the whole Field is being used for a wide variety of exercise and leisure activities. This confirms the findings of the original paper survey.

The video survey data (summarised in Table B below) was recorded randomly on part of 20 days from April to August 2019, for part of the lower section of the Field. It recorded 360 instances of people using the Field for a variety of purposes, including single people and many groups. 166 of the instances, 46%, recorded groups, some large, so the total number of people seen can be taken as well over 1,000.

Of those 360 instances, about half were not using the footpath, the PROW. In particular, dog walkers, one of the most common users, often let their dogs run freely across the Field and then followed the dog.

It should be noted that this data represents only part of the total Field’s usage, as the camera had limited width cover and did not see the whole 2.2 hectare section of the lower Field.

The raw data has been provided in a separate document, “Observations Summary”.

The Field is also well used by dog walkers during night hours and the northern 2.6 hectare Field was not video surveyed at all, so such use is additional to the data

quoted here. Many uses are only of the northern Field, as its 2.6 hectare size is sufficient for many leisure activities without venturing into the lower Field.

**3. Evidence that the size of the Field is not unreasonable in designation as an LGS.**

There is no formal definition of the NPPF term “extensive tract of land”, leaving Examiners to interpret it.

There are numerous examples of spaces similar to, and larger than the Field’s 4.3 hectares being designated as Local Green Spaces in “made” Neighbourhood Plans.

In terms of similarity of character, the Bredon made plan designated as a LGS, a site very similar to the Field, an agricultural site of 5.2 hectares, “Land east of Tewkesbury Road”. That Examiner’s report took special note of the historical significance of that site in his determination.

In terms of the general size criterion, made plan examples are: Woughton with a site of 15.78 hectares and Bersted with a site of 19 hectares.

The full list of comparable sites is provided in a separate document, “List of Large Sites designated as Local Green Spaces”.

**4. Evidence that the Field is substantially different to other fields around the village which could be considered “open countryside”.**

The Field is very different because of its central accessible location, and that it is substantially bordered by habitations on its perimeter by the village. It is completely bordered on the north and west sides and substantially on the east side.

Other fields around the village are not similar, with the exception of Castle Field which like the Field, is part of the SAM and substantially bordered by habitations. The other fields surrounding the village are neither central nor substantially bordered by habitations, and therefore could be considered as “open countryside”.

All the other fields are bounded only on one side, rolling away to open countryside. The Field, by contrast, has the railway line to the north, the play area and two estates to its full western boundary and Prospect Place to its east.

It is only completely open to the south running down to the River Tove and for the eastern boundary below Prospect Place. Furthermore, the Field has never been used for arable, unlike other fields to the north and east, but only for occasional grazing and, of course, continual recreational use. At the time of writing, Gobbey’s has not been used for grazing for several months.

The Shepperton estate was built in the 1970s and its two easy accesses to the Field have always be heavily used, many residents, gaining a “right by prescription” for access and use under the 20 year criteria. Not until December 2016 did the owners make any attempt to

**TABLE B - VIDEO SURVEY RESULTS – DURING PART OF 20 DAYS – APRIL TO AUGUST 2019**

|                   | <i>Total instances recorded by camera</i> | <i>Instances: single person</i> | <i>Instances: group of people</i> | <i>Instances using public right of way</i> | <i>Instances using whole field</i> |
|-------------------|---|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|
| <b>Number</b>     | <b>360</b>                                | <b>194</b>                      | <b>166</b>                        | <b>172</b>                                 | <b>188</b>                         |
| <b>Percentage</b> | <b>100</b>                                | <b>53.88</b>                    | <b>46.11</b>                      | <b>47.77</b>                               | <b>52.22</b>                       |
| <b>Rounded %</b>  |   | <b>54</b>                       | <b>46</b>                         | <b>48</b>                                  | <b>52</b>                          |





discourage public use of the whole Field, and then only by placing a single notice on one of the Shepperton gates. Until 2005 the village shop/post office was located in New Road, diagonally opposite the Field's north eastern corner. This meant that by far the most convenient route to the shop by residents of Shepperton and the lower part of Station Road, which has a shortcut path through to Shepperton, was via the Shepperton gates, across the Field diagonally to climb the fence to New Road/Prospect Place in the north-eastern corner.

Similarly, residents from The Chequers and the upper part of Station Road had a direct route from the Fishponds play area gate across the top of the Field to the north-eastern corner for shop/ post office access.

Thus these routes were heavily used to access the shop/post office and are now still well used as a short cut to the eastern part of the village, the alternative being a much longer walk to the top western corner of the field, crossing the railway via the footbridge and then walking along South Street.

The Field is very easy to access for the whole village and it is used for a wide variety of informal pleasure activities such as jogging, football, dog walking, children's games, golf practice, drone, kite and model aircraft flying. It is without doubt the most utilised green space in the village.

## Conclusion

Gobbeys Field meets the requirements of NPPF paragraph 100:

- (a) It is in close proximity to the community being adjacent to The Chequers, Shepperton Close and the Fishponds play area and easily accessed via the footbridge from the rest of the village.
- (b) It is demonstrably special due to its historical setting containing part of the Scheduled Ancient Monument, Castlethorpe Castle, and also because of its unhindered leisure and exercise usage for at least 50 years. It is rich in wildlife. It is a high-quality public space, with high amenity value, providing opportunities for social interaction and meetings which would otherwise not take place. It is tranquil (the background hum from the rail line in its cutting is unnoticed by residents), safe, accessible and promotes healthy exercise activities within the community.
- (c) It is local in character having the two major historical events of the village, the castle and the railway, on its boundary and about 0.5 hectares of the Field is protected by its SAM status. The LGS status is therefore sought for the remaining 4.3 hectares, which is not extensive by reference to sites designated as LGS in other made Neighbourhood Plans.



# Annex C - Community Facilities

## 1. Introduction

Within the Village there are a number of buildings and parcels of land whose existence and use justifies their classification as “Assets of Community Value”. The purpose of this Annex is to provide the rationale for inclusion in the category.

## 2. The Assets

These are: the Allotments, the Carrington Arms Public House, the Fishponds Play Area, the First School, the Parish Church, the Recreation Ground Buildings, the Thrupp Play Area, the Village Hall and the Village Shop.

## 3. Rationale for Designation as Assets of Community Value

**The allotments** are sited on a plot of land behind housing on Bullington End Road. They are owned by shareholders of the Allotments Association and there are currently sixteen ‘10 pole’ plots. In the late 1920s a much larger plot of land which encompassed the current site, and much of the land on which the northern section of Thrupp Close was built was purchased by the Association, for use as allotments.

With the current trends in encouraging gardening as a healthy outdoor activity and producing one’s own vegetables and fruit for direct consumption, the allotments play an important role in the village, providing an opportunity for those who do not have large gardens to grow their own produce.

Few houses in the village have gardens large enough for this activity, so the allotments provide the only facility in the village to meet the need.

**The Carrington Arms public house** is situated on South Street, at the junction with North Street in the very heart of the village. It is a Grade 2 Listed stone building with an impressive Georgian façade.

It has been closed for business for some years but has been recently granted planning permission for conversion into a pub/restaurant. It now has the same owner as the site for new housing in the former railway station yard and its redevelopment will take place at the same time as that project. It has been much missed by villagers who eagerly look forward again to be able to take refreshments without the need to travel, and also to reinstate it as an important social hub for the village.

There is a long history of use of the site as a public house; in 1847 it was known as the Pea Hen Inn. A public house

existed on or very near the current site since 1753, with various names including the Weavers Arms, Crooked Billet and Kings Arms.

The current lack of a public house in the village means that those seeking refreshment and a convivial environment for such must drive to other public houses in the surrounding area. There is a public house, the Navigation, on the canal at Thrupp Wharf which is within walking distance of the south side of the village but it means using a very narrow road which has quite a lot of traffic and can be dangerous, particularly after dark.

**The Fishponds Play Area** sits on land which was transferred into the ownership of the Parish Council for public use in 1921 by Lord Carrington.

Part of the site is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM), as it forms a section of the Motte and Baillie castle which was intersected by the railway, the major part of the SAM now being north of the railway line. This area is surrounded by the banks of the fishponds that once served the motte and bailey castle in Castle Field and has similar undulating terrain.

About 35 years ago the first play area in Castlethorpe, was established there. Four pieces of playground equipment – a set of swings, a roundabout, a climbing frame and a slide – were fitted in the flat part of the site abutting The Chequers. Benches and waste bins were also fitted.

In 2009 an inspection of the play area highlighted that the design was outdated, of poor play value/stimulation and because the equipment was suitable only for use by younger children, did not offer anything for the older children or adults.

The Parish Council then undertook a project to re-equip and refurbish the area and the newly-equipped play area was opened to the public on

The Fishponds is very popular with children and adults of the village. It is easily accessed from the south of the village via entrances from Station Road, The Chequers and the footpath running through the edge of Gobbey's Field which connects The Fishponds with the bridge over the railway to South Street. The latter access also provides an easy route for those live in the centre of the village, north of the railway line.

The play area encourages outdoor physical exercise, particularly important for children now, with the many



in-house distractions of the Internet and electronic devices. It also serves a meeting place and brings together children and adults who may not meet under other circumstances, promoting social interaction.

**The First School** uses a building which has a long history, starting life as the 'Board School' in October 1891. It replaced a smaller 'National School' which was built by Lord Carrington in 1867, as the population of pupils had grown, largely due to the growth in the railway works at Wolverton.

It is an attractive high quality red brick building with a bell and clock tower, situated in a central position on the main through route of the village, North Street.

Originally it was intended for a school population of about 150 children and also provided a large external playground, still in use now. The current school has a capacity of 45 children with 43 currently on the register. The school achieved an 'Outstanding' rating in its last OFSTED Inspection.

The village has always placed great value on maintaining the presence of the school in the village. A good quality first school provides an ideal environment for village children's first foray into education, in a caring and comfortable environment.

Over the last 35 years there have been a number of attempts to reorganise local schooling which would have resulted in closure of the village school. It is a measure of the village's values that these have always been successfully challenged and the school continues with its important position in the community.

**The Parish Church** of Saint Simon and Saint Jude is located in the heart of the village on North Street, opposite the First School.

It has a Grade 1 Listing and is a building of considerable architectural standing. It has Saxon and Norman heritage dating from the 11th and 12th centuries. As seen now, its form is largely that of how it was rebuilt about AD 1350, based on the Norman 11th/12th century replacement for an earlier Anglo-Saxon church.

It sits in the Conservation Area and is the most significant historical building in the village and parish. It lends a strong character to the ancient core of the village and a reminder of the village's long heritage; Castlethorpe was in turn a Roman, Danish, Anglo

Saxon and Norman settlement. An 1881 map of the village shows the church as St Mary's, so the current name is relatively new.

In current times the church has thriving congregation who work actively with the congregation of St James Church in Hanslope, which shares the same priest.

**The Recreation Ground Buildings** were constructed from the proceeds of a planning gain payment when the Lodge Farm Court housing development was constructed in 1998.

The buildings provide modern high-quality changing and meeting facilities for football, cricket and tennis teams/users and are a key part of the functionality of the Recreation Ground, also providing hard surface car parking. Without such buildings, utilisation of the Recreation Ground would certainly be at a lower level.

There is now a public expectation of provision of good quality sporting and recreation facilities, driven by the general quality improvements in such public and privately financed facilities in the Milton Keynes area.

The availability of the buildings and their convenience greatly aids the Recreation Ground to meet its objectives of encouraging healthy outdoor exercise for children and adults of all ages, also providing social interactions among players and spectators which would otherwise not take place.

**The Thrupp Play Area** was created by the Parish Council on land arising from a planning gain of the Thrupp Close housing development in 1996.

It is situated between Thrupp Close and Bullington End Road and has pedestrian easy access from both, providing a convivial outdoor space for exercise and social meetings of children and adults.

It has children's swings and slides and benches for seating and picnics. This facility meets the need for these activities in the north side of the village. In common with the Fishponds play area, this play area encourages outdoor physical exercise, particularly important for children now, with the many in-house distractions of the Internet and electronic devices. It also serves a meeting place and brings together children and adults who may not meet under other circumstances, promoting social interaction.

**The Village Hall** uses a building which was originally part of the Carrington Estate, and was known as the





Carrington Hall. Lord Carrington made a greatly appreciated gift of it to the Parish Council in 1920 and it became the Village Hall for public use. It is an attractive red brick building in a similar style to the First School, again situated in a central position on the main through route of the village, North Street.

In recent years it has been extensively extended and modernised, recent additions being a modernised kitchen and a play area at the rear for use of the pre-school group.

It is very popular with the village, to the extent that on occasions it has not been possible to use it for some Parish Council meetings due to other commitments! It is however normally used for the regular public monthly Parish Council meetings.

Other regular users are the daily pre-school, a full morning every day during term time, Carpet Bowls Club, Fitness Club, Zumba exercise sessions, Craft Club, the WI, the Historical Society and bingo. Casual users are private functions such as birthday parties, quiz nights and irregular meetings.

The hall plays an important part in the well-being of the village, providing a central focus and a meeting place

for social interaction which would not take place without the facility it provides.

**The Village Shop** and Post Office was built in 2007, funded by a number of organisations and local residents.

It is leased at below market rates to a shopkeeper by a local Community Interest Company. It has become an important service for village residents and passing local motorists.

It is situated on North Street in the centre of the village, close to the junction with Hanslope Road which means it is easily accessible both to residents and passing traffic from two directions through the village.

It is open seven days a week and sells foodstuffs, licensed alcohol, newspapers and magazines and household commodities, so coupled with the Post Office counter it provides for a local convenience shopping service which otherwise would have to be met by travelling either to Hanslope or Wolverton.

Since its establishment it has quickly established itself as an important local service, particularly for those residents who are not in a position to be able to travel easily to other local facilities.

# Annex D: Buildings of Local Interest

*This Appendix lists and justifies the inclusion of non-designated heritage assets or Buildings of Local Interest. Proposals that will result in harm to, or unnecessary loss of, a Building of Local Interest, will be resisted, unless it can be demonstrated that there is a public benefit that outweighs the harm or loss. All of these buildings, except for the row in Station Road, are either already in or proposed to be included in the next revision of the Conservation Area and make a positive contribution to its character and appearance.*

The coming of the railway, and especially employment at Wolverton Railway Works, had a major impact on Castlethorpe which was previously entirely agricultural. Census data shows it resulted in a 50% increase in population and was the largest change to Castlethorpe<sup>1</sup> probably since the destruction of the castle in 1215.

Lord Carrington, who was the major landowner, released land for housing for workers at Wolverton from 1891 onwards. Men would walk to work along the tracks and there were a number of accidents from being hit by trains. Six rows of houses were built in the late Victorian / Edwardian periods. They share many of the same characteristics such as orange / red brick, natural slate roofs, sash and bay windows, terrace and semi-detached layouts and chimneys and are particularly important to the visual interpretation of the village history.

The roofscape is an important element. The simple and unbroken slopes of natural slate with repeating chimneys unify each group of buildings and identify them as part of this phase. These form crucial parts of key views and vistas within and upon entry to and leaving the village. As such the plan seeks to prevent development that would erode this surviving, traditional character.

The preserved, intact, traditional character and unifying features are important to the group and the contribution it makes to the character, appearance, significance and distinct local identity of Castlethorpe.

**Bullington End Road Nos 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11 (1899).** This row is recommended to be included within the Conservation Area at its next boundary review.



**South Street Nos 40, 42, 44, 46 (Maltin Row (1899) and Nos 22, 24, 26, 28, 30 32 (Pretoria Terrace, 1909)**



**North Street Nos 25, 27, 29, 31, 33, 35, 37, 39 (Carrington Terrace, 1893)** is a row of Victorian houses in their original form at the front and within the existing Conservation Area.



**New Road Houses to the east of the road (1891).** This row is recommended to be included within the Conservation Area at its next boundary review.



**Station Road Nos 39-53.** This is a set of Victorian semi-detached houses (1898). There have been some changes to the front but they are mostly unaltered and fine examples of their type.



**School Lane Row of houses from 18 North Street to No 7 School Lane.** Three cottages (Nos 7, 9, 11) in School Lane<sup>2</sup> were originally one 15th century medieval open

<sup>1</sup> Source: Castlethorpe Historic Website

<sup>2</sup> Source: Castlethorpe Village (2012), by Ann Foakes



hall farmhouse, probably belonging to a freeman. Some of the original cruck beams are still visible inside numbers 9 and 11 and concealed within the dividing wall between numbers 7 and 9. The original thatched roof was removed



during the Great Fire in 1905 in order to save the buildings. Nos 9 and 11 are Grade 2 listed. Extensions have been done at the rear but the front retains a pleasant coherence which should be retained.

There are a number of individual buildings which have great character and whose frontage should be protected.

**No 22 North Street** ('The Holmestead' or now 'Holmstead House') which was an important house in the village



though much of its grounds have been sold. It features in the parish records, being sold to the tenant in the great Castlethorpe Estate Sale in 1920.

**The First School** (previously the Board School) which opened in 1891.



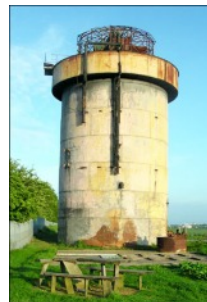
**The Village Hall** (previously the Carrington School) built in 1867 and gifted by Lord Carrington to the Parish Council in 1920.



**No 17 South Street** (Acorn Nursery which is the old Wesleyan Chapel). The Chapel opened in 1811, was enlarged in 1888 and services were held until 1979 when it was converted first into a private dwelling and subsequently into a Day Nursery.



**The water tower** on the railway to the south-east of the village is of significant historical importance. It was constructed to serve "Castlethorpe Troughs", long water troughs by the side of the track where steam trains would scoop up water at speed. The Gas Works at Wolverton were responsible for the maintenance of Castlethorpe Troughs and the pump which can be seen at the base of the water tower.



The troughs were refurbished in 1950 but fell into disuse with the end of steam. It is believed that there are only two such water towers remaining in the country.