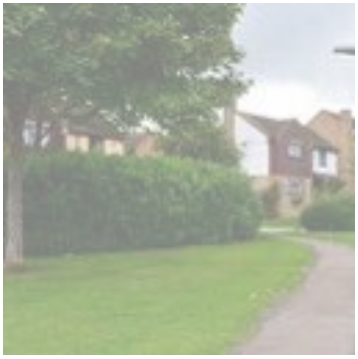


West Bletchley
Character Assessment

West Bletchley Council

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Study

The objective of the West Bletchley Character Assessment is to provide a better understanding of the main elements that contribute to the character of West Bletchley, both positive and negative. The methodology is comprehensive and assesses the historical evolution of the area, the overall structure, built form and landscape, and how an area is experienced by those living, working and travelling through the area.

The assessment looks at the whole area including those areas that are already recognised for their special character, such as Old Bletchley, Bletchley Park and the railway station area, which are of wider significance. It also looks at those areas of more local significance that are not designated or protected but are of importance at the neighbourhood level such as local parks, open spaces and street character.

The Character Assessment describes and interprets the character and provides an assessment of the features that are of importance to the positive character of West Bletchley that should be retained and enhanced. It also identifies those aspects which affect the character in a negative way and where action is required now or in the future to ensure the character is not eroded further.

The assessment provides a broad framework that should be used to inform decisions about change to the environment in West Bletchley. Other ways in which the Character Assessment can be used are identified in the Conclusions in Section 6.

The Character Assessment has been prepared using a combination of desk-based research and appraisals undertaken on site throughout the area carried out in July and August 2017.

The Assessment has not at this stage included the views of local residents or those of people who use or work in the area. This can provide a valuable test of those features that have been identified to see if they correspond with the experience of local people. Recommendations are made to consult on the document in the final section of the report.

1.2 The Document

The document is presented in six main sections. This introductory section outlines the purpose and structure of the document.

The remaining sections are structured as follows:

Section 2: Understanding the Strategic Character of West Bletchley - Is a primarily desk-based study which aims to understand West Bletchley as a place and its key strategic features;

Section 3: Understanding the Evolution of West Bletchley - Aims to understand the background to how West Bletchley evolved to be the place it is today;

Section 4: The individual Character Areas - Having gained an understanding of the parish as a whole, it is then divided into 17 separate character areas largely relating to the successive phases of growth.

For each Character Area, the Assessment:

Describes the character in terms of built form, streetscape, landscape, parks and open spaces, the views and how it is accessed; and identifies key characteristics and key issues and opportunities (with a plan of each with key characteristics identified).

Section 5. Review - Aims to define the character of the parish as a whole. It then identifies priority issues and opportunities for specific areas within the Parish. The final section identifies parish-wide issues and opportunities.

Section 6. Conclusion - Summary of findings of the Character Assessment and identification of policy recommendations.

West Bletchley is located in the south-west of Milton Keynes. It expanded as a settlement largely in the second half of the 20th century due to its good access to both north-south and east-west rail connections and the designation of the area to accommodate housing growth from the southeast of England. Between 1967 and 1981, it was part of Milton Keynes New Town although large parts of the area had already been developed as part of post-war housing expansion.

Figure 1: Location in Milton Keynes

