

Wilshamstead Neighbourhood Plan

2021-2035

Referendum - 24 November 2022

Plan made - 4 January 2023

Index

Foreword	3
1. Introduction	4
2. The Strategic Policy Context	6
The National Planning Policy Framework	6
Sustainable development	6
Local Planning Documents	6
3. Parish Description	7
History and Heritage	7
Village Life	9
Landscape	9
Education	9
Recreation facilities	10
Local business, services and employment	10
Population & Household Data	10
4. Consultation	11
5. Vision and Objectives	12
6. Sustainable Development	14
7. Rural Character	16
Landscape	16
Key Views	18
Forest of Marston Vale	18
Gaps between settlements	19
8. Natural Environment	21
9. Built Environment	23
Heritage Assets	23
High Quality Design	25
10. Housing	27
Existing population and housing stock	27
Housing Affordability and Mix	29
Location of Housing	31
11. Community Facilities	32



12. Recreation and Open Space	34
Local Green Spaces	35
13. Traffic and Transport	37
Parking	38
Provision for cyclists and pedestrians	39
Local Businesses	41
14. Implementation, Monitoring and Review	43
Working in partnership	43
Funding and Implementation Mechanisms	43
15. Parish Aspirations	45
16. Policies Map	47
17. Table showing relationship between Objectives and Policies	48
18. List of Appendices to the Neighbourhood Plan plus Accompanying Documents	49
19. Glossary	50



Foreword

Wilshamstead Parish Council determined in 2017 that a Neighbourhood Plan should be developed. A team to put the Plan together was recruited from volunteers and Council members after publicity in the local newsletter and an Open Day in the Village Hall.

Following a survey of the opinions of residents, completed in September 2019, the Neighbourhood Plan team and Parish Council have drafted this Neighbourhood Plan for Wilshamstead Parish.

A Neighbourhood Plan is a way for local people to influence the planning and development of the area in which they live and/or work. Ours is expected to last for 15 years and aims to:

- Specify a shared vision for the village
- Help prevent inappropriate or poorly placed development in the village
- Sit within the Bedford Borough Local Plan to provide specific planning policies for the village
- Comply with the Government's wider policy of sustainable development
- Ensure any development is sympathetic with the look and feel of the village
- Identify and help protect important local green spaces or other treasured assets
- Help local residents have access to new homes locally
- Establish the important aspects of the village that need to be preserved
- Identify further actions or aspirations that the Parish Council may wish to pursue in the future to improved aspects of village life

The Plan was endorsed by Wilshamstead Parish Council on 8th February 2021.

Once approved, our plan will have legal force in setting out what development is acceptable in our parish and for what reasons.

An on-line copy of the Neighbourhood Plan can be accessed via the Parish Council's website:

<http://wilsteadparishcouncil.org/>

The Parish Council and Neighbourhood Plan team would like to thank all those who contributed to the survey, attended open communication and working sessions and those who carried out the extensive research and consultation required and put so much hard work into putting this plan together.

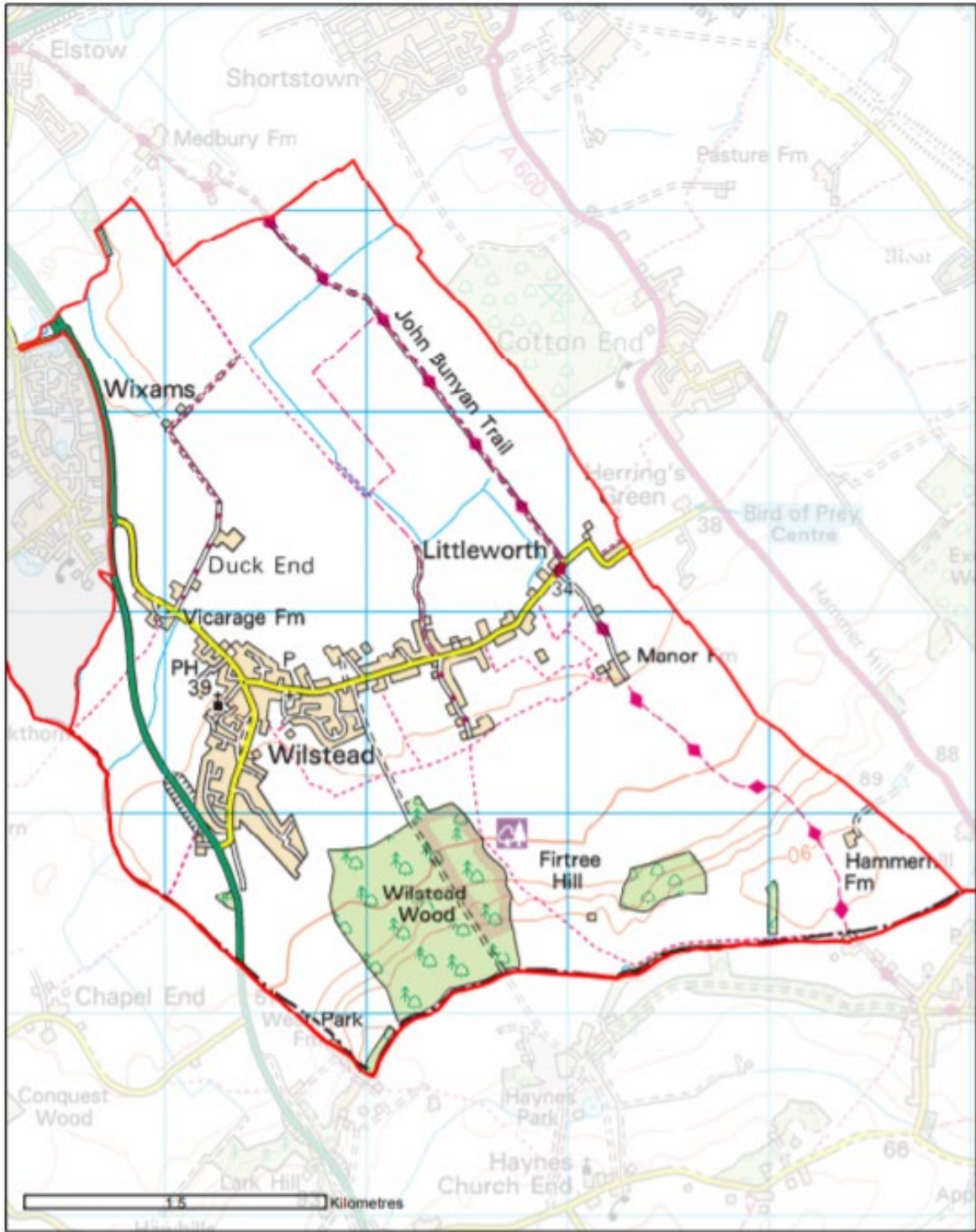
Eric Benton
Chairman
Wilshamstead Parish Council

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Chair
Wilshamstead Neighbourhood Plan Team



1. Introduction

- 1.1. In 2011, the Localism Act introduced a new opportunity for local communities to shape their future formally as part of the planning system. Neighbourhood Plans can be produced by Parish Councils and when they have gone through all the required steps and processes, they become part of the development plan for the area. This means that any planning applications will have to take account of policies contained within the Neighbourhood Plan. It also provides local people with a say on how land use and buildings can develop over time, such as protecting open spaces and improving local character.
- 1.2. Producing a Neighbourhood Plan is a formal process involving several stages, governed by the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012, but critically important is that the Plan is developed with continuing community involvement. In order to rigorously test the policies of a Neighbourhood Plan, an independent Examination is carried out. The Neighbourhood Plan must conform to the following 'basic conditions':
 - be consistent with local planning policy
 - demonstrate how it will contribute towards sustainable development
 - have regard to national policy
 - provide general conformity with strategic local policy
 - meet prescribed conditions and comply with prescribed matters.
- 1.3. Once the Plan has passed Examination, it is voted upon in a referendum by Parish residents and if a simple majority 'yes' vote is achieved, then the Neighbourhood Plan is 'made' by Bedford Borough Council and comes into force as a planning document with legal weight in decision-making.
- 1.4. Wilshamstead Parish Council decided in February 2017 that they wished to designate the whole of the Parish as a Neighbourhood Area in order to safeguard the current character of the village and the integration of future communities in the village and its surrounds. The Neighbourhood Area is contiguous with the Parish boundary and was designated on the 22nd February 2017.



1:26,000



Parish of Wilshamstead

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2. The Strategic Policy Context

The National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) version was published in July 2018 and sets out the Government's approach to sustainable development. At the heart of the NPPF is the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. Essentially, it is about positive growth with economic, social and environmental gains being sought simultaneously through the planning system. Neighbourhood planning forms part of the NPPF approach to planning, to allow local communities to shape sustainable development within their area and to enable local communities to address their strategic needs and priorities. The NPPF states that Neighbourhood Plans should set out a positive vision for the future of the local area with planning policies to determine decisions on planning applications, including policies which set out the quality of development that should be expected for the area, based on stated objectives for the area's future and an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics. However, a Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan 2030 and plan positively to support these policies.

Sustainable development

- 2.2. The Neighbourhood Plan must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF states that pursuing sustainable development includes making it easier to create jobs in villages, to promote gains in biodiversity, to achieve better quality design, to improve people's quality of life, and to provide a wider choice of high quality homes.
- 2.3. Therefore, the aims objectives, policies and proposals of the Neighbourhood Plan should be assessed against their ability to achieve sustainable development. Wherever possible the Neighbourhood Plan should actively promote the achievement of sustainable development.

Local Planning Documents

- 2.4. The current Local Plan is the Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030 which was adopted on the 15th January 2020. There are also some remaining relevant policies in the Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013 and these are referenced in the Local Plan 2030. The Borough also have a suite of Supplementary Planning Documents which provide more detailed information and application of policies. The current list is available on the Borough Council's website.

3. Parish Description

- 3.1. Wilshamstead or Wilstead is a village and civil parish in Bedfordshire, just off the A6 Bedford to Luton Road, about five miles south of Bedford town centre at the foot of the Greensand Ridge escarpment. The name of the village has been spelled in many different ways, including Wilshamstead and Wylhamstead. Wilstead is now the usual name of the village, but the civil parish is named Wilshamstead. Generally the name Wilstead is used in everyday parlance to refer to both the Parish and the village, as one is a shortened form of the other. Unless statements in this Plan are specifically referring to the whole Parish the name Wilstead has been used throughout.
- 3.2. Housing types include traditional farms, older houses (including thatched cottages and many Listed Buildings) and more modern, estate-type housing. Dwellings on the estate are generally of a more spacious character than the most modern developments. There is also a park home site called Briar Bank Park on the southern end of the village.

History and Heritage

- 3.3. There is evidence of occupation within the village and surrounding area dating back to Roman times, or earlier; there are signs of a settlement in fields to the north of the village. The Domesday Book (1086) records the village as Winessamestede with 23 heads of households. Close to the crossroads in the middle of the village is the 14th century church All Saints. The church contains a memorial to William Tompson who in 1595 founded Wilshamstead Charities which still exists to help the villagers. In the churchyard there is the tomb of Sir William Morgan, Chief Secretary of the State of South Australia. A village-born grocer's son, he found gold in Australia and became one of Australia's richest men. He died on a visit to the village in 1883. At the top of Church Road is the Church House thought to have been a 'Pilgrim's Rest', for those journeying to shrines.
- 3.4. According to the Domesday Book, at the eastern end of Cotton End Road there used to be another hamlet called Westcotes, probably where Littleworth is now. Near here down Elms Lane is Manor Farm, thought to be the location of Nigel de Albini's Manor. Much nearer the centre of the village on Cotton End Road is another Manor Farm, thought to be the likely location of Countess Judith's (sister of William the Conqueror) manor on Winessamestede, the second manor of the village mentioned in the book.
- 3.5. Historically farming has always been the essence of village life and has played an important part of Wilstead life over the years. Seven farms exist today in the village and continue to be operational.
- 3.6. Duck End, to the north east of the village centre, was once a separate hamlet and first appears in the village enclosure award. The original nucleus in the village is believed to have been around a large green to the south east of the church, centred on what is today called 'the crossroads', where the village sign stands. To the south east of the crossroads was also once the site of the

original animal pound and the Blacksmith's house. Many houses were built from Wilstead Brick which is a yellow/brindle brick and can be seen in some properties today. Wilstead brick was used to construct the signs at the entrances to the village in Luton and Bedford Roads. The brickworks closed in 1919.



*Wilstead Village Entrance Sign
 Installed for the 2000 Millennium and
 constructed from Wilstead bricks. There is a time
 capsule buried beneath one.*

Gradually several homesteads were established along a roadway to the East that was to become Cotton End Road. As the population grew the gaps between houses were slowly filled in.

This gradual expansion followed the line of the main roadways, thus giving the strung-out appearance or "ribbon development" for which the parish is known. In the 1950s and 60s many cottages and older houses were demolished in the national trend to modernise.

- 3.7. The population of the village did not grow substantially until the late 1960s when several estates of varying sizes were built out from the principal roads. This brought new, younger families attracted by the availability and affordability of the new housing developments. In more recent years further development has taken place in the Longmeadow Drive area on the southern fringe of the Village. In addition, a park home site (Briar Bank - now restricted to residents 50 years of age or older) has existed at the southern edge of the village for 50 years.



All Saints Church

There are 23 listed buildings in the Parish, all Grade II apart from the Grade II* listed Parish Church of All Saints.

3.8. In the early 2000s Wilshamstead Parish Council were charged with representing a brand-new community to be established on the old Second World War munitions site at the Elstow Storage Depot. This community, now named Wixams, will eventually grow to small town size with 10,000 residents. In 2015 Wilshamstead officially “deparished” so creating the two separate communities of Wixams and Wilstead. Part of the old village boundary (west of the A6 trunk road) is now incorporated into the Wixams parish. Since the split it has been an important part of Parish Council policy to preserve the separate identity of Wilstead. The Neighbourhood Plan consultation process has also established that Wilstead residents feel it very important that the separate identity of the two communities is maintained together with a physical green belt of land between the two.

Village Life

3.9. The village is a vibrant village, activities in the various halls continue to promote the community life. Wilstead offers its locals a variety of clubs namely the football club, school clubs, holiday clubs, children’s clubs, British Legion Club, Bowls Club, Wilstead Drama group, Allotment Society, Garden Club, WI, senior citizen reunions, footpath group meetings, art club and many more.

Landscape

3.10. Wilshamstead is a rural, relatively flat parish which slopes up towards the Greensand Ridge in the south. Countryside surrounds the village and reaches into its very heart with working farms, public spaces and footpaths joining the main arteries.

Education

3.11. Wilstead has a Primary School located in Cotton End Road and also a pre-school next door. Both are very popular and always near capacity or full, causing difficulty for parents moving into the village with young children.

In September 2020 there were 5 children waiting to join the reception class, 6 on the waiting list for Year Three and 2 for Year Four.



Wilstead Primary School

Recreation facilities

- 3.12. Playgrounds are located next to the primary school, (off Whitworth Way), in Longmeadow Drive and in a small area in the corner of the Wooding Way estate. There are allotments close to the village playing fields. These and the Wilstead Jubilee Centre/Sports pavilion, Multi Use Games Area and a Lawn Bowls club are all situated in Jubilee Way, close to the village centre, off Bedford Road.

Local business, services and employment

- 3.13. Near the centre of the village are a small shop that incorporates a sub post office with a sorting office, two pubs, a pharmacy/convenience store, an Indian takeaway, a Chinese takeaway and a used car sales outlet. There is a craft shop on the Briar Bank site. The village hall, a modern building, is located in Cotton End Road. The village also has three churches. In Duck End several farm buildings have been converted for commercial use, creating a small industrial estate. There are also a number of small businesses located in people's homes and a number of people working from home. 407 people responded to a question in the survey regarding their employment. Of these 185 are either retired or not working and, of the remaining 178 people, 26 (15%) work either at home or within the village, indicating a very high occupancy of the village during working hours. We aim, therefore, to help maintain and/or increase local facilities.

Population & Household Data

- 3.14. In 2011, Wilstead had about 2,300 residents and 1040 households. This included early Wixams residents. The figure without Wixams has grown to around 2500 residents. Approximately 200 new homes have been built in the village since 2000 and planning permission exists for a further 30.

4. Consultation

4.1. In preparing the Neighbourhood Plan the team has carried out a range of communication and



*Neighbourhood Plan Open Day
 September 2019*

consultation activities. They have also been assisted by the existence of a Village Design Statement produced by a team in September 2000 and a Parish Plan survey conducted in 2010.

4.2. The first consultation was an Open Day held at the Village Hall in April 2017 when villagers were introduced to the concept of a Neighbourhood Plan. This has been followed by regular articles in the village Newsletter, banners, a further Open Day and a subsequent event to publicise the results of the Village Survey.

4.3. The survey achieved 447 responses, the large majority from separate households. One of the lowest return rates (23%) was from the Briar Bank Park Home site, probably a result of reduced ability to respond on-line and the distance from

the collection points. However one of the newer estates (Longmeadow Drive) showed only a 22% response which may be a reflection of the

distance from the centre and a reduced feeling of community involvement (being a newer development). Full details are shown in the Consultation Statement which accompanies this Plan.

4.4. Unfortunately, only a small number of respondents (4.5%) were aged 25 or under.

4.5. Close to 70% of respondents indicated that they have lived in the village for more than 10 years. This is a strong indicator of the closeness of the community and that people do not move away.

4.6. Following the agreement of the Parish Council in January 2021 to endorse the Neighbourhood Plan it was agreed to progress to pre-submission consultation. The six-week consultation period required under Regulation 14 ran from 1st April 2021 to the 15th May 2021. Notices were laminated and placed on all the village noticeboards and emails sent to all statutory bodies, neighbouring parishes and stakeholders. The initial 6-week period was extended, with the extension published on the village website and notice boards. The formal pre-submission consultation ended on 18th August 2021. 80 individual responses were made by residents, all but 2 supported the NP. 7 responses were received from landowners/agents and a detailed response from Bedford Borough Council. Full details of the publicity and responses can be found in the Consultation Statement.

5. Vision and Objectives

- 5.1. The Vision and Objectives of this Neighbourhood Plan have been carefully developed and refined by the Parish Council to reflect the views and priorities of the community. They help set the future of the village. The Vision is the overall aim of the Neighbourhood Plan and the Objectives are more detailed, allowing the development of policies which in turn will be used to comment on and determine planning applications.

Vision

To retain and enhance the countryside setting, friendly character, identity and relative tranquility of the village of Wilshamstead.

Development opportunities will be sustainable and appropriate to the scale and nature of the village, respecting its historic, agricultural and rural character.

Objectives

1. To seek protection and enhancement of the countryside setting of the village, by ensuring separation from the urban edge whilst retaining access to the countryside.
2. Identified green spaces, views and vistas and local wildlife habitats will be maintained and enhanced.
3. To identify, protect and enhance village heritage assets and key public spaces, ensuring that any future development is sympathetic to the existing rural character of the village.
4. To ensure any future housing responds to local needs, is of a high standard of design, and fits well into the context of the village in terms of type, mix, scale and character.
5. To protect existing assets such as the school, village hall and other community buildings and spaces used for community events and encourage improvements in line with changing needs.
6. To improve the leisure and recreation opportunities for residents of all ages by maintaining and encouraging community activities and the provision of open space and children's play facilities
7. To promote safe public streets and spaces; reduce traffic volumes through more accessible and beneficial sustainable transport links (including pavements, footpaths and cycle routes) and ensure appropriate parking solutions.
8. To sustain and enhance the range of community and commercial activities and services in the village. Economic activity such as working from home and appropriate small scale diversification of farm buildings will be encouraged.

6. Sustainable Development

- 6.1 Reflecting the NPPF, there are several over-arching development principles to ensure that new development is sustainable, achieves high design & environmental standards, reflects local preferences in terms of location and, especially important, delivers new community infrastructure.
- 6.2 The Parish has a distinctive character and new development should protect, reflect and enhance that character. There is a need for development to contribute to the quality of life for residents, including healthy lifestyles, access to local services, green open spaces, safe places for active play, and to be accessible by walking and cycling and public transport.
- 6.3 It is generally accepted that new development is necessary but there is a strong feeling that this should meet the needs of local people - existing and future generations, applying the principles of sustainable development to reflect environmental, economic and social needs. However, in many ways the social implications of accepting more development underlie the key issues and need, namely for an investment in new community infrastructure. The policies reflect the issues facing the Parish, the Vision and the Objectives.
- 6.4 For Wilstead, the meaning of sustainable development is set out below.

Sustainable Development Principles

Sustainable development for Wilstead means that development should be:

- ***At an appropriate scale and in locations where it would support the community,***
- ***Of a high standard of design, reflecting the rural and historic character of the surroundings,***
- ***Contributing towards community infrastructure,***
- ***Providing superfast broadband (fibre-optic) connections,***
- ***Ensuring that there is no increase in the risk of flooding,***
- ***Meeting contemporary construction, energy efficiency and water management standards,***
- ***Located and designed to enable safe walking and cycling to local services and facilities, preferably within a 400m radius of those locations.***

The following adverse impacts must be avoided:

- ***Reduction in the physical separation between the village and Wixams,***
- ***Avoidable intrusion into open countryside,***
- ***The loss of or damage to wildlife habitats and hedgerows and trees,***
- ***The loss or inappropriate diversion of public rights of way,***

- *A loss of amenity for existing residential properties and reduced efficiency for nearby businesses,*
- *Overloading existing utilities and services (water, drainage, sewerage and waste).*

7. Rural Character



- 7.1. As stated previously, countryside surrounds Wilstead and extends visually and functionally into the heart of the village through footpaths, important views and green public spaces. The village extends out into the Parish by the means of various 'lanes' which run at right angles from the main routes in the village. To the south of the village is the face of the Greensand Ridge which is largely wooded and provides a backdrop to the village. The remainder of the Parish is largely flat open fields.
- 7.2. Consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan demonstrates the value that local people place on the landscape and rural environment of the Parish. 95% of respondents agreed that the rural feel and access to the countryside are fundamental to the quality of life and community identity for Wilstead.

Landscape

- 7.3. Some change that occurs in the landscape is outside planning control, but where planning permission is required for development, landscape features should be considered in a systematic way. Proposals for new development will need to include an appropriate landscape analysis either as a freestanding report or as part of a design and access statement to enable the impact to be assessed and any mitigation proposed.
- 7.4. The Landscape Character Assessment (2020) for this part of Bedfordshire indicates a high-quality landscape, where characteristic features are well represented and in good condition and there is a wide and long history represented in the landscape. The County is divided up into 'landscape

character types’ which allows characteristic features to be identified and guidelines produced so that development can be designed to respect the surroundings. The bulk of the Parish is set within the East Marston Clay Vale landscape character type with the southern part of the Parish including Wilstead Wood lying within the Mid Greensand Ridge landscape character type.

- 7.5. The key characteristics of these two landscape types are the large scale, flat, open vale landscape underlain by Oxford Clay with expansive views across the vale to the wooded Greensand Ridge that forms a prominent backdrop to the vale and which provides some sense of containment. Formerly meadow pasture, land use is now predominantly defined by intensive arable cropping contained within medium to large arable fields. Some smaller fields given over to pasture and horse grazing remain.
- 7.6. The Landscape Character Assessment sets “Guidelines for New Development”. Those relevant to the landscape around Wilstead are summarised below.
- Conserve the dispersed pattern of settlements - preventing linear expansion and the merger of villages e.g. Wixams with Wilstead. Monitor linear development, and infill of villages in order to prevent further settlement coalescence and loss of individual village identity – this is particularly the case for the dispersed, loose settlements and ‘Ends’ such as Duck End.
 - Prevent further urbanisation of the rural roads - and ensure that traffic management measures are sympathetic to the rural character. Monitor the expansion/widening of transport corridors, to prevent further fragmentation of the landscape. Consider further opportunities for landscape enhancement along the road corridors e.g. through planting of hedgerows and hedgerow trees where appropriate.
 - Improve settlement edges where these form an unsympathetic relationship with the open countryside - small scale woodland planting is a key opportunity but should not obscure views to the Mid Greensand Ridge, rather it should form part of a connected network which complements and responds to the topography and landscape structure of the ridge.
 - Conserve locally distinctive influences such as the palette of bricks used in buildings
 - Conserve the clear views and visual relationship with the Mid Greensand Ridge.
 - Avoid any large scale, taller development of land at the base of the ridge to retain the dramatic visual contrast between the flat vale and steep slopes.
 - Conserve and enhance access and connections from the urban area into the vale e.g. via existing footpaths or the John Bunyan Trail. Avoid severance of existing routes.
- 7.7. The Wilstead Landscape Sensitivity Study (Bedford Borough Council Local Plan 2030 background document) reinforces the above guidelines and also recognises the importance of views to the open setting of the 14th Century All Saints Church.
 (<http://edrms.bedford.gov.uk/OpenDocument.aspx?id=kCUtyDy%2bKg%2foDKZkw4LWuw%3d%3d&name=47%20-%20Landscape%20Sensitivity%20Study.pdf>)
- 7.8. Existing hedgerows and trees contribute greatly to the landscape in the Parish, particularly given the relatively flat terrain. Policies 39 and 40 of the Local Plan 2030 set out the requirements for retaining these features, whilst Policy 38 recognizes that landscaping and planting is important

not only for its visual qualities, but it can also help with climate regulation, biodiversity and the mental health and wellbeing associated with being outdoors in a green space. Accordingly the Local Plan 2030 requires that new development is accompanied by a landscaping scheme.

Key Views



View of Cardington Hangars from Dines Close

7.9. Local surveys have identified the key views in the local landscape, shown in detail in Appendix A to this plan. These are identified on the Policies Map. The key views have been identified for their particular value to residents and visitors and should be retained and not blocked by insensitive development.

7.10. The way the countryside comes into the very heart of Wilstead, including the footpaths, bridleways and Green Spaces within it and the views from within the village into the surrounding countryside, were highlighted in the Village Design Survey in 2000 and the NP survey resulted in an overwhelming number (close to 100%) continuing to support the need to protect these - indicating very little has changed in the way people feel about the village in the last 20 years.

- 7.11. Especially important and emphasised in the responses to the surveys are the views of the Greensand Ridge, the Cardington Hangars and All Saints Church from Church Road.

Forest of Marston Vale

- 7.12. The Parish lies within the Forest of Marston Vale (FOMV), one of only 12 Community Forests in England, each designated by Government as national priority areas for the environmentally led regeneration of degraded and industrially scarred landscapes. The core objective for all Community Forests is to radically transform these degraded landscapes using trees and woodlands to create a new landscape with 30% tree cover by 2030, this being the catalyst for wider social and economic regeneration of these areas.
- 7.13. The Parish Council has been very active in promoting the use of land within the Parish as a Community Woodland and has been working with the FoMV organisation to plant a large area of trees on the border between Wilstead and Wixams to serve both communities for recreation and to form part of the natural countryside break between the two parishes.

- 7.14. Policy 36S of the Local Plan 2030 seeks contributions to the enhancement of the Forest area and the primary aim of planting trees will be expected to be supported by all new housing and commercial developments in the Parish where relevant.

Policy RC1: Rural Character

Any proposals for development in the rural parts of the Parish should recognise and seek to protect and enhance the historic and natural landscape and local character of the Parish, including

- ***Field patterns and elements of the landscape heritage of the area, including ridge and furrow, field ponds, mature trees and historic hedgerows should be protected and incorporated into any landscape design schemes and their long-term maintenance ensured. Unavoidable loss of these features will require justification***
- ***Retention and where possible, enhancement of the key views identified on the Policies Map***
- ***Development of new sites will be expected to contribute to the tree planting aspirations of the Forest of Marston Vale***
- ***Landscaping schemes will be required to be implemented for new developments. Where appropriate, planting should reflect existing planting in the vicinity of the site particularly where there are established trees and hedgerows, to provide visual integration and allow the movement of wildlife wherever possible***

Gaps between settlements

- 7.15. Wilstead is very close to the new housing developments at the Wixams and residents are keen that both settlements remain separated to support the retention of rural character of Wilstead Parish. Over 94% of respondents to the Questionnaire considered that maintaining a gap between the village and Wixams was ‘essential’ or ‘important’. Maintaining other gaps between the village and Duck End, Littleworth and Briar Bank was seen as important by a majority of residents.
- 7.16. The Landscape Character Assessment recognizes that the need to retain separate identities of villages contributes to landscape character as does the Local Plan 2030, Policy 37 and the Allocations and Designations Local Plan AD42. The latter recognizes that the gap between Wilstead and Wixams is less than 800m in places but nonetheless acknowledges that a gap should be maintained and protected to prevent coalescence and preserve the separate character and identity of Wilstead village.
- 7.17. However, the Local Gap designation uses an arrow to define the gap between the settlements and does not define the boundaries of where development should be avoided to retain the visual and functional separation of the settlements. Accordingly, this Neighbourhood Plan gives more detail to the gap between the settlements below.



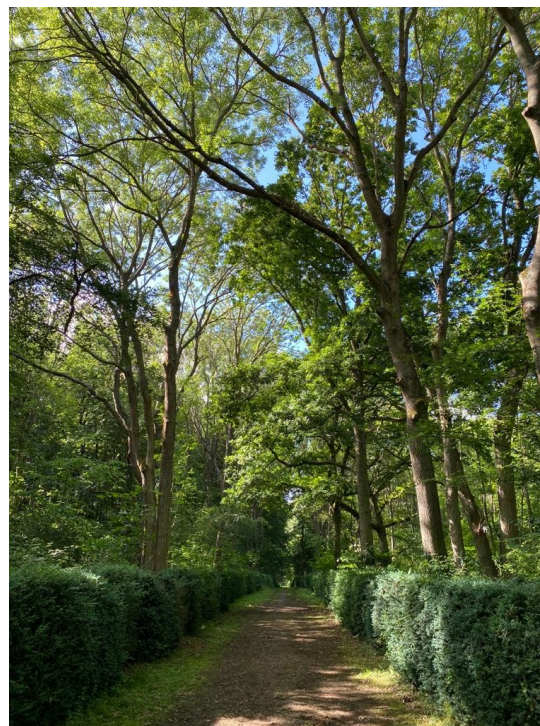
7.18 The gap between the northern part of Wilstead village and Wixams to the west includes the important Community Woodland managed by the Forest of Marston Vale and shared between the two communities and the Newt Reserve and the area of land between the A6 and Bedford Road (north of the underpass).

8. Natural Environment

8.1. Protection of the nature conservation interest in the Parish, which is valued by local people, is critical to the rural character of the Parish.

8.2. There are 6 County Wildlife sites within, and one partly within, the Parish. These are designated for their special wildlife interest and are protected through Policy 42S in the Local Plan 2030.

- Wilstead Wood is ancient woodland at the base of the Greensand Ridge and mostly with the area of the Greensand Ridge Nature Improvement Area (NIA).
- St Macute's Wood is also ancient woodland close to the Greensand Ridge and fully within the NIA.
- Wilstead Meadows.
- Top of Northwood Lane.
- Top of Hooked Lane.
- Land to the south of Chapel End.
- Keyse's Spinney and Hurstpightle Spinney (partly within the Parish).



Wilstead Woods

8.3. The Parish lies within the Forest of Marston Vale and also the southern end of the Parish lies within the Green Infrastructure opportunity zone of the Greensand Ridge Fringes as set out in Policy AD24 of the Allocations and Designations Local Plan. Opportunities must be sought through development finance and other sources of funding to implement the following:

- Linking and extending woodland sites to each other and down the ridge slopes to strengthen the wooded fringe landscape character.
- Managing ancient woodlands, veteran trees, biologically significant trees and historic hedgerows and interpreting historic environment features associated with ancient woodlands.
- Linking the ancient woodlands together, and creating a complex of grassland, scrub and woodland habitats.
- Creating green corridors and enhancing access routes, particularly creating woodlands and meadow features along the Bunyan Trail.
- Enhancing the setting of archaeological features.

8.4. Where appropriate, development will deliver or contribute to the protection, enhancement and/or creation of green infrastructure in accordance with the priorities set out for the

opportunity zone. A wildlife corridor is an area of habitat connecting wildlife populations separated by human activities or structures (such as roads and built development). It is important to try and link up individual pockets of habitats to provide a wider area for wildlife migrations and expansion.

- 8.5. The layout and form of new buildings should have regard for the rural setting of the village, with its existing green spaces and corridors. Development should enhance green spaces or features and the connections between them where practicable. New development must provide a 10% biodiversity net gain in line with the emerging Environment Bill.
- 8.6. Proposals for all types of new development will be required to demonstrate how the design has taken into account its potential impact on local habitats and species. This will include sites and features that are locally important in the parish, including trees, hedges and woodland, parkland, ponds and watercourses and unimproved grassland. Developers will be required to ensure that appropriate measures are put in place to protect wildlife and take every available opportunity to enhance biodiversity and important habitats. Landscaping schemes will be required to use native species for planting schemes, particularly those found locally. Opportunities should be sought to increase biodiversity, particularly at the edges of the settlement.
- 8.7. In order to protect the hydrological regime around the parish and the River Great Ouse with its associated Natura 2000 sites at Portholme (SAC) and The Ouse Washes (SAC, Ramsar), the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems is recommended where necessary as advocated in Policy 93 of the Bedford Local Plan 2030. Where Sustainable Urban Drainage systems (SUDS) are required to serve new developments, every opportunity to link them into habitats should be taken.

Policy NE1: Nature Conservation

New development will be required to protect and enhance existing natural features of sites and where possible enhance biodiversity.

Development proposals must provide appropriate green infrastructure and enhanced Green Infrastructure networks which result in a minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity, species richness and/or abundance. Provision of appropriate species-related measures will be required, including, for example, tunnels for hedgehogs and the incorporation of native species into landscaping schemes.

Opportunities should also be taken by developers and landowners to link sustainable drainage solutions in new development to complement nature conservation objectives both locally and at protected sites downstream on the River Great Ouse.

9. Built Environment

Heritage Assets



Listed Building
 Compton Cottage - 12 Ivy Lane

9.1. It is essential that the location and design of new development has regard to the historic character of the local area. Listed Buildings are afforded statutory protection, and this is recognised in Policy 41S of the Local Plan 2030. Furthermore, non-designated heritage assets (assets which possess a degree of heritage significance) are afforded weight in the planning process as per the NPPF and the Local Plan 2030. There are 23 listed buildings in the Parish currently, including the Parish Church of All Saints which is a Grade II* listed building. A summary of listed buildings in the village is shown in the Historical and Important Buildings

Appendix (Appendix B).

- 9.2. Listed Buildings are already protected under legislation and Local Plan 2030 policy 41S which requires that proposals for alterations to heritage assets must be assessed on their impact on the value of that asset.
- 9.3. The list of non-designated heritage assets (local list for Wilstead) set out below has been compiled and consulted upon in the questionnaire and seeks to recognise the historic importance of local buildings that are not listed buildings in the Parish. There may also be other unidentified heritage assets within the Parish, particularly those of archaeological interest. The buildings and features identified may not be of sufficient architectural or historic merit to justify listing, but they are an important part of the character of the Parish. The policy will help to ensure they are retained.

They are:

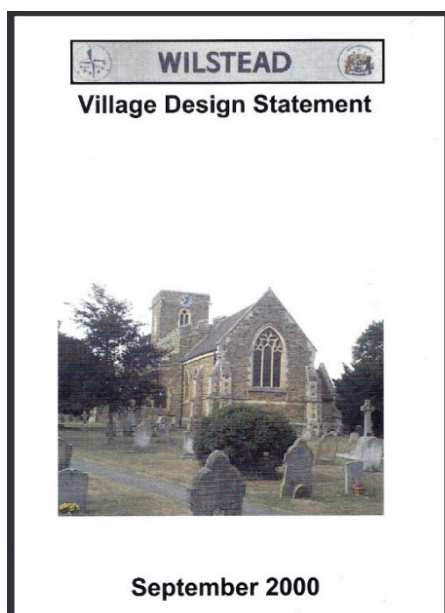
- 47 Cotton End Road
- The Elephant and Castle (former pub) 49 Cotton End Road
- The Rose (former pub) 265 Cotton End Road near Littleworth
- The Woolpack
- The Old Infants School (78 Cotton End Road)
- Wilstead Post Office (33, Cotton End Road)
- Wilstead Methodist Church

Owners have been consulted for inclusion of the above in the list of Historical and Important Buildings Appendix (Appendix B) where a brief description of each is shown.

Policy BE1: Protecting and enhancing local heritage assets

All development proposals affecting heritage assets (including the non-designated heritage assets identified in the Neighbourhood Plan) will be required to take into account the significance of affected assets; as well as the contribution made by setting. Development should take into account local styles, materials and architectural detailing which contribute to local distinctiveness. The total loss of, or substantial harm to, a designated heritage asset will be resisted unless substantial public benefits can be demonstrated. Archaeological evaluation should be undertaken where development proposals have the potential to affect heritage assets with archaeological interest. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

High Quality Design



9.4. Wilshamstead Parish Council produced a Village Design Statement in 2000 which was adopted by Bedford Borough Council as Supplementary Planning Guidance. It remains a useful document for residents, developers, the Parish Council and Bedford Borough Council and is a technical background document to the Neighbourhood Plan. However, the main elements have been incorporated into this Neighbourhood Plan to ensure that the principles are up to date and can be applied to planning applications as current planning policy.

9.5. Residents have a range of views on design for new development in the village, and 30% are aware that the village has a design guide. Over 70% of respondents thought that three-storey buildings were not acceptable and over 80% thought that new developments should be in small clusters with green space around and within them.

- 9.6. Over 80% of the respondents to the survey supported renewable energy for new housing development.
- 9.7. Detailed design guidelines for the village, incorporating the guidelines from the September 2000 Design Guide and subsequent input from villagers, are set out in the Design Guide at Appendix C. Within the Design Guide the village is shown divided into four distinct zones.
- 9.8. Of particular importance is the village centre, located around the main crossroads. Any development in this area must be of the most sensitive nature and part of a long-term plan to restore the area to a focal point, retaining the shopping and central facilities and in keeping with the heritage of the Village.
- 9.9. Where practicable any development in future would need to be located as close as possible to the crossroads area to facilitate integration of new villagers into the community and provide close access to local amenities such as the Post Office, chemist/pharmacy, take-aways, public houses and public transport.
- 9.10. The NPPF and the Neighbourhood Plan recognises that well-designed buildings and places improve the quality of life and that it is a core planning principle to secure good design. Good design is not just about appearance, but also functionality and the relationship to surroundings and it is not about copying past styles or preventing innovative modern design. The aim is to create site-specific creative design, which is contextual by referencing form and materials to surroundings.

- 9.11. Development proposals should include a Design and Access Statement, or other written statement related to the scale and complexity of the scheme, which shows that the development has been designed to specifically relate to its setting. This is essential to ensure that the special character of the village is protected, and its local distinctiveness is enhanced and reinforced.
- 9.12. Larger scale proposals must be accompanied by a Development Brief.

Policy BE2: The Design of New Development

Proposals for high quality new development (including new buildings and extensions to existing buildings) will be supported, where they address the following criteria.

All new development will:

- *Meet the Design Guidelines set out in Appendix C (Design Guide)*
- *Contribute to the locally distinctive rural character*
- *Take advantage of the local topography, retaining water features, trees and hedgerows*
- *Relate to the existing development pattern in the vicinity of the site in terms of design, building placement on the site, enclosure and definition of streets/spaces*
- *Be of an appropriate scale and density in relation to its setting*
- *Be of simple design and form to reflect the rural character of the village*
- *Use materials appropriate to the development's context.*
- *Be well integrated with surroundings; reinforcing connections, taking opportunities of new ones, retaining or allowing close access to the countryside*
- *Provide convenient access to community services and facilities*
- *Respect the residential amenities of adjacent properties, including privacy and overshadowing*
- *Integrate car parking within landscaping so that it does not dominate the street*
- *Provide convenient, well-screened storage for bins and recycling, bicycles and motor vehicles*
- *Conform to sustainable building design and construction best practice*

10. Housing

Existing population and housing stock

- 10.1. In 2011, there were 1,402 households in Wilstead containing 3,270 residents. Compared to 2001, this represents an increase of around 46% in terms of households (from 958) and also an increase of 44% in terms of residents (from 2,263). This large increase in population and households can be attributed to the introduction of a number of new developments in the village plus the development of Wixams, which, at the time of the 2011 census, was included within the Parish of Wilshamstead. In 2015 Wixams became a separate parish.
- 10.2. New developments within Wilshamstead Parish since 2011 have been introduced as ‘in-fill’ or in the form of a new estate of 70 houses located to the west and south of Whitworth Way. This development was allowed, on appeal, to meet the need for additional housing in Bedford Borough. Although granted planning permission before the adoption of the Local Plan 2030 this estate was taken into account when allocating sites for Wilstead and, as a result, no additional housing was included for the village in the final plan. Since then a further 30 houses have been granted outline planning permission, again on appeal, located some distance from the village centre at the end of Howard Close, off Luton Road.
- 10.3. The age profile in 2011 (compared to 2001, and then to Bedford Borough as a whole in 2011) is shown below.

Age	% Wilstead 2011	% Wilstead 2001	% Bedford Borough 2011
0 – 4	7.1	4.5	6.3
5-15	11.0	11.3	14.3
16-17	2.0	2.5	2.6
18-64	60.4	62.2	61.7
65-84	16.5	17.2	13.1
85+	3.1	2.7	1.8

- 10.4. The age demographic has stayed fairly stable in Wilstead over the 10 years between 2001 and 2011. The proportion of those aged 85+ has risen slightly but this resulted in a slight decrease in the 65-84 age category. The greatest increase has been in the 0-4 age category, which can be attributed to more young families moving into the newly developed Wixams area. This is putting pressure on the availability of school places in both parishes. The age profile overall is older than that of Bedford Borough as a whole, which can be attributed to the 50+ age stipulation for the Briar Bank park home site and the very common practice of residents to move within the village rather move away.

Household Composition	% Wilstead	% Beds Borough
1 person - pensioner	14.6	11.9
1 person - other	10.0	16.9
Couple + dependent children	19.3	20.9
Couple + non-dependent children	31.9	23.5
Lone parent + dependent children	6.3	7.6
Lone parent + non-dependent children	3.1	3.4
All aged 65 and over	9.7	8.2
Other	5.1	7.5

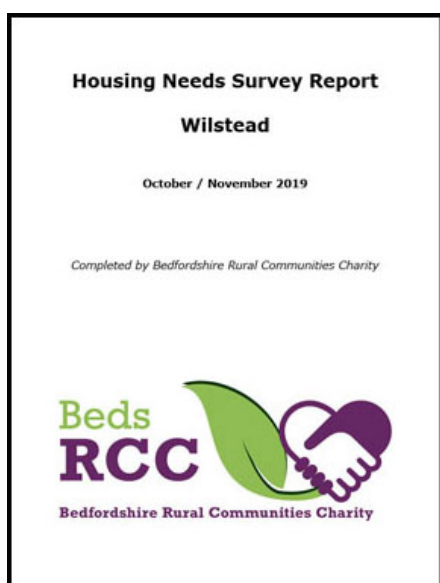
10.5. There are slightly higher levels of households with all occupants aged 65 and over and 1-person pensioner households, compared to Bedford Borough Averages. There is also a higher level of families with non-dependent children at home.

Housing Tenure	% Wilstead	% Beds Borough
Owned outright	43.7	31.4
Owned with mortgage/loan	39.4	34.3
Shared ownership	4.7	1.0
Social rented	12.4	16.1
Private rented	5.3	15.9
Living rent free	0.9	1.3

10.6. The majority of households are owner occupiers in Wilstead. There are much higher levels of properties owned outright and owned with a mortgage or loan compared to Bedford Borough averages. The levels of shared ownership properties in the Parish is above the average figure for Bedford Borough. Levels of both social and private rented properties were lower than the Bedford Borough averages.

Dwelling Types	% Wilstead	% Beds Borough
Detached house	43.7	27.4
Semi-detached house	25.9	32.2
Terraced house	23.2	21.9
Flat	2.4	17.6
Caravan/other temp. accommodation	14.5	0.9

- 10.7. There are significantly more detached properties, with correspondingly fewer semi-detached houses in Wilstead compared to Bedford Borough averages. The number of flats is significantly lower than the boroughs average figures. There are much higher levels of caravan and other temporary accommodation due to the Briar Bank park home site situated within the Parish.
- 10.8. The Parish Questionnaire asked a series of questions regarding the scale, type and location of new houses for residents to comment on. Most respondents would prefer to see infill of one or two dwellings or 4-9 new units, with a strong negative response to developments of 10 or more houses (55% strongly disagreeing). This negative response is likely to be in response to the recent high levels of current building and planning applications for larger development around the village.
- 10.9. In terms of the types of housing, many of the respondents considered that affordable housing for those with a local connection was a priority (82% agreeing), retirement housing (63% agreeing) and bungalows (79%) should also be provided. Smaller homes of 1-2 or 2-3 bedroom houses were more popular than 3-4 or 4+ bedroom houses which reflects the predominance of larger homes in the village housing stock.



Housing Affordability and Mix

10.10. In 2019, the Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity was contracted to carry out a Housing Needs Survey (HNS) by the Parish Council. The following information is extracted from that document which is a technical background document to the Neighbourhood Plan. A copy of the full report accompanies this Neighbourhood Plan

10.11. **Affordability:** The 'affordability ratio' (median house prices as a ratio of median household earnings) for Wilstead in 2008/09 (latest data available) was 12.5. In other words, houses on the market cost on average 12.5 times annual incomes.

- 10.12. 14.9% of dwellings in Wilstead are in Council Tax Band A, and 13.8% in Band B, compared to 13.6% and 24.9% for Bedford Borough as a whole. The lower proportion of particularly Band B properties when compared to district wide levels is likely to indicate a relative shortage of affordable housing for purchase in Wilstead.
- 10.13. According to the DCLG guidance, in order to purchase the cheapest property currently available for sale on the open market in Wilstead (a 2-bedroom house at £200,000) as a first time buyer, a single earner household would need an annual gross income of over £57,000 and dual-income household would need over £68,000. There was a 1-bedroom shared ownership flat for sale which would require a single earner household to have an annual gross income of around £21,000

and a dual income household would need an income of over £25,500. It should be noted that the median annual full-time wage in the UK stood at £28,200 in April 2016.

- 10.14. According to the same guidance, “A household can be considered able to afford market house renting in cases where the rent payable was up to 25% of their gross household income.” (The ‘Rent Payable’ figure is defined as the entire rent due, even if it is partially or entirely met by housing benefit.) In order for a household to be able to rent the cheapest property available closest to Wilstead (a 2-bedroom apartment at £725pcm), a household’s gross income would therefore need to be over £34,500.
- 10.15. Another major barrier to entry to the property market for first-time buyers is the high deposit needed for a competitive mortgage rate. The average loan to value for first time buyers nationally in October 2017 was 84.7% , meaning that the average deposit is 15.3%. Smaller deposit mortgages all but disappeared following the onset of the financial crisis. However, Phase 2 of the government’s Help to Buy scheme has more recently facilitated a market in mortgages for first-time buyers at up to 95% loan to value. These mortgages are generally offered at higher rates of interest than for buyers with larger deposits. At 95% loan to value, a first-time buyer household in order to purchase the cheapest property currently available on the market in the Parish (2-bedroom house) at £200,000, would require a deposit of around £10,000. At the current average of 84.7% loan to value, a deposit of over £30,500 would be required.
- 10.16. **Mix:** The Housing Needs Survey suggests there is a need for smaller properties, particularly as there are rarely smaller properties on the market in Wilstead (only 2 x 2 bed units at the time of the survey in 2019 and at the time of drafting this document, 1 house and 3 park homes). Those that are, are often park homes which are restricted to older residents.
- 10.17. **Affordable Housing needs:** Analysis of the data from the 2019 Housing Needs Survey has identified a need for affordable housing within Wilstead from households resident in (or with strong links to) the Parish. This is unlikely to be met by normal market provision. This need is predominantly from young adults/couples who are currently living in their parents’ home and want to move into a rented property of their own or get on the housing ladder. There is also a demand from families who are currently in rented accommodation who would like to get on the property ladder. Based on data supplied by respondents in late 2019, up to 13 households with a local connection would be suitable for housing within a rural exception site development, whether for rent, shared ownership or under a starter homes initiative. However, it must be recognised that this is a snapshot of current, self-assessed need: some respondents may withdraw, move, or be housed by other means during the planning and development of any future scheme.
- 10.18. At the time of the HNS, 18 households were on the Bedford Borough Council Housing register plus 7 from the older age group.

10.19. The Local Plan 2030 policy 58S requires that sites of 10 or more residential units or 0.5 hectares or more will provide 30% affordable housing with 78% of the dwellings as social or affordable rented properties and the remainder (22%) as other forms of affordable housing. Policy 59S requires that all sites will be required to provide a mix of size and type of housing, including 59% 'accessible/adaptable housing on sites of 3 or more houses. However, there is no threshold set out for the size of houses. Given the ageing population and the lack of smaller, more affordable properties in the housing stock of the Parish, it is reasonable to require that a larger proportion of smaller homes are provided on sites of 3 or more dwellings including bungalows. This will apply to 'windfall' sites i.e. sites that are not allocated through the emerging Local Plan where housing mix will be governed by the Local Plan or an up to date Housing Needs assessment.

Location of Housing

10.20. The current Local Plan 2030 policies do not allow large scale development outside the Settlement Policy Boundary (as defined on the Policies Map) unless the need for housing outweighs the policy restrictions. This may happen when the Borough as a whole cannot provide a 5 year housing land supply. This requirement is set out in Government Policy, NPPF chapter 5 refers.

10.21. Bedford Borough Council will also be required to provide additional housing land for development through a new Local Plan Review. Whilst there is no information on the distribution of that housing requirement currently, it is likely that Service Centres such as Wilstead will be expected to provide additional housing in years to come. The majority of respondents to the Questionnaire considered that no development should take place in the Parish (50%) but accepted that infilling in the existing built up area could be less unacceptable (36%) as opposed to the use of greenfield sites outside the current built up area (2%).

10.22. This NP does not seek to allocate sites currently given that there is no requirement in the current Local Plan 2030 for it to do so. However, in the future, should new housing be required in the Parish by the Borough Council, the Neighbourhood Plan is likely to be reviewed to consider this at a local level.

Policy H1: Housing

Infill development within the built form of the village (Settlement Policy Area) is supported provided that the principles of high-quality design are adhered to (see Appendix D).

All new windfall housing development for 3 units or more will ensure that at least 33% comprise smaller homes (up to 2 bedrooms).

The provision of bungalows is supported.

11. Community Facilities

- 11.1. Wilstead has a small collection of services and facilities. There is a Post Office/general store, a pharmacy and 2 pubs, The Woolpack, currently owned by Green King and the Red Lion. There are also 2 takeaways, one Indian and one Chinese, a craft shop situated on the Briar Bank site and an Equestrian Centre ("The Stables") in Cotton End Road.
- 11.2. There are various community halls which can be hired:
Village Hall, Jubilee Centre, Methodist Church Hall and All Saints Chapter House, each being run on a voluntary basis.
- 11.3. Places of worship are:
All Saints Church, the Methodist Church and Wilstead Evangelical Church.
- 11.4. Wilstead has a Primary School with a capacity for 210 children from Reception Class to Year 6 and a pre-school nursery. The Primary School currently has a waiting list of 13 children.
- 11.5. Residents value their local services and facilities and loss of any of them would inevitably result in more car journeys to facilities outside the Parish. The questionnaire revealed that 87% of residents regularly use the Post Office and over 70% use the chemist regularly. Nearly 50% said that they regularly visit the pubs in the village. All are an indication of the spirit of 'local community', appreciated by residents and very much evident in survey responses.
- 11.6. The survey revealed less usage of the services provided by a mobile library, Methodist Hall and Jubilee Centre and these need to be promoted more locally.
- 11.7. The policy is intended to retain these facilities and services to maintain Wilstead as a sustainable village. Accordingly, change of use, conversion or demolition of any of the facilities listed above to a use which is not for the community will be resisted unless a replacement would prove more suitable for the needs of the community. The applicant will need to put forward evidence that the existing use is no longer commercially viable and, prove that a genuine attempt has been made to market the enterprise as a going concern for at least a year.

Policy CF1: Community Facilities

Development proposals that will result in either the loss of or significant harm to a valued community facility will not be supported, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that its continued use is no longer viable or that appropriate alternative arrangements are more suitable for commercial uses. This will require evidence that the property has been actively marketed, commensurate with its use, at an open market value for a period of at least 12 months. Facilities include:

- *Red Lion and Woolpack pubs*
- *The Post Office/store*
- *The pharmacy*
- *Village Hall*
- *Take-away shops*
- *Jubilee Centre and Playing Field*
- *Bowls Club*
- *Community Woodland*
- *The 3 Village Churches*

Proposals to improve the viability of a community facility by way of the extension or partial replacement or redevelopment of buildings, structures and land, will be supported, provided the design of the scheme respects heritage features, the street scene and the resulting increase in use will not have an unacceptable negative impact on the amenities of adjoining residential properties.

12. Recreation and Open Space

- 12.1. Wilstead has a wealth of informal and formal open spaces. Informal spaces allow people to enjoy the natural environment and landscape whilst walking or simply being outdoors. Increasingly, the value of being outdoors is recognized as playing an important role in healthy lives, mental health and general wellbeing. Formal spaces include recreation grounds and sports pitches. All open spaces contribute visually to the rural nature of the Parish.
- 12.2. An overwhelming majority of respondents to the questionnaire (81%) said that they used open/green spaces regularly, with a further 30% saying that they used the children's play areas regularly.
- 12.3. The following informal and formal open spaces are a major source of recreation in the village:
- Church Yard & Burial Ground
 - Green Spaces, MUGA, Children's Play Area and Ponds off Longmeadow Drive
 - Community Woodland and Newt Reserve
 - The area between the A6 and Bedford Rd, next to the Balancing Pond
 - Spaces within the Whitworth Way estate
 - The Allotments, Bowling Green and Jubilee Playing Field
 - Whitworth Way Playing Field and Children's Play Area
 - Island to the West of Luton Road
- 12.4. Further detail on each of the above is shown in Appendix A. The majority of the above list have been designated Local Green Space and therefore are protected from inappropriate development. However, those that do not meet the criteria and any new spaces which may be provided within new developments during the lifetime of this Neighbourhood Plan should also be retained.
- 12.5. Within new housing developments, new open space and recreation facilities will be required in line with Local Plan 2030 requirements and contributions expected through CIL or Section 106 agreements. Where any such development is in reasonably close proximity to existing playing fields and/or children's play areas, financial assistance will be sought to help introduce a new area of land north of the village centre being considered for teenage and adult recreation.

Policy ROS1: Open Spaces

Existing and new open spaces and recreation facilities will be protected from development. Proposals which would reduce the quality or quantity of these facilities will only be permitted where the existing facilities are re-provided to a better quality or quantity in an appropriate location.

Policy ROS2: Open space provision as part of new development

Open space should normally be provided within new development to accord with the standards set by Bedford Borough Council in the Local Plan 2030 and the following criteria should be met:

- *Green corridors between the village and the countryside should be provided.*
- *New open spaces should incorporate tree and shrub planting.*

Suitable arrangements must be incorporated for the costs of future maintenance of these spaces.

Wherever possible, the Parish Council will want to be responsible for maintenance of the open spaces within any new development to ensure a consistent approach throughout the Parish.

Local Green Spaces



Green Space - Luton Road

12.6. Consultation showed that people place a high value on the relationship between the village, the countryside and on the open spaces that help to define the landscape and character of the area. Designation of Local Green Spaces (LGS) give a very high level of protection to such open spaces. In the NPPF it is stated that in Neighbourhood Plans, local communities can identify green areas of particular importance to them for special protection and to rule out new development, other than in “very special circumstances”. The proposed designations are in accordance with the requirement in Paragraph 100 of the NPPF:

- The green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves
- The area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquility or richness of its wildlife
- The area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land

12.7. Our survey and consultations with residents have also shown that people place a high priority on maintaining a “strategic gap” between Wilstead and the new housing developments at the Wixams to support the retention of the rural character of Wilshamstead Parish. To facilitate this, a number of areas have been designated as “Strategic Gaps”. These, together with Local Green Spaces that enhance the feeling of the village being located within a countryfied setting, are identified on the Policies Map. Details are shown, together with the County Wildlife sites, in Appendix A.

Policy ROS3: Local Green Spaces

The following areas (shown on the Policies Map with a GS reference) are designated as Local Green Spaces:

- *LGS1: Field in front of Manor Farm*
- *LGS2: Spaces and Pond off Longmeadow Drive*
- *LGS3: Allotments, Bowls Club and Jubilee Playing Field*
- *LGS4: Whitworth Way Playing Field*
- *LGS5: Fields between Dragons Wood, Wilstead Woods and Luton Road*
- *LGS6: Dragons Wood*
- *LGS7: Spaces within the Whitworth Way Estate*
- *LGS8: Island to the West of Luton Road*
- *LGS9: Wilstead Meadows – Butterfly Field (also a County Wildlife Site)*

Development will be resisted in the Local Green Spaces to protect their special character and contribution to the Parish, except in very special circumstances.

13. Traffic and Transport

- 13.1. Wilstead is served by two major routes: Bedford Road and Luton Road providing the main North-South route through the village and linking at either end with the A6 trunk road, and Cotton End Road which runs East-West and links the Village to the A600. The traffic on the Bedford Road and Luton Road is used predominantly by residents, with through traffic using the A6 Bypass. Cotton End Road provides a connection between the new development of Wixams to the East and the A600, and for the new developments at Cotton End and New Cardington to the A6 and Luton. It suffers from excessive through traffic which is often found to be above the 30mph speed limit.
- 13.2. Heavy Goods vehicles are prohibited from entering the village.
- 13.3. Public transport is currently provided by bus services between Bedford and Luton, with an additional, more occasional, service to Ampthill and Flitwick. There are no rail services. A low percentage of survey responses showed regular use of public transport into/from the village (8%) and 69% hardly ever or never use the bus.
- 13.4. Most people depend upon travel by car, putting pressure within the village on road conditions and car parking space. 69% of the 339 respondents answering a survey question about car ownership have 2 or more vehicles in their household. This reduces to 52% who have less than 2 cars if you add the number who replied accordingly to the number who skipped the question, a figure which is very close to the 53% average of 'Bedford Rural Villages & Bedford Rural Town & Fringe' taken from the 2011 Census (compared to 32% in England as a whole).
- 13.5. The survey showed few people admitting to using their car within the village, preferring to walk or cycle. This highlights a need to keep the pavements in good order and to consider better facilities/routes for cyclists.
- 13.6. Traffic and transport issues were raised constantly throughout the public consultation, open days and survey. 70% of the survey responses referencing dislikes and issues in the village related to speeding, parking and the state of the pavements.
- 13.7. While speeding and other traffic violations are policing and highway issues, new infrastructure by way of traffic calming measures or speed cameras would bring about significant improvements to the environment.
- 13.8. 51 people (approx. 10%) responding to the September 2019 survey indicated that they have issues with mobility. Improvements requested are listed in the Aspirations section at the end of the Plan.
- 13.9. Traffic congestion is an issue from traffic turning at the junctions of Dines Close and Whitworth Way which are used as mini roundabouts.

13.10. All developments which will increase traffic should be accompanied by a Transport Statement or Assessment and should include the following matters:

- Road safety and parking, including the avoidance of congestion.
- A local focus on providing pedestrian and cycle links between new housing to the school, shops, Village Hall, recreation grounds and sports field.
- Developers should identify the realistic level of traffic their development will generate.
- Development should not add to existing traffic congestion but should strive to reduce it.

13.11. As part of the underlying approach to achieving sustainable development in the Neighbourhood Plan any development should encourage walking, cycling, and the use of public transport.

Policy TT1: The traffic impact of new development

Proposed developments that would generate a significant amount of movement or would potentially affect a known traffic hazard should be supported by realistic measures to maintain highway safety and avoid vehicular/pedestrian conflict. Where appropriate it may be necessary to consider off site measures where these are required to accommodate the traffic impact of the scheme.

Where they are proposed, new roads, junctions, pavements and traffic management measures should be designed to complement the rural character of the village, reflect local heritage and ensure that watercourses are not affected by pollution.

Parking

13.12. There is a single car park off Whitworth Way close to the village centre which provides limited parking for the School, Preschool, Village Hall, Methodist Church and Post Office. The parking is inadequate at peak times and any loss of this facility will be resisted.

13.13. It is important that the design of new housing development is not dominated by car parking but a failure to make proper provision can result in problems in terms of appearance and safety. In terms of design, the provision of off-street car parking in sight of properties is of primary concern. Some parts of estates in the village offer off-street parking in the form of communal areas. This is disliked because residents cannot physically see their cars, evidenced by the number that are then parked in adjoining roads. Tandem parking can be inconvenient to residents, particularly when there are many car movements per day for school runs, work commuting and accessing facilities. This encourages parking on the street, adding to congestion and narrowing the usable highway. This is particularly true in Cotton End Road, (outside the post office and opposite the school,) and in Whitworth Way opposite the school playing field.



The most recent development in the village (Wooding Way) offers sufficient parking for 2 cars at each property and is designed to keep as many as possible off the street. This is a good example for the future.

13.14. Car ownership levels in the Parish are high as indicated above, reflecting both the rural location and limited availability of public transport. Off-road parking is limited in the village and is a frequent source of frustration for residents, even on new estates. Adherence to Bedford Borough Council’s parking standards should reflect these local factors and seek to ensure that new development does not add to current levels of congestion.

13.15. In the questionnaire, residents expressed strong concerns about traffic and transport issues and the impact on their well-being. They highlighted the dangers caused by on-street parking and risks to pedestrian and cyclist safety. The loss of any of the limited parking in the village would exacerbate these problems.

Policy TT2: Car Parking

Proposals for new housing developments will provide parking in line with Bedford Borough Council’s parking standards and have adequate on-site parking to meet current and future needs, tandem parking should be avoided where possible.

New development should not result in the loss of publicly accessible off-street car parking. Developments which propose to remove off-road parking spaces will only be supported where alternative provision is made which increases or maintains the number of accessible parking spaces available on or within the immediate vicinity of the site. Proposals for new development that provide additional off-road car parking spaces to alleviate parking congestion will be encouraged. New residential development should be designed to ensure that surface water run-off is minimised.

Provision for cyclists and pedestrians

13.16. Rights of Way are designated footpaths and bridleways, the latter can also be used by cyclists. These are protected by law and also protected by Policy 91 of the Local Plan 2030, which encourages improvements as well as provision of new rights of way.

- 13.17. There are no designated cycle routes within the village. There is a cycle/pedestrian link between the northern extremity of the village and Wixams, leading on to a link to the neighbouring village of Elstow and the outskirts of Bedford.
- 13.18. Wilstead benefits from a considerable number of public footpaths – 13 in total which together cover nearly 7 miles. They are used extensively by villagers for recreation, as walks can be planned to combine several footpaths resulting in an enjoyable circular walk in the countryside. All the walks offer pleasant views over the landscape whether North East towards the Cardington hangars or South towards the Greensand Ridge and woodland areas. In addition there are 4 bridleways (covering an additional 4 miles) which are used by walkers, cyclists and by recreational horse riders from the local equestrian centre and neighbouring smallholdings. The walks have inspired Wilstead residents to form a walking group which regularly meets to help maintain the network of footpaths and to go on organised rambles, using the local footpaths and exploring outside the village.
- 13.19. A comprehensive list of public footpaths and bridleways together with an indexed map is shown in Appendix D.
- 13.20. 94% of respondents to a question in the Survey were in favour of creating better footpaths to make it easier to walk around the village and 87% were in favour of creating better bridleways that could be used for horse riding or cycling.
- 13.21. Within the village the encroachment onto the pavements by parked cars, grass and hedges has resulted in large lengths of the pavements being too narrow for buggies or wheelchairs.
- 13.22. There are significant gaps in the pavements on the east side of Bedford Road stretching from No 30 up to Cawne Close. On the north side of Cotton End Road there is a break in the pavement between Cotton End Farm and 245 Cotton End Road (opposite Elms Lane) and on the south from No 114 to 154. Where footpaths end grass verges then extend to each of the main trunk roads. The older lanes (e.g. Duck End Lane, Northwood Lane, Ivy Lane, etc.) do not have pavements nor do some of the smaller, more recent developments (e.g. Brambles, Reid Court, Black Hat Close).
- 13.23. A partnership approach between the Parish Council, Bedford Borough Council and developers will be required to improve highway safety and minimise conflicts between road traffic, cyclists and pedestrians. It is intended to support new ways of managing the traffic throughout the Parish by promoting pedestrian and cyclist safety and resident well-being through lower traffic speeds and traffic volumes.

Policy TT3: Provision for pedestrians & cyclists

New development, including housing sites, should retain rights of way and, where appropriate, fund schemes to improve the provision of pavements and improve safety and access for pedestrians and cyclists.

New rights of way and permissive paths will be supported.

Local Businesses

- 13.24. Wilstead has supported a variety of trades, services and centres in the past and continues to do so today with hairdressers, takeaways, the pharmacy, the post office, a cattery, computer services, Equestrian Centre, garages, builders, gardeners, bookkeepers, childminders, and many others. There are still seven working farms in the Parish with some diversification such as open days and storage.
- 13.25. The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate employment sites, but it supports the viability of local businesses and their expansion, where this is proportionate and appropriate in the individual circumstances. The intention is to avoid Wilstead becoming more of a “dormitory” settlement which is over-dependent on outward commuting. The September 2019 survey showed most people who travel to work do not travel more than 20 miles.
- 13.26. The Plan also encourages appropriate diversification of existing economic activities, as this will make the local economy more robust and more sustainable. Home working is also seen as a means of encouraging business and creating a sustainable community with less commuting and a more sustainable lifestyle, saving individuals the cost of travel and increasing their leisure time.
- 13.27. However, development must be of a scale and intensity appropriate to its context, must not impact detrimentally on residential amenity, and must have an acceptable impact on the character and scale of the village and its rural hinterland. There was little support in the Survey responses for industrial development, offices or facilities to encourage tourism.
- 13.28. The provision of good telecommunications is particularly important in rural areas and in supporting the viability and sustainability of rural enterprise and home working. The village is well served by the provision of fibre-optic communications. These can be extended into individual homes although with the short distance to the telephone exchange within the village ‘copper wire’ connection to houses is sufficient to provide fairly fast connection.

Policy LE1: Supporting Local Employment and Businesses

Proposals for the development of new small businesses and for the expansion or diversification of existing businesses, including farm-based operations, will be encouraged, providing that:

- *it can be demonstrated that there will be no adverse impact from increased traffic, noise, smell, lighting, vibration or other emissions or activities arising from the proposed development; and*
- *it would have an acceptable impact on the character and scale of the village, its rural hinterland and landscape.*
- *it follows the sustainable development principles that protect the environment.*

Applications for extensions or part change of use of dwellings to enable flexible or home working within the development boundary will be supported, subject to there being appropriate parking and that the residential amenity of neighbouring properties is maintained.

In each instance, the provision of effective broadband services will be encouraged and appropriate measures should be incorporated into the design of workplaces.

14. Implementation, Monitoring and Review

14.1. This section outlines the approach to the implementation of the Wilshamstead Neighbourhood Plan, including working in partnership, funding mechanisms, priority projects and monitoring/review. The approach will be that any new development should be supported by the timely delivery of infrastructure, services and facilities necessary to provide a balanced, self-sufficient community.

Working in partnership

14.2. Wilshamstead Parish Council is committed to Localism and locally informed influence over planning decisions and it will be the key organisation in the implementation, monitoring and review of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Council will build upon its excellent track record in engaging in planning decisions (reactively through consultation and proactively through promoting the policies of this plan) and by delivering related projects for the local community. However, it is recognised that partnership working is needed for the potential of the plan to be realised. Partnership and joint working will be key elements in the successful implementation of the plan. The main organisations and the roles that they can play are summarised below.

- **Bedford Borough Council** - Planning Policy, Development Control, Housing Management and Improvement, Economic Development, Open Spaces, Recreation and Community Facilities and unitary authority functions, including Drainage, Highways and Transport, Education, Landscape and Social Services.
- **Adjoining Parish Councils** – Assessing impact of large-scale planning applications.
- **South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnerships (SEMLEP)**
- **Environment Agency** The planning, design and delivery of development, taking account of: Flood risk management; Water quality and water resources and other regulation.
- **Site owners and developers** will need to liaise with the Parish Council as well as the other agencies involved in development.

Funding and Implementation Mechanisms

14.3. Financial contributions will be sought from developers through Section 106 agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) which provides a legal framework to raise funds to provide the infrastructure needed to cope with new developments. Contributions will be sought as appropriate under CIL Regulations and the NPPF.

14.4. The Neighbourhood Planning Regulations of the 2011 Localism Act enable areas with a Neighbourhood Plan in place to receive at least 25% of the CIL raised in their area to direct to their own local infrastructure priorities. These contributions will be targeted on the priority need to deliver new community infrastructure.



- 14.5. In addition, the Parish Council will seek to influence annual and other budget decisions by Bedford Borough Council on housing, open space and recreation, economic development, community facilities and transport, through the Local Transport Plan.
- 14.6. The Parish Council will also work with the appropriate agencies and organisations to develop funding bids to help to achieve Neighbourhood Plan policies and objectives. This might include The Lottery, UK Government programmes, land fill tax credits and LEP funding.
- 14.7. The Plan will be used by the Parish Council to:
- guide comments on planning applications
 - negotiate with landowners and developers to achieve the best possible outcomes from new development
 - direct financial resources to the village in a structured way
 - bring together groups or working parties to improve the village environment
 - lobby local authorities to support the parishioners wishes and aspirations
 - encourage ideas from local residents to further improve or introduce amenities in the village
- 14.8. It is important to check that progress is made towards meeting the objectives and policies of the Plan. The Parish Council will report on the implementation of the Plan every 5 years and consider:
- if progress is being made to achieve the vision and the objectives of the Plan
 - if progress is being made towards the implementation of the policies in the Plan
 - if financial contributions available to the community arising from development are being targeted towards the identified plans and projects
 - if the Plan remains based on the most up to date information
 - if the Plan is being taken into account by Bedford Borough Council when determining planning applications
- 14.9. It will then conclude whether a review is required. If so, it will secure opinions of residents and stakeholders to update the Plan.

15. Parish Aspirations

15.1. There was remarkable consistency in responses to the September 2019 Survey showing that people appreciate:

- Living in a village and its location in the countryside with its views and its walks.
- Community spirit and the friendliness of neighbours and other residents.
- Relative quiet and tranquillity as opposed to the hustle and bustle of a town.
- Local amenities, particularly the post office, pharmacy and school
- The availability of organised social activities.
- The village feels safe and has a relatively low crime rate.
- Good infrastructure

But they do not want:

- Continual development and expansion of the Village.
- Inconsiderate parking, particularly around the post office, school entrance and crossroads area and across dropped kerbs.
- Vehicle speeding.

15.2. Where appropriate, these responses to the survey have been summarised within the appropriate paragraph of the Neighbourhood Plan above. There are additional comments, however, that cannot be addressed directly by the Plan and these are reproduced in this section as aspirations for the future. The Parish Council should consider these in their future planning.

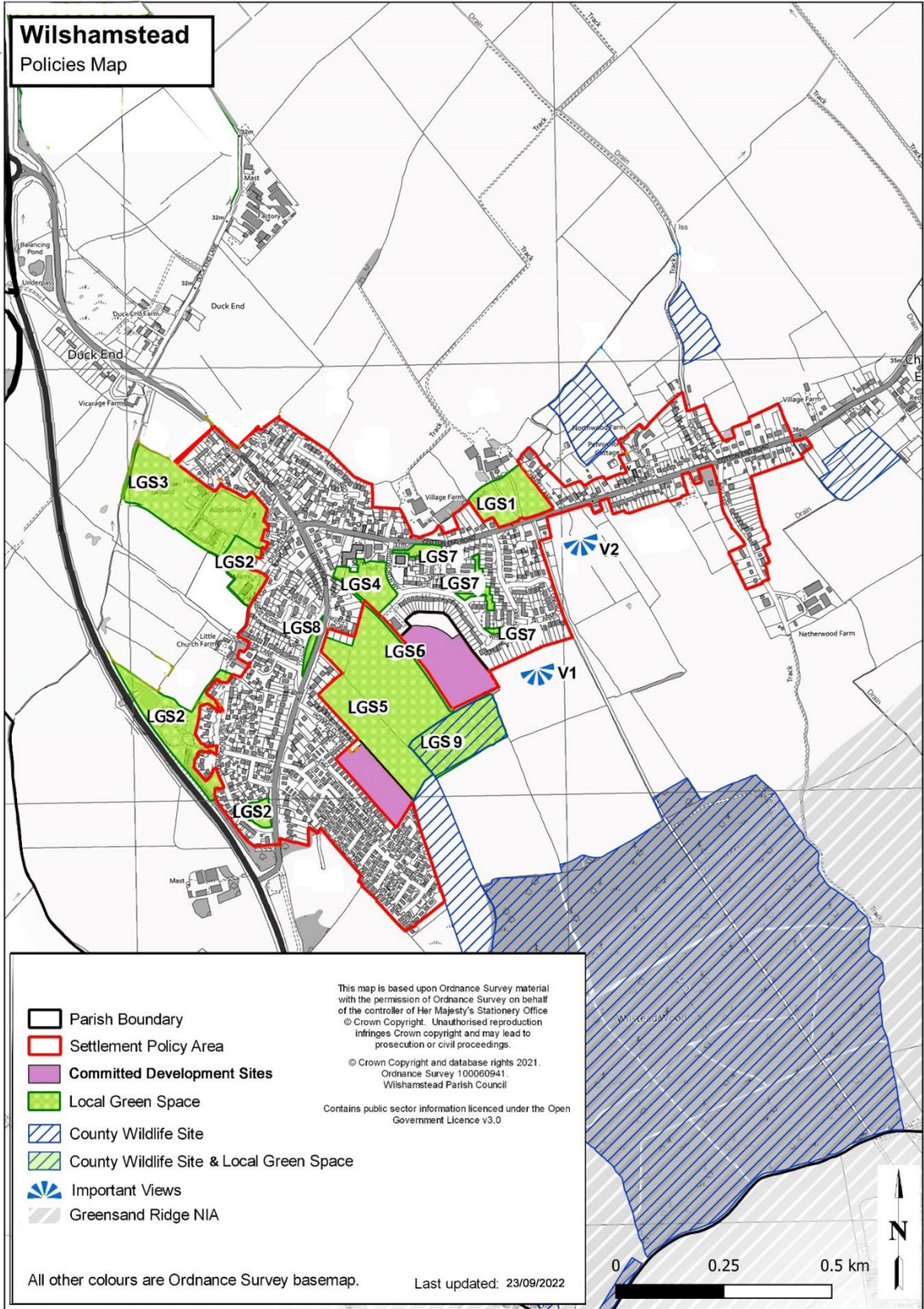
In no order of priority:

- The poor state of pavements (particularly for those with mobility issues)
- Lack of GP or medical facilities
- The lack of a clear village centre
- An improvement in facilities for younger people and the elderly
- Better bus shelters
- More shops
- Improved street lighting (e.g. Ivy Lane)
- Reduction in litter
- Improved safety and security
- Better mobile phone coverage
- More pedestrian crossing points/dropped kerbs
- More seats
- Reduced potholes (particularly for those with mobility issues)
- Increase the CCTV to provide support and a deterrent at additional places such as the “bottle bank” lay-by
- Hanging baskets of seasonal flowers on lamp posts, planting , landscaping and raised beds
- Better maintenance (e.g. fencing around ditches)



- Management of the encroachment of bushes & over hanging trees which reduce pavement widths
- Digital speed signs
- More litter bins
- Roundabout at A6/Luton Road junction
- An annual village fete
- Additional recreational apparatus on the school playing field
- Improvement and repair of current children's play equipment
- More Christmas decorations over future years
- Opening up of Duck End Lane planted area as a centre for woodland wildlife conservation and the creation of a substantial pond
- Setting up of a high quality free book store exchange library
- Establishing a neighbourhood garden tour, inviting residents to open up their gardens for viewing
- Better provision for cyclists
- A café in the village

16. Policies Map



17. Table showing relationship between Objectives and Policies

Objectives	Policies
1. To seek protection and enhancement of the countryside setting of the village, by ensuring separation from the urban edge whilst retaining access to the countryside.	RC1
2. Identified green spaces, views and vistas and local wildlife habitats will be maintained and enhanced.	NE1,
3. To identify, protect and enhance village heritage assets and key public spaces, ensuring that any future development is sympathetic to the existing rural character of the village.	RC1, BE1, BE2, ROS3
4. To ensure any future housing responds to local needs, is of a high standard of design, and fits well into the context of the village in terms of type, mix, scale and character.	BE2, H1, ROS2
5. To protect existing assets such as the school, village hall and other community buildings and spaces used for community events and encourage improvements in line with changing needs.	CF1
6. To improve the leisure and recreation opportunities for residents of all ages by maintaining and encouraging community activities and the provision of open space and children's play facilities	CF1, ROS1, ROS2, ROS3
7. To promote safe public streets and spaces; reduce traffic volumes through more accessible and beneficial sustainable transport links (including pavements, footpaths and cycle routes) and ensure appropriate parking solutions.	TT1, TT2, TT3
8. To sustain and enhance the range of community and commercial activities and services in the village. Economic activity such as working from home and appropriate small-scale diversification of farm buildings will be encouraged.	LE1



18. List of Appendices to the Neighbourhood Plan plus Accompanying Documents

Appendices to the Neighbourhood Plan (Separate documents):

- Appendix A: Local Green Spaces, County Wildlife Sites, Strategic Gaps and Important Views
- Appendix B: Historical and Important Buildings
- Appendix C: Design Guide
- Appendix D: Public Footpaths and Bridleways

Documents supporting the Neighbourhood Plan (Separate documents)

- Basic Conditions Statement
- Consultation Statement and Survey Results
- Housing Needs Survey Report
- Habitat Regulations Assessment
- Screening Report – Strategic Environmental Assessment

19. Glossary

Adoption		The procedure by which a plan becomes formal council responsibility. The Neighbourhood Planning Regulations also call this stage 'made' for the purposes of a Neighbourhood Plan.
Affordable housing		Housing provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined taking into account local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.
Allocation		A piece of land that has had a particular use earmarked via a Neighbourhood Plan or Local Plan. This might be for housing, employment or another use such as open space.
Amenity		A positive element or elements that contribute to the overall character or enjoyment of an area. For example, open land, trees, historic buildings and the interrelationship between them, or less tangible factors such as tranquility.
Biodiversity		The whole variety of life encompassing variations, including plants and animals.
Brownfield/previously developed		Land that has been previously developed on (excluding agricultural or forestry buildings and residential gardens).
Bedford Borough Council	BBC	The Local Authority within which Wilstead lies.
Consultation Statement		A document which details when, where and how the public and stakeholders have been consulted, issues that were raised and how they were addressed.
Countryside		Land not within settlement boundaries.
County Wildlife Site	CWS	A designated area of land important for its species or habitat, of Bedfordshire-wide importance.
Community Infrastructure Levy	CIL	An amount of money payable to the Council on new housing and other development which is used for infrastructure and community facilities and services.
Developer Contributions/Planning Obligations/Section 106		Developer contributions, also known as planning obligations, can be secured via a section 106 legal agreement or planning condition attached to a

		planning permission. They help mitigate any adverse impacts generated by new development on infrastructure and facilities.
Employment Land		Land that is used or is proposed to be used for offices, industry and/or storage and distribution – covered by B and E Classes in the Use Classes Order.
Evidence Base		The information and data gathered by local authorities and other plan makers to inform and support the policy approaches to be set out in a Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan.
Examination		For neighbourhood planning, an independent assessment carried out by an examiner to determine whether your plan meets the Basic Conditions.
Flood risk		The combination of probability of a particular flood event and its corresponding hazard. Used to refer to the scale of flood effect, combining hazard and probability, upon a particular site. Flood Zones 1-3b describe land with a specific probability of flooding with 1 being the least affected. Development may be restricted by Flood Zones.
Greenfield		Land where there has been no previous development.
Greensand Ridge Nature Improvement Area	NIA	The Greensand Ridge NIA is a partnership led by the Greensand Trust, the Wildlife Trust and the RSPB, working closely with Central Bedfordshire Council and Natural England, committed to working together and with others to achieve a real and lasting difference to the habitats, species and landscape of the Greensand Ridge.
Green Infrastructure	GI	A network of multi-functional green space and other environmental features, urban and rural, including both established and new sites - which support natural and ecological processes, and are capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.
Green Space	GS	An open space that helps to define the landscape and character of the area and is of aesthetic or recreational value to the community.
Habitats Regulation	HRA	Tests the impacts of a plan or project on nature

Assessment		conservation sites of European importance and is required under EU legislation.
Heritage asset		A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).
Infrastructure		Refers to the fundamental facilities and systems serving a country, city, or other area, including the services and facilities necessary for its economy to function, including transport.
Local Green Space	LGS	A green space that has been designated for protection from development.
Local Plan		The main planning document in an area which sets out what type and how much development will occur across the area for the next 15 years. It also provides a suite of policies that help manage development including for design, access and amenity.
National Planning Policy Framework	NPPF	Sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.
National Planning Practice Guidance	NPPG	A web-based resource, provides more detailed guidance on the contents of the NPPF.
Neighbourhood Area		The area that the Neighbourhood Plan will focus on. For town or parish councils, the designated area is usually the boundary.
Neighbourhood Development Plan or Neighbourhood plan	NDP/NP	Will set out the vision for a neighbourhood area and the planning policies for the use and development of land. If adopted, a Neighbourhood Plan will become a statutory plan carrying equal weight with adopted local plan policies.
Policy		A concise statement of the principles that a particular kind of development proposal should satisfy in order to obtain planning permission.
Parish Plan		A Parish Plan or community led plan can include planning related issues but they can focus purely on areas other than development. Parish Plans will not have the same legal status in planning terms as a Neighbourhood Plan.

Policies Map		Illustrates the spatial extent of the planning policies and designated areas.
Qualifying Body		Either a parish/town council or neighbourhood forum, which can initiate the process of neighbourhood planning.
Referendum		A vote by the eligible population of an electoral area who may decide on a matter of public policy. Neighbourhood Plans are subject to a referendum of the eligible voters within a neighbourhood area. There is a specific question set in Regulations which has a yes or no answer.
Settlement Hierarchy		Many Local Plans set out a hierarchy of settlements according to their population and facilities. Different levels of growth may be attributed to each tier.
Strategic Environmental Assessment	SEA	A European requirement – it assesses the significant environmental impacts of plans and programmes.
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	SFRA	An assessment of the probability of flooding within a particular area.
Strategic Gap	SG	In order to preserve the separate character and identity of the village, the gap between Wilstead and other settlements requires additional protection from development, to prevent coalescence.
Supplementary Planning Document	SPD	A document which elaborates upon a policy/policies of the Local Plan to provide additional guidance for a particular topic or type of development.
Sustainability Appraisal	SA	An assessment of the environmental, social, and economic impacts of a Local Plan to check that the plan accords with the principles of sustainable development.
Sustainable Development		An approach to development that aims to allow economic growth without damaging the environment or natural resources. Development which ‘meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’.
Sustainable Drainage System	SuDS	An artificial drainage solution which reduces and slows the quantity and rate of surface water run off from new development, dealing with it as close to the source as possible.

Tree Preservation Order	TPO	An order made by a local planning authority to protect a specific tree, a group of trees or woodland. TPOs prevent the felling, lopping, topping, uprooting or other deliberate damage of trees without the permission of the local planning authority.
Village Design Statement		Contains a description and analysis of the distinctive aspects of a village and outlines design guidance for further development. A Village Design Statement can then be considered in assessing planning applications.
Wilshamstead or Wilstead		Usually the name Wilshamstead is used to refer to the whole Parish and Wilstead to the village. However, they do get confused in everyday usage. For the purposes of this document, the first statement in this section applies.



Wilshamstead Neighbourhood Plan

2020 - 2035

Appendix A

**Green Spaces,
County Wildlife
Sites,
Strategic Gaps and
Important Views**

February 2022

Local Green Spaces, County Wildlife Sites, Strategic Gaps and Important Views

Introduction

This document identifies and describes existing open spaces, County Wildlife Sites, strategic gaps and important views in the Parish of Wilshamstead and assesses them to determine if they fit the criteria for designating as Local Green Space as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Bedford Borough Council identify a number of open space designations in their development plans (open spaces in the Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013 and Local Green Spaces in the Local Plan 2030). These should remain in place. However, the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to protect specific spaces against development because of their importance to the village. A fresh look has been taken and the identified potential green spaces, strategic gaps and key views set out on the Policies Map which follows and described in detail on subsequent pages.

The document is divided into 4 sections:

- Green Spaces (GS)
- Existing County Wildlife Sites (CWS)
- Strategic Gap sites (SG)
- Important Views (V)

Local Green Space Designation

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. As part of promoting healthy and safe communities, the value of access to a network of high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and wellbeing of communities. The Local Green Space designation will allow communities to identify and protect areas that are of value to the community through local and neighbourhood plans.

The designation should only be used:

- where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves
- where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife and
- where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

Bedford Borough Council, as part of preparation for the Local Plan 2030 asked for nominations for Local Green Space. Three spaces were nominated at that time, an area off Bedford Road, (the Community Woodland), an area south of Whitworth Way and land north of Wilstead Wood. BBC designated parts of the two latter and rejected the Community Woodland as being not special enough at that time. Their assessment can be seen here

<https://edrms.bedford.gov.uk/OpenDocument.aspx?id=ZZ3uVNsgT9VVmBkYLXyUvg%3d%3d&name=Local%20Green%20Space%20Assessment%20-%20Wilstead.pdf>

This Neighbourhood Plan methodology differs from the Borough's and therefore these sites have been reassessed.

Greensand Ridge Nature Improvement Area (NIA)

Part of the Parish of Wilshamstead lies within the Greensand Ridge Nature Improvement Area (see Policies Map). The objectives of the Greensand Trust are fully supported by the Parish Council and it is assumed that adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan will mean that this part of the Parish will be protected from unsuitable development.

The Greensand Ridge NIA is a partnership led by the Greensand Trust, the Wildlife Trust and the RSPB, working closely with Central Bedfordshire Council and Natural England, committed to working together and with others to achieve a real and lasting difference to the habitats, species and landscape of the Greensand Ridge. The partners are particularly committed to strengthening ecological networks at all levels, enhancing and buffering existing sites and linking them together across the wider countryside.

For further information see: <http://bedfordshirenaturally.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/44173-Greensand-Ridge-6pp.pdf>

Three of the County Wildlife Sites shown under consideration for Local Green Space recognition are (largely) included within the NIA but are documented separately from the NIA to emphasise their importance.

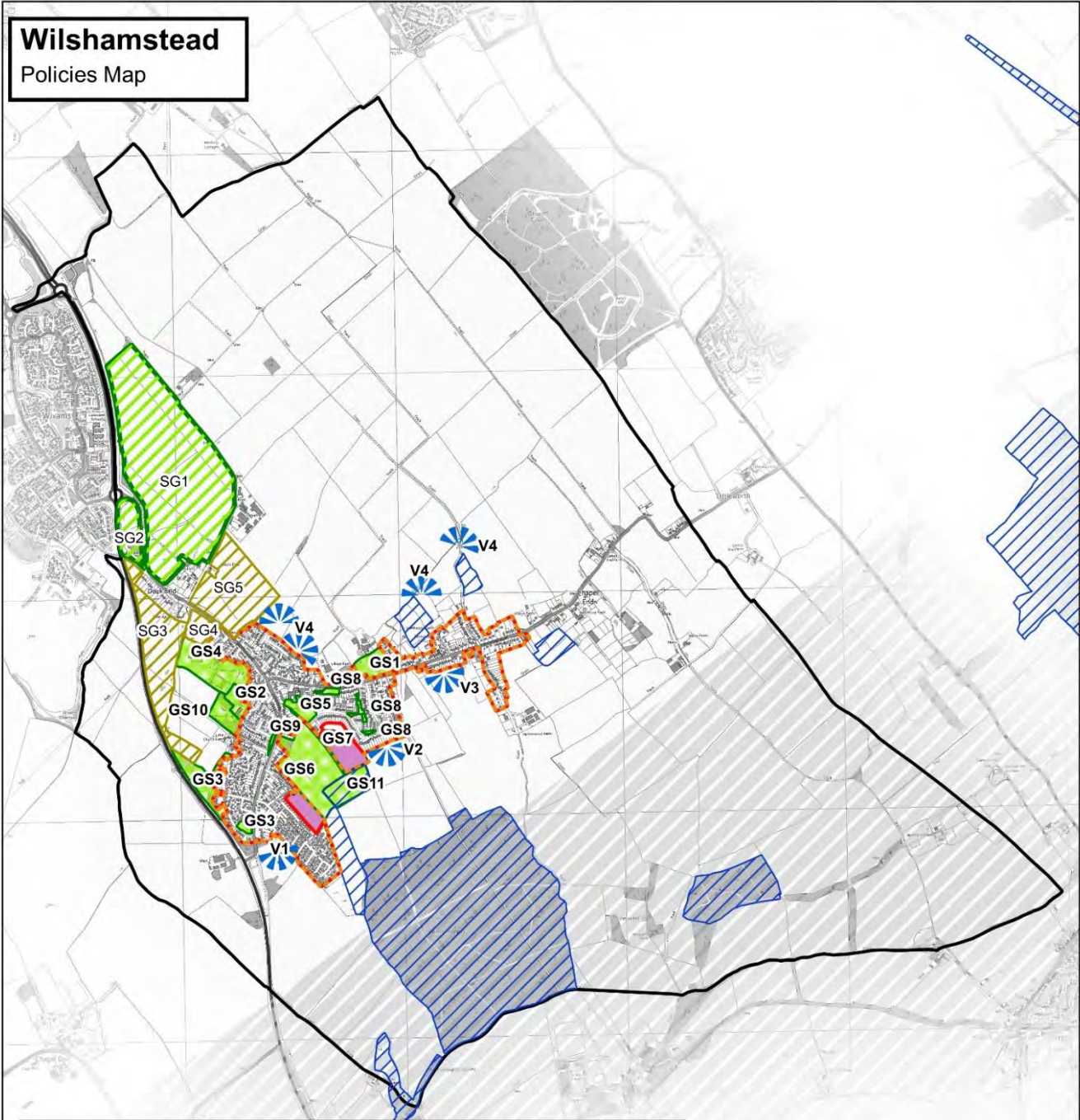
Policies Map

The Preliminary Policies Map which follows shows the complete Parish of Wilshamstead and all sites considered for Local Green Space (LGS) status. Not all sites figure in the final selection. Those that are proposed for LGS status are shown in a table at the end of this document and on the Final Policies Map.

The Preliminary Map and smaller maps used to identify specific areas show (in darker green) the areas designated by Bedford Borough Council as Village Open Spaces. These are removed from the Final Policies Map for reasons of simplification.

(N.B. All Satellite pictures used are courtesy of Google Earth)

Wilshamstead Policies Map



-  Parish Boundary
-  Settlement Policy Area
-  New Village Envelope
-  Development Sites
-  Local Green Space
-  Local Green Space & Strategic Gap
-  Strategic Gap
-  Important Views
-  County Wildlife Site
-  Greensand Ridge NIA

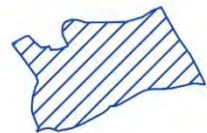
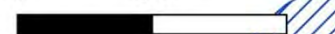
All other colours are Ordnance Survey basemap.

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Last updated: 11/02/2021

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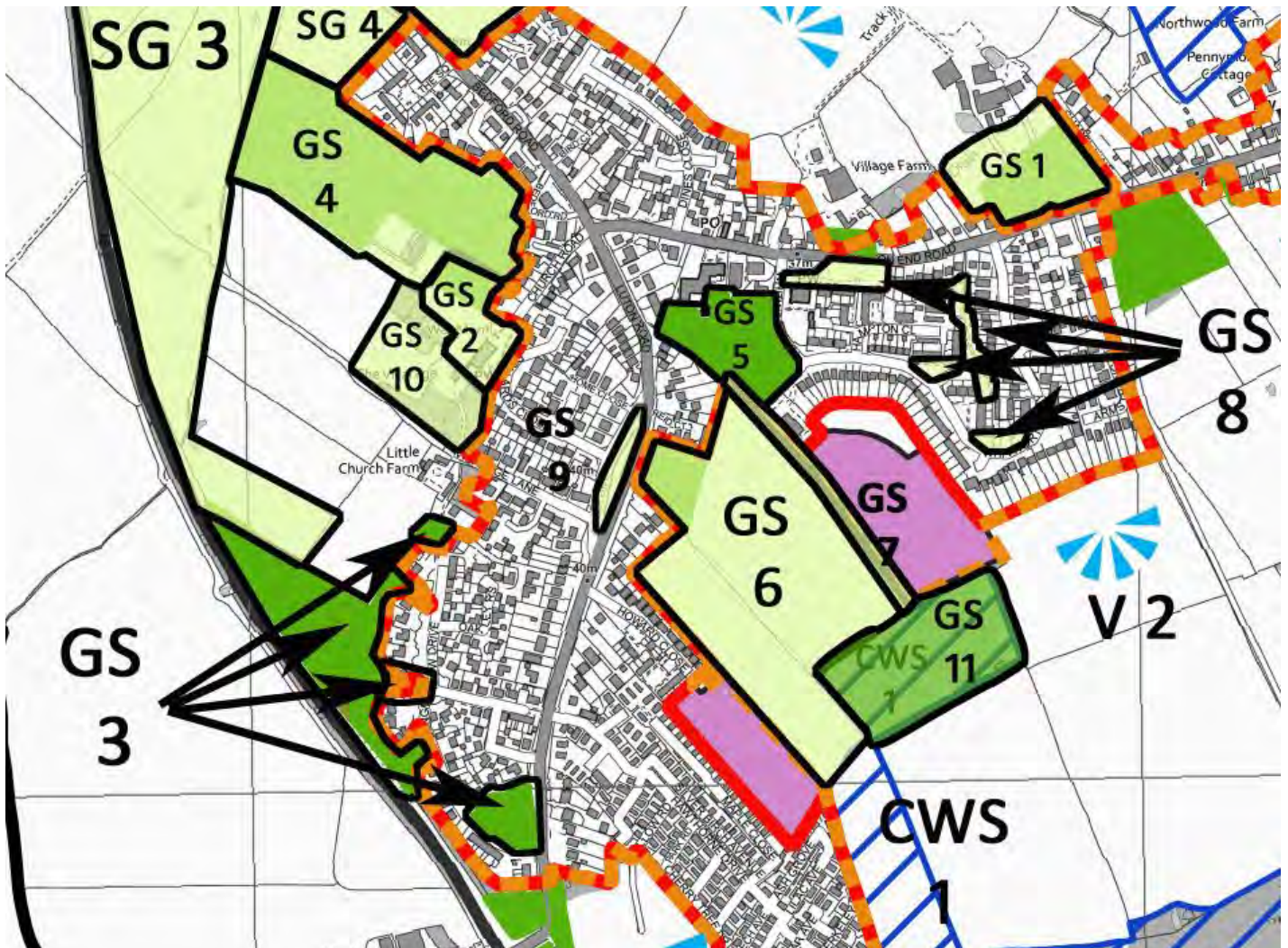


Policies Map – Proposed Local Green Spaces Only



This map shows the 11 sites first considered as Local Green Spaces. Each is given a “GS” reference and is shown in detail on the pages which follow.

After final designation sites were either removed or designated as Local Green Spaces (LGS). The original and final references of each are shown in the title row of each item on the pages which follow.


The darker green areas are existing Open Spaces recognised by Bedford Borough Council.





	GS 1			(Ref LGS 1 after Redesignation)
Site Name	Field in front of Manor Farm			
Site Map				
Site Area	1.42 ha			
Site Location	North of Cotton End Road between 95 Cotton End Road including the copse of trees that borders Chapel Lane.			
Site Description	<p>Open field and woodland that helps maintain the rural feel to the village as it reaches right into the heart of the village. Part of the area is already recognised as an important open space by Bedford Borough Council.</p> <p>Beauty Open aspect providing views past to open countryside</p> <p>Historical significance The majority of the trees within the wooded copse are over 50 years old and the field has been part of the village scene for more than 100 years.</p> <p>Tranquillity The site is peaceful except for the road along the Southern boundary.</p> <p>Recreational Value There is no public access. However, it provides an area of natural pasture land, often grazed by sheep, that is close to the centre of the village providing educational value for village children. The woodland copse has scope to be managed as a small nature reserve.</p> <p>Wildlife The small area of mixed native woodland has not received a wildlife survey. However, it will contain many species of bird and ground wildlife typical of an English wood. Owls are regularly heard calling in the wood after dark.</p>			
Site Ownership	Private (Manor Farm)			
Site Access	No public access			
Site Photos				
Under 10 ha	Within 300m of village community	Demonstrably Special / Locally Significant	Recommended for Designation?	
Y	Y	Y	Y	

Ref	GS 2 (Removed after Redesignation)		
Site Name	Church Yard & Burial Ground		
Site Map			
Site Area	0.8 ha		
Site Location	South & West of Church Rd. West of Pollards Close.		
Site Description	<p>Land surrounding the church. East of Church: grass area used for wedding photos and cremation plots. North of Church: War memorial and almost full cemetery. West of Church: Remembrance Garden.</p> <p>Burial Ground to north of churchyard for cremations, burials and scattered ashes. Path through Burial Ground lined with Himalayan Birch. Part of this (shaded a darker green on the first map) is already recognised as an important open space by Bedford Borough Council.</p> <p>Beauty Undisturbed natural habitat</p> <p>Historical significance Contains many interesting graves.</p> <p>Tranquillity The site is peaceful.</p> <p>Recreational Value Footpath FP 4 runs through it and is used extensively for recreational walks and access to the centre of the village from residents on the Longmeadow estate.</p> <p>Wildlife Has not received a wildlife survey. However, it will contain many species of bird and ground wildlife typical of undisturbed natural grassland, shrubs and woodland, which borders the site.</p>		
Site Ownership	Churchyard – Church (maintained by PC) Burial Ground - PC		
Site Access	From Church Rd, Vicarage Lane, Pollards Close & Jubilee Way (unadopted) via Allotments. Wilstead Footpath 4 goes through the Churchyard.		
Site Photos			
Under 10 ha	Within 300m of village community	Demonstrably Special / Locally Significant	Recommended for Designation?
Y	Y	Y	N (already protected)

Ref	GS 3 (Ref LGS 2 after Redesignation)
Site Name	Green Spaces and Ponds off Longmeadow Drive
Site Map	
Site Area	See below
Site Location	South west part of the village off Luton Road
Site Description	<p>Four important green spaces within the Longmeadow Drive estate, one with a LEAP & MUGA (Local Enhanced Area of Play & Multi Use Games Area), one with a LAP (Local Area of Play), one with a pond and one with a circular seat / specimen tree.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Between No's 34 & 36 – 0.09 hectares 2. Between Nos 42 & 44 through to the land behind, which stretches to the A6, including the MUGA and balancing pond. – 1.29 hectares. This land is already recognised as an important open space by Bedford Borough Council. 3. Triangle of land opposite Nos 16 to 22 and next to Luton Road which includes a pond – 0.23 hectares 4. The very top of Longmeadow Drive before the footpath leading to Vicarage Lane – 0.06 hectares
	<p>Beauty: No's 1 & 4 are areas of mown grass No's 2 & 3 are important natural habitats including substantial water features</p>
	<p>Historical significance None</p>
	<p>Tranquillity Close to the busy A6 and Luton Road, so not particularly tranquil</p>
	<p>Recreational Value These spaces provide area within the estate for recreation and rest. They also provide important space to reduce the "built-up" feel.</p>
	<p>Wildlife Areas 2 & 3 are home to a variety of pondlife and grassland creatures</p>
Site Ownership	Being transferred from the developer to the Parish Council.
Site Access	From Longmeadow Drive, Church Farm Avenue. Wilstead Footpath 4 from Vicarage Lane goes along part of Longmeadow Drive before going over the A6 bund to Houghton Conquest.

Ref	GS 3 (ctd)		
Site Name	Green Spaces and Ponds off Longmeadow Drive		
Site Photos			
Under 10 ha	Within 300m of village community	Demonstrably Special / Locally Significant	Recommended for Designation?
Y	Y	Y	Y



Ref	GS 4 (Ref LGS 3 after Redesignation)		
Site Name	Allotments, Bowls Club and Jubilee Playing Field		
Site Map			
Site Area	3.51 ha		
Site Location	West of Bedford Road, SW of The Square and Black Hat Close		
Site Description	<p>Area of Allotments, Bowling Green and Playing Field used extensively for recreation. This land is already recognised as an important open space by Bedford Borough Council.</p> <p>Beauty Not a particular reason for designation</p> <p>Historical significance Allotments have been at this site for 50+ years. The Jubilee Playing Field was established to commemorate the Queen's Silver Jubilee.</p> <p>Tranquillity Peaceful site some distance from traffic</p> <p>Recreational Value Very high. The main area for recreation in the village with facilities for football, horticulture, Bowls, tennis and netball.</p> <p>Wildlife Not a particular reason for designation</p>		
Site Ownership	Parish Council		
Site Access	From Jubilee Way (unadopted) off Bedford Rd		
Site Photos			
Under 10 ha	Within 300m of village community	Demonstrably Special / Locally Significant	Recommended for Designation?
Y	Y	Y	Y



Ref	GS 5 (Ref LGS 4 after Redesignation)		
Site Name	Whitworth Way Playing Field		
Site Map			
Site Area	0.54 ha		
Site Location	West of Whitworth Way to rear of School		
Site Description	Large, grassed area used by the school. Includes a children's play area which can be used at all times. This land is already recognised as an important open space by Bedford Borough Council		
	Beauty Not a reason for designation		
	Historical significance Has been set aside for recreation since the 1960's		
	Tranquillity Not a reason for designation		
	Recreational Value Invaluable site close to the centre of the village for children's play and exercise		
	Wildlife Not a reason for designation		
Site Ownership	Bedford Borough. Children's Play Area rented by Parish Council.		
Site Access	Public access from Whitworth Way and Public Right of Way Wilstead Footpath 5.		
Site Photos			
Under 10 ha	Within 300m of village community	Demonstrably Special / Locally Significant	Recommended for Designation?
Y	Y	Y	Y




Ref	GS 6 (Ref LGS 5 after Redesignation)		
Site Name	Fields between Dragons Wood, Wilstead Woods and Luton Road		
Site Map			
Site Area	5.72 ha		
Site Location	East of Luton Road and eastern end of Howard Close		
Site Description	<p>2 grass fields bordered by mature trees and hedgerows. Provides views into the surrounding countryside from Reid Court, Howards Close and Briar Bank Park Home site keeping the rural feel to the village. These fields provide an informal footpath for Howards Close and Briar Bank to the heart of the village. Wilstead Footpath 5 runs along eastern edge through Dragons Wood.</p> <p>Part of the land (shaded in darker green) contains an area of shrubs and trees recognised as an important open space by Bedford Borough Council.</p>		
	Beauty Natural countryside extending into the heart of the village		
	Historical significance Not a reason for designation		
	Tranquillity Provides an area away from development		
	Recreational Value Used by villagers for walks across country to Wilstead Woods and the County Wildlife site at the end of Dragons Wood		
	Wildlife Varied wildlife including many species of woodland mammals and birds		
Site Ownership	Privately owned		
Site Access	Informal paths off Howard Close and from Dragons Wood & Wilstead Woods		
Site Photos			
Under 10 ha	Within 300m of village community	Demonstrably Special / Locally Significant	Recommended for Designation?
Y	Y	Y	Y

Ref	GS 7			(Ref LGS 6 after Redesignation)
Site Name	Dragons Wood			
Site Map				
Site Area	0.16ha			
Site Location	Linear space south west of Wooding Way			
Site Description	Linear woodland along part of Wilstead Footpath 5 from its junction with the path from Whitworth Way by the Telephone Exchange running south to the County Wildlife Site			
	Beauty Narrow strip of natural woodland and hedgerow.			
	Historical significance Part of Footpath 5 used historically to access Wilstead Woods			
	Tranquillity Close to the Wooding Way/Whitworth Way estates so not particularly tranquil			
	Recreational Value Used extensively for walking and access to the CWS and woods to the South			
	Wildlife Contains many species of bird and small mammals typical of an English wood.			
Site Ownership	Private			
Site Access	Public access from Luton Rd and Whitworth Way via Public Footpaths Wilstead FP5 and 18 respectively			
Site Photos				
Under 10 ha	Within 300m of village community	Demonstrably Special / Locally Significant	Recommended for Designation?	
Y	Y	Y	Y	

Ref	GS 8 (Ref LGS 7 after Redesignation)		
Site Name	Whitworth Way Estate		
Site Map			
Site Area	0.51 ha		
Site Location	Whitworth Way estate south of Cotton End Rd		
Site Description	<p>Green spaces within the housing as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bordering Cotton End Road with Whitworth Way to the West and houses on Cotton End Road to the West. Has a brook running through part of the site. 2. Large linear area running between Hampton Close and the NE/ East side of Whitworth Way. 3. Triangular area in front of no's 1- 11 Morgans Close and Phipps Close with Whitworth Road to the West. 4. Area at the end of Morgans Close on the bend at the South of Whitworth Way. 		
	Beauty Not a particular reason for designation		
	Historical significance Not a particular reason for designation		
	Tranquillity Not a particular reason for designation		
	Recreational Value Very important to help give a more open and rural feel to a large-scale development. Much used by children playing and for social gatherings.		
	Wildlife Not a particular reason for designation		
Site Ownership	Bedford Borough		
Site Access	By roads and footpaths within the estate		
Site Photos			
Under 10 ha	Within 300m of village community	Demonstrably Special / Locally Significant	Recommended for Designation?
Y	Y	Y	Y

Ref	GS 9 (Ref LGS 8 after Redesignation)		
Site Name	Island to the West of Luton Road		
Site Map			
Site Area	0.22 ha		
Site Location	At junction of Pollards Close and Luton Rd		
Site Description	Planted with trees and spring bulbs with a seating area. To enhance the area and provide a valuable break in the housing along Luton Road with seating to allow people to rest.		
	Beauty Not a reason for designation		
	Historical significance Established at the same time as the Pollards Close estate to provide a break in the housing and access over a deep ditch		
	Tranquillity Close to Luton Road		
	Recreational Value Providing a shortcut to Luton Road and an area of seating		
	Wildlife Area enhanced with spring bulbs. Attracts birds. Pondlife in ditch.		
Site Ownership	Borough Council		
Site Access	From Pollards Close and Luton Road		
Site Photos			
Under 10 ha	Within 300m of village community	Demonstrably Special / Locally Significant	Recommended for Designation?
Y	Y	Y	Y

Ref	GS 10 (Removed after Redesignation)		
Site Name	Rectory Grounds		
Site Map			
Site Area	1.44 ha		
Site Location	Western end of Vicarage Lane adjacent to Churchyard		
Site Description	Grassed and wooded area surrounded by mature trees		
	Beauty Natural area		
	Historical significance Used for village fetes for many years. Provides a setting for the listed church		
	Tranquillity Background noise from A6 but provides a buffer area for the peaceful churchyard and burial ground (GS 1)		
	Recreational Value See historical significance		
	Wildlife Many species of birds, small mammals and deer.		
Site Ownership	Church Authorities		
Site Access	No public access		
Site Photos			
Under 10 ha	Within 300m of village community	Demonstrably Special / Locally Significant	Recommended for Designation?
Y	Y	Y	Y

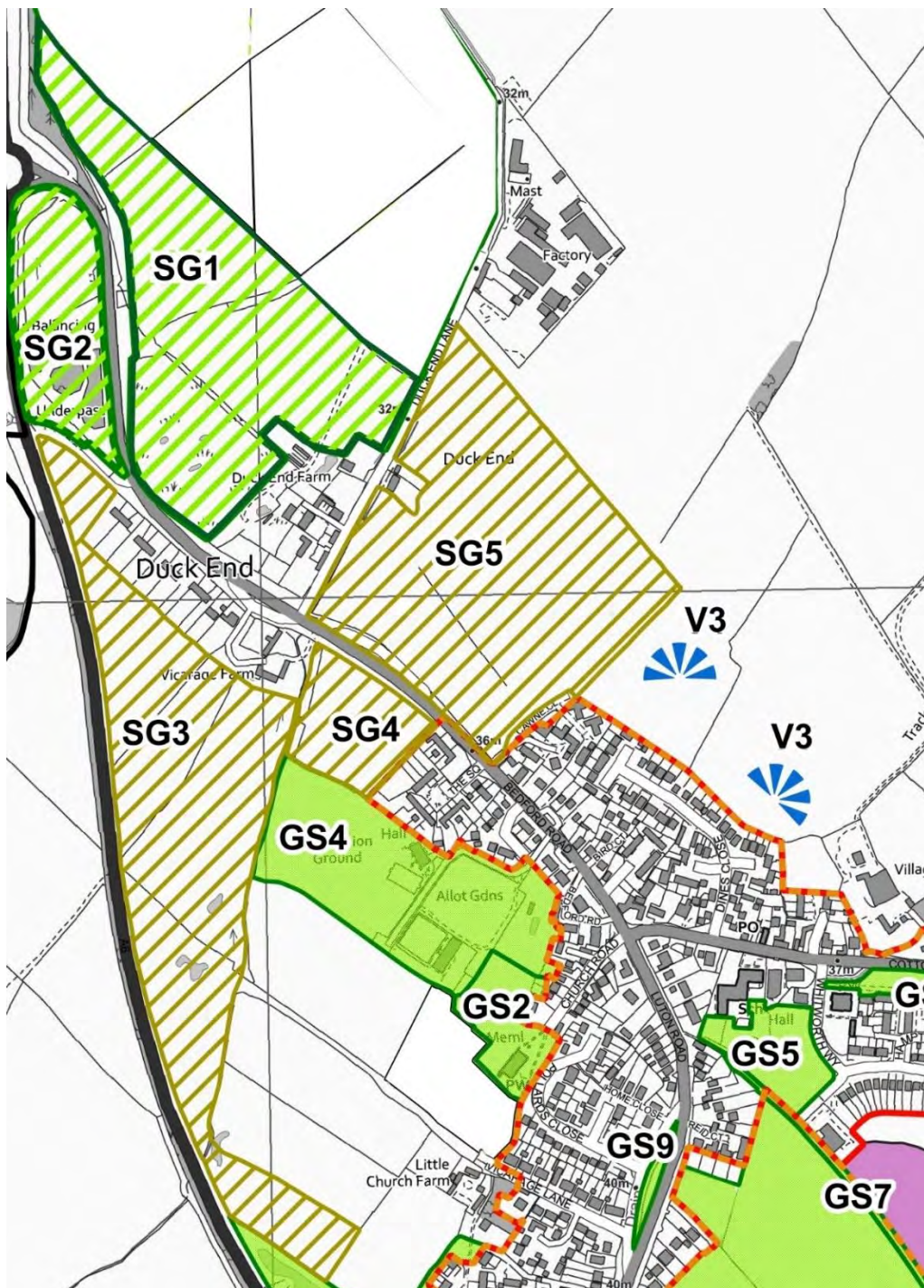
Ref	GS 11 (part of CWS 1) (Ref LGS 9 after Redesignation)		
Site Name	Wilstead Meadows - Butterfly Field		
Site Map	 		
Site Area	2.0 ha		
Site Location	South of Wooding Way & Dragons Wood		
Site Description	<p>Part of the already designated County Wildlife Site. South of the New Development (Wooding Way) east of Whitworth Way with open views of the Greensand Ridge.</p> <p>Beauty This is a ridge and furrow wildlife area and has developed unique habitats, it is a very rare feature in Bedfordshire. Neutral grassland on Oxford Clay, the fields are surrounded by tall mature hedges. Contains many species of wild flowers. Plants include: black knapweed (<i>Centaurea nigra</i>), common sorrel (<i>Rumex acetosa</i>), with lady's bedstraw (<i>Galium verum</i>), pepper saxifrage (<i>Silaum silaus</i>), dropwort (<i>Filipendula vulgaris</i>) and restharrow (<i>Ononis repens</i>).</p> <p>Historical significance Part of the CWS recognised in 1990</p> <p>Tranquillity Tranquil – away from the heart of the village</p> <p>Recreational Value Much used by residents for walking /exercise and a valuable natural site</p> <p>Wildlife The variety of grasses and wildflowers encourage many small mammals and insects, particularly butterflies</p>		
Site Ownership	Private ownership		
Site Access	Public access via Wilstead Footpath 5 and informal paths from Howard Close and Wilstead Wood		
Site Photos			
Under 10 ha	Within 300m of village community	Demonstrably Special / Locally Significant	Recommended for Designation ?
Y	Y	Y	Y – as LGS Already a CWS




Strategic Gap (SG)

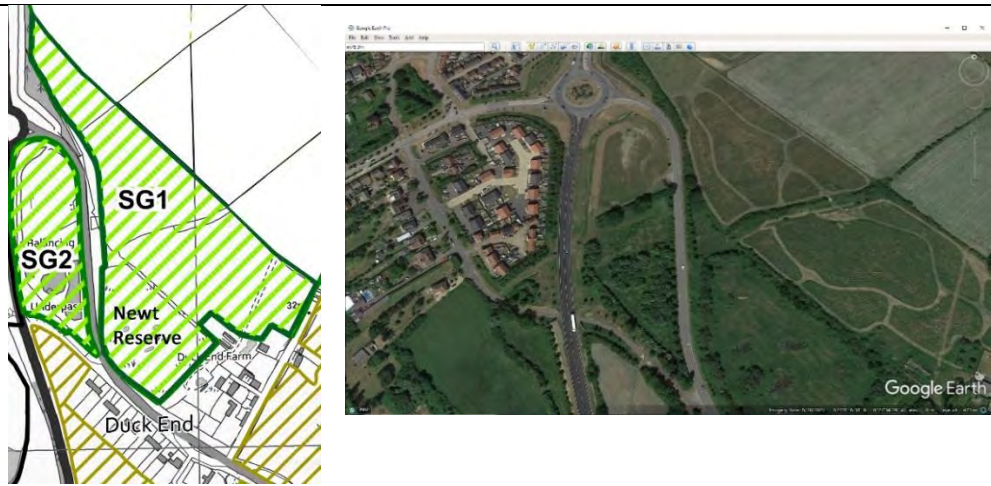

As explained in the Neighbourhood Plan, Wilstead is very close to the new housing developments at the Wixams and residents are keen that both settlements remain separated to support the retention of the rural character of Wilshamstead Parish. Other historical gaps between the village and its “Ends”, Duck End, Chapel End, Littleworth and Briar Bank, are also strategically important to maintain.



The gap to be preserved between the settlements should encompass the five areas shown below.




Whilst important as gaps, not all the areas shown can necessarily be designated as Local Green Spaces. See the Assessments at the end of each description to determine which have been selected.



Ref	SG 1 (Ref LGS 10 after Redesignation)		
Site Name	Community Woodland and Newt Reserve		
Site Map	 		
Site Area	9.69 ha		
Site Location	Equidistant from the communities of Wilstead and Wixams. East of Bedford Road and north of Duck End Lane		
Site Description	Part of the Landscape Enhancement Area created as part of the Wixams development. Together with the adjacent Newt Reserve, provides a green buffer between the village of Wilstead and the new community of Wixams.		
	Beauty Recently planted by villagers, under the direction of the Marston Vale Community Forest Project, with a variety of native trees. Will grow into a well-managed woodland area with wide pathways		
	Historical significance Designed as a result of a Consultation Report issued in November 2006 following discussion between the owners (Gallagher Estates) and a group of villagers.		
	Tranquillity Whilst close to the busy A6 trunk road it will none-the-less provide an area of reasonable tranquillity in a secure environment		
	Recreational Value Walking, cycling, horse riding, study of ecology & wildlife in a secure environment. Defined seating and interpretation points. Disabled access. Has already been supported by villagers who have planted 100's of young trees.		
	Wildlife The newt reserve (pond and wetland) was specifically created to take all newts found on the site of the Wixams development. The woodland will eventually be alive with native birds and mammals.		
Site Ownership	Transferred to Parish Council from L & Q Estates. Maintenance by Forest of Marston Vale.		
Site Access	Gated access off Duck End Lane. Future access from Newt Reserve off Bedford Rd		
Site Photos			
Under 10 ha	Within 300m of village community	Demonstrably Special / Locally Significant	Recommended for Designation?
Y	Y	Y	Y – as SG and LGS

Ref	SG 2 (Ref LGS 11 after Redesignation)		
Site Name	Area between the A6 and Bedford Rd.		
Site Map			
Site Area	2.51 ha		
Site Location	Between pedestrian underpass (under A6) and A6 Southern Cross Roundabout		
Site Description	<p>Landscape Enhancement Area created as part of the Wixams development. The northern section is a balancing pond to control run off from the Wixams. The middle section is grass with the southern section covered with young trees.</p> <p>Beauty Provides the initial break between the village of Wilstead and the new community of Wixams.</p> <p>Historical significance An important part of the gap designed as part of the Wixams development to separate the two communities</p> <p>Tranquillity Close to the busy A6 trunk Road</p> <p>Recreational Value Ideal location for use by both communities for recreational activity such as Scouting, Skate Park, Outdoor Gym</p> <p>Wildlife Balancing pond will support various wetland creatures. Woodland will contain many small mammal species</p>		
Site Ownership	<p>Balancing pond – Bedford Borough/Anglian Water</p> <p>Remainder being transferred from Bedford Borough to Parish Council</p>		
Site Access	Off Bedford Rd		
Site Photos			
Under 10 ha	Within 300m of village community	Demonstrably Special / Locally Significant	Recommended for Designation?
Y	Y	Y	Y – as SG and LGS

Ref	SG 3		
Site Name	Fields running between A6 and Bedford Road		
Site Map			
Site Area	9.47 ha		
Site Location	Closest fields to A6 west of Bedford Road		
Site Description	<p>These fields are located between the new town of Wixams and Wilstead. They help to maintain the strategic gap between the two communities which was always envisaged when the new community at Wixams was established.</p>		
	<p>Beauty No</p>		
	<p>Historical significance Not a reason for designation</p>		
	<p>Tranquillity Not a reason for designation</p>		
	<p>Recreational Value Not a reason for designation</p>		
	<p>Wildlife Not a reason for designation</p>		
Site Ownership	Privately owned.		
Site Access	No public access at present, however there is a public footpath running across		
Site Photos			
Under 10 ha	Within 300m of village community	Demonstrably Special / Locally Significant	Recommended for Designation?
Y	Y	N	Y – as SG N – as LGS

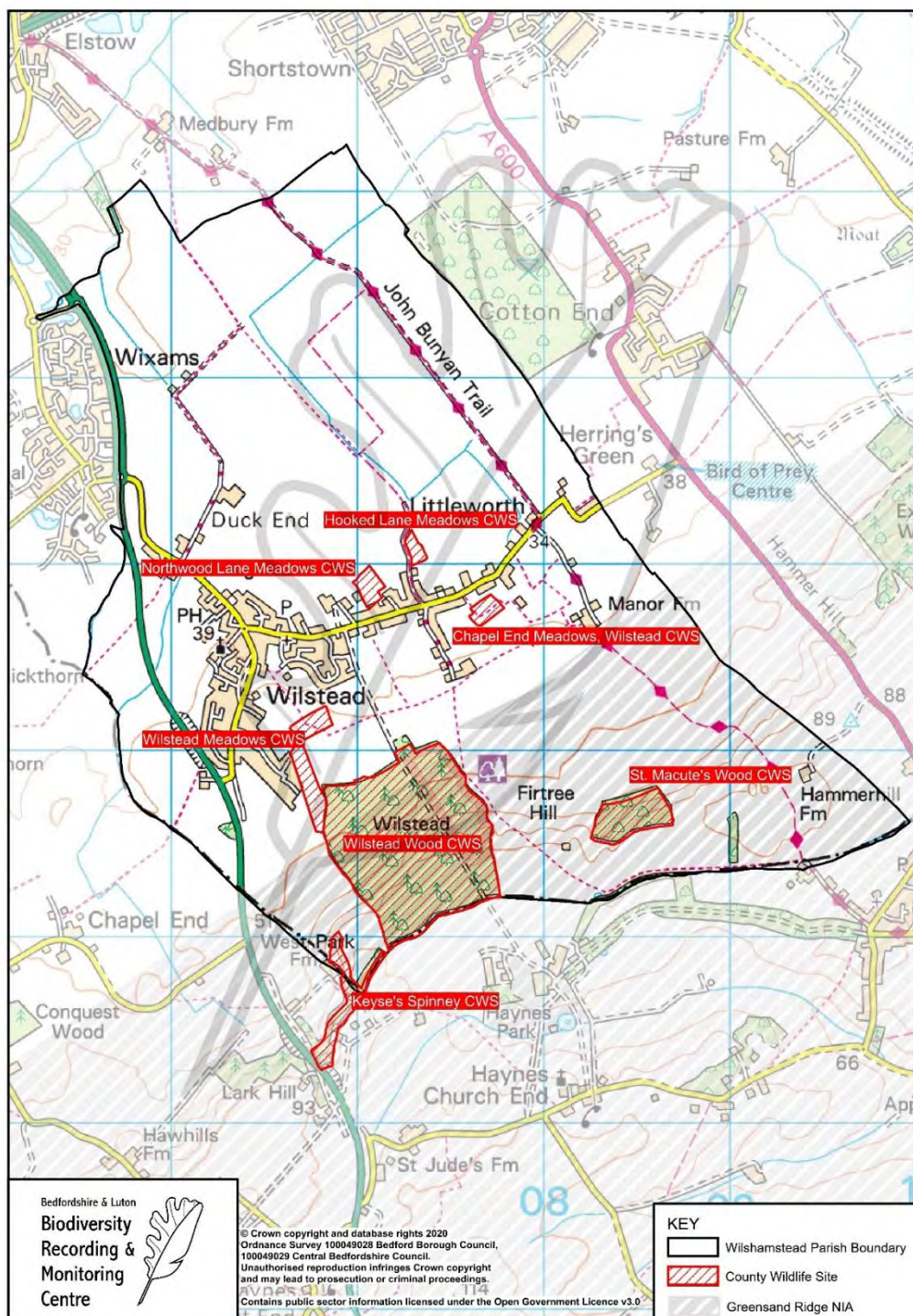
Ref	SG 4		
Site Name	Field West of Bedford Rd between the Square and Vicarage Farm		
Site Map	 		
Site Area	1.38 ha		
Site Location	Between Bedford Road and the Jubilee Playing Field		
Site Description	<p>Bordered by hedgerows. Used by the owner often for arable farming but presently sheep grazing. Represents another instance of the countryside reaching into the very heart of the village. Forms an important buffer or gap between the main village and Duck End</p> <p>Beauty Not a reason for designation</p> <p>Historical significance Not a reason for designation</p> <p>Tranquillity Not a reason for designation</p> <p>Recreational Value Alongside the Jubilee Playing Field and would make a much-needed extension to that field to extend the football areas. It would also provide access to the Jubilee field, Jubilee Centre, MUGA and changing rooms from the Bedford Road.</p> <p>Wildlife Not a reason for designation</p>		
Site Ownership	Private ownership		
Site Access	No public access		
Site Photos			
Under 10 ha	Within 300m of village community	Demonstrably Special / Locally Significant	Recommended for Designation?
Y	Y	Y	Y – as SG N – as LGS




Ref	SG 5		
Site Name	Land South of Duck End Lane and East of Bedford Road		
Site Map			
Site Area	8.84 ha		
Site Location	West of the main entry into the village and north of Cawne Close.		
Site Description	<p>Large arable field with a copse of trees in it. Contributes to the rural setting of Wilstead coming from A6 / Wixams.</p> <p>Beauty Being south of the new Community Woodland (SG1) it enhances the woodlands surroundings.</p> <p>Historical significance Duck End is one of the view separate “Ends” within the Parish. This field provides a Strategic Gap keeping the historic form of the village with a gap between Duck End and the heart of the village.</p> <p>Tranquillity Separates Duck End making it a more tranquil section of the village.</p> <p>Recreational Value Not a reason for designation</p> <p>Wildlife The copse of trees is invaluable for birds</p>		
Site Ownership	Privately owned.		
Site Access	No Public access		
Site Photos			
Under 10 ha	Within 300m of village community	Demonstrably Special / Locally Significant	Recommended for Designation?
Y	Y	Y	Y – as SG N – as LGS

County Wildlife Sites

County Wildlife Sites (CWSs) are areas of land important for their wildlife and they can be found on public and private land. CWS recognition is non-statutory but is recognition of a site's high value for biodiversity. The Wildlife Trust, Local Authorities and other organisations are working to protect and enhance such sites in co-operation with land owners and land managers. CWSs vary in size and shape from small meadows, green lanes, ponds and hedges through to much larger areas of ancient woodlands, species rich grassland, heathland and commons.

This map shows the location of six main sites within the Wilshamstead Parish and one which crosses its border. These are described in detail in the following pages and some are included in the sites recommended for inclusion as Local Green Spaces. They are shown as blue cross-hatched areas on the map included within the description of each and on the Policies map.

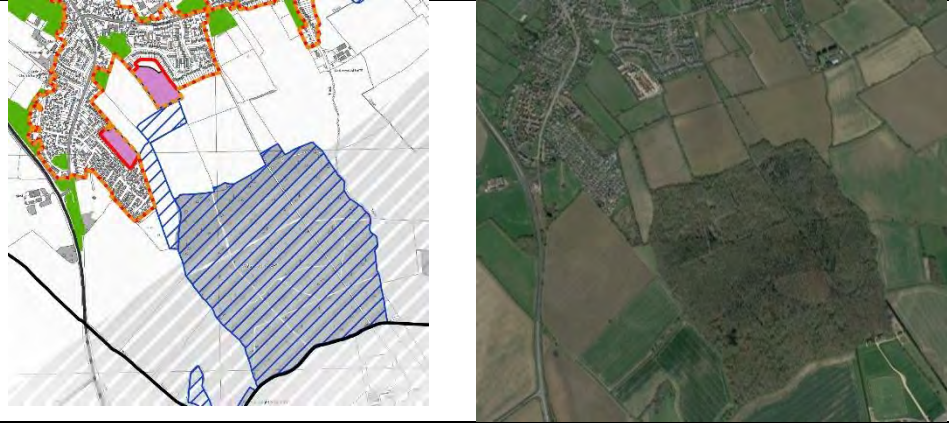





Ref	CWS 1		
Site Name	Wilstead Meadows - Butterfly Field		
Site Map	 		
Site Area	6.1 ha		
Site Location	South of Wooding Way & Dragons Wood		
Site Description	<p>County Wildlife Site. South of the New Development (Wooding Way) east of Whitworth Way with open views of the Greensand Ridge. The site stretches south past the Briar Bank park home site up to Wilstead Woods (CWS 5)</p> <p>Beauty This is a ridge and furrow wildlife area and has developed unique habitats, it is a very rare feature in Bedfordshire. Neutral grassland on Oxford Clay, the fields are surrounded by tall mature hedges. Plants include: black knapweed (<i>Centaurea nigra</i>), common sorrel (<i>Rumex acetosa</i>), with lady's bedstraw (<i>Galium verum</i>), pepper saxifrage (<i>Silaum silaus</i>), dropwort (<i>Filipendula vulgaris</i>) and restharrow (<i>Ononis repens</i>).</p> <p>Historical significance Recognised as a CWS in 1990</p> <p>Tranquillity Tranquil – away from the heart of the village</p> <p>Recreational Value Much used by residents for walking / exercise and a valuable natural site</p> <p>Wildlife The variety of grasses and wildflowers encourage many small mammals and insects, particularly butterflies</p>		
Site Ownership	Private ownership		
Site Access	Public access via Wilstead Footpath 5 and informal paths from Howard Close and Wilstead Wood		
Site Photos			
Under 10 ha	Within 300m of village community	Demonstrably Special / Locally Significant	Recommended for Designation ?
Y	Y	Y	Y –see GS 11 Already a CWS


Ref	CWS 2		
Site Name	Northwood Lane Meadows		
Site Map			
Site Area	1.74 ha		
Site Location	North west of Northwood Lane		
Site Description	<p>A County Wildlife site containing a good example of neutral grassland.</p> <p>Beauty Hedgerows border the site along its southwest and northwest edges, and a hedge runs between the southwest and middle fields. They are mostly dominated by hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>), with english elm (<i>Ulmus procera</i>), blackthorn (<i>Prunus spinosa</i>), elder (<i>Sambucus nigra</i>), dog rose (<i>Rosa canina</i>) and bramble (<i>Rubus agg.</i>). Field maple (<i>Acer campestre</i>) and spindle</p> <p>Historical significance Extra interest is provided by the old hedges, with faint ridge-and-furrow marks in some areas.</p> <p>Tranquillity Situated away from busy areas of the village</p> <p>Recreational Value Not a reason for designation</p> <p>Wildlife Not a reason for designation</p>		
Site Ownership	Private ownership		
Site Access	No public access		
Under 10 ha	Within 300m of village community	Demonstrably Special / Locally Significant	Recommended for Designation?
Y	Y	N	N as LGS Already a CWS

Ref	CWS 3		
Site Name	Hooked Lane Meadows		
Site Map			
Site Area	1.1 ha		
Site Location	North of Hooked Lane alongside a public footpath from the end of the lane		
Site Description	<p>A single field of neutral grassland on Oxford clay.</p> <p>Beauty The grassland has a range of grasses including crested dog's-tail, Yorkshire fog, perennial rye-grass, cock's-foot, false oat-grass, common bent, meadow foxtail, timothy, meadow barley and yellow oat-grass. A good range of neutral grassland species are present including agrimony, bird's-foot-trefoil, pepper saxifrage, lady's bedstraw, dropwort and great burnet.</p> <p>Historical significance Not a reason for designation</p> <p>Tranquillity Situated away from busy areas of the village</p> <p>Recreational Value Not a reason for designation</p> <p>Wildlife Not a reason for designation</p>		
Site Ownership	Private ownership		
Site Access	No public access		
Under 10 ha	Within 300m of village community	Demonstrably Special / Locally Significant	Recommended for Designation?
Y	Y	N	N as LGS Already a CWS

Ref	CWS 4		
Site Name	Chapel End Meadows		
Site Map			
Site Area	11.72 ha		
Site Location	South of the Stables Equestrian Centre, Cotton End Road		
Site Description	<p>This is the site of an equestrian centre with stabling, menage and adjacent paddocks. Its fields include a County Wildlife site of neutral grassland.</p> <p>Beauty The site is not a reason for designation. However, the open aspect from Cotton End Road gives good views of Macute's Wood and the Greensand ridge and is another example of the countryside coming into the heart of the village. The fields also offer a strategic gap between the more central part of Wilstead and the "End" of Chapel End.</p> <p>Historical significance Not a reason for designation</p> <p>Tranquillity Not a reason for designation</p> <p>Recreational Value The Equestrian Centre offers private horse riding for villagers and visitors</p> <p>Wildlife Not a reason for designation</p>		
Site Ownership	Privately owned		
Site Access	Wilstead Footpath 8 goes from Cotton End Rd though The Stables between the paddocks to join Footpath 9 near Elms Lane		
Under 10 ha	Within 300m of village community	Demonstrably Special / Locally Significant	Recommended for Designation?
Y	Y	Y	N as LGS Already a CWS

Ref	CWS 5		
Site Name	Wilstead Wood		
Site Map			
Site Area	67.2 ha		
Site Location	South of village, much of it within the Greensand Ridge		
Site Description	<p>Wilstead Wood is an attractive site which is being gradually restored to native woodland under 'The Ancient Woodland Project'. The Wilstead Wood is managed by the Forestry Commission and there is open access on the eastern side</p> <p>The Western half of the wood is owned by the Radha Soami Satsang Beas British Isles (RSSB), an Indian sect and is occupied by the associated organisation, Science of the Soul. RSSB have given permissive access to this side of the wood.</p>		
	Beauty Mixed deciduous woodland, pond and coniferous plantation.		
	Historical significance Ancient semi-natural woodland		
	Tranquillity Very tranquil, natural habitat.		
	Recreational Value Used very extensively by villagers and visitors for recreational walks and exercise.		
	Wildlife Varied bird life and small mammals plus deer.		
Site Ownership	Forestry Commission and RSSB		
Site Photos			
Site Access	Most of the wood has either open access or permissive access, but a strip approximately 170m deep across the southern end of the wood is private.		
Under 10 ha	Within 300m of village community	Demonstrably Special / Locally Significant	Recommended for Designation?
N	Y (Briar Bank site)	Y	N as LGS (too large) Already a CWS

Ref	CWS 6		
Site Name	St Macute's Wood		
Site Map			
Site Area	7.8 ha		
Site Location	On Greensand Ridge escarpment south of Cotton End Rd.		
Site Description	<p>Ancient woodland to the East of Wilstead Wood. Site of the former chapel of St Macute and a County Wildlife site</p> <p>Beauty The CWS comprises a single block of mature semi-natural broadleaved ancient woodland consisting of ash and maple and sycamore trees plus shrubs, with hazel and hawthorn dominant. Ground flora are rather grassy due to open nature of the wood.</p> <p>Historical significance Ancient semi-natural woodland. Recognised as a CWS in 1990</p> <p>Tranquillity Very tranquil, natural habitat.</p> <p>Recreational Value Provides a natural background for the view past the Stables from the eastern end of Cotton End Road.</p> <p>Wildlife Varied bird life, small mammals and deer.</p>		
Site Ownership	Private		
Site Photos			
Site Access	No public access. Public Rights of Way Bridleway 16, Footpath 7 and Footpath 17 run to the east, west and south of the wood respectively		
Under 10 ha	Within 300m of village community	Demonstrably Special / Locally Significant	Recommended for Designation?
Y	N	Y	N as LGS Already a CWS

Ref	CWS 7		
Site Name	Keyse's Spinney and Hurstpightle Spinney		
Site Map			
Site Area	1.96 ha within the parish boundary		
Site Location	East of the A6 and East of West Park Farm running along the top of the Greensand ridge to the West of Wilstead wood. Most of the CWS is not in Wilstead.		
Site Description	County Wildlife Site. Woodland and field of semi-improved neutral grassland on Boulder Clay and scattered oak, field maple and elder trees.		
	Beauty Natural habitat		
	Historical significance Recognised as a CWS in 1990		
	Tranquillity Some noise from the A6 trunk road to the west.		
	Recreational Value No		
	Wildlife Birdlife and small mammals.		
Site Ownership	Private ownership		
Site Access	Varied bird life and small mammals plus deer.		
Under 10 ha	Within 300m of village community	Demonstrably Special / Locally Significant	Recommended for Designation?
Y	N	Y	N as LGS (remote) Already a CWS

Local Green Space Assessment

The following assessment has been undertaken using a methodology for identifying spaces suitable for designation as Local Green Spaces (LGS) according to the criteria set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and subsequent Government guidance (Planning Practice Guidance: Local Green Space designation).

Stage 1 Assessment

The stage 1 assessment is designed to filter out which sites do not meet the basic LGS eligibility criteria. Sites which have current planning permission, or have been allocated for development, or have an existing designation giving the same level of protection as a LGS designation, do not meet the criteria and are not carried forward to the stage 2 assessment.

The following table provides information on the most important sites in the Parish.

Site	Ref	Current Planning Permission?	Allocated for Development?	Already Designated?	Pass to Stage 2?
Field in front of Manor Farm	GS 1	N	N	N	Y
Church Yard & Burial Ground	GS 2	N	N	N (churchyards are protected)	N
Green Spaces and Ponds off Longmeadow Drive	GS 3	N	N	N	Y
Allotments, Bowls Club and Jubilee Playing Field	GS 4	N	N	N	Y
Whitworth Way Playing Field	GS 5	N	N	N	Y
Fields between Dragons Wood, Wilstead Woods and Luton Road	GS 6	N	N	N	Y
Dragons Wood	GS 7	N	N	N	Y
Whitworth Way Estate	GS 8	N	N	N (part of estate design)	Y
Island to the West of Luton Road	GS 9	N	N	N	Y
Rectory Grounds	GS 10	N	N	N	Y
Wilstead Meadows - Butterfly Field	GS 11	N	N	N	Y

Site	Ref	Current Planning Permission?	Allocated for Development?	Already Designated?	Pass to Stage 2?
Community Woodland and Newt Reserve	SG 1	N	N	N	Y
Area between the A6 and Bedford Rd.	SG 2	N	N	N	Y
Fields running between A6 and Bedford Road	SG 3	N	N	N	Y
Field West of Bedford Rd between the Square and Vicarage Farm	SG 4	N	N	N	Y
Land South of Duck End Lane and East of Bedford Road	SG 5	N	N	N	Y
Wilstead Meadows - Butterfly Field	CWS 1 & GS 11	N	N	Y CWS	Y
Northwood Lane Meadows	CWS 2	N	N	Y CWS	Y
Hooked Lane Meadows	CWS 3	N	N	Y CWS	Y
Chapel End Meadows	CWS 4	N	N	Y CWS	Y
Wilstead Wood	CWS 5	N	N	Y CWS	Y
St Macute's Wood	CWS 6	N	N	Y CWS	Y
Keyse's Spinney and Hurstpightle Spinney	CWS 7	N	N	Y CWS	Y

Stage 2 Assessment

- Not extensive means less than about 10ha
- Close proximity means within easy walking distance (10 minutes) from the nearest part of the built area of the village.
- ‘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.

Site	Ref	Not extensive Under 10 ha	Close proximity Within 10 min walk / 300m of village community	Demonstrably Special / Locally Significant	Designation?
Field in front of Manor Farm	GS 1	Y	Y	Y - Open field in the very heart of the village that helps enhance the rural feel to the village. A copse of tall trees by the side of the field represents a valuable wooded site.	Y
Green Spaces and Ponds off Longmeadow Drive	GS 3	Y	Y	Y – the 4 green spaces are visually important to the built environment, the ponds provide wildlife value and of recreational value	Y
Allotments, Bowls Club and Jubilee Playing Field	GS 4	Y	Y	Y - The plots are well used for growing fruit and veg. Bowls and football are the most popular recreations in the village	Y
Whitworth Way Playing Field	GS 5	Y	Y	Y - Large grassed area used by the school and also includes the children’s play area. This is used by all ages for recreation	Y

Stage 2 Assessment Continued Site	Ref	Not extensive Under 10 ha	Close proximity Within 10 min walk / 300m of village community	Demonstrably Special / Locally Significant	Designation?
Fields between Dragons Wood, Wilstead Woods and Luton Road	GS 6	Y	Y	Y - Helps keep rural feel to the village providing an informal footpath for Howards Close and Briar Bank to the heart of the village. Footpath 5 runs along eastern edge through Dragons Wood	Y
Dragons Wood	GS 7	Y	Y	Y - Linear woodland along part of Wilstead Footpath 5 from its junction with the path from Whitworth Way by the Telephone Exchange running south to the County Wildlife Site	Y
Whitworth Way Estate	GS 8	Y	Y	Y - Large development with green spaces among the housing, and in front of This is very important to help give a more rural feel to a large-scale development	Y
Island to the West of Luton Road	GS 9	Y	Y	Y - Planted with trees and spring bulbs with a seating area. To enhance the area and provide a valuable break in the housing along Luton Road with seating to allow people to rest	Y
Wilstead Meadows - Butterfly Field	GS11	Y	Y	Y – Part of the County Wildlife Site CWS 1	See CWS 1 below
Rectory Grounds	GS 10	Y	Y	Y - Used for village fetes. Bordered by Wilstead Footpath 4	N Objection taken into account

Stage 2 Assessment Continued					
Site	Ref	Not extensive Under 10 ha	Close proximity Within 10 min walk / 300m of village community	Demonstrably Special / Locally Significant	Designation?
Community Woodland and Newt Reserve	SG 1	Y	Y	Y – planting has taken place to increase biodiversity value, land used for community purposes	Y but reduced in size. (Objection taken into account) Re-designated LGS 10
Area between the A6 and Bedford Rd.	SG 2	Y	Y	Y - part of the Landscape Enhancement Area created as part of the Wixams development	Y Redesignated LGS 11
Fields running between A6 and Bedford Road	SG 3	Y	Y	N - Forms part of the Strategic Gap between Wilstead and Wixams but not sufficiently exceptional to be an LGS	N as LGS Y as SG
Field West of Bedford Rd between the Square and Vicarage Farm	SG 4	Y	Y	N - Forms part of the Strategic Gap between Wilstead and Duck End but not sufficiently exceptional to be an LGS	N as LGS Y as SG
Land South of Duck End Lane and East of Bedford Road	SG 5	Y	Y	N - Forms part of the Strategic Gap between Wilstead and Duck End but not sufficiently exceptional to be an LGS	N as LGS Y as SG
Wilstead Meadows - Butterfly Field	CWS 1 & GS 11	Y	Y	Y – County Wildlife Site - Ridge and furrow wildlife area and has developed unique habitats. Much used by residents and a valuable natural site. With open views of the Greensand Ridge	Y Part designated GS 11 and later redesignated as LGS 9

Stage 2 Assessment Continued Site	Ref	Not extensive Under 10 ha	Close proximity Within 10 min walk / 300m of village community	Demonstrably Special / Locally Significant	Designation?
Northwood Lane Meadows	CWS 2	Y	Y	N - A County Wildlife site containing a good example of neutral grassland and enabling important views to the North/NE. Not sufficiently exceptional in itself to be an LGS	N
Hooked Lane Meadows	CWS 3	Y	Y	N - A County Wildlife site containing a good example of neutral grassland and enabling important views to the North/NE. Not sufficiently exceptional in itself to be an LGS	N
Chapel End Meadows	CWS 4	Y	Y	Y – County Wildlife Site. The open aspect from Cotton End Road gives good views of St Macute’s Wood and the Greensand ridge and is another example of the countryside coming into the heart of the village. The fields also offer a strategic gap between the more central part of Wilstead and the “End” of Chapel End. Not sufficiently exceptional in itself to be an LGS	N

Stage 2 Assessment Continued Site	Ref	Not extensive Under 10 ha	Close proximity Within 10 min walk / 300m of village community	Demonstrably Special / Locally Significant	Designation?
Wilstead Wood	CWS 5	N	Y	Y – County Wildlife Site -an attractive site which is being gradually restored to native woodland under 'The Ancient Woodland Project' Mixed deciduous woodland, pond and coniferous plantation Used very extensively by villagers and visitors for recreational walks and exercise	N (too large)
St Macute's Wood	CWS 6	Y	N	Y – County Wildlife Site - Ancient woodland to the East of Wilstead Wood. Site of the former chapel of St Macute	N (remote)
Keyse's Spinney and Hurstpightle Spinney	CWS 7	Y	N	Y- County Wildlife Site. Woodland and field of semi-improved neutral grassland on Boulder Clay and scattered oak, field maple and elder trees	N (remote)

The following sites are therefore put forward for LGS designation and redesignated as shown:

Name	GS reference	Local Green Space (LGS) reference
Field in front of Manor Farm	GS 1	LGS1
Green Spaces and Ponds off Longmeadow Drive	GS 3	LGS2
Allotments, Bowls Club and Jubilee Playing Field	GS 4	LGS3
Whitworth Way Playing Field	GS 5	LGS4
Fields between Dragons Wood, Wilstead Woods and Luton Road	GS 6	LGS5
Dragons Wood	GS 7	LGS6
Whitworth Way Estate	GS 8	LGS7
Island to the West of Luton Road	GS 9	LGS8
Wilstead Meadows - Butterfly Field	GS 11	LGS9
Community Woodland and Newt Reserve	SG 1	LGS10
Area between the A6 and Bedford Rd (north of the underpass)	SG 2	LGS11

The following sites are put forward for designation as important Strategic Gaps:

- Fields running between A6 and Bedford Road SG 3
- Field West of Bedford Rd between the Square and Vicarage Farm SG 4
- Land South of Duck End Lane and East of Bedford Road SG 5

Important Views

Local surveys have identified the key views in the local landscape. These are identified on the Policies Map. The key views have been identified for their particular value to residents and visitors and should be retained and not blocked by insensitive development.



The way the countryside comes into the very heart of Wilstead, including the footpaths, bridleways and Green Spaces within it and the views from within the village into the surrounding countryside, were highlighted in the Village Design Survey in 2000 and the NP survey resulted in an overwhelming number (close to 100%) continuing to support the need to protect these - indicating very little has changed in the way people feel about the village in the last 20 years.



Especially important and emphasised in the responses to the surveys are the views of the Greensand Ridge, the Cardington hangars and All Saints Church from Church Road. Countryside surrounds the village and reaches into its very heart in places. This allows views in the opposite direction, allowing villagers to appreciate their natural surroundings and provides a contrast to the housing estates which have been added since the 1960's.

The Greensand Ridge, to the south of the village, forms an important backdrop to the flat ground upon which the village is situated. In addition, there are important views to the north east where the historic Cardington hangars are situated.

This map shows the location of four views from the heart of the Wilshamstead Parish. These are described in detail in the following pages and are included in this report in order to draw attention to the importance of maintaining them and ensuring that development does not obstruct them.

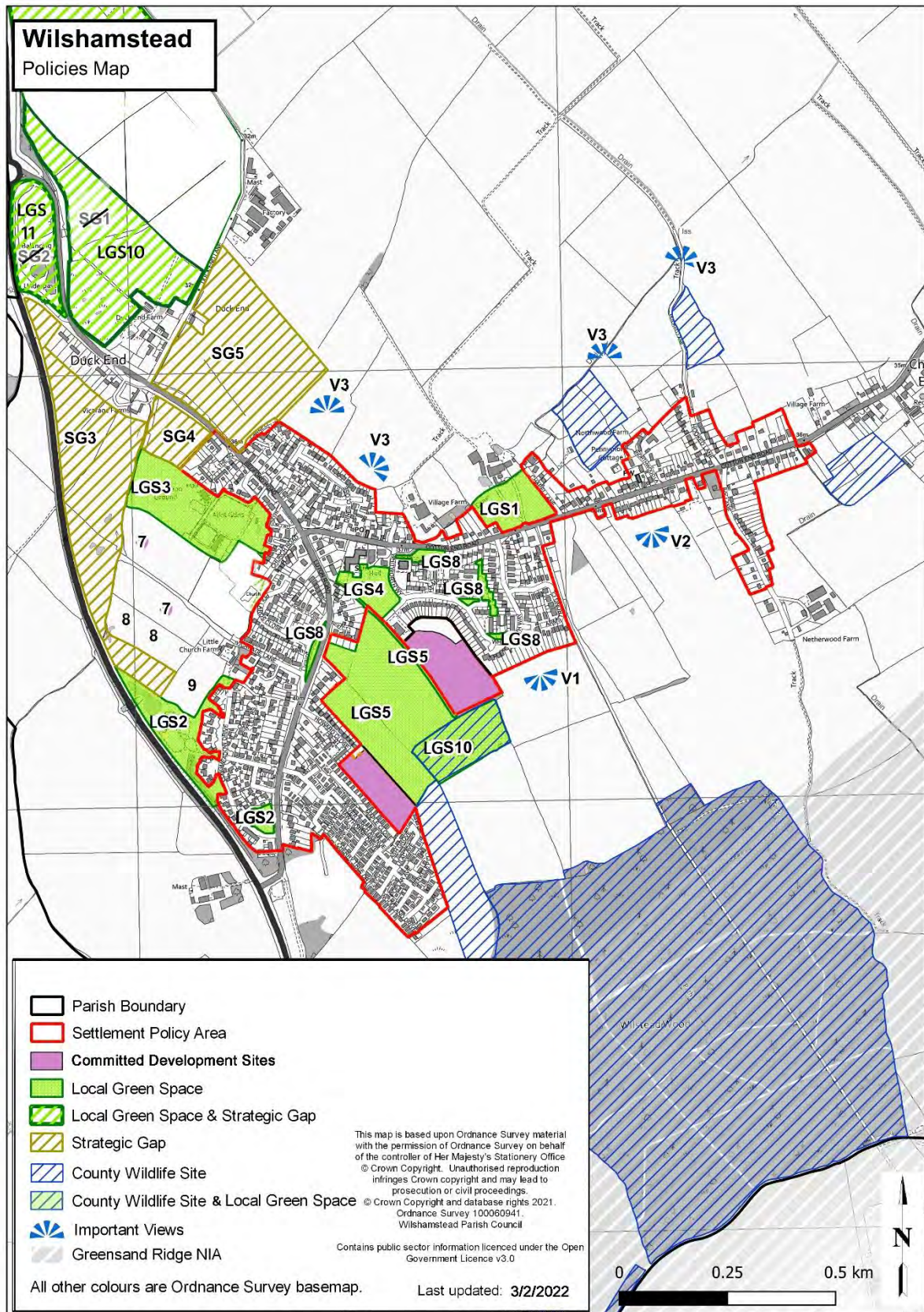
They are shown with Important View signs on the Policies Map and with arrows on the maps accompanying each description below.

Ref	V1
Name	Open Fields, South of Whitworth Way and Armstrong Close
Site Map	 <p>The site map on the left shows a residential area with various colored zones: a large blue hatched area at the bottom, a pink area to the left, and several green and orange areas. Three black arrows point from the pink area towards the blue hatched area. To the right is an aerial photograph of the site, showing a large open field with hedgerows, adjacent to a residential area. A red location pin is visible in the top left of the aerial view with the text 'MK45 3HN'.</p>
Site Location	Adjacent to the Carriage Drive (rear entrance to Haynes Park) and east of County Wildlife Site.
Site Description	Large arable fields surrounded on three sides by hedgerows and on the Northern edge the fences of the gardens of houses in Whitworth Way and Armstrong Close. Formed an important open space for residents of Whitworth Way and Armstrong Close since the estate was established in the 1960's, allowing unobstructed views to Wilstead Wood and the Greensand Ridge.
Photos	 <p>A photograph of a large, open field with a mix of green grass in the foreground and brownish, harvested-looking crops in the middle ground. The background shows a line of trees under a cloudy sky.</p>

Ref	V2
Site Name	South of Cotton End Road
Site Map	
Site Location	South of Cotton End Rd east of Chapel Lane and west of Public Right of Way Footpath 6
Site Description	Open fields surrounded by hedgerows on 3 sides giving views up to the Greensand Ridge and Wilstead Wood. Another finger of the countryside that reaches into the village.
Site Photos	

Ref	V3
Site Name	To the North & North East of Village
Site Map	
Site Location	From the ends of Dines Close. Chapel Lane, Northwood Lane and Hooked Lane
Site Description	<p>Views across the open fields, with a lone and impressive oak tree standing in the foreground to the distant listed Cardington Hangers (formerly airship sheds). Providing welcome rural views through breaks between houses.</p> <p>Similar views from the ends of Chapel Lane, Northwood Lane and Hooked Lane.</p>
Site Photos	

Policies Map – the Centre of the Village





Wilshamstead Neighbourhood Plan 2020 - 2035

Appendix B Historical and Important Buildings

February 2021

Listed Buildings are already protected under legislation and Local Plan policy 41S which requires that proposals for alterations to heritage assets must be assessed on their impact on the value of that asset. There are 23 Listed Buildings within the parish as follows:

- All Saints Church
- 5 & 7 Bedford Road (The old Red Lion)
- Vicarage farmhouse – Bedford Road (West side near pull-off)
- Dove Cottage (Duck End Lane)
- Duck End Farmhouse
- Barn at Duck End farmhouse
- 7 Church Road (Winter’s Moon)
- 8 Church Road
- Church Cottage – Church Road (next to Churchyard)
- Orchard Cottage – 6 Luton Road
- 16a Luton Road (Eyebrow Cottage)
- Little Church Farmhouse (Vicarage Lane)
- Church Farmhouse (Vicarage Lane)
- The Old Manor House – Cotton End Road (near garage)
- Manor Farmhouse – Cotton End Road
- The Granary at Manor Farmhouse
- Long Thatch – 58 Cotton End Road
- 80 & 82 Cotton End Road
- Spindle Cottage – 94 Cotton End Road (Corner of Ivy Lane)
- Compton Cottage - 12 Ivy Lane
- 229 – 233 Cotton End Road (Littleworth)
- Bromford – Cotton End Road (opp Elms Lane)
- Cotton End Manor Farmhouse (Elms Lane)

A list of non-designated heritage assets set out below has been compiled and consulted upon in the questionnaire and seeks to recognise the historic importance of local buildings that are not listed buildings in the Parish. The buildings and features identified may not be of sufficient architectural or historic merit to justify listing, but they are an important part of the character of the Parish. An average of 84% of those responding in the survey considered that these buildings should have a form of protection. The policy will help to ensure they are retained.

They are:

- 47 Cotton End Road
- The Elephant and Castle (former pub) 49 Cotton End Road,
- The Rose (former pub) 265 Cotton End Road near Littleworth
- The Woolpack pub
- The Old Infants School (78 Cotton End Road)
- Wilstead Post Office (33, Cotton End Road)
- Wilstead Methodist Church

47 Cotton End Road



47 Cotton End Road is an unassuming 19th century private house. For many years, however, it was a bakery.

The property comprised a parlour, a living room and a kitchen with three bedrooms upstairs. The bakehouse, measuring 14 feet by 10 feet and with a five-bushel oven, stood outside along with a washhouse measuring 8 feet by 10 feet, a stable and an old barn.

The Elephant and Castle (former beerhouse) 49 Cotton End Road



The Elephant and Castle was first licensed in 1848. The premises consisted of a tap room, a bar, a parlour, a kitchen, a cellar, a large club room and four bedrooms with a corn barn, stable, piggeries, small farmyard, small garden “and a very Superior Well of Good Water”. An old stable, a garage and a storeroom all lay outside.

Trade in the early 1900s comprised about half a barrel (eighteen gallons) per week.

The property is now a private house.

The Rose (former pub) 265 Cotton End Road near Littleworth



In 1927 Charles Wells (the brewers) applied for planning permission to build the current property on the site of a former beerhouse. In 1934 they applied for permission for an outbuilding to house a portable forge. At some point after 1996 the Rose closed its doors for the last time and is now a private house.

The Woolpack pub



There is a history of a cottage on this site from the early 18th century. This may be the same building as the current Woolpack, or it may be an older building on the same site. The building was licensed as the Woolpack, a beerhouse, in 1846.

In 1875 it was purchased by Bedford brewers Newland & Company. The particulars state: “a stud-built, rough-cast and slated freehold dwelling house formerly known as “The Wool

Pack”, licensed for the Sale of Beer, containing tap room, parlour, kitchen, sunk cellar, with a large club room divided into 2 bedrooms, and one other bed room over parlour, a brick-built and slated stable, timber-built and pantiled pigsties and closet, timber-built and pantiled cart hovel, with four bays, brick-built and slated slaughter house or workshop at end, with large open yard, small piece of garden enclosed, fencing, gateway entrance from the Bedford Road, next which it has a good South frontage, being bounded on the west by the Trustees of the Building Society and Mr. Tow; East by property of Lord John Thynne; and North by Mr. Robinson, and now in the tenure of Charles Crowsley. In connection with this House, a good Village Club is held, bringing an increasing business with the same”.

The beerhouse received a full license, becoming a public house, on 5th March 1959. At the time of writing it remains, with the Red Lion nearly opposite, one of the two remaining public houses in the parish.

The Old Infants School (78 Cotton End Road)



The school was built in 1873, at the sole cost of the Rev. Lord John Thynne”. Lord John was the third son of the Marquess of Bath. He inherited the substantial Haynes Park Estate in Haynes, Houghton Conquest and Wilshamstead from his uncle John, 3rd Baron Carteret who died childless and, thus, the barony became extinct.

In 1909 a schools’ inspector reported: “The Schoolroom is extremely cold and so is quite unfit for its purpose. The Temperature during the first three months of the year appears rarely to have reached 40 degrees Fahrenheit in the morning and was often below 40 degrees Fahrenheit”. A report in 1911 concluded, however, that “The condition of the Infants School is very satisfactory indeed”. There were no further inspections, because of the First World War, until 1923, when the report stated: “the 27 children are happy, seem to be intelligent, and are benefiting by their school life”.

In 1951 the school managers decided that they no longer had the resources to carry on either the infants or the junior school, both in old buildings which were below standard. Both schools were, therefore, taken over by Bedfordshire County Council as Local Education Authority and run as county primary schools, in their existing buildings, until they were merged together as a single county primary school on a new site in the angle of Cotton End Road and Luton Road, which opened on 4th April 1958. The old school was sold in 1959 for £750 and is now a private house. The new school, now a Primary school, thrives today and has difficulty accommodating the number of children whose parents wish them to attend.

Wilstead Post Office (33 Cotton End Road)



The building has fulfilled the role of sub-post office for many years, at least as far back as 1901, as shown on maps.

In 1925 the building comprised the shop, which measured 8 feet by 10 feet, a parlour, a living room, a scullery and three bedrooms. In 1979 planning permission was granted for an extension to provide additional living accommodation.

The facility of general store and post office is very much valued by Wilstead residents. In response to a question in the Neighbourhood Plan survey, 88% of respondents stated that they visit regularly. It is now the only store selling general provisions in the village.

Wilstead Methodist Church



The first Methodist Chapel was situated in Chapel Lane and erected in 1808. Services continued in the Chapel into the 1960's when it was determined that the foundations of the building would require extensive repairs to remain safe. As a result a new site on Cotton End Road was identified and gifted by one of the trustees.

The new church opened in 1967 and is of a very distinctive contemporary design. A Church Hall was added in 1972.



Wilshamstead Neighbourhood Plan 2020 - 2035

Appendix C

Design Guide

February 2022

Design Guidelines to ensure all New Development is to a High Quality

These Guidelines are based upon the previous standards within the Wilshamstead Parish Council Village Design Statement 2000, which was adopted by Bedford Borough Council as Supplementary Planning Guidance at that time. They have been updated to take into account the views of residents following a comprehensive survey undertaken to ensure that the principles, now set out, are up to date and can be applied to planning applications as current planning policy.

New Development

It is generally recognised that new development is necessary and that there are opportunities for small scale infill development to meet this need. Such development must meet local needs and importantly must be appropriate to the scale and nature of the village, respecting its historic, agricultural and rural character.

The Pattern of Growth

New development should respect the existing settlement pattern of the village in order to preserve its character. Development should contribute to and integrate with the Village Centre. The Village must continue to be a Rural Settlement surrounded by and integrated with working farms. Suburbanisation and separate clusters must be avoided. Any proposal that would adversely affect the physical appearance of any part of the village or give rise to an unacceptable increase in the amount of traffic, noise or disturbance would be inappropriate.

The Village Centre

The most sensitive part of the village is the Centre

Originally a crossroads on the busy A6 Trunk Road, the Centre has extended from All Saints Church eastwards along Cotton End Road to the junction with Whitworth Way and Castle Close. This area includes the Pharmacy, two public houses, two take-away shops, the Village Hall, the Village School, the Post Office, the Village Car Park, Whitworth Way Playing Field and the Methodist Church.

The Crossroads area remains an important part of the Village heritage despite ad hoc development in which earlier buildings have been swept away, leaving the Woolpack public house and houses behind the Red Lion as sole representatives of former times.

Any development of the Centre must be of the most sensitive nature and part of a long-term plan to restore the area to a focal point retaining the shopping and central facilities and in keeping with the heritage of the Village.

District Zones

The Village Design Statement produced in September 2000 identified District Zones with additional Design guidelines for each and these continue to be important and relevant. The Zones have now changed with the rationalisation of Parish Boundaries and creation of a new Parish at Wixams and 2 new significant developments at Longmeadow Drive and Wooding Way. The Design Principles now apply to all of the Zones with the Zones re-defined in the Appendix to this Design Guide and shown on the plan included therein.

Wilstead village has no specific single building style but the following points include the essence of the rural character of the village and should be respected in new development.

- Open and generous quality of external spaces including verges, green spaces and play spaces
- The existing settlement pattern (in order to preserve the character of the Village and the adjoining properties)
- The strong links between the Village and the countryside.
- Integrate with the existing paths, streets and circulation networks
- Rural footpaths linking the village with countryside
- Varying pattern of development reflecting existing buildings set in deep fronted gardens and historic buildings set close to the road
- Prominent copses and tall trees within the built area
- Roofing types are almost universally pitched and consist of dark red/brown/grey tiles or slate
- The building material is predominately brick, of a warm colour (buff with a pink blush) rather than dark red, yellow or buff. Some houses are rendered or part-rendered
- Relatively small, simple windows and plain brickwork without elaborate or coloured courses or external details, are typical. To deviate from these would be out of character
- Buildings which exceed two storeys in height are disproportionate and out of character.
- Pre-cast concrete and corrugated materials (as found, for example, in the village centre) conflict with typical village styles
- Spaces between buildings are non-uniform and generous - this gives Wilstead its feeling of openness
- A characteristic of early 20th century double fronted villa is worth echoing as a model, where appropriate

As general design guidelines, new development should:

- Reinforce and enhance the established character of streets and greens with open and generous external spaces including verges, green spaces and play spaces
- Retain and enhance ponds (including balancing ponds), ditches, streams and hedgerows forming wildlife corridors and collection and distribution points for flood water
- Harmonise and enhance existing settlement in terms of physical form, architecture and land use
- Adopt contextually appropriate materials and details
- Respect surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing
- Retain and incorporate important existing features into the development
- Integrate housing tenures
- Incorporate necessary services and drainage infrastructure without causing unacceptable harm to retained features

The Village Centre

The Village Centre extends from All Saints Church through Church Road and eastwards along Cotton End Road to the junction with Whitworth Way and Castle Close.

This area includes the Village Hall, the Village School, the Post Office, the Village Car Park Whitworth Way Playing field and the Methodist Church.

The original character is still retained in Church Road which leads from the crossroads to All Saints Church. To the east of the Crossroad are some of the most distinctive older buildings of the village including the Manor House, the post office, the adjacent row of terraced cottages and the Old Elephant and Castle Public House, now a private dwelling. There is a more modern small development at Dines Close.

The Centre has extremely varied building materials reflecting its mixed nature. Industrial and commercial buildings use modern materials such as felt roofs and precast pebble-dashed concrete wall sections which clash with traditional materials used in the very mixed, even picturesque Church Road.

Zone 1 - Bedford Road North of the Village Centre.

At its northern end is a row of terraced pebble dashed interwar ex-council houses that are unique to the village. These are well set back from the road and have views eastwards across open countryside towards Shortstown. Duck End Lane comprises mainly 19th century farm buildings and Carey's cottages with some recent conversions and additions. Nearer the centre modern post-war development has all but removed old buildings with some still represented at Cawne Close, numbers 20 -22 and numbers 5 to 7. The Red Lion Public House, built in mock Tudor style, was constructed on the site of the old Red Lion next to the former village green. Small pockets of development of various types and

characteristics have sprung up along Bedford Road with Cawne Close and Black Hat Close being the most recent examples.

This Zone includes the main recreational facilities for the Village including the Bowls Club, Wilstead Football Club the Jubilee Centre, an all-weather games area and the allotments,

The northernmost part of Bedford Road has mostly buildings associated with thirties- and fifties-type ribbon development - brick exteriors, sometimes rendered, concrete roof-tiles (these were introduced during the inter-war period as being cheaper to produce than traditional clay tiles).

In the remainder of Bedford Road, the pebble-dashed inter-war ex council houses have concrete tile roofs, the only clay tiles are in Cawne Close. The Woolpack and No. 20/22, both nineteenth century buildings, have slates. Bricks are still the main building materials.

Zone 2 - Whitworth Way and adjoining streets

This area has seen large changes since the 1950s with the Whitworth Way Estate built on land to the south of Cotton End Road and more recently Castle Close (1970's) on the northern side. These developments which interrupted the ribbon development that predominated in the village include important green spaces and verges which help to lessen the visual impact of large development on the village.

The buildings are primarily development typical of the 1960's and 70's.

A further development at Wooding Way has extended the Whitworth Way estate by some 75 houses.

Zone 3 - Cotton End Road (Eastern end)

Once past the Whitworth Way Estate, travelling eastwards, housing reverts to ribbon development along Cotton End Road and down the various lanes which branch off to eventually become footpaths and bridleways into the surrounding countryside. The farm houses and buildings set back from the road are the oldest structures and add to the ambiance and the views. On the road, the most notable type of building is the early 20th century brick villa with double bay windows and a central front door all covered by a tiled canopy roof above the ground floor windows.

Bungalows and an open pattern of house types predominate. The type of early 20th Century villa described above is frequently found here. Some traditional wooden barns survive near the road side. The bungalows and houses are of brick with a proportion of rendering or pebbledash being typical building materials. Concrete roof tiles, some replacing the original clay ones on older buildings are common.

Zone 4 - Luton Road

Luton Road extends from the Crossroads south to the junction with the A6 with a mixture of early 20th century double fronted villas and post-war housing. There are a number of estates built off Luton Road. Initially a small 1960's estate mainly on the west side leading to the Church and Vicarage and more modern developments at Howards Close, and Longmeadow Drive (including Church Farm Avenue and Oakley Rise). These new developments include a few 3 - storey houses located near the southern entrance to the Village. These are disproportionate to the normal scale of housing in the village and demonstrate why development to this scale should be avoided.

At the southern end of the Zone is the extensive Briar Bank site, a distinctive development of some 200 park home units for residents over the age of 50. These single-storey homes are attractively set out amongst mature trees and gardens. The park extends inconspicuously from Luton Road towards the edge of Wilstead Woods and is enclosed on three sides by hedges and fields. The site forms a distinct architectural environment within Wilstead but is, however, internally consistent. Its park homes are set on concrete bases and are skirted with brickwork so as to be flush with the ground. The wall material is plywood that can be washed or rendered in various colours to present pleasing variations within a close-knit pattern. Roofs are constructed of composition tiles in a range of subdued colours.

Luton Road shows essentially the same pattern of house-types and materials as Zone 3 with the exception of more recent developments at Longmeadow Drive, Howards Close and Reid Court.

The Longmeadow Drive estate is an example of a well-designed new housing development in that it incorporates both substantial properties and affordable housing with wide verges and plenty of green spaces, together with a substantial area set aside for children's play and recreational activity.

Summary of Building materials

Within the village it is possible to see characteristic types and styles of building and construction materials associated with each zone and these should be respected in any development or alterations to buildings.

The main exterior building material used in Wilstead is exposed brick of varying appearance and colour. Rendering often provides a pleasing variation on naked brick. Roofing materials are pre-dominantly dark brown or grey in colour, consisting of clay or concrete tiles, or slates.

Windows throughout Wilstead are predominantly white and small paned (with some examples of sashes). There are a few examples of decorated windows with stained glass and leaded lights - these have been added since the 60s & 70s. The window surrounds are also predominantly simple and without obvious 'over decoration'.

Village District Zones





Wilshamstead Neighbourhood Plan 2020 - 2035

Appendix D Public Footpaths and Bridleways

February 2022

Footpaths and Bridleways

Wilstead enjoys an extensive network of footpaths and bridleways surrounding the Village. There are 17 separate paths, all well maintained and marked and with a total of some 11 miles. They provide a range of circular walks and links to adjoining villages and the John Bunyan Trail.

The paths provide access to all parts of the Village taking in the listed buildings, the wildlife sites and woods and the local buildings which are not listed but are an integral part of the character and heritage of the Village. The footpaths to the South rise up to some 60m above the Village to the Greensand Ridge and provide extensive views over Bedfordshire.

Despite the popularity of existing footpaths and bridleways in the village 70% of respondents to a question in the Neighbourhood Plan survey were "Strongly in favour" of creating better footpaths, to make it safer and easier to get around the village and wider parish on foot. Another 20% were "moderately in favour".

Similarly with bridleways: 50% were strongly in favour and another 37% moderately in favour of creating better bridleways to make it safer and easier to get around the village and wider parish by horse or bicycle.

The existing network of footpaths and bridleways is shown on this chart:

Wilstead

Red - Footpaths

Green - Bridleways

List of Paths

- FP1 285m
- FP3 745m
- FP4 1000m
- FP5 - Luton Rd to Ivy Lane 1440m
- FP5 - Ivy Lane to Elms Lane 760m
- FP6 450m
- FP7 1520m
- FP8 820m
- FP9 555m
- FP10 145m
- BW11 440m
- FP12 1520m
- FP13 1000m
- BW14 2340
- BW15 1670m
- BW16 1810m
- FP17 1120m



Description of the Public Rights of Way

Footpath FP1 runs North East from Cotton End Road at Littleworth to the Parish Boundary where it meets Eastcotts Footpath 7 that ends at the A600 at Cotton End. Length 285m

Footpath FP3 runs South West from Bedford Rd, through of Vicarage Farm, just north of Duck End Lane. It then runs across the A6 to the Parish Boundary with Houghton Conquest and Wixams where it meets a Houghton Conquest Footpath 9 and a Wixams Greenway which respectively give access to their centres. Length 745m

Footpath FP4 runs South from the top of Church Rd through the churchyard across Vicarage Lane and along Longmeadow Drive to the A6 which it crosses. It then runs to the Parish Boundary where it meets Houghton Conquest Footpath 8 again giving access to the centre of Houghton Conquest. Length 1000m.

Footpath FP5 runs South East from Luton Road, south of the village Cross Roads, through Dragons Wood and across a County Wildlife Site. It then turns east across the Carriage Drive (rear entrance to Haynes Park) and the southern end of Ivy Lane to Manor Farm on Elms Lane. Length 2200m

Footpath FP6 runs South East from Cotton End Road just east of Chapel lane and runs parallel to the Carriage Drive to meet FP5. Length 450m

Footpath FP7 runs from the southern end of Ivy Lane past Wilstead Woods to the West and up Firtree Hill to the Parish Boundary where it meets Wilstead Footpath 17 (which runs eastwards along the boundary). Length 1520m.

Footpath FP8 runs South East from Cotton End Road, east of Ivy Lane, before turning east to go through The Stables Equestrian Centre and then to meet FP9. Length 820m

Footpath FP9 runs South East from Cotton End Road just south west of Cotton End Farm past the ends of FP10 and then FP8 to join FP5 just before Elms Lane. Length 555m.

Footpath FP10 runs South West from Elms Lane to join FP9. Length 145m

Bridleway BW11 runs North East from the northern end of Bridleway 15 to join Bridleway 14.

Footpath FP12 runs North West from a junction with Bridleway 15 north of Hooked Lane past the junction with FP13 to the Parish Boundary. Here it meets Elstow Footpath 7 which gives access to the village via Medbury Farm. Length 1520m.

Footpath FP13 runs North West from the end of Duck End Lane before turning north east to meet Footpath 12. Length 1000m.

Bridleway BW14 runs North West from Cotton End Rd just east of the northern end of Elms Lane and runs past the eastern end of BW11 to end at the Parish Boundary at Medbury Farm. Here it meets an Elstow Bridleway 4 which gives access to the centre of the village. Length 2340m.

Bridleway BW15 runs North from the end of Hooked Lane, past its junction with FP12 to meet the western end of BW11. Length 1670m

Bridleway BW16 runs from South from the end of Elms Lane at Manor Farm then up the escarpment to the Parish Boundary at Northwood End Farm Haynes where it meets FP17. Here it also meets North Lane which gives access to the village. Length 1810m

Footpath FP17 runs from the southern end of FP7 running east along the Parish Boundary to meet the southern end of BW16. Length 1120m

Footpath FP18 (not shown on map above) runs west from the northern end of Wooding Way to join FP5. Length 50m.