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Uttlesford District Council

Chief Executive: Peter Holt

Cabinet

Date: Thursday, 20th October, 2022

Time: 7.00 pm

Venue: Council Chamber - Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden, CB11 4ER

Leader and Chair: Councillor P Lees

Members: Councillors A Armstrong, A Coote, J Evans, R Freeman, N Hargreaves, L Pepper, N Reeve and M Sutton

Other Attendees: Councillors M Caton (Liberal Democrat and Green Alliance Group Leader), G Smith (Conservative Party Group Leader), N Gregory (Chair of Scrutiny Committee), E Oliver (Chair of Governance, Audit and Performance Committee) and R Pavitt (Uttlesford Independent Party Group Leader)

Public Speaking

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AGENDA

PART 1

Open to Public and Press

1 Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

To receive any apologies for absence and declarations of interest.

2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

7 - 11

To consider the minutes of the meeting held on 1 September 2022.

3 Questions or Statements from Non-Executive Members of the Council (standing item)

To receive questions or statements from non-executive members on matters included on the agenda.

4 Matters Referred to the Executive by the Scrutiny Committee or by the Council (standing item)

To consider matters referred to the Executive for reconsideration in accordance with the provisions of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules or the Budget and Policy Framework Rules.

5 Consideration of reports from overview and scrutiny committees (standing item)

To consider any reports from Scrutiny Committee.

6 Report of Delegated Decisions taken by Cabinet Members (standing item)

To receive for information any delegated decisions taken by Cabinet Members since the previous Cabinet meeting.

- [Designation of Great Easton Duton Hill and Tilty Neighbourhood Development Area](#)

7 Report on assets of community value determined by the Assets of Community Value and Local Heritage List Committee (standing item)

To receive for information any decisions made by the Assets of Community Value committee since the previous Cabinet meeting.

- No decisions to report.

8	Budget 2021/22 - Final Outturn	12 - 40
	To consider the Budget 2021/22 – Final Outturn report.	
9	Treasury Management 2021/22 - Final Outturn	41 - 56
	To consider the Treasury Management 2021/22 – Final Outturn report.	
10	Local Council Tax Support Scheme Proposals - 2023/24 and Consultation Responses	57 - 75
	To consider the Local Council Tax Support Scheme Proposals 2023/24 report.	
11	Christmas Car Parking Incentives	76 - 79
	To consider the Christmas Car Parking Incentives report.	
12	Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan	80 - 241
	To consider the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan.	
13	Local Development Scheme (Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation)	242 - 247
	To consider the report regarding the Local Development Scheme (Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation).	
14	Zero Carbon Communities Fund	248 - 254
	To consider the report regarding the Zero Carbon Communities Fund.	
15	Independent Housing Ombudsman`s Scheme Complaints Handling Code Self Assessment	255 - 274
	To consider the Self Assessment Independent Housing Ombudsman Scheme Complaints Code report.	
16	Exclusion of public and press	
	To exclude the public and press due to consideration of reports containing exempt information within the meaning of section 100I and paragraphs 1, 3 and 5 part 1 Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972.	

PART 2

Exclusion of Public and Press

- 17 Complaint upheld by the Local Government Ombudsman** 275 - 289

To receive the report regarding the Ombudsman Complaint.

MEETINGS AND THE PUBLIC

Following the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions, and in accordance with the Council's risk assessment, Council, Cabinet and Committee meetings have returned to in-person and are held in the Council Chamber. However, due to social distancing measures and capacity considerations, those wishing to listen to or watch meetings will continue to be encouraged to access the live broadcast until further notice.

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The agenda is split into two parts. Most of the business is dealt with in Part I which is open to the public. Part II includes items which may be discussed in the absence of the press or public, as they deal with information which is personal or sensitive for some other reason. You will be asked to leave the meeting before Part II items are discussed.

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CABINET held at COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNCIL OFFICES, LONDON ROAD, SAFFRON WALDEN, CB11 4ER, on THURSDAY, 1 SEPTEMBER 2022 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillor P Lees (Chair)
Councillors J Evans, R Freeman, N Hargreaves, L Pepper and M Sutton.

Officers in attendance: P Holt (Chief Executive), B Ferguson (Democratic Services Manager) D Hermitage (Director of Planning) and A Webb (Director of Finance and Corporate Services)

Also Present: Councillors M Caton (Leader of the Liberal Democrat and Green Alliance Group), N Gregory (Chair of the Scrutiny Committee) and G Smith (Leader of the Conservative Party Group)

CAB25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies were received from Councillors Armstrong and Coote.

CAB26 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 7 July were approved as a correct record.

CAB27 QUESTIONS OR STATEMENTS FROM NON-EXECUTIVE MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL (STANDING ITEM)

In response to a question regarding the resumption of Saffron Walden Day Centre, Councillor Freeman said the Communities team were currently looking into potential venues and options, including the Garden Rooms in Saffron Walden. The Leader said the Council was awaiting feedback from Saffron Walden Town Council and information regarding proposals for the Day Centre would be shared later in September.

In response to a question regarding proposals for the Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation, it was confirmed that said proposals would be published and put before Members prior to public consultation.

In response to a question regarding Blueprint Uttlesford, the Chief Executive confirmed that an all Member briefing was in hand and details would be circulated in due course.

In response to a question regarding the opening of communal buildings ("warm hubs") in the context of rising energy prices, Councillor Sutton said the Communities team were currently identifying buildings that could be opened to the public during the winter months. The Director of Finance and Corporate

Services said Officers were exploring whether venues could be financially supported to stay open to the public.

The Leader and Councillor Caton agreed to hold a Group Leaders meeting in order to discuss the cross-party coordination of members' Ward Initiative Funds to be put towards heating communal buildings across the District, as well as looking at assisting residents in a more holistic way. Councillor Evans said he had particular concern for those who lived in remote areas of Uttlesford, who could not travel to "warm hubs".

CAB28 CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES (STANDING ITEM)

Councillor Gregory provided a report on behalf of the Scrutiny Committee, including details on both the Committee and the Stansted Airport Scrutiny Review, which had culminated in a debate at a Full Council meeting in July.

Councillor Gregory said he and the Vice-Chair of Scrutiny had written to the Chief Executive and Director of Planning regarding Local Plan matters. He thanked the Chief Executive for his advice and looked forward to receiving a response before the Local Plan committee cycle began.

Councillor Gregory said the key issue facing the Stansted Airport Scrutiny Review was the "known unknowns", principally the 40 meetings between Officers and Stansted Airport that had not been minuted. However, he said in the circumstances the best outcome had been achieved, and he praised Councillor Caton for initially proposing that the Review was undertaken independently of the Council. He thanked the Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer for their work in ensuring the Review was robust and transparent.

In other matters, Councillor Gregory apologised to Councillor Pepper for directing a budgetary question to her, rather than Councillor Hargreaves. He noted the improvement of the Planning performance indicators since the arrival of the Director of Planning. He also noted that the issues with Housing appeared to go back a long time, and the issue would be looked at by the Housing Board and the Governance, Audit and Performance Committee.

Councillor Caton said he felt that the Stansted Airport Scrutiny Review should have allowed more input from 'back-bench' councillors.

CAB29 REPORT OF DELEGATED DECISIONS TAKEN BY CABINET MEMBERS (STANDING ITEM)

There were no decisions to report.

CAB30 REPORT ON ASSETS OF COMMUNITY VALUE DETERMINED BY THE ASSETS OF COMMUNITY VALUE AND LOCAL HERITAGE LIST COMMITTEE (STANDING ITEM)

There were no decisions to report.

CAB31 ASHDON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Councillor Evans presented the report on Ashdon Neighbourhood Plan. He commended the work of the Steering Group and proposed that Cabinet accept the Independent Examiner's recommended modifications to the Ashdon Neighbourhood Plan in full and that the amended Ashdon Neighbourhood Plan proceed to a Referendum in the Parish of Ashdon.

Councillor Hargreaves seconded the proposal. He welcomed the report and said that whilst establishing a neighbourhood plan was hard work, it did result in well-informed steering groups at parish level due to the accumulation of planning knowledge during the process.

Councillor Smith thanked Councillor Evans and said the Steering Group would welcome his comments. He hoped other parishes would come forward with their own neighbourhood plans in future.

The Leader moved to a vote. The proposal was approved unanimously.

RESOLVED:

- I. That Cabinet accepts the Independent Examiner's recommended modifications to the Ashdon Neighbourhood Plan in full as set out in the Schedule at Appendix 2 and note the recommendation that the amended Ashdon Neighbourhood Plan should proceed to a Referendum of voters within the Parish of Ashdon to establish whether the plan should form part of the Development Plan for Uttlesford District Council.
- II. That Cabinet approves the holding of a referendum relating to the Ashdon Neighbourhood Plan and, that it will include all the registered electors in Ashdon Parish.

CAB32 REVISED TENANCY POLICY

The Leader presented the Revised Tenancy Policy report and said the key issue at hand was the removal of fixed term tenancies from the Council's Tenancy Policy. She said it was important that all tenancies were equal and the Council's approach to tenants be consistent. She proposed that the revised Tenancy Policy be adopted.

Councillor Sutton seconded the proposal.

In response to a question regarding the number of downsizing grants that had been issued in the past 24 months, the Leader said she would provide an answer to Councillor Caton in writing.

In response to a question regarding why there was a cost differential for different age groups, the Leader said this would be looked into.

The Leader moved to a vote. The proposal was approved unanimously.

RESOLVED: Cabinet approves the revised Tenancy Policy removing Fixed Term Tenancies.

CAB33 OFFICER DECISIONS - WRITE OFFS 2021/22

Councillor Hargreaves presented the Officer Decisions: Write Offs 2021/22 report. The report detailed Officers decisions under delegated powers to authorise write offs less than £10,000 in line with the constitution and Financial Regulations. The total value of monies owed to the Council which had been written off by officers for the financial year 2021/22 was £262,831; of this £69,584 had a direct financial impact on the Council.

The report was noted.

CAB34 SHOP FRONT DESIGN GUIDE

Councillor Evans presented the report regarding the Shopfront Design guide for Uttlesford. He said it was important that there was a level of quality and consistency with shopfront designs and this guide would assist shop owners across the District. The guide had been circulated for consultation and the feedback had led to the document being revised. He proposed that the design guide be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document.

Councillor Pepper seconded the proposal.

Members commended the report author and the presentation of the Guide.

The Leader moved to a vote. The proposal was approved unanimously.

RESOLVED: that Cabinet adopts the accompanying 'Uttlesford Shopfront Design Guide' document as a Supplementary Planning Document

CAB35 ALLOCATION OF GRANT FUNDING (SPORTS PROVISION MAJOR PROJECTS)

Councillor Sutton presented the report regarding the Allocation of Grant Funding for major sports provision projects. The report asked Cabinet to approve two grant applications which had been considered against the Council's Grant Allocation Policy (Sports Provision – Major Projects), for Newport Sports Committee and Great Dunmow Town Council. Councillor Sutton proposed approval of the Grants.

Councillor Freeman seconded the proposal.

Councillor Hargreaves said he would abstain from the vote as the Ward Member for Newport.

The Leader said conflicts of interest had been checked and Councillor Hargreaves could vote if he so wished, although he was entitled to abstain if he felt more comfortable doing so.

The Leader moved to a vote. The proposal was approved. Councillor Hargreaves abstained from the vote.

RESOLVED that Cabinet awards the following grants:

- I. Newport Sports Committee the sum of £100,000 for the provision of a Multi-Use Games Area
- II. Great Dunmow Town Council the sum of £100,000 for the provision of a Multi-Use Games Area. The grant to be released once the remaining funding requirement has been raised.

Before closing the meeting, the Leader permitted a question from Councillor Gregory regarding the Housing Revenue Account, current inflation rates and the indexation of rents. In response, the Director of Finance and Corporate Services said the Council had little scope over indexation. He said the Government had launched a consultation at the end of August to explore the issue of rent setting.

The meeting was closed at 19:55.

Agenda Item 8

Committee:	Cabinet	Date:
Title:	Budget Outturn - 2021/22	Thursday, 20 October 2022
Portfolio Holder:	Portfolio Holder for Finance and Budget Councillor Neil Hargreaves	
Report Author:	Angela Knight, Assistant Director - Resources aknight@uttlesford.gov.uk	Key decision: No

Summary

1. This report details the financial performance of the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account, Capital Programme and Treasury Management. It is based upon actual expenditure and income from April 2021 to March 2022.
2. The General Fund and Housing Revenue Account are reporting net underspends made up of various under and overspends which are detailed in the body of this report.
 - General Fund underspend of £1,019,395
 - Housing Revenue Account underspend of £112,000
3. The Capital Programme has a current year net overspend of £61,213,000; after adjusting for requested slippage of £6,179,000 to be carried forward to 2022/23 (detailed later in this report), this leaves an actual full year predicted net overspend of £67,392,000. The overspend is due mainly to the commercial investments which were undertaken after the budget setting process was completed for 2021/22.
4. The 2020/21 audit is currently in progress and this report is based on estimated opening balances; the balances cannot be confirmed until the audit is formally signed off. The 2021/22 audit will commence later in the year and the final outturn presented in this report will be subject to the auditors review and sign off for both 2020/21 and 2021/22 accounts. If any material changes to either of these years financial position are identified a revised report will be presented to Cabinet at a later date.

Recommendations

5. The Cabinet is recommended to
 - I. Note the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account and Capital Programme outturn positions.
 - II. Approve the updated use of reserves and the allocation of the surplus for the General Fund, set out in paragraph 12 and Housing Revenue Account, set out in paragraph 56
 - III. Approve the requested slippage for the Capital Programme as set out in paragraph 64

Financial Implications

6. Included in the main body of the report

Background Papers

7. None

Impact

Communication/Consultation	Corporate Management Team (CMT) and Informal Cabinet Board (ICB)
Community Safety	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Health and Safety	N/A
Human Rights/Legal Implications	N/A
Sustainability	N/A
Ward-specific impacts	N/A
Workforce/Workplace	N/A

External factors affecting the financial position

8. The direct impact of the Covid 19 pandemic has lessened and we are now in the recovery phase. The first three months of the financial year was focused on supporting businesses and organisations in the initial phased recovery period and the council continued to administer the Grant schemes made available by the Government.
9. The council has continued to receive some direct service grants to support specific areas, such as Homelessness, Health and Wellbeing, Environmental Health and the track and trace payments to encourage people to self-isolate.
10. The cost of living crisis with increasing utility and fuel costs have not had a significant impact or generated material variances in the 2021/22 net expenditure.

General Fund Revenue Account

11. The net operating expenditure is £4,777,223 against a budget of £13,183,503 this shows an overall underspend on the net of all income and expenditure of £8,406,280. After adjusting for the associated use of reserves, this gives an overall net underspend of £1,019,395.
12. It is proposed that the surplus is allocated across two reserves as below.
- Medium Term Financial Strategy £509,697
 - Transformation Reserve £509,698
13. The following table provides a summary of the budget outturn and a detailed budget summary and the financial position for each service is shown in Appendix A.

£'000	2020/21	2021/22			
	Outturn	Original Budget	Current Budget	Outturn	Variance
Communities & Partnerships	1,041	1,097	1,097	1,076	(21)
Housing & Economic Development	1,557	2,677	2,677	1,489	(1,188)
Environmental Services	4,791	4,265	4,265	3,993	(272)
Finance & Administration	5,914	7,697	7,697	6,910	(787)
Portfolio (Service) Budgets	13,303	15,736	15,736	13,468	(2,268)
Net Corporate investment Income	(2,039)	(4,635)	(4,635)	(4,407)	229
Corporate Items	7,328	2,017	3,313	(1,026)	(4,339)
Net Direct Expenditure	18,592	13,117	14,413	8,035	(6,379)
Funding	(14,118)	(1,230)	(1,230)	(3,258)	(2,027)
Net Operating Expenditure	4,474	11,888	13,184	4,777	(8,405)
Transfers to/(from) Reserves	1,482	(5,729)	(7,025)	362	7,387
OVERALL NET POSITION	5,957	6,159	6,159	5,139	(1,019)

14. The forecast outturn position for quarter 3 presented to Cabinet in March was predicting a net overspend of £248,000. The final year end position is reporting an overall net underspend of £1,019,395, the changes from the quarter 3 forecast are set out in the table below.

Forecast Outturn movements Quarter 3 to Final Outturn			
	Quarter 3 variance to Budget (31 December 2021) £'000	Final Outturn variance to Budget (31 March 2022) £'000	Variance movement £'000
Normal Service Activity	(304)	(2,268)	(1,964)
Direct Services Variance	(304)	(2,268)	(1,964)
Investment Income	(933)	(1,261)	(328)
Cost of Borrowing	(556)	(471)	85
	(1,489)	(1,732)	(243)
Capital Financing	(1,031)	(2,250)	(1,219)
Net other corporate costs	3	(129)	(132)
Corporate Services Variance	(1,728)	(2,379)	(651)
Business Rates	(1,739)	(1,968)	(229)
Covid Impact funding	409	(58)	(467)
Funding Variance	(1,330)	(2,026)	(696)
Net Reduction in Reserves	4,402	7,387	2,985
Movement in Reserves Variance	4,402	7,387	2,985
General Fund net variance	248	(1,019)	(1,266)

15. The key factors attributing to the change in the outturn position which are not offset by a reserve transfer are;

- Increased service income and receipt of additional grants
- Increased investment income due to re-profiling on investment assets completion dates
- Capital financing reduction in revenue contributions reprofiled for investment assets completion
- Central Government funding of covid/support grant

Direct Services Net Expenditure

16. Where the underspends and increased income relate to ongoing activities that span more than one year, these have been carried forward and will be held in ringfenced reserves, so have a net nil impact on the bottom line forecast.

17. The movement in reserves which directly impacts the net cost of direct service delivery, is a net transfer to reserves of £1,000,487, these are set out in the following table. This can be where reserves have been used to support direct service delivery or where a grant has been received and held in reserve to match against spend for the specified service activities or initiatives.

Movement in Reserves - Forecast Change in Net Transfers			
	£'000	£'000	£'000
	Drawn down	Additions	Reasons for change in use of reserves
Licensing		18	Adjustment to reflect 3/5 year profile of income for taxi licensing
Medium Term Financial Strategy		110	Revenues new burden funding c/fwd for future years costs
Medium Term Financial Strategy		21	Funding for additional 20/21 audit costs relating to Covid
Economic Development		361	Year 1 funding for Economic Recovery plan c/fwd to year 2
Elections		30	Covid funding support for elections c/fwd
Homelessness	(149)		Net impact of homelessness/rough sleeping grant to match cost of service delivery
Health and Wellbeing		55	Grant funding c/fwd to support future years spend
Planning	(16)		Release of grant held for Tilty Mill
Planning - Neighbourhood Plan		24	Net adjustment to reflect receipt of grant funding to deliver plans
Development Control	(63)		Drawdown of funds held relating to the 20% fee income to match spend
Sustainable New Communities		168	Adjustment to allocation of funding to support local plan to match actual in year spend
Sustainable New Communities		160	Receipt of Grant to support Design Code for Local Plan c/fwd to match spend profile
Voluntary Sector		42	Grants not paid out in year - c/fwd to match spend in 22/23
Sports Reserve	(45)		Sports grant for 2020/21 paid in year and part of 2021/22, c/fwd balance to match spend in 22/23
Climate Change		285	Year 1 net funding c/fwd of climate change funding to year 2
Direct Services - Reserve in year movement	(273)	1,273	1,000

18. The Climate Change and Economic Recovery budgets are both 3 year programmes of which each have been allocated £1m. The spend is profiled equally across 3 years, although many of the activities and initiatives in each of the plans will span more than one year. This is reflected in the underspends and any unspent sums will be held in a ringfenced reserve to be released in line with actual spend.
19. In addition, the unused New Burdens grant and Covid grants where the spend is expected to continue into 2022/23 have been held in the reserves to match the associated spend.
20. The homelessness grant has specific criteria and has been used to offset the associated current spend in the service. The grant covers responsibilities/activities for 2021/22 and 2022/23 and any remaining grant will be held in the reserve to match future spend.
21. The predicted outturn for the delivery of direct services is a net underspend of £2,267,927, after adjusting for the reserves movements as set out in paragraph 17 this leaves an actual direct service net underspend of £1,267,440.

£'000	Reduced Costs/Additional		Increased Costs/Reduced Income		Other Immaterial	Total Net Variance
	One off	Ongoing	One off	Ongoing		
Communities & Partnerships	(222)	(16)	222	0	(5)	(21)
Housing & Economic Development	(1,449)	(114)	361	27	(14)	(1,188)
Environmental Services	(1,546)	(969)	1,641	616	(13)	(272)
Finance & Admin	(1,898)	(1,031)	1,074	1,061	7	(787)
Direct Services	(5,115)	(2,130)	3,297	1,704	(25)	(2,268)
Net reserves transfers						1,000
Net Direct Service Expenditure	(5,115)	(2,130)	3,297	1,704	(25)	(1,267)

Direct Service Variances

22. The direct services variances are made up of a number of over and underspends and full details of variances over £50,000 which are not offset by reserves are set out in the table below.

Variances > £50,000		
Service	Variance - over / (under) spend £'000	Variance details
Employee Salaries	(988)	Net underspend on salaries for all direct services
Agency Spend	1,326	Cost of additional agency across all direct services
Corporate Management	(240)	Members priorities funding allocated to support staff resources in Planning
		98
Development Control	(803)	Increase in charges/fee income due to increased pre-applications and main planning applications
Corporate Management	(250)	Transformation project and associated employee expenses underspent - held to support expected Gov't funding reforms
Consultancy	(220)	Net underspend on Consultancy costs for all direct services
Corporate Management	(200)	Local Highways Panel funds released to revenue as no projects in year have been agreed
Revenues Admin	(152)	New Burdens funding received for delivery of Government schemes to support businesses
Environmental Protection	(134)	Additional in year grant received from DLUHC associated costs included in employee/agency spend
Housing Benefits	(133)	Final subsidy income claim income for payment of Housing Benefit higher than expected (claim total £12m)
Financial Services	(100)	Reduced broker fees due to profiling of borrowing requirement
Waste Management	(96)	Additional ECC credit income for increased recyclable and materials collected
Waste Management	(96)	Additional income due to increased green waste subscriptions
Benefits Admin	(82)	Net effect of in year grants and associated costs to deliver track and trace and other Housing Benefit legislative changes
Building Surveying	(81)	Additional income due to increased construction activity
Local Taxation	(77)	Court cost fee income refund and additional income as recovery processes reinstated following pandemic
Council Tax Discounts	(68)	ECC sharing agreement additional income as Council tax/LCTS collection rates higher than anticipated
Public Health	(59)	Increased fee income for food imports
		(2,550)
Offices	187	Additional utility costs and rates cost for Little Canfield site
Local Taxation	133	Revenue cost of bad debt provision - any recoveries of bad debt will be written back to service in year they are realised
Development Control	141	Legal fees for planning appeals
Waste Management	118	Trade waste income reduced
Waste Management	107	Cost of hiring additional vehicles
Waste Management	102	Additional fees for processing recyclable materials
Licensing	108	Reduced income in Taxi license and taxi driver fees
Car Parks	89	Net income loss across all car park income (additional information below)
Asset Management	70	Additional cost of planned and Adhoc repairs to council buildings and assets
		1,055
Net other variances		130
Total Variances		(1,267)

23. The net overspent of salaries and agency costs of £98,000 is made up of £988,000 of vacant posts and £1,326,000 agency costs, the £240,000 relates to funding from members priorities fund to support the staffing structure in Planning. The majority of the agency spend is directly related to vacancy underspend and the net financial impact of these are not material. Where the cost of agency is material, it is included in the following paragraphs which provide a more detailed breakdown of the key service areas where there are significant variances.

Planning Policy and Development Control

24. The Local Plan has a total budget allocation of £6,915,000 for the period April 2020 to March 2026, this has been profiled in the Medium Term Financial Strategy to meet estimated annual expenditure. The council also holds a dedicated reserve to support the cost of delivering a Local Plan, the Sustainable New Communities reserve. Any in year underspends in service delivery will be added to the reserve to be reallocated in future years.
25. Planning Policy has an overall underspend of £386,614, this is the combined position for both the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan expenditure.
26. The cost of the Local Plan is reporting an overall underspend of £145,614; the underspend is due to the pause in the consultation process to allow for the allocation of sites to be reviewed and is made up of a number of individual underspends, the key items are
 - i. consultancy budget was underspent by £42,366
 - ii. agency by £36,000
 - iii. cost of Place Services was £39,332 less than budgeted
27. The original budget had a proposed reserve drawdown of £639,800 to support the cost of the Local Plan, due to the underspend this drawdown has been reduced to £471,500. In addition, a grant receipt for £160,000 has been received to support the delivery of the High Street Design Code, there was no spend in 2021/22 relating to the grant funding and it has been added to the reserve to match against spend in future years. This gives a closing balance on the Sustainable New Communities reserve of £1,469,606.
28. The Neighbourhood plan had a total in year budget of £65,000 (£15,000 funded from reserves), in addition a grant of £20,000 was received to support the consultations. A total of £8,000 was spent and the balance of the grant and the original £15,000 reserves contribution have been added back to reserves to support expenditure in 2022/23.
29. Development Control and Planning Management had additional budget allocated during the financial year of £240,000 to support the new staffing structure identified by the external review carried out earlier in the year. This additional budget is funded from the Members Priorities fund held in the Corporate Management budget, which is reporting a corresponding underspend and will offset the net cost of the staffing and agency overspend.
30. The overall net underspend shown against the Development Control budget is £235,075, this is due to the additional income generated for a higher number of planning and pre planning applications received, additional consultancy costs and the increased cost of planning appeals. The overall variance to budget has been set out in the following table and this includes the additional funding provided from the member's priorities fund as discussed in the paragraph above.

	Over(under)spends £
Net of Staffing vacancy and agency	306,175
Consultancy	90,517
Planning Appeals Consultancy	69,766
Planning Appeals Legal Fees	141,192
Actual cost of staffing resources	607,650
Income	(802,741)
Other minor variances	(39,984)
Budget Variance	(235,075)
Members Priority funding allocation	(240,000)
Total Variance	(475,075)

Car Park Income

31. Car Parks have seen high levels of lost income during the year, this is for a number of reasons and all car parks have been affected differently by the change in work and shopping habits.

- Faircroft – Income reduction of £38,097 and this is due to the change in shopping habits, moving to online shopping and more people working from home and so not 'dropping by the supermarket on their way home'
- Swan Meadow – Income losses of £31,212 were due to continuous vandalism and theft of monies from the machines. Due to the damage and repeat offences the car park machines were out of order and parking was free whilst the new machines were installed. Theft from the cash machines also affected five other car parks across the district but to a lesser extent with a total loss for all five at £35,166.

32. The car park machines have been upgraded to card only payments in the affected car parks. Please note that since February 2021 a separate issue arose where customer cards were being declined, this was due to a programming issue with the machines and was resolved in July 2022. The income loss of this was minimal in 2021/22 but will impact on the level of income collected in the 2022/23 financial year.

Direct Service over/underspends of £100,000

33. The following services are reporting overspends in excess of £100,000 and the reasons for this are explained in the following paragraphs, where the variance is mainly due to staffing vacancies or agency costs these are not discussed as they are included in the net staffing variance discussed in paragraph 23 unless the cost/saving is significant.

34. In 2021/22 two areas were identified by members as higher priority, Climate Change and Economic and Business Recovery and a £1m budget was allocated from reserve balances to each workstream to be spent over 3 years. The underspends on these two areas will be held in reserves and the spend reprofiled over the next two financial years. This is also discussed in paragraph 18.

- Economic Recovery - £361,000 (£340,000 economic recovery plan and £21,000 other minor underspends)
- Climate Change - £285,000

35. Waste Management is reporting a net overspend of £405,000, the key factors to this are the net impact of staffing vacancies and additional agency of £271,376 and the reduction in Trade Waste income of £118,000.

36. Corporate Management is underspend by £441,024 and the key factors in this are the members priorities budget discussed above in the analysis of the variance for

Development Control (£240,000) and the Local Highways Panel (LHP) funding of £200,000. The Local Highways Panel did not identify any projects for the 2021/22 financial year.

37. The Offices budget is overspent by £186,968 and this is due to the cost of rates and utilities for the offices and depot at Little Canfield. In future years the surplus office space and other buildings on the site will be leased/rented to external businesses and these costs will be covered by the rental income received from the new tenants.
38. The Government provided Revenues and Benefits services with additional new burdens funding to support the delivery of the grant schemes and support packages for Businesses and Residents. This has generated an underspend in Revenues of £228,224 of which £110,000 of this funding is held in reserves to support ongoing costs of the schemes in 2022/23. The Benefits service new burdens funding of £90,000 has contributed to the underspend of £113,895.
39. Housing Benefit £147,151 is reporting an underspend in the net expenditure and income subsidy for the administration of housing benefits. A reduction of £71,713 in the expected level of bad debt due to a higher level of recovery on the overpayments of benefit and a net positive receipt of subsidy income.
40. Public Health are underspent by £138,421 and this is a mix of additional income for border and food inspections and additional funding received for Covid related activities.

Commercial and Investment Income

41. The following table provides an analysis of the investment income generated from both the Council's commercial assets and the investment in Chesterford Research Park, through Aspire (CRP) Ltd.
42. The net income available to the General Fund revenue account after all associated costs have been incurred is predicted to be £1,737,000 higher than expected when setting the budget.

Investment Income Analysis	Budget £'000	Actual £'000	Variance £'000
Income			
Aspire (CRP)	(2,316)	(2,450)	(134)
Commercial Investments - rental income	(4,905)	(4,528)	377
Commercial Investments - interest on advance payments	0	(1,346)	(1,346)
	(7,221)	(8,324)	(1,102)
Costs			
Commercial Consultancy and Fees	270	121	(149)
	270	121	(149)
Treasury Management Costs			
Interest charged	1,814	1,343	(471)
Broker Fees	170	100	(70)
External Treasury Advice on long term borrowing options	0	55	55
	1,984	1,498	(486)
Total Net Revenue Income	(4,967)	(6,704)	(1,737)

43. The increase in the net investment income is due to the following;

- The council received a compensation payment at completion of the purchase for the Vets in Scotland for a rent-free period. Initially this was held in the reserves to be released over a three year period. An adjustment to the accounting treatment now includes this within the actual lease income, the contra entry for this is shown in the reserves.
- The investment income for Aspire (CRP) has increased due to the interest received for two additional loans to Aspire (CRP) Ltd and lower interest rates available for council borrowing during the year.
- The commercial investments are showing a reduced income level for the year, and this reflects the forecast completion date for Amazon being delayed until the 1 April 2022.
- The interest on Commercial assets is due to advance payments on two of the commercial assets, Amazon and MOOG to support the construction stage of the buildings. The agreement was that the council would receive interest payments on the amounts advanced.
- The cost of borrowing (interest charged) has decreased due to the use of short term borrowing being extended for the whole financial year. Rates for short term borrowing remained low during 2021/22 with the average interest rate at 0.22%.
- The reduction in broker fees is due to associated borrowing maturing in the next financial year and these fees are only paid at the time of loan repayments.

Corporate Costs

44. The total corporate costs are showing an underspend of £4,339,378; this includes the reduced cost of borrowing and the additional investment income which are discussed in the paragraph above.

45. Capital financing is the revenue cost of the capital programme. The underspend of £2,250,000 relates to the slippage in the capital programme for revenue contributions and internal borrowing costs. Full details of the capital projects being slipped are set out in paragraph 64 and the key items with a revenue impact are:

- £1,097,721 of the revenue cost of the commercial investments for purchasing and management fees which were not required in the current year due to completion of Amazon being delayed until 1 April 2022. These funds will be transferred to the capital slippage reserve and applied to the associated spend as it is incurred in 2022/23.
- £600,000 of slippage for superfast broadband and £125,000 for various other smaller capital projects.

Where revenue contributions to capital projects are not required but the project is being slipped to future years, these funds will be held in the capital slippage reserve to be released in line with associated spend.

46. The remainder of the underspend relates to the revenue charge for the Loans to Aspire (CRP) and a reduction in the internal borrowing revenue cost of the vehicle replacement programme.

Funding

47. The Covid 19 Pandemic impacted on the collection of Business Rates income, the introduction of new rate reliefs and the extension of current ones. The Government extended the Covid support scheme for rate reliefs available to businesses and specified other organisations until the 31 July. The Council are compensated in full for all these reliefs awarded via the S31 grant.
48. Business Rates is currently showing a net positive variance of £1,968,671 the two key factors are £550,743 (net cost of UDC share of income and tariff payable) and £2,545,071 S31 grant funding. The balance of the underspend is the net cost of £25,657 relating to renewable energy income and collection fund balance.
49. The S31 grant is received in the year the reliefs are applied but the financial impact of these reliefs is not accounted for in the revenue account until the following year. The S31 grant for the reliefs are held in the Business Rates Reserve and drawn down as required to match expenditure in the year it is accounted for.

General Fund Reserves

50. The total reserves balance on 1 April 2021 was £22,441,000 and after applying the net movement to reserves, this increases the councils' balances by £363,000 giving a year-end balance of all reserves at £22,804,000. Full details of the reserves are set out in Appendix B, please note that these balances do not include the 2021/22 surplus of £1,019,395.
51. The original budget included a net draw on reserves of £5,729,000, following the year end outturn report for 2020/21 the approved capital slippage of £1,296,000 was added to the reserves. This was shown to be drawn down full during 2022/23 and gave an updated budgeted net use of reserves of £7,025,000.
52. The following table sets all the movements to the reserves during the year; a net reduction in use of reserves by £7,387,000. This includes the net use of direct service reserves as discussed earlier in the report.

Movement in Reserves - Change in Net Transfers				
	£'000	£'000	£'000	Reasons for change in use of reserves
	Drawn down	Additions		
Licensing		18		Adjustment to reflect 3/5 year profile of income for taxi licensing
Medium Term Financial Strategy		110		Revenues new burden funding c/fwd for future years costs
Medium Term Financial Strategy		21		Funding for additional 20/21 audit costs relating to Covid
Economic Development		361		Year 1 funding for Economic Recovery plan c/fwd to year 2
Elections		30		Covid funding support for elections c/fwd
Homelessness	(149)			Net impact of homelessness/rough sleeping grant to match cost of service delivery
Health and Wellbeing		55		Grant funding c/fwd to support future years spend
Planning	(16)			Release of grant held for Tilty Mill
Planning - Neighbourhood Plan		24		Net adjustment to reflect receipt of grant funding to deliver plans
Development Control	(63)			Drawdown of funds held relating to the 20% fee income to match spend
Sustainable New Communities		168		Adjustment to allocation of funding to support local plan to match actual in year spend
Sustainable New Communities		160		Receipt of Grant to support Design Code for Local Plan c/fwd to match spend profile
Voluntary Sector		42		Grants not paid out in year - c/fwd to match spend in 22/23
Sports Reserve	(45)			Sports grant for 2020/21 paid in year and part of 2021/22, c/fwd balance to match spend in 22/23
Climate Change		285		Year 1 net funding c/fwd of climate change funding to year 2
Direct Services - Reserve in year movement	(273)	1,273	1,000	
Business Rates		3,060		Net of Section 31 grant for years 21/22 and 22/23
Capital Slippage		2,163		Financing of capital programme reduced requirement of the slippage reserve to match programme spend
Waste Depot Relocation	(86)			Release of funds to support cost of capital expenditure for waste depot relocation
Medium Term Financial Strategy		373		Release of funds held in relation to the rent compensation for one commercial asset now accounted for as direct revenue
Transformation	(7)			Revenue contribution to the capital expenditure for the Customer Services Appointments system
Planning - Capital	(27)			Revenue contribution to the capital expenditure for the ARGis planning system
Private Finance Initiative (PFI)		795		Additional cost of inflationary uplift as per contract agreement
Working Balance		116		Adjustment to the statutory contingency reserve balance
Other Reserve in year movement	(120)	6,507	6,386	
Net reduction in use of reserves			7,387	

53. The three reserves which have significant changes to the budgeted position are explained below.

- Business Rates** - The cost of the business rate reliefs on our collection fund account are not accounted for until the financial year after they are awarded; for example, reliefs awarded in 2020/21 are accounted for in the revenue budget for 2021/22. The S31 grant payments to cover these reliefs are received in the year they are applied, so the grant payments and the revenue cost are a year apart. To ensure that the grant and relief costs are accounted for correctly, future years S31 grants are held in the reserve to be released in line with the cost impact on the revenue account.

The original budget predicted a required drawdown of £6,123,000 relating to 2020/21 reliefs and estimated reduced collection rates, the actual net cost at the year-end was £3,063,417. This is a S31 grant drawdown of £4,837,114 to match the current year cost of reliefs (awarded in 2020/21) and the c/fwd. of £1,773,697 for the cost of 2021/22 reliefs to be accounted for in 2022/23.

- Capital Slippage** - This is the net impact of the reduced use of the slippage b/fwd. from 2020/21 and additional c/fwd. amounts from 2021/22 (as discussed in paragraph 45). This reserve is held to match the allocated revenue financing for the rolling capital programme and will be released in line with actual spend as it is incurred.
- Private Finance Initiative (PFI)** – The PFI is a contract governed by specific terms and conditions, this includes increases in inflationary costs over and

above the agreed annual uplifts. Due to the extremely high increases in energy costs, we are contractually obliged to increase our payment contribution, the estimated cost is approximately £265,000 per annum and the reserve has been increased by a total of £795,000 to cover the next three years.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

Covid-19 Impact

54. The housing services are currently not reporting any material impact for covid related pressures. There has been a significant increase in people presenting as homeless but the resources to manage this are supported in full by the Homelessness Grant received from DLUHC (formally MHCLG).

Service Delivery

55. The HRA operating surplus is £358,000 and after adjusting for funding contributions and reserves this gives a net surplus of £112,000. The following table provides a summary of the budget, and full details are set out in Appendix C.

£'000	2020/21 Outturn	2021/22			
		Original Budget	Current Budget	Outturn	Variance
Total Service Income	(16,139)	(16,170)	(16,170)	(16,056)	114
Total Service Expenditure	4,749	4,821	4,821	4,786	(34)
Total Corporate Costs	8,362	10,523	10,523	10,086	(438)
OPERATING (SURPLUS)/DEFICIT	(3,028)	(827)	(827)	(1,184)	(358)
Funding of Capital Programme from HRA	952	650	3,235	2,239	(996)
Use of Reserves	2,102	177	(2,408)	(1,166)	1,242
Total Use of Reserves/Funding	3,054	827	827	1,073	246
(SURPLUS)/DEFICIT	26	0	0	(112)	(112)

56. It is proposed that the £112,000 surplus is added to the Transformation reserve to support the additional costs being incurred in 2022/23 for the temporary management structure to support Housing Services.

57. The key variances relating to the direct service delivery are detailed below:

- Net Income decrease of £114,000, made up of rental income reduction of £58,000 due to updated budget information on collectable housing and garage rents in year. In addition, a reduction of income of £45,000 for utility charges recharged to leaseholders, under Contributions for services and facilities.
- Common service flats has an underspend of £47,000 and this is the reduced cost of utilities and offsets the income reduction in the above point.
- Housing Repairs additional costs for an historical invoice received which related to a prior financial year.
- Housing Services and Sheltered Housing are underspent due to in year staffing vacancies.

58. Corporate Costs is reporting a total underspend of £438,000 and this is due to the following items

- Bad Debt provision budgeted at £100,000, was not required due to high collection rates on rents and minimal arrears. The council hold a bad debt provision on the balance sheet and this provision was not increased.
- Depreciation charges are calculated on the current valuations received at the end of the financial year, which often differ from the valuations used to set the budget. This has generated a reduction in the depreciation charge of £393,000.

HRA Reserves

59. The reserve balances at 1 April 2021 were £4,355,000 and the net use of reserves is £1,166,000 to support capital projects, this leaves a yearend balance of £3,189,000. The detailed reserves balances are set out in Appendix D.

Capital Programme

60. The current budget for the 2021/22 Capital Programme is £15,945,000 and this is made up of the original budget of £8,420,000 and the slippage of £7,525,000 brought forward from 2020/21.

61. The actual spend for 2021/22 is £77,158,000 against the current budget of £15,945,000, this gives a total net overspend of £61,213,000 the overspend relates mainly to the commercial investments.

62. If the investments are removed from the actual spend on the rolling capital programme this gives a total spend of £14,750,000 for the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account and an overall underspend against budget of £695,000. After allowing for slippage this gives an actual in year overspend of £5,584,000.

63. The overspend is due to the net effect of a number of over and under spends and the following items are the key overspends;

General Fund

- £4,758,000 additional spend for the refurbishment of the Little Canfield site and the additional spend includes development of the commercial areas.

Housing Revenue Account

- £248,000 additional spend on right to buy schemes relating to Gold Close.

64. The slippage requests are set out below.

Slippage Requests 2021/22	
	£'000
General Fund	
Community Project Grants	72
White Street Car Park	25
Car Parking Machine Replacement	65
Vehicle Replacement Programme	1,066
PCI Compliance	40
Asset Management System	30
Cyber Security	72
Grounds Maint & Vehicle System	43
Postal Software	27
Scanner Replacement	30
Sharepoint	18
Wifi	36
Northgate Housing Assets	20
Corporate Mobile Refresh - Cap Pur IT	37
ICT - New Sites - Cap Pur IT	326
Web-to-Print Solutions - Cap Pur IT	9
London Rd Office Building works	189
Swan Meadow Car Park Resurface	240
Museum Boiler	34
London Road - Fire Alarm Upgrade	50
Empty Dwellings	13
Superfast Broadband	600
Housing Revenue Account	
Cash Incentive Scheme Grants	41
RTB SCHEMES	
The Moors	75
Thaxted Road	1,860
Great Chesterford	371
HRA - UTTLESFORD NORSE	
HRA Repairs	790
UPVC Fascia's and Guttering	(6)
Resurfacing Access Road	(3)
Lift Replacement	10
Total Slippage requested	6,179

65. The slippage from 2020/21 for the Housing Revenue has been reallocated during the year as reported in earlier forecast outturn reports.

- Walden Place - £1,727,000 was reallocated during the year to support the purchase of affordable homes to meet our right to buy requirements.
- HRA repairs has reduced the level of slippage by £64,000, a reserves contribution has been applied to fund this.

66. The full Capital Programme is set out in Appendix E; this provides a summary of all the schemes for the Commercial Investments, General Fund and HRA, along with the balances for S106 funds.

Investments

67. The Council has directly purchased six commercial properties and through its wholly owned company Aspire (CRP) Ltd purchased a 50% share in Chesterford Research Park, this was in line with the requirements of the Commercial Strategy approved by Members in February 2021.
68. The direct commercial property investments are listed in the table below along with the purchase price (excluding stamp duty, Land Registry fees and insurance) and the rental income received during 2021/22.

Commercial Asset	Purchase Price	Income 2021/22
	£'000	£'000
Skyway House - Takeley	20,000	(1,146,800)
Veterinarian Practice - Livingstone, Scotland	5,925	(333,331)
Waitrose Distribution Centre - Chorley	55,000	(2,309,108)
Amazon - Gloucestershire	42,514	(87,967)
MOOG - Tewksbury	35,000	0
Stane Retail Park (phase 1), Colchester	30,424	(650,876)
TOTAL	188,863	(4,528,083)

69. The forward funding acquisition of the new build logistics unit at Gloucester, pre-let to Amazon, the tenant took occupation of the building in November 2021.
70. The forward funding acquisition of the new build headquarters for Moog Controls Ltd is on schedule to complete in May 2022.
71. Stane Retail Park located in Colchester is an out of town retail development, phase one is forward funding of the site and two stores have been pre-let to Aldi and B&Q. Completion was scheduled for October 2021, but this is now delayed and expected completion is late November.
72. All of the tenant leases have upward only increases in their leases, which in most cases are compounded five yearly.

Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Actual income and expenditure may require adjustments subject to the external audit	2 – there may be required changes to balances	2 – this may change the final outturn position	The outturn is based on current information held and up to date working papers

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project

Appendix A

General Fund Budget Summary

£'000	2020/21 Outturn	2021/22			
		Original Budget	Current Budget	Final Outturn	Variance
Portfolio Budgets					
Community & Partnerships	1,041	1,097	1,097	1,076	(21)
Housing & Economic Development	1,557	2,677	2,677	1,489	(1,188)
Environmental	4,791	4,265	4,265	3,993	(272)
Finance & Administration	5,914	7,697	7,697	6,910	(787)
Subtotal - Direct Portfolio Budgets	13,303	15,736	15,736	13,468	(2,268)
Net Corporate investment Income	(2,039)	(4,635)	(4,635)	(4,407)	229
Total - Net service costs	11,264	11,100	11,100	9,061	(2,039)
Corporate Items					
Capital Financing Costs	9,499	3,626	4,922	2,672	(2,250)
PFI interest cost	372	360	360	360	0
External borrowing interest charges	807	1,814	1,814	1,343	(471)
Profit shares	(3)	0	0	0	0
Financial Investment Income	(2,306)	(2,316)	(2,316)	(3,806)	(1,490)
Exceptional corporate items - bad debt	7	0	0	12	12
Pension Fund - Added Years	86	85	85	91	6
Pension Triennial Payment	582	0	0	0	0
Corporate Core HRA Share	(405)	(385)	(385)	(372)	14
Recharge to HRA	(1,310)	(1,167)	(1,167)	(1,328)	(160)
Subtotal - Corporate Items	7,328	2,017	3,313	(1,026)	(4,339)
Subtotal - General Fund	18,592	13,117	14,413	8,035	(6,379)
Funding					
Council Tax - Collection Fund Balance	(20)	55	55	55	0
Business Rates - Collection Fund Balance	8	4,785	4,785	4,837	53
Business Rates - UDC Share (net of tariff)	(2,475)	(1,068)	(1,068)	(1,112)	(44)
Business Rates - Levy/(Safety Net) Payment	380	393	393	989	595
Business Rates - Renewable Energy Schemes	(104)	(107)	(107)	(134)	(27)
Collection fund - Section 31 Funding	(6,298)	(1,282)	(1,282)	(3,827)	(2,545)
Rural Services Delivery Grant	(279)	(293)	(293)	(293)	0
New Homes Bonus	(3,635)	(2,823)	(2,823)	(2,823)	0
Covid impact funding	(1,694)	(890)	(890)	(948)	(58)
Subtotal - Funding	(14,118)	(1,230)	(1,230)	(3,258)	(2,027)
Net Operating Expenditure	4,474	11,888	13,184	4,777	(8,405)
Transfer to/(from) Reserves					
Business Rates	4,801	(6,123)	(6,123)	(3,063)	3,060
Licensing	(45)	13	13	31	18
Capital Slippage	203	0	(1,296)	868	2,164
Working Balance	127	(38)	(38)	78	116
Medium Term Financial Strategy	48	(473)	(473)	31	503
Transformation	(3)	0	0	(7)	(7)
Emergency Response	500	794	794	794	(0)
Economic Development	216	660	660	1,021	361
Elections	25	30	30	60	30
Homelessness	121	102	102	(47)	(149)
Health and Wellbeing	13	0	0	55	55
Planning and Development	(916)	(15)	(15)	(97)	(82)
Strategic Initiatives Fund	203	0	0	0	0
Sustainable New Communities	7	(640)	(640)	(312)	328
Voluntary Sector	0	0	0	41	41
New Homes Bonus Ward Members	(6)	0	0	0	0
Waste Depot Relocation Project	(4,343)	0	0	(86)	(86)
Private Finance Initiative (PFI)	0	0	0	795	795
Sports reserve	150	0	0	(45)	(45)
Climate Change	380	(40)	(40)	245	285
Subtotal - Movement in General Fund Reserves	1,482	(5,729)	(7,025)	362	7,387
COUNCIL TAX REQUIREMENT	5,957	6,159	6,159	5,139	(1,018)
Council Tax (precept levied on Collection Fund)	(5,957)	(6,159)	(6,159)	(6,159)	0
OVERALL NET POSITION (Under) / Over spend	0	0	0	(1,019)	(1,019)

Appendix A continued...

Portfolio Service Variances

Communities and Partnerships

£'000	2020/21 Outturn	2021/22			
		Original Budget	Current Budget	Outturn	Variance
Community Information	48	51	51	35	(16)
Day Centres	105	95	95	76	(18)
Emergency Planning	29	34	34	32	(2)
Grants & Contributions	363	568	568	617	49
Leisure & Performance	43	47	47	41	(6)
Saffron Walden Museum	229	240	240	217	(23)
New Homes Bonus	82	78	78	78	(0)
Private Finance Init	168	11	11	4	(7)
Renovation Grants	(27)	(27)	(27)	(24)	3
Portfolio Total	1,041	1,097	1,097	1,076	(21)

Housing and Economic Development

£'000	2020/21 Outturn	2021/22			
		Original Budget	Current Budget	Outturn	Variance
Building Surveying	(41)	(11)	(11)	(105)	(95)
Committee Admin	265	308	308	289	(19)
Customer Services Centre	493	569	569	501	(68)
Democratic Represent	321	358	358	323	(35)
Economic Development	148	611	611	181	(429)
Climate Change	13	424	424	62	(362)
Health Improvement	172	193	193	102	(91)
Homelessness	172	143	143	89	(54)
Lifeline	(164)	(160)	(160)	(136)	23
Communications	178	241	241	183	(58)
Portfolio Total	1,557	2,677	2,677	1,489	(1,188)

Portfolio Service Variances**Environmental Services**

£'000	2020/21 Outturn	2021/22			
		Original Budget	Current Budget	Outturn	Variance
Animal Warden	4	6	6	3	(3)
Grounds Maintenance	368	364	364	407	43
Car Park	(188)	(573)	(573)	(474)	99
Development Control	748	(270)	(270)	(505)	(235)
Depots	56	56	56	60	4
Garden Planning	131	0	0		0
Street Cleansing	388	422	422	390	(33)
Housing Strategy	46	60	60	57	(3)
Highways	9	8	8	(3)	(12)
Local Amenities	(12)	(13)	(13)	(13)	(1)
Licensing	(155)	(261)	(261)	(186)	75
Vehicle Management	416	491	491	457	(34)
Public Health	521	718	718	580	(138)
Planning Management	396	422	422	390	(33)
Planning Policy	463	1,660	1,660	1,274	(387)
Planning Specialists	203	210	210	240	30
Waste Management	775	315	315	720	405
Community Safety	341	398	398	316	(83)
Street Services	281	250	250	284	34
Portfolio Total	4,791	4,265	4,265	3,993	(272)

Portfolio Service Variances

£'000	2020/21 Outturn	2021/22			
		Original Budget	Current Budget	Outturn	Variance
Asset Management	0	94	94	165	72
Benefits Admin	266	353	353	239	(114)
Corporate Management	1,140	1,998	1,998	1,557	(441)
Central Services	374	463	463	350	(112)
Corporate Team	(1,987)	0	0	0	0
Conducting Elections	(1)	4	4	(40)	(43)
Electoral Registration	20	38	38	33	(5)
Financial Services	1,149	1,176	1,176	1,154	(22)
Housing Benefits	(747)	104	104	(44)	(147)
Human Resources	289	374	374	333	(41)
Internal Audit	146	159	159	157	(2)
Information Technology	1,472	1,585	1,585	1,593	8
Land Charges	(71)	(63)	(63)	(53)	10
Legal Services	343	374	374	461	87
Local Taxation	471	(100)	(100)	(44)	56
Norse Partnership	0	384	384	379	(5)
Non Domestic Rates	(69)	(146)	(146)	(130)	16
Office Cleaning	215	0	0	0	0
Offices	494	211	211	398	187
Revenues Admin	397	671	671	443	(229)
Council Tax Discounts	(26)	18	18	(42)	(60)
Portfolio Total	3,875	7,697	7,697	6,910	(787)

Appendix B

General Fund Reserves

£'000	Balance 1st April 2021	Transfer From General Fund	Transfer to General Fund	Transfer Between Reserves	Balance 31st March 2022
<u>RINGFENCED RESERVES</u>					
Business Rates	7,634	1,774	(4,837)		4,571
Departments for Work and Pensions	71				71
Licensing	35	31			66
Capital Slippage	1,483	1,400	(532)		2,350
Working Balance	1,438	78			1,517
TOTAL RINGFENCED RESERVES	10,661	3,283	(5,369)	0	8,575
<u>USABLE RESERVES</u>					
<u>Financial Management Reserves</u>					
Medium Term Financial Strategy	1,576	131	(100)	200	1,806
Transformation	1,139		(7)		1,132
EU Exit	513				513
Income Protection	1,060				1,060
	4,287	131	(107)	200	4,511
<u>Contingency Reserves</u>					
Emergency Response	540	794			1,334
	540	794	0	0	1,334
<u>Service Reserves</u>					
Economic Development	463	1,000	21		1,484
Elections	70	60			130
Homelessness	404		(47)		357
Health and Wellbeing	131	55			186
Planning	669		(43)		625
Neighbourhood Planning	54	8			62
Housing Strategy	22	2			24
Development Control	146		(63)		83
Strategic Initiatives Fund	1,863			(200)	1,663
Sustainable New Communities	1,781	160	(472)		1,470
New Homes Bonus Ward Members	16				16
Voluntary Sector	0	41			41
Waste Depot Relocation Project	247	500	(586)	(161)	0
Waste Management	250			161	411
Private Finance Initiative	307	795			1,102
Sports reserve	150	150	(195)		105
Climate Change	380	300	(55)		625
	6,953	3,071	(1,439)	(200)	8,384
TOTAL USABLE RESERVES	11,780	3,995	(1,546)	0	14,229
TOTAL GENERAL FUND RESERVES	22,441	7,278	(6,916)	0	22,804

Housing Revenue Account Budget Summary

£000	2020/21 Outturn	2021/22			
		Original Budget	Current Budget	Outturn	Variance
<u>Housing Revenue Account Income</u>					
Dwellings Rent	(14,797)	(14,875)	(14,875)	(14,817)	58
Garage Rents	(224)	(233)	(233)	(223)	11
Land Rents	(1)	(1)	(1)	0	1
Charges for Services & Facilities	(1,035)	(1,061)	(1,061)	(1,016)	45
Contributions Towards Expenditure	(82)	0	0	(1)	(1)
Total Service Income	(16,139)	(16,170)	(16,170)	(16,056)	114
<u>Housing Finance & Business Management</u>					
Rents, Rates & Other Property Charges	68	80	80	104	25
	68	80	80	104	25
<u>Housing Maintenance & Repairs Services</u>					
Common Service Flats	194	224	224	177	(47)
Uttlesford Norse Partnership	2,741	2,626	3,370	3,371	1
Estate Maintenance	196	200	2	1	(1)
Housing Repairs	0	0	0	58	58
Housing Sewerage	62	61	13	16	3
Newport Depot	3	0	0	4	4
Property Services	366	436	49	87	37
	3,561	3,547	3,659	3,712	53
<u>Housing Management & Homelessness</u>					
Housing Services	470	536	536	491	(45)
Sheltered Housing Services	650	658	546	479	(67)
	1,119	1,194	1,082	970	(112)
Total Service Expenditure	4,749	4,821	4,821	4,786	(34)
<u>Corporate Costs</u>					
Bad Debt Provision	113	100	100	(1)	(101)
Depreciation - Dwellings (to MRR)	3,881	4,230	4,230	3,751	(479)
Depreciation - Non-Dwellings (to MRR)	0	51	51	137	86
Interest / Costs - HRA Loan	2,584	2,601	2,601	2,574	(27)
Repayment of Loan	0	2,000	2,000	2,000	0
Investment Income	0	(2)	(2)	(3)	(1)
Uttlesford Norse Partnership Profit Share	(66)	0	0	(69)	(69)
Recharge from General Fund	1,310	1,167	1,167	1,328	160
HRA Share of Corporate Core	405	385	385	372	(14)
Pension Fund - Added Years	18	0	0	18	18
Pension Fund - Deficit	128	0	0	0	0
Right to Buy Admin Cost Allowance	(10)	(10)	(10)	(21)	(10)
Total Corporate Costs	8,362	10,523	10,523	10,086	(438)
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	13,111	15,344	15,344	14,872	(472)
OPERATING (SURPLUS)/DEFICIT	(3,028)	(827)	(827)	(1,184)	(358)
<u>Funding of Capital Programme from HRA</u>					
Funding of Capital from Revenue	952	650	3,235	2,239	(996)
	952	650	3,235	2,239	(996)
<u>Transfers to/from (-) Reserves</u>					
Capital Projects Reserve	897	216	216	0	(216)
Potential Developments (New Builds)	(100)	0	0	0	0
Sheltered Housing Reserve		0	0	0	0
HRA Capital Slippage Reserve	(302)	0	(2,585)	(1,166)	1,419
Revenue Projects	1,650	0	0	0	0
Transformation Reserve	0	0	0	0	0
Working Balance	(43)	(40)	(40)	0	40
	2,102	177	(2,408)	(1,166)	1,242
Total Use of Reserve / Funding	3,054	827	827	1,073	246
(SURPLUS)/DEFICIT	26	0	0	(112)	(112)

Appendix D

Housing Revenue Account Reserves

Reserve	Actual Balance	Actual transfer from HRA	Actual Transfer to HRA	Transfer between Reserves	Balance
£'000	1st April 2021				31st March 2022
<u>RINGFENCED RESERVES</u>					
Working Balance	471			0	471
	471	0	0	0	471
<u>USABLE RESERVES</u>					
<u>Revenue Reserves</u>					
Transformation / Change Managemen	180			0	180
Revenue Projects	160			0	160
	340	0	0	0	340
<u>Capital Reserves</u>					
Capital Projects	884			0	884
Potential Development Projects	10			0	10
Sheltered Housing Projects				0	0
HRA Slippage Reserve	2,650	927	(2,093)	0	1,484
	3,544	927	(2,093)	0	2,378
TOTAL USABLE RESERVES	3,884	927	(2,093)	0	2,718
TOTAL RESERVES	4,355	927	(2,093)	0	3,189

Reserves with Conditions

Reserve with conditions	Actual Balance	Actual transfer from HRA	Actual Transfer to HRA	Capital financing	Balance
£'000	1st April 2021				31st March 2022
Capital Receipt Reserve - RTB	2,147	2,941	(446)	(1,360)	3,282
Capital Receipt Reserve - Other	29				29
Capital Receipt Reserve - Total	2,176	2,941	(446)	(1,360)	4,671

Capital Programme expenditure summary

Scheme	ORIGINAL BUDGET 2021/22 £'000	SLIPPAGE FROM 2020/21 £'000	CURRENT BUDGET 2021/22 £'000	ACTUAL SPEND APRIL 21 - MARCH 22 £'000	VARIANCE £'000	SLIPPAGE REQUESTED
Investment Properties	500	0	500	62,408	61,908	0
Total Spend for Investment Properties	500	0	500	62,408	61,908	
Community and Partnerships	110	60	170	43	(127)	72
Environmental Services	190	1,634	1,824	686	(1,138)	1,156
Finance and Administration	1,745	772	2,517	5,996	3,479	1,200
Housing and Economic Development	280	701	981	647	(334)	613
Total General Fund	2,325	3,167	5,492	7,371	1,879	3,040
Housing Revenue Account	5,595	4,358	9,953	7,378	(2,575)	3,139
TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME	8,420	7,525	15,945	77,158	61,213	6,179

Capital Programme financing summary

FINANCING SUMMARY 2021/22	INVESTMENTS £'000	GENERAL FUND £'000	HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT £'000
Borrowing	62,006	5,385	
Grants and Contributions		291	456
Revenue Contribution (RCCO)	402	396	147
Internal Borrowing			
Reserves		1,166	2,093
S106			
Capital Receipts		134	1,360
Major Repairs Reserve			3,323
	62,408	7,372	7,378
TOTAL FINANCING			77,158

Capital Programme Investment Properties

SCHEME	ORIGINAL BUDGET 2021/22	SLIPPAGE FROM 2020/21	VIREMENTS	CURRENT BUDGET 2021/22	ACTUAL TO March	FORECAST TO BUDGET VARIANCE	SLIPPAGE TO 2022/23
INVESTMENT PROPERTIES							
Skyway House	500	0	0	500	0	(500)	
Deer Park Road	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Stane Retail Park	0	0	0	0	19	18,784	
Waitrose Distribution Centre	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Amazon, Gloucester	0	0	0	0	27	27,167	
MOOG	0	0	0	0	16	16,457	
	500	0	0	500	62,408	61,908	0

Appendix E continued...

Capital Programme General Fund

SCHEME	ORIGINAL BUDGET 2021/22	SLIPPAGE FROM 2020/21	VIREMENTS	CURRENT BUDGET 2021/22	ACTUAL TO March	FORECAST TO BUDGET VARIANCE	SLIPPAGE TO 2022/23
GENERAL FUND							
COMMUNITY AND PARTNERSHIPS							
Community Project Grants	110	53		163	38	(125)	72
Tree Planting	0	7		7	4	(3)	
TOTAL COMMUNITY AND PARTNERSHIPS	110	60	0	170	43	(127)	72
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES							
White Street Car Park	0	25		25	0	(25)	25
Household Bins	70	0		70	79	9	
Trade Waste Bins	30	0		30	24	(6)	
Kitchen Caddies	10	0		10	9	(1)	
Garden Waste Bins	20	0		20	18	(2)	
Car Parking Machine Replacement	0	92		92	28	(65)	65
Electric Car Charges	15	0		15	32	17	
Vehicle Replacement Programme	45	1,517		1,562	496	(1,066)	1,066
TOTAL ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	190	1,634	0	1,824	686	(1,138)	1,156
SCHEME	ORIGINAL BUDGET 2021/22	SLIPPAGE FROM 2020/21	VIREMENTS	CURRENT BUDGET 2021/22	ACTUAL TO March	FORECAST TO BUDGET VARIANCE	SLIPPAGE TO 2022/23
HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT							
Private Sector Renewal Grant	70	67		137	3	(134)	
Disabled facilities Grant	200	24		224	237	13	
Compulsory Purchase Order	0	0		0	400	400	
Empty Dwellings	10	10		20	7	(13)	13
Superfast Broadband	0	600		600	0	(600)	600
TOTAL HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	280	701	0	981	647	(334)	613

Capital Programme General Fund

SCHEME	ORIGINAL BUDGET 2021/22	SLIPPAGE FROM 2020/21	VIREMENTS	CURRENT BUDGET 2021/22	ACTUAL TO March	FORECAST TO BUDGET VARIANCE	SLIPPAGE TO 2022/23
FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION							
Minor Items IT	20	20		40	22	(18)	
Revenues and Benefits IT	0	20		20	0	(20)	
PCI Compliance	20	34		54	14	(40)	40
Video Conferencing - Cap Pur IT					(13)	(13)	
PSN CoCo Works	30	58		88	36	(52)	
PCI - Cash Receipt - Cap Pur IT					10	10	
Asset Management System	0	30		30	0	(30)	30
Cyber Security	20	52		72	0	(72)	72
Grounds Maint & Vehicle System	0	43		43	0	(43)	43
Idox Additional Modules	0	5		5	0	(5)	
Licensing - Lalpac to Idox Uni	0	16		16	7	(9)	
ArcGIS Upgrade	0	12		12	27	15	
Postal Software	0	27		27	0	(27)	27
Scanner Replacement	0	30		30	0	(30)	30
Sharepoint	0	30		30	12	(18)	18
Wifi	0	50		50	14	(36)	36
Northgate Housing Assets	0	20		20	0	(20)	20
Corporate Mobile Refresh - Cap Pur IT	40	0		40	3	(37)	37
ICT - New Sites - Cap Pur IT	400	0		400	74	(326)	326
Web-to-Print Solutions - Cap Pur IT	18	0		18	9	(9)	9
Appoitment Reservation	0	0		0	7	7	
S/W offices					2	2	
New Depot Site	1,000	0		1,000	5,758	4,758	
London Rd Office Building works	120	195	(117)	199	10	(189)	189
Swan Meadow Car Park Resurface	0	0	240	240	0	(240)	240
Day Centres Cyclical Improvements	25	25	(50)	0	0	0	
Museum Fire Alarm	20	0	(20)	0	0	0	
Museum Boiler	32	0	2	34	0	(34)	34
London Rd Office Electrical	0	10	(10)	0	0	0	
London Road - Fire Alarm Upgrade	0	50		50	0	(50)	50
London Road - LED Lighting	0	45	(45)	0	0	0	
Section 106 agreements	0	0	0	0	3	3	
TOTAL FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION	1,745	772	0	2,517	5,996	3,479	1,200

Capital Programme Housing Revenue Account

SCHEME	ORIGINAL BUDGET 2021/22	SLIPPAGE FROM 2020/21	VIREMENTS	CURRENT BUDGET 2021/22	ACTUAL TO March	FORECAST TO BUDGET VARIANCE	SLIPPAGE TO 2022/23
HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT							
Cash Incentive Scheme Grants	50	0		50	9	(41)	41
TOTAL	50	0	0	50	9	(41)	41
RTB SCHEMES							
Newton Grove	0	0		0	20	20	
Frambury Lane	0	0		0	21	21	
The Moors	0	877		877	802	(75)	75
Thaxted Road	1,350	2,110		3,460	1,600	(1,860)	1,860
Great Chesterford	650	819		1,469	1,098	(371)	371
Auton Court	0	0		0	0	0	
Gold Close	0	0		0	248	248	
White Roding	0	0		0	12	12	
Future sites					7	7	
TOTAL RTB SCHEMES	2,000	3,806	0	5,806	3,807	(1,999)	2,307
SHELTERED SCHEMES							
Reynolds Court	0	0		0	14	14	
Hatherley Court	0	0		0	19	19	
Walden Place	0	0		0	86	86	
Alexia House	0	0		0	47	47	
Parkside	0	0		0	90	90	
TOTAL SHELTERED SCHEMES	0	0	0	0	256	256	0
HRA - UTTLESFORD NORSE							
HRA Repairs	3,445	497	0	3,942	3,152	(790)	790
UPVC Fascia's and Guttering	100	0		100	106	6	(6)
Resurfacing Access Road	0	0		0	3	3	(3)
Lift Replacement	0	55		55	45	(10)	10
TOTAL UTTLESFORD NORSE	3,545	552	0	4,097	3,306	(791)	791

Section 106

With Conditions	31 March 2021	Income	Adjustment	Drawn Down - Capital	Balance at 31 Mar 2022
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
S106 Receipts in Advance					
Priors Green, Takeley	78	-	-	-	78
Land north of Ingrams, Felsted	10	-	-	-	10
Rochford Nurseries/Foresthall Park, Stansted	20	-	-	-	20
The Orchard, Elsenham	42	-	-	-	42
Wedow Road, Thaxted	53	-	-	-	53
Sector 4 Woodlands Park, Gt Dunmow	10	-	-	-	10
Keers Green Nurseries, Aythorpe Roding	120	-	-	-	120
Land adjacent to S/W Hospital	31	-	-	-	31
Land at Blossom Hill Farm, Henham	33	-	-	-	33
Land at Webb & Hallett Road, Flitch Green, Felsted	33	-	-	-	33
Land south side of Radwinter Road	49	273	-	-	322
Land North side of Stansted Road Elsenham	-	380	-	(3)	377
Land South of Stansted Road, Elsenham	-	330	-	-	330
Total	479	983	-	(3)	1,459
Other Bodies	31 March 2021	Income	Adjustment	Transferred to other bodies	Balance at 31 Mar 2022
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
S106 Receipts in Advance					
Sector 4 Woodlands Park (Helena Romanes School)	165	-	-	-	165
Brewers End, Takeley	31	-	-	-	31
Land adj Hailes Wood, Elsenham	10	-	-	-	10
Land at Flitch Green, Felsted	67	-	-	-	67
Land adjacent to S/W Hospital	1	-	-	-	1
Ashdon Road Commercial Centre	34	-	-	-	34
Land south of Stansted Road, Elsenham	53	-	-	-	53
Land south of Ongar Road, Dunmow	17	-	-	-	17
Land at 119 Radwinter Road, adj S/W Hospital	15	-	-	-	15
Land North of Ongar Road, Gt Dunmow	21	-	-	-	21
Land at Bury Water Lane, Newport	29	-	-	-	29
Land at Elsenham Nurseries	14	-	-	-	14
Bury Water Lane, Newport	26	-	-	-	26
Walpole Farm, Cambridge Road, Stansted	53	-	-	-	53
14 Stortford Road, Gt Dunmow	35	-	-	-	35
Land west of Woodside Way, Gt Dunmow	-	264	-	-	264
Grants and Contributions to Other Bodies	571	264	-	-	835
Without Conditions	31 March 2021	Income	Adjustment	Drawn Down - Capital	Balance at 31 Mar 2022
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
S106 Unapplied					
Affordable Housing;	813	-	-	-	813
Drawn Down	-	-	-	-	-
Affordable Housing	813	-	-	-	813
Dunmow Eastern Sector	18	-	-	-	18
Woodlands Park, Gt Dunmow	36	-	-	-	36
Bell College, Saffron Walden	15	-	-	-	15
Priors Green, Takeley	8	-	-	-	8
Foresthall Park, Stansted	33	-	-	-	33
Lt Walden Road/Ashdon Road, Saffron Walden	98	-	-	-	98
Oakwood Park, Takeley	5	-	-	-	5
Total	1,026	-	-	-	1,026

Committee:	Cabinet	Date:
Title:	Treasury Management Outturn 2021/22	Thursday, 20 October 2022
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Neil Hargreaves, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Budget	
Report Author:	Angela Knight, Assistant Director - Business and Change Management aknight@uttlesford.gov.uk	Key decision: No

Summary

1. The Authority has adopted the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's *Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice* (the CIPFA Code).
2. Treasury risk management at the Authority is conducted within the framework of the CIPFA Code, which requires the Authority to approve a treasury management strategy before the start of each financial year and, as a minimum, a semi-annual and annual treasury outturn report. The attached report fulfils the Authority's legal obligation under the Local Government Act 2003 to have regard to the CIPFA Code.
3. The Authority's treasury management strategy for 2021/22 was approved at a meeting on 22 February 2021. The Authority has borrowed and invested substantial sums of money and is therefore exposed to financial risks including the loss of invested funds and the revenue effect of changing interest rates. The successful identification, monitoring and control of risk remain central to the Authority's treasury management strategy.
4. Treasury Management is the activity of the Council's finance function which manages cash flows, bank accounts, deposits, investments and borrowing. The objective is to manage risk effectively in order to ensure the security of funds, sufficient liquidity to enable commitments to be met, to generate income and minimise cost.
5. The 2020/21 audit is currently in progress and this report is based on estimated opening balances; the balances cannot be confirmed until the audit is formally signed off. The 2021/22 audit will commence later in the year and the final outturn presented in this report will be subject to the auditors review and sign off for both 2020/21 and 2021/22 accounts. If any material changes to either of these years financial position are identified a revised report will be presented to Cabinet at a later date.

Recommendations

6. The Cabinet is recommended to note the 2021/22 Treasury Management Outturn attached as Appendix B.

Financial Implications

7. These are included in the body of the report and the associated Appendices.

Background Papers

8. None

Impact

9.

Communication/Consultation	CMT have been consulted
Community Safety	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Health and Safety	N/A
Human Rights/Legal Implications	N/A
Sustainability	N/A
Ward-specific impacts	N/A
Workforce/Workplace	N/A

Situation

10. Treasury management is defined as: “The management of the local authority’s investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks.”
11. The Council’s treasury management activity is underpinned by CIPFA’s Code of Practice on Treasury Management (“The Code”), which requires local authorities to produce annual Prudential Indicators and a Treasury Management Strategy on the likely financing and investment activity.
12. The Treasury Management Strategy is approved by the Council as part of the annual budget setting process. Monitoring reports relating to investments are submitted to the Cabinet as part of the quarterly budget monitoring process.
13. The Council is supported in its treasury management activity by our independent financial advisers Arlingclose Limited.
14. All responsibility for decision making rests with the Council. Under the Council’s constitution the Director of Finance and Corporate Services and the Assistant Director of Resources are authorised to make investment and borrowing decisions in line with the Treasury Management Strategy and the Treasury Management Practices – Principles and Schedules approved by the Council.
15. The Treasury Management Outturn Report is attached as Appendix B and provides more detail on the performance of Treasury Management from both the external and internal context. The report also compares actual in year activity to the 2021/22 Strategy set as part of the approved budget in February 2021.

16. Total net borrowing as of 31 March 2022 was £262.50 million, an increase from the previous year of £44.80 million. The increase in net borrowing is directly related to the investment activities in line with the approved Commercial Strategy. A breakdown of the borrowing and investments for the current year is set out in the table below and includes a comparison to the previous year.

	31 March 2021	31 March 2022	In year Movement
	£m	£m	£m
Housing Revenue Account	80.40	78.40	(2.00)
Phoenix Loan for Aspire (CRP) Ltd Investment	22.00	36.70	14.70
Local Authority more than 1 year	18.00	5.00	(13.00)
Total Long Term Borrowing	120.40	120.10	(0.30)
Short Term Borrowing	109.50	166.00	56.50
Total Borrowing	229.90	286.10	56.20
Short Term Investments	(11.00)	(18.60)	(7.60)
Cash and Cash Equivalents	(1.20)	(5.00)	(3.80)
Total Investments	(12.20)	(23.60)	(11.40)
NET BORROWING	217.70	262.50	44.80

17. The commercial properties and the associated capital cost during the 2021/22 financial year have been detailed in the following table showing further payments of £62.41 million during the year..

	31 March 2021	31 March 2022
Commercial Property Costs	£m	£m
Skyway House, Parsonage Road, Takeley – Offices	20.81	20.81
Deer Park Road, Livingston, Scotland – Veterinarian Practice	5.24	5.24
Stane Retail Park, Colchester – Retail Park	8.34	27.12
Chorley – Regional Distribution Centre	58.30	58.30
Gloucester – Distribution Centre	6.73	33.90
Tewkesbury – Offices and warehouse	8.01	24.47
Total Capital Cost	107.43	169.84

18. Two of the assets had not completed by 31 March 2022, Amazon at Gloucester completed during April 2022 and MOOG at Tewkesbury is due to complete later this year.
19. The Council made advance payments on two of the commercial assets, Amazon and MOOG to support the construction stage of the buildings. The agreement was that the council would receive interest payments on the amounts advanced and these sums are set out separately in the table.
20. The following table sets out the Council's investment income and the associated cost of borrowing for 2021/22.

Investment Income Analysis	Budget £'000	Actual £'000	Variance £'000
Income			
Aspire (CRP)	(2,316)	(2,450)	(134)
Commercial Investments - rental income	(4,905)	(4,528)	377
Commercial Investments - interest on advance payments	0	(1,346)	(1,346)
	(7,221)	(8,324)	(1,102)
Treasury Management Costs			
Interest charged	1,814	1,343	(471)
Broker Fees	170	100	(70)
	1,984	1,443	(541)
Non Treasury Management Costs			
Commercial Consultancy and Fees	270	121	(149)
External Treasury Advice on long term borrowing options	0	55	55
	270	176	(94)
Total Net Revenue Income	(4,967)	(6,704)	(1,737)

21. The average rate of interest achieved for short term investments was 0.12% (excluding Money Market Funds) and for short term borrowing was 0.22% for the 2021/22 financial year. A full list of all the short-term investments and borrowing for the year are detailed in Appendix A.
22. The council has two long term loans;
- Housing Revenue Account - £78.407million outstanding balance (initial loan £88.407 million) to fund the purchase of the council's housing stock; this is a mix of fixed and variable rate loans. The annual interest payment for 2021/22 was £2.574 million with a current annual principal repayment of £2.000 million.
 - General Fund - £37 million forward starting loan with Phoenix Life Limited at a fixed rate of 2.86% over 40 years, with no principal repayments until 5 January 2022 to fund part of the investment of £47.25 million in Aspire (CRP) Ltd. The loan profile was drawn down in three stages:
 - £10 million on 3 July 2017
 - £12 million on 3 July 2020
 - £15 million on 3 July 2021
23. The council has continued to support the development of Chesterford Research Park, which it purchased a 50% share of in May 2017 through its wholly owned company, Aspire (CRP). The following table provides details of all the loans to Aspire (CRP) and the balance outstanding as at 31 March 2022.

Drawdown Date	Loan Amount £'000	Loan Term	Loan Balance	Repayment Basis	Rate %
03/05/2017	47,250	50 years	47,250	Interest Only	4.0
26/03/2018	223	49 years 1 month	223	Interest Only	4.0
02/01/2019	2,518	48 years 4 months	2,518	Interest Only	4.0
20/08/2019	3,000	20 years	2,834	Repayment	4.5
09/06/2020	1,250	20 years	1,214	Repayment	4.5
01/07/2020	2,600	20 years	2,530	Repayment	4.5
15/03/2021	2,975	21 years	2,963	Repayment	4.5
26/08/2021	780	20 years	780	Interest Only	4.5
Total of	60,596		60,312		

24. The repayment basis of the loans is determined by the type of works it will fund. Interest only loans are for new buildings and infrastructure and principal and interest loans are for the refurbishment of existing buildings. The repayment schedules are set to align with the capital life of the asset and/or works.

Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Loss of council's funds	1 – minimal risk due to the policy, procedures and guidance in place	4 – significant sums	multi-function/level checking, authorisation and monitoring of all activities

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project

Appendix A

Borrowing – 1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022

Date of borrowing	Institution	Amount (£)	Date of Repayment	Interest Rate %
21-Apr-21	Hampshire County Council	3,000,000	20-Apr-22	0.13%
21-Apr-21	Devon County Council	2,500,000	20-Apr-22	0.13%
30-Apr-21	London Borough of Newham	5,000,000	29-Apr-22	0.13%
30-Apr-21	Brighton & Hove City Council	4,000,000	29-Apr-22	0.13%
20-Apr-21	West Yorkshire Combined Authority	3,500,000	12-Apr-22	0.12%
17-Jun-21	Newport City Council	2,000,000	01-Jul-21	0.02%
21-Jun-21	Middlesbrough Council	3,000,000	01-Jul-21	0.02%
09-Sep-21	Middlesbrough Teeside Pension Fund	7,000,000	08-Sep-22	0.10%
22-Jul-21	Greater Manchester Combined Authority	4,500,000	02-Aug-21	0.02%
12-Aug-21	Vale of Glamorgan Council	2,000,000	11-Aug-22	0.06%
19-Aug-21	Middlesbrough Council	4,500,000	01-Sep-21	0.01%
26-Aug-21	Bedford Borough Council	1,000,000	02-Sep-21	0.03%
20-Sep-21	Cheshire West and Chester Council	5,000,000	01-Oct-21	0.02%
23-Sep-21	West Yorkshire Combined Authority	6,000,000	25-Jul-22	0.06%
21-Oct-21	Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	4,000,000	01-Nov-21	0.02%
21-Oct-21	Hyndburn Borough Council	2,000,000	17-Oct-22	0.15%
21-Oct-21	New Forest District Council	1,000,000	17-Oct-22	0.15%
21-Oct-21	Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	2,000,000	02-Nov-21	0.02%
22-Nov-21	Bridgend County Borough Council	3,000,000	21-Nov-22	0.25%
22-Nov-21	Somerset County Council Pension Fund	5,000,000	21-Nov-22	0.40%
22-Nov-21	Police & Crime Commissioner for Avon & Somerset	2,000,000	21-Nov-22	0.40%
22-Nov-21	Flyde Borough Council	2,000,000	21-Nov-22	0.35%
22-Nov-21	Ryedale District Council	2,000,000	21-Nov-22	0.35%
22-Nov-21	Camb. & Peterborough Combined Authority	7,000,000	24-Oct-22	0.35%
18-Nov-21	London Borough of Havering	4,000,000	01-Dec-21	0.02%
02-Dec-21	Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar	3,000,000	21-Nov-22	0.20%
16-Dec-21	Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council	4,000,000	04-Jan-22	0.01%
23-Dec-21	Cheshire West and Chester Council	4,000,000	21-Jan-22	0.05%
21-Jan-22	West Yorkshire Combined Authority	4,000,000	21-Nov-22	0.25%
20-Jan-22	Bedford Borough Council	1,000,000	27-Jan-22	0.07%
27-Jan-22	Bedford Borough Council	2,000,000	01-Feb-22	0.07%
17-Feb-22	Scarborough Borough Council	3,000,000	04-Apr-22	0.32%
08-Mar-22	Scarborough Borough Council	5,000,000	01-Aug-22	0.68%
17-Mar-22	Greater Manchester Pension Fund	2,000,000	03-May-22	0.50%
21-Mar-22	South Cambridgeshire District Council	2,000,000	30-Mar-22	0.58%
28-Mar-22	Newport City Council	3,000,000	04-Apr-22	0.59%
30-Mar-22	West Midlands Combined Authority	8,000,000	30-Sep-22	0.85%
30-Mar-22	Vale of Glamorgan Council	1,500,000	03-May-22	0.58%
Average interest rate				0.22%
05-Jul-21	Phoenix	15,000,000		2.86%

Appendix A continued....

Investments – 1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022

Date of Investment	Counterparty	Amount (£)	Date of Repayment	Interest Rate %
06-Apr-21	DMO	6,500,000	08-Apr-21	0.01%
08-Apr-21	DMO	2,800,000	12-Apr-21	0.01%
12-Apr-21	DMO	2,600,000	15-Apr-21	0.01%
13-Apr-21	DMO	1,500,000	19-Apr-21	0.01%
15-Apr-21	DMO	5,400,000	20-Apr-21	0.01%
20-Apr-21	Cornwall Council	3,000,000	20-Oct-21	0.04%
20-Apr-21	DMO	2,200,000	26-Apr-21	0.01%
26-Apr-21	DMO	3,000,000	29-Apr-21	0.01%
29-Apr-21	DMO	2,100,000	04-May-21	0.01%
21-May-21	Ashford Borough Council	3,000,000	22-Nov-21	0.04%
17-May-21	DMO	2,600,000	20-May-21	0.01%
11-Jun-21	Thurrock Borough Council	2,000,000	10-Jun-22	0.20%
15-Jun-21	DMO	5,000,000	17-Jun-21	0.02%
02-Jul-21	DMO	1,400,000	05-Jul-21	0.01%
05-Jul-21	DMO	2,500,000	08-Jul-21	0.01%
16-Aug-21	DMO	3,300,000	19-Aug-21	0.01%
15-Sep-21	DMO	4,000,000	16-Sep-21	0.01%
20-Oct-21	Cornwall Council	3,000,000	17-Jan-22	0.03%
22-Nov-21	DMO	12,500,000	01-Dec-21	-0.01%
22-Nov-21	DMO	3,000,000	21-Feb-22	0.04%
17-Jan-22	DMO	3,200,000	20-Jan-22	0.05%
17-Jan-22	DMO	3,000,000	15-Jul-22	0.22%
21-Feb-22	North Lanarkshire Council	3,000,000	21-Nov-22	0.75%
15-Feb-22	DMO	2,450,000	17-Feb-22	0.30%
01-Mar-22	DMO	1,650,000	03-Mar-22	0.30%
10-Mar-22	DMO	1,200,000	17-Mar-22	0.30%
15-Mar-22	DMO	2,600,000	17-Mar-22	0.33%
30-Mar-22	DMO	10,600,000	01-Apr-22	0.55%
Average interest rate				0.12%

Money Market Fund Balances – 1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022

Fund Name	Opening Balance (£)	Closing Balance (£)	No. of days invested	Average daily yield
Aberdeen Standard Liquidity Fund (Lux) - Sterling Fund	500,000	450,000	365	0.07%
Aviva Investors Sterling Liquidity Fund	400,000	750,000	364	0.07%
CCLA - The Public Sector Deposit Fund	1,050,000	800,000	362	0.11%
Federated Short-Term Sterling Prime Fund	500,000	450,000	365	0.07%
Invesco Sterling Liquidity Portfolio (Institutional)	500,000	0	325	0.02%

Treasury Management Outturn Report 2021/22

Introduction

The Authority adopted the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's *Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice* (the CIPFA Code) which requires the Authority to approve treasury management semi-annual and annual reports.

The Authority's treasury management strategy for 2021/22 was approved at a meeting on 22 February 2022. The Authority has borrowed and invested substantial sums of money and is therefore exposed to financial risks including the loss of invested funds and the revenue effect of changing interest rates. The successful identification, monitoring and control of risk remains central to the Authority's treasury management strategy.

Treasury risk management at the Authority is conducted within the framework of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's *Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice* (the CIPFA Code) which requires the Authority to approve a treasury management strategy before the start of each financial year and, as a minimum, a semi-annual and annual treasury outturn report.

The Prudential Code includes a requirement for local authorities to provide a Capital Strategy, a summary document approved by full Council covering capital expenditure and financing, treasury management and non-treasury investments. The Authority's Capital Strategy, complying with CIPFA's requirement, was approved by full Council on 22 February 2022.

External Context

Economic background: The continuing economic recovery from coronavirus pandemic, together with the war in Ukraine, higher inflation, and higher interest rates were major issues over the period.

Bank Rate was 0.1% at the beginning of the reporting period. April and May saw the economy gathering momentum as the shackles of the pandemic restrictions were eased. Despite the improving outlook, market expectations were that the Bank of England would delay rate rises until 2022. Rising, persistent inflation changed that.

UK CPI was 0.7% in March 2021 but thereafter began to steadily increase. Initially driven by energy price effects and by inflation in sectors such as retail and hospitality which were re-opening after the pandemic lockdowns, inflation then was believed to be temporary. Thereafter price rises slowly became more widespread, as a combination of rising global costs and strong demand was exacerbated by supply shortages and transport dislocations. The surge in wholesale gas and electricity prices led to elevated inflation expectations. CPI for February 2022 registered 6.2% year on year, up from 5.5% in the previous month and the highest reading in the National Statistic series. Core inflation, which excludes the more volatile components, rose to 5.2% y/y from 4.4%.

The government's jobs furlough scheme insulated the labour market from the worst effects of the pandemic. The labour market began to tighten and demand for workers grew strongly as employers found it increasingly difficult to find workers to fill vacant jobs. Having peaked at 5.2% in December 2020, unemployment continued to fall and the most recent labour market data for the three months to January 2022 showed the unemployment rate at 3.9% while the employment rate rose to 75.6%. Headline 3-month average annual growth rate for wages were 4.8% for total

pay and 3.8% for regular pay. In real terms, after adjusting for inflation, total pay growth was up 0.1% while regular pay fell by 1.0%.

With the fading of lockdown - and, briefly, the 'pingdemic' restraints - activity in consumer-facing sectors improved substantially as did sectors such as oil and mining with the reopening of oil rigs but materials shortages and the reduction in the real spending power of households and businesses dampened some of the growth momentum. Gross domestic product (GDP) grew by an upwardly revised 1.3% in the fourth calendar quarter of 2021 according to the final estimate (initial estimate 1.0%) and took UK GDP to just 0.1% below where it was before the pandemic. The annual growth rate was revised down slightly to 7.4% (from 7.5%) following a revised 9.3% fall in 2020.

Having increased Bank Rate from 0.10% to 0.25% in December, the Bank of England hiked it further to 0.50% in February and 0.75% in March. At the meeting in February, the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) voted unanimously to start reducing the stock of its asset purchase scheme by ceasing to reinvest the proceeds from maturing bonds as well as starting a programme of selling its corporate bonds.

In its March interest rate announcement, the MPC noted that the invasion of Ukraine had caused further large increases in energy and other commodity prices, with the expectation that the conflict will worsen supply chain disruptions around the world and push CPI inflation to around 8% later in 2022, even higher than forecast only a month before in the February Monetary Policy Report. The Committee also noted that although GDP in January was stronger than expected with business confidence holding up and the labour market remaining robust, consumer confidence had fallen due to the squeeze in real household incomes.

GDP growth in the euro zone increased by 0.3% in calendar Q4 2021 following a gain of 2.3% in the third quarter and 2.2% in the second. Headline inflation remains high, with CPI registering a record 7.5% year-on-year in March, the ninth successive month of rising inflation. Core CPI inflation was 3.0% y/y in March, was well above the European Central Bank's target of 'below, but close to 2%', putting further pressure on its long-term stance of holding its main interest rate of 0%.

The US economy expanded at a downwardly revised annualised rate of 6.9% in Q4 2021, a sharp increase from a gain of 2.3% in the previous quarter. In its March 2022 interest rate announcement, the Federal Reserve raised the Fed Funds rate to between 0.25% and 0.50% and outlined further increases should be expected in the coming months. The Fed also repeated its plan to reduce its asset purchase programme which could start by May 2022.

Financial markets: The conflict in Ukraine added further volatility to the already uncertain inflation and interest rate outlook over the period. The Dow Jones started to decline in January but remained above its pre-pandemic level by the end of the period while the FTSE 250 and FTSE 100 also fell and ended the quarter below their pre-March 2020 levels.

Bond yields were similarly volatile as the tension between higher inflation and flight to quality from the war pushed and pulled yields, but with a general upward trend from higher interest rates dominating as yields generally climbed.

The 5-year UK benchmark gilt yield began the quarter at 0.82% before rising to 1.41%. Over the same period the 10-year gilt yield rose from 0.97% to 1.61% and the 20-year yield from 1.20% to 1.82%.

The Sterling Overnight Rate (SONIA) averaged 0.39% over the quarter.

Credit review: In the first half of FY 2021-22 credit default swap (CDS) spreads were flat over most of period and are broadly in line with their pre-pandemic levels. In September spreads rose by a few basis points due to concerns around Chinese property developer Evergrande defaulting but then fell back. Fitch and Moody's revised upward the outlook on a number of UK banks and

building societies on the Authority's counterparty list to 'stable', recognising their improved capital positions compared to 2020 and better economic growth prospects in the UK.

Fitch also revised the outlook for Nordea, Svenska Handelsbanken and Handelsbanken plc to stable. The agency considered the improved economic prospects in the Nordic region to have reduced the baseline downside risks it previously assigned to the lenders.

The successful vaccine rollout programme was credit positive for the financial services sector in general and the improved economic outlook meant some institutions were able to reduce provisions for bad loans. However, in 2022, the uncertainty engendered by Russia's invasion of Ukraine pushed CDS prices modestly higher over the first calendar quarter, but only to levels slightly above their 2021 averages, illustrating the general resilience of the banking sector.

Having completed its full review of its credit advice on unsecured deposits, in September Arlingclose extended the maximum duration limit for UK bank entities on its recommended lending list from 35 days to 100 days; a similar extension was advised in December for the non-UK banks on this list. As ever, the institutions and durations on the Authority's counterparty list recommended by Arlingclose remains under constant review.

Revised CIPFA Codes, Updated PWLB Lending Facility Guidance

In August 2021 HM Treasury significantly revised guidance for the PWLB lending facility with more detail and 12 examples of permitted and prohibited use of PWLB loans. Authorities that are purchasing or intending to purchase investment assets primarily for yield will not be able to access the PWLB except to refinance existing loans or externalise internal borrowing. Acceptable use of PWLB borrowing includes service delivery, housing, regeneration, preventative action, refinancing and treasury management.

CIPFA published its revised Prudential Code for Capital Finance and Treasury Management Code on 20th December 2021. The key changes in the two codes are around permitted reasons to borrow, knowledge and skills, and the management of non-treasury investments.

The principles of the Prudential Code took immediate effect although the Authority has taken the option to defer fully introducing revised reporting requirements until 2023/24.

To comply with the Prudential Code, authorities must not borrow to invest primarily for financial return. This Code also states that it is not prudent for local authorities to make investment or spending decision that will increase the CFR unless directly and primarily related to the functions of the authority. Existing commercial investments are not required to be sold; however, authorities with existing commercial investments who expect to need to borrow should review the options for exiting these investments. Authorities with existing commercial land and property may also invest in maximising its value and are permitted to carry out prudent active management and rebalancing of their portfolios.

Borrowing is permitted for cashflow management, interest rate risk management, to refinance current borrowing and to adjust levels of internal borrowing. Borrowing to refinance capital expenditure primarily related to the delivery of a local authority's function but where a financial return is also expected is allowed, provided that financial return is not the primary reason for the expenditure. The changes align the CIPFA Prudential Code with the PWLB lending rules.

Unlike the Prudential Code, there is no mention of the date of initial application in the Treasury Management Code. The TM Code now includes extensive additional requirements for service and commercial investments, far beyond those in the 2017 version.

Local Context

On 31st March 2022, the Authority had net borrowing of £262.5m arising from its revenue and capital income and expenditure. The underlying need to borrow for capital purposes is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), while usable reserves and working capital are the underlying resources available for investment. These factors are summarised in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Balance Sheet Summary

	31.03.21 Actual £m	2021/22 Movement £m	31.3.22 Actual £m
General Fund CFR	13.4	4.6	18
HRA CFR	82.8	-2.2	80.6
Investments CFR	164.3	60.7	225.0
Total CFR	260.5	63.1	323.6
Less: Other debt liabilities *	-4.3	0.3	-4.0
Borrowing CFR	256.2	63.4	319.6
Less: Usable reserves	-31.4	-1.7	-33.1
Less: Working capital	-7.1	-16.9	-24.0
Net borrowing	217.7	44.8	262.5

* PFI liabilities that form part of the Authority's total debt

Lower official interest rates have lowered the cost of short-term, temporary loans and investment returns from cash assets that can be used in lieu of borrowing. The Authority pursued its strategy of keeping borrowing and investments below their underlying levels, sometimes known as internal borrowing, in order to reduce risk and keep interest costs low.

The treasury management position at 31st March 2022 and the change during the year is shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Treasury Management Summary

	31.3.21 Balance £m	2021/22 Movement £m	31.3.22 Balance £m	31.3.22 Average Rate %
Long-term borrowing	120.4	-0.3	120.1	3.06
Short-term borrowing	109.5	56.5	166.0	0.31
Total borrowing	229.9	56.2	286.1	
Short-term investments	8.0	10.6	18.6	0.49
Cash and cash equivalents	4.2	0.8	5.0	0.26
Total investments	12.2	11.4	23.6	
Net borrowing	217.7	44.8	262.5	

The increase in the level of borrowing supports the Commercial Strategy and the funding of the commercial investments.

Borrowing Update

The Authority currently holds commercial investments that were purchased prior to the change in the CIPFA Prudential Code. Before undertaking further additional borrowing the Authority will review the options for exiting these investments.

There will be no further borrowing in order to acquire commercial investments primarily for yield, except where permitted by the Prudential Code (i.e. for prudent active management and rebalancing of the existing portfolio, for maximising the value of existing property assets, and for the refinancing of existing debt).

Borrowing strategy

At 31st March 2022 the Authority held £286.1m of loans, an increase of £56.2m since 31st March 2021, as part of its strategy for funding previous and current years' capital programmes. Outstanding loans on 31st March are summarised in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Borrowing Position

	31.3.21	2021/22	31.3.22	31.3.22
	Balance	Movement	Balance	Weighted Average Rate
	£m	£m	£m	%
Public Works Loan Board	80.4	-2	78.4	3.28
Phoenix Life Ltd	22	14.7	36.7	2.86
Local authorities (Long-term)	18	-13	5.0	1.20
Local authorities (short-term)	109.5	56.5	166.0	0.31
Total borrowing	229.9	56.2	286.1	

The Authority's chief objective when borrowing has been to strike an appropriately low risk balance between securing low interest costs and achieving cost certainty over the period for which funds are required, with flexibility to renegotiate loans should the Authority's long-term plans change being a secondary objective.

With short-term interest rates remaining much lower than long-term rates, the Authority considered it more cost effective in the near term to use internal resources or borrowed rolling temporary / short-term loans instead. The net movement in short-term loans is shown in table 3 above.

Other Debt Activity

After £0.154m repayment of prior years' Private Finance Initiative liabilities, total debt other than borrowing stood at £4.0m on 31st March 2022, taking total debt to £290.1m.

Treasury Investment Activity

CIPFA published a revised Treasury Management in the Public Services Code of Practice and Cross-Sectoral Guidance Notes on 20th December 2021. These define treasury management investments as investments that arise from the organisation's cash flows or treasury risk management activity that ultimately represents balances that need to be invested until the cash is required for use during normal business.

The Authority holds significant invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. During the year, the Authority's investment balances ranged between £10 million and £21 million due to timing differences between income and expenditure. The investment position is shown in table 4 below.

Table 4: Treasury Investment Position

	31.3.21 Balance £m	2021/22 Movement £m	31.3.22 Balance £m	31.3.22 Weighted Average Rate %	31.3.22 Weighted Average Maturity days
Government (incl. local authorities)	8.0	10.6	18.6	0.49	113
Money Market Funds	3.0	-0.5	2.5	0.26	42
Banks (unsecured)	0.5	2	2.5		
Total investments	11.5	12.1	23.6		

Both the CIPFA Code and government guidance require the Authority to invest its funds prudently, and to have regard to the security and liquidity of its treasury investments before seeking the optimum rate of return, or yield. The Authority's objective when investing money is to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses from defaults and the risk of receiving unsuitably low investment income.

Ultra-low short-dated cash rates, which were a feature since March 2020 when Bank Rate was cut to 0.1%, prevailed for much of the 12-month reporting period which resulted in the return on sterling low volatility net asset value (LVNAV) Money Market Funds being close to zero even after some managers have temporarily waived or lowered their fees. However, higher returns on cash instruments followed the increases in Bank Rate in December, February and March. At 31st March, the 1-day return on the Authority's MMFs ranged between 0.50% - 0.58% p.a.

Similarly, deposit rates with the Debt Management Account Deposit Facility (DMADF) initially remained very low with rates ranging from 0% to 0.1% but following the hikes to policy rates increased to between 0.55% and 0.85% depending on the deposit maturity. The average return on the Authority's DMADF deposits was 0.10%.

Non-Treasury Investments

The definition of investments in CIPFA's revised 2021 Treasury Management Code covers all the financial assets of the Authority as well as other non-financial assets which the Authority holds primarily for financial return. Investments that do not meet the definition of treasury management investments (i.e. management of surplus cash) are categorised as either for service purposes (made explicitly to further service objectives) and or for commercial purposes (made primarily for financial return).

Investment Guidance issued by the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and Welsh Government also broadens the definition of investments to include all such assets held partially or wholly for financial return.

The Authority also held £60.3m of such investments in a loan to subsidiary, Aspire (CRP) Ltd, this generated £2.45m of investment income in 2021/22.

A full list of the Authority's directly owned property investments is shown below:

Table 5 – Commercial Properties

Commercial Property Costs	31 March 2021 £m	31 March 2022 £m
Skyway House, Parsonage Road, Takeley – Offices	20.81	20.81
Deer Park Road, Livingston, Scotland – Veterinarian Practice	5.24	5.24
Stane Retail Park, Colchester – Retail Park	8.34	27.12
Chorley – Regional Distribution Centre	58.30	58.30
Gloucester – Distribution Centre	6.73	33.90
Tewkesbury – Offices and warehouse	8.01	24.47
Total Capital Cost	107.43	169.84

These investments generated £6.704m of investment income for the Authority after taking account of direct costs.

Compliance

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services reports that the majority of the treasury management activities undertaken during the quarter complied fully with the CIPFA Code of Practice and the Authority's approved Treasury Management Strategy. There was one area of non-compliance. As can be seen in table 7, the banks (unsecured) limit was breached, this happened on three occasions and was due to large unconfirmed payments being received after the external investment deadlines. Compliance with specific investment limits is demonstrated in table 6 below.

Compliance with the authorised limit and operational boundary for external debt is demonstrated in table 6 below.

Table 6: Debt Limits

	2021/22 Maximum £m	31.3.22 Actual £m	2021/22 Operational Boundary £m	2021/22 Authorised Limit £m	Complied
Borrowing	286	286	416	416	✓
PFI	4	4	4	4	✓
TOTAL	290	290	420	300	✓

Since the operational boundary is a management tool for in-year monitoring it is not significant if the operational boundary is breached on occasions due to variations in cash flow, and this is not counted as a compliance failure.

Table 7: Investment Limits

	2021/22 Maximum £m	31.3.22 Actual £m	2021/22 Limit £m	Complied
Banks (unsecured)	2.5	2.5	2	x
UK Central Government	15.5	13.6	Unlimited	✓
UK Local Authorities including Police and Fire per authority	3	3	3	✓
UK Building Societies without credit ratings	0	0	2	✓
Saffron Building Society	0	0	0.5	✓
Money Market Funds, per fund	2	0.8	2	✓

Treasury Management Indicators

The Authority measures and manages its exposures to treasury management risks using the following indicators.

Security: The Authority has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to credit risk by monitoring the value-weighted average credit rating of its investment portfolio. This is calculated by applying a score to each investment (AAA=1, AA+=2, etc.) and taking the arithmetic average, weighted by the size of each investment. Unrated investments are assigned a score based on their perceived risk.

	31.3.22 Actual	2021/22 Target	Complied
Portfolio average credit rating	AA-	A	✓

Liquidity: The Authority has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to liquidity risk by monitoring the amount of cash available to meet unexpected payments within a rolling three-month period.

	31.3.22 Actual	2021/22 Target	Complied
Total cash available within 3 months	3	£2m	✓

Interest Rate Exposures: This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to interest rate risk. The upper limits on the one-year revenue impact of a 1% rise or fall in interests was:

	31.3.22 Actual £'000	2021/22 Limit	Complied
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% rise in interest rates	897	£2m	✓
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% fall in interest rates	897	£2m	✓

The impact of a change in interest rates is calculated on the assumption that maturing loans and investment will be replaced at current rates.

Maturity Structure of Borrowing: This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to refinancing risk. The upper and lower limits on the maturity structure of all borrowing were:

	31.3.22 Actual	Upper Limit %	Complied
Under 12 months	59	70	✓
12 months and within 24 months	3	50	✓
24 months and within 5 years	4	50	✓
5 years and within 10 years	8	80	✓
10 years and within 20 years	19	80	✓
20 years and above	7	100	✓

Time periods start on the first day of each financial year. The maturity date of borrowing is the earliest date on which the lender can demand repayment.

Principal Sums Invested for Periods Longer than a year: The purpose of this indicator is to control the Authority's exposure to the risk of incurring losses by seeking early repayment of its investments. The limits on the long-term principal sum invested to final maturities beyond the period end were:

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Actual principal invested beyond year end	0	0	0
Limit on principal invested beyond year end	£10m	£10m	£10m
Complied	✓	✓	✓

Other

IFRS 16: The implementation of the new IFRS 16 Leases accounting standard was due to come into force for local authorities from 1st April 2022. Following a consultation CIFPA/LASAAC announced an optional two year delay to the implementation of this standard a decision which was confirmed by the Financial Reporting Advisory Board in early April 2022. Authorities can now choose to adopt the new standard on 1st April 2022, 1st April 2023 or 1st April 2024. The Authority intends to adopt the new standard on 1st April 2024.

Committee:	Cabinet	Date: Thursday, 20 October 2022
Title:	Local Council Tax Support Scheme Proposals 2023/24	
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Neil Hargreaves Portfolio Holder for Finance and Budget	
Report Author:	Angela Knight, Assistant Director - Resources aknight@uttlesford.gov.uk	Key decision: No

Summary

1. There is a requirement to annually review the Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) Scheme and propose changes to the scheme for the following financial year. The decisions made, even if no change is proposed, must then be consulted upon before a decision is taken at Full Council in December on the final scheme for the following financial year.
2. A consultation has been carried out during the summer of 2022 on the scheme proposals, to retain the contribution rate at 12.5% and continue to protect Vulnerable and Disabled residents and Carer's on a low income.
3. The consultation was carried out via an online form and widely promoted on our website, social media and a press release to all local media and newspapers. The consultation will be available in paper form on request.
4. The total number of responses received were 48 and this included four from preceptors.
5. As can be seen from the table in paragraph 18 Uttlesford continues to have the lowest percentage contribution requirement of any authority in Essex. This demonstrates that whilst the council has had sufficient funds to support the scheme it has done so.
6. In 2013/14 when the original scheme was introduced the contribution rate was set at 8.5%. This increased in 2014/15 to 12.5% and it has remained at this rate for each subsequent year.
7. The Exceptional Hardship Fund is available to support residents and claimants who are suffering financial hardship.

Recommendations

8. The Cabinet is requested to recommend Council approve the Local Council Tax Support Scheme for 2023/24 as set out below:
 - I. The contribution rate is frozen for the ninth consecutive year at 12.5%.
 - II. The Council continues to protect Vulnerable and Disabled Residents and Carer's on a low income.

Financial Implications

9. Detailed in the main body of this report.

Background Papers

10. None

Impact

Communication/Consultation	Proposals subject to public consultation and discussions with major preceptors
Community Safety	None.
Equalities	An equalities impact assessment will be completed as part of developing final proposals for decisions by Cabinet and the Council later in the year.
Health and Safety	None.
Human Rights/Legal Implications	Compliance with relevant legislation.
Sustainability	The objective is to achieve a financially sustainable set of arrangements.
Ward-specific impacts	None.
Workforce/Workplace	Ongoing demands on the Revenues & Benefits, Housing and Customer Service teams

Local Council Tax Support (LCTS)

11. LCTS replaced Council Tax Benefit (CTB) from 1 April 2013. The Council has adopted a scheme which has the following key elements:
- a) Pensioners on low income protected from adverse changes (as required by Government)
 - b) Disabled people, Carer's and blind people on a low income receive discretionary protection from adverse changes
 - c) Working age people previously on full CTB pay no more than 12.5% of the council tax bill
 - d) £25 per week of earned wages income disregarded from assessment (to provide a work incentive)
 - e) Child Benefit and Child Maintenance disregarded from assessment (to minimise exacerbation of child poverty, or accusations of same)
 - f) Hardship Policy to enable additional support for genuine extreme hardship cases

Essex Sharing Agreement

12. An Essex wide income sharing agreement was entered into with all billing authorities and major preceptors at the time of implementation of the new LCTS scheme.
13. The main principles of the agreement are to ensure a joint approach in maximising income collection, reduce fraud, ensure compliance, and increase the taxbase.
14. By working proactively on fraud this ensures that our tax base is maintained at the maximum level generating extra revenue for both the major preceptors and billing authorities.
15. Preceptors receive a share of all income generated for Council Tax and this is allocated through the Collection Fund at year end.
16. The increased income generated specifically from these activities and internal decisions made by UDC each year is monitored by ECC, and the preceptors have agreed to share their element of the increased income with the Local Authorities. The level of share back is reviewed annually.
17. The major preceptors also provide funding through this agreement for;
 - a) an officer to ensure the efficient administration of the LCTS scheme and provide claimants with dedicated support in debt management.
 - b) two officers to work directly on all areas of fraud and compliance within Council Tax.
 - c) contributions towards the Exceptional Hardship Scheme which has a £17,000 annual budget (£10,000 UDC element), plus Essex County Council provide an additional £5,000 for admin support.

Contribution Rates across Essex

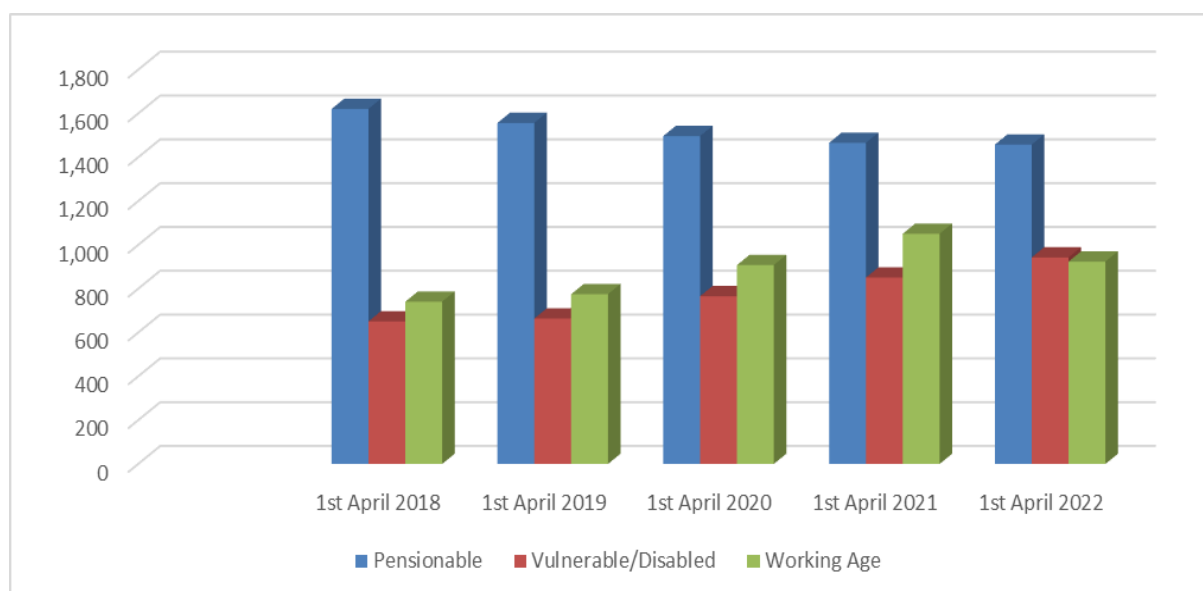
18. The council has the lowest percentage contribution rate within Essex with the highest being set at 30%. The contributions across Essex Local Authorities have remained consistent since 2017.

Contribution Rates 2022/23			
	%		%
Basildon	25	Harlow	24
Braintree	24	Maldon	20
Brentwood	25	Rochford	25
Castle Point	30	Southend-on-Sea	25
Chelmsford	23	Tendring	20
Colchester	20	Thurrock	25
Epping Forest	25	Uttlesford	12.5

Caseload

19. The following table and graphs provide an analysis of each category of claimant and how the caseloads have changed over the past 5 years.

	1/4/18	1/4/19	In year movement	1/4/20	In year movement	1/4/21	In year movement	1/4/22	In year movement
Pensionable	1,621	1,557	-64	1,497	-60	1,466	-31	1,458	-8
Vulnerable/Disabled	651	664	13	766	102	851	85	943	92
Working Age - Employed	341	323	-18	331	8	337	6	297	-40
Working Age - unemployed	400	452	52	577	125	714	137	627	-87
Total Claimants	3,013	2,996	-17	3,171	175	3,368	197	3,325	-43



20. An increase in the number of vulnerable and/or disabled recipients continues to be seen.

21. Since April 2020, increases across all claim types can be directly attributed to the Covid-19 pandemic. It is promising to see that, from April 2022, a decrease in the requirement for working age support is starting to be seen.

Increases to the Contribution Rate

22. The Band D equivalent used in this table for the calculation of the increase in contribution rate is estimated based on the 2022/23 Band D equivalent multiplied by the average increase over the previous two years (3%).

23. The table below sets out the financial impact of an increase to the contribution rate to both preceptors and claimants and is shown in 2.5% increments. Each 2.5% increase will generate additional income of £42,499, of which the council will receive £5,949.

24. It is impossible to identify and calculate precise figures as the contribution level varies dependant on the claimant's financial circumstances. The financial gain and the claimant cost impact are based on all working age claimants paying a 12.5% contribution.

Percentage Contribution	Average liability income due	90% Collection Rate	Increase @ 2.5% increments	Additional Cost to claimant	
				per year	per week
12.50%	£236,108	£212,497			
15%	£283,329	£254,997	£42,499	£46.00	£0.88
17.50%	£330,551	£297,496	£84,999	£91.99	£1.77
20%	£377,773	£339,995	£127,498	£137.99	£2.65

Reducing the Contribution Rate

25. A reduction of 2.5% to the contribution rate will reduce income by £38,710 and will reduce the taxbase for all preceptors including Town and Parish Councils. Reducing the taxbase has the following impacts.

- a) To reduce the contribution is not in the spirit of the sharing agreement (detailed in paragraphs 11 to 16 above), where we have committed to an Essex wide agreement which includes the commitment to maximise our taxbase. The additional income from the Essex Sharing agreement, would be reduced.
- b) Town and Parish Councils will have to increase their precepts to offset the reduction in taxbase to meet their budget requirements.

Exceptional Hardship Fund (EHF)

26. The Council holds a ring-fenced budget specifically to support all residents who are suffering financial hardship due to unforeseen circumstances, and you do not have to be eligible for LCTS to make an EHF claim. The EHF is supported by the major preceptors as part of the Essex Sharing Agreement.

27. The annual budget held for this fund is £17,000 with UDC contributing £10,000 and the major preceptors contributing £7,000. In 2020/21 the Council received £325,304 hardship funding from Government to provide additional support to those on the lowest income during the Covid Pandemic. There was £19,870 of this funding unspent and this is being carried forward to provide extra support for those suffering financial hardship.

28. The EHF is subject to award criteria and supports all residents who find themselves in financial difficulties, you do not have to be in receipt of LCTS to qualify, making this scheme fully inclusive to all residents. Full details can be found using the following link: <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/ehf>

29. It is recommended that the EHF fund is used to provide additional financial support to residents rather than reducing the contribution rate.

Full cost of LCTS scheme (estimated)

30. The following table shows that the forecast financial position for UDC in 2023/24 is an estimated net cost of £467,624. The costing has been based on caseload as of 1 April 2022, the 2022/23 band D equivalent and the 12% share back on current predicted collection rates.

£'000	LCTS Expenditure 2022/23	County, Fire and Police Share	UDC Share 2022/23
LCTS Discounts	3,975,729	3,419,127	556,602
Major Preceptors Income share back (12%)	0	0	(89,000)
Net of LCTS Scheme & Discounts	3,975,729	3,419,127	467,602
Staff support costs (Fraud, Compliance and Recovery)	120	103	17
LCTS Hardship Scheme	17	7	10
LCTS Hardship Scheme - ECC Admin support	0	0	(5)
Total Net Cost	3,975,866	3,419,237	467,624

31. Caseload levels might decrease during 2022/23 but it is predicted that they will remain at levels higher than pre-pandemic. It is difficult to accurately predict the outcomes for 2023/24 but it is hoped that the economy will recover during 2022/23 and the need for LCTS will decrease.

Consultation

32. The consultation ran for the period 20 June to 5 September 2022 and the full consultation report is attached as Appendix A.
33. The consultation was carried out using an online form using an open text box format requesting views on the proposals to maintain the contribution rate at 12.5% and to continue to protect Vulnerable and Disabled Residents and Carer's on a low income. For those who do not use digital services, paper copies were available on request.
34. The consultation was extensively publicised via a press release to all local media and newspapers, E-newsletters were sent to all the subscribers on our mailing lists. In addition, the consultation was promoted on Facebook and Twitter in July, with reminders in August.
35. The major preceptors, (Essex County Council, Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner) and Town and Parish Councils were sent an email directly inviting them to provide their views on the proposals.
36. The consultation received a total of 48 responses (28 responses last year), 44 responses from residents (26 last year) and 4 from preceptors (2 last year).
37. The submitted comments show that 28 responses were supportive of the scheme proposals and a further 13 felt the scheme should be amended or extended, the remainder did not comment specifically on the proposals of the scheme. Full details of all responses are included in the attached report.

Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Assumptions about costs and income levels are incorrect	3 - a high degree of variability and estimation is involved	3 - adverse or favourable cost affecting the council budget/collection fund	Monitor trends closely and review scheme each year to make necessary adjustments.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Cost of living crisis	2 – claimant levels increase	2 – cost of the scheme will increase	Monitor caseload

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.



Uttlesford District Council September 2022

Local Council Tax Support (LCTS)

A summary report of the survey about the proposed Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) scheme for Uttlesford for the financial year 2023-2024.

In April 2013 Council Tax Benefit was abolished and replaced by a new local Council Tax Support (LCTS) scheme. The government required councils to protect pensioners so that they would receive the same level of support as they did under Council Tax Benefit. This means that LCTS has applied only to working age people.

The proposed scheme

Uttlesford District Council has been consulting local residents regarding the Local Council Tax Support Scheme (the Scheme) since 2012 during which time the scheme has undergone various changes. For the financial year 2023/2024, the council has proposed that the scheme is set on the same basis as that for 2022/2023, namely to:

- freeze the contribution rate so that the amount that LCTS claimants pay towards their Council Tax bill will be kept at 12.5%. This remains the lowest contribution rate in Essex
- continue to protect pensioners, the vulnerable and disabled residents and their carers on a low income

Consultation

As in previous consultations, respondents were asked to consider the proposals and provide their views in an 'open text box'.

The survey also invited (but did not require) participants to provide their name and a contact email address so that they



could be kept up to date with the results of the consultation and decision on the proposed scheme. Participants were also asked to identify if their response was on behalf of an organisation (such as major preceptors).

The online survey was run as a web form on the Uttlesford District Council “Lets talk” consultation platform. This could be accessed via a direct link or from the main website home page, directly from the platform itself or from links sent out in various promotions, publicity and newsletters.

Promotion

The survey ran from 20 June to 5 September 2022.

At the start of the consultation period emails inviting participation in the survey were sent directly to:

- Essex County Council
- Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority
- Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner for Essex - Policing and Community Safety
- all town and parish councils in the district

The survey was widely publicised to the citizens of Uttlesford who were encouraged to take part.

A press release was distributed to all local media and newspapers on 23 June and a reminder release went out on 2 August.

It was included in the *District News* e-newsletter on 11 July that was sent to a total of 9,431 recipients.

Social media promotion went on throughout the consultation period with a total 9,998 reach, 323 engagements and 44 shares.

A reminder letter, promotional materials and paper forms were sent to all town and parish councils on 20 July.

Those people who do not use digital services were offered the option of requesting a paper copy of the survey and proposals to be sent out by post (details were provided on the website, in the press releases and in all publicity).



Results – overall submissions

The overall response rate for the survey was up 71.4% on that undertaken in 2021.

Overall submissions	Result counts 2022 (percentage)	Result counts 2021 (percentage)	Result counts 2020 (percentage)
Total number of paper forms returned	3 (6.25% of total responses)	0	0
Total number of web forms / direct emails submitted	45 (93.75% of total responses)	28 (100%)	27 (100%)
Total number of comments received	48	28	27



Results – submitted comments summary

General consultees

Of the submitted comments, 28 (or 58.3% of all the comments received) either directly supported the proposals for 2023-2024 or could clearly be interpreted as such. This is comparable to the 57.1% of comments received in 2021 that supported the scheme proposed for 2022-2023.

A further 13 comments suggested expanding or making amendments to the proposed scheme.

Notable this year are the number of references to the cost of living crisis, or to providing additional support to the most vulnerable in the district.

3 people who responded to the consultation chose to provide a view not directly relevant to the proposed LCTS scheme. These comments covered:

- making people on any kind of disability scheme a priority
- help for working single parents
- a report of alleged benefit fraud

Preceptors

4 preceptors also responded to the consultation. Of these, 3 support the proposed scheme. Thaxted Parish Council, though, asked that their objection to the proposal to remove the subsidy grant from the parish council be noted.



Comments received from preceptors

The response rate from preceptors was up 100% in comparison with the survey undertaken in 2021.

Overall submissions	Result counts 2022 (percentage)	Result counts 2021 (percentage)	Result counts 2020 (percentage)
Number of responses on behalf of/from representatives of preceptors	4 (8.3% of total responses)	2 (7.1% of total responses)	3 (11.1% of total responses)

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Debden Parish Council

We support UDC's proposal for LCTS claimants to pay towards their Council Tax bill a maximum of 12.5%.

Elsenham Parish Council

Elsenham Parish Council support freezing the contribution rate at the same as last year.

Thaxted Parish Council

Thaxted Parish Council asks you to note its objection to the proposal to remove the subsidy grant from the parish council, which is not in keeping with the general principle of the grant scheme given by Central Government to principle authorities. A copy of a letter from Kris Hopkins MP, Minister for Local Government dated February 2015 can be found in the link as below.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/parish-funding-for-local-council-tax-supportscheme> and is also further enclosed for your convenience.

You will note from the letter the specific request from Kris Hopkins MP for the grant to be passed to town and parish councils, he further notes in his letter to Leaders of Billing Authorities that “it is essential they (town and parish councils) receive all the funds due to them in order to carry out their activities”

The National Association for Local Councils (NALC) also notes the following on its website:



“In 2013/14 and 2014/15 the Department for Communities and Local Government have paid Billing Authorities a combined total for each financial year of £3.3 billion to officially refer on to parish councils in their areas to minimise the reduction of parish precept revenue following the diminution of average council tax bases in parished areas over the last two years. Accordingly, In 2014/15 most Billing Authorities nationally passed on the Localisation of Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTSS) mitigation grant to parishes in their areas, but 15 did not. We lobbied the Government very hard to ensure that it put pressure on Billing Authorities to pass across to all parishes in their areas the maximum amount of LCTSS parish mitigation grant in 2015/16.”

Should UDC choose not to honour the intent from DCLG, it is not only in clear breach of the guidance and request from DCLG but is also acting outside of the essence and intention of the whole Local Council Tax Support Scheme process of how grants received from Central Government should be forwarded to town and parish councils.

It is further noted within UDC Minutes of 3rd May 2016 that “The Assistant Director Corporate Services said that the 2015 consultation survey had revealed that 93.3% of responses had supported the protection of the parish council grant. However, they would not necessarily have been aware of the financial implications of this arrangement”

It is exceptionally clear and demonstrated from the results of the 2015 consultation that the public is content with the LCTS subsidy continuing to be forwarded to town and parish councils for its intended purpose.

The loss of any funding will have a detrimental effect on Thaxted Parish Council continuing to provide and improve services to the residents and at a time when the Council is still settling its finances after taking on several services that have been devolved from Uttlesford District Council to us such as the Public Toilets and car Park.

The Parish Council therefore wishes to register its fierce objection to the withdrawal of this much needed grant to both town and parish councils. Please therefore consider this letter a formal response to the LCTS consultation process.

Saffron Walden Town Council

Saffron Walden Town Council considered the 2023/24 Local Council Tax Support Scheme report included within the consultation at the Full Council meeting on 11/07/2022. It was unanimously agreed to support the proposals included in the report.



Comments received from general consultees

Comments generally in favour of the proposed scheme

Comment 1

I support the proposals

Comment 2

I agree it should continue as it has this year to protect the vulnerable.

Comment 3

I support the scheme

Comment 4

I agree with the proposed scheme. I am a beneficiary of the scheme myself and greatly appreciate the support that UDC offers to people on low incomes.

Comment 5

Agree full support should be given to those with low income whatever age they are.

Comment 6

It seems fine.

Comment 7

I agree with proposals for the 2023/24 scheme.

Comment 8

It should continue.

Comment 9

I absolutely agree.



Comment 10

The most vulnerable need our support. I would pay a little more. As many will suffer with the cost of living crisis.

Comment 11

I agree with the proposals.

Comment 12

I am fully supportive of the scheme continuing but would like further considerations to be made for residents who may be struggling to pay energy bills. Maybe further reductions for those also in fuel poverty?

Comment 13

Any continued help from LCTS helps - especially for the vulnerable and elderly and low paid.

Comment 14

I agree.

Comment 15

Agree with a freeze.

Comment 16

I agree that this should continue.

Comment 17

Agree.

Comment 18

As a local family who have recently been deceased of my partner of 22 yrs (our bread winner and my boys father) and has had no income since January 2022 I support this proposal. We will sink if no help is provided.

Comment 19

I agree with the proposals. But the council should also be supporting people more in the cost of living crisis with help for heating and food bills.



Comment 20

I recommend leaving at the present level, at the very least.

Comment 21

Councils should help the vulnerable as much as is possible.

Comment 22

This is a good scheme and will help those who need it most.

Comment 23

Agree.

Comment 24

Absolutely Agree - I wish we could do more , with the Cost of Living Crisis.

Comment 25

As a family who pay council tax, I fully support this scheme and would be happy to pay 1% more - as if all did that we could help further.

Comment 26

As someone who grew up poor- This scheme proposed is as it should be - could we do more

Comment 27

Keeping the same support as the current 2022 scheme.

Comment 28

Yes, approve.



Comments received suggesting the proposed scheme be expanded or amended

Comment 1

That seems ridiculous that I have to struggle to pay my council tax in full yet others pay only 12.5 %. How is that fair. 50% maybe. No wonder I have to pay so much.

Comment 2

The scope of the scheme is too wide and will still not include the many who are property rich but money poor. There is a large proportion of the elderly who do not receive the full pension (born prior to 1952) & have saved a little money. They now find themselves having been frugal all their lives getting little return for their small investments as rates are SO LOW. The small amount of savings they have to pay for funeral and repairs to home has excluded them from any financial help. But all around them they see new home owners enjoying historically low interest rates on their mortgages. They have disposable income. They do not! Anything that may address this inequality must be good.

Comment 3

Should be at least 25%.

Comment 4

I feel that it's time to increase the amount paid to 15%. This is still a lot less than other areas and is 88p a week.

Comment 5

Pensioners are seeing inflation linked increases in income, many working in the private sector are not. It is unreasonable to continue to disproportionately recover from those working when non working people are receiving larger annual increases in income.

Comment 6

It is all very well supporting people who are on benefits but they get loads of help already. What about those of us who work sometimes 2 or more jobs but still have to pay for everything and we get no help at all it's like everywhere else if you try to help yourself you get nothing. The council should be helping all people who need it with their council tax and other bills otherwise what is the point.

Comment 7

I don't think they should pay any, I appreciate that's probably not possible - great initiative

Comment 8

The payment contributions need to increase were all struggling and the financial burden of this scheme should not continually be loaded on those that pay the full amount / tax payers.



Comment 9

Give even more support.

Comment 10

I can't help feeling that a wealthy area like Uttlesford should be doing more to help people who are struggling. Why make it that people in real need have to still pay 12.5%, surely Uttlesford can afford to cover the whole amount so that they pay 0%. And what about other shemes. This only helps people with their council tax now with rising energy costs there are going to be a lot of people especially pensioners who will not longer be able to afford to heat their homes. You should be doing something for them now, not thinking about it for some time next year.

Comment 11

How can the rate for a single person living alone not have a 50% discount in annual bill ?
I live in a 2 bed of app on my own but next door also a 2 bed has 5 people ?

Comment 12

I feel that, with the cost of living increase as high as they are, not only the most vulnerable should be given priority. ALL residents should be considered, despite their income or disability.

Families and pensioners who are sitting just above the threshold for discounted rates are usually the hardest hit.

12.5% is a very low contribution rate and should be revised and potentially increased.

Comment 13

Many years ago now I read in the local paper that despite Uttlesford being a relatively wealthy area there were people in all the villages near me suffering hardship.

It must be a lot worse in today's tragic circumstances and a feel that the support scheme lifeline must remain in place and be increased if possible. Council tax is not fair and many more benefits should be added to bring it up to date.



Comments received not specifically commenting on the proposed scheme

Comment 1

I believe that people on any kind of disability scheme and pensioners whose only income is state pension should be priorities. Then families on low income, UC etc.

Comment 2

As a single parent working more than 50 hours a week earning just over £32,000 a year and qualifying for absolutely nothing in benefits or council tax help I am struggling and will be in a worse position this winter with rising fuel costs! Where is the help for her working single parents who don't sponge off the state and sit on their backsides all day?

Comment 3

This needs to be applied in a firm but fair manner. I agree that there are households that need support but I personally know of a female who has ridden and abused this scheme for well over 6 years. For 3 of those years she lived in a Static Home on a stable yard avoiding paying for any Council tax.

She then moved to Cutlers Green and now lives in Henham and has used her physical and earnings capacity to live off benefits since I first met her.

By claiming that she cannot work full hours she keeps herself below the radar by working on the books for a minimum amount of hours and then topping her money up by working cash in hand jobs out of hours. At one stage she was earning well over £2300 per month and getting benefits paid, Pip, reduced Council Tax and working credits. She sees the "help" that she gets as a right not a privilege.

She is an example that I'm sure if we all looked is not isolated. This is why I believe that any scheme to assist should be rigorously enforced to weed out these people who see it as a way to make money rather than have a genuine need.

Agenda Item 11

Committee: Cabinet

Date: Thursday,
20th October 2022

Title: Christmas Car Parking Incentives 2022

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Richard Freeman,
Portfolio Holder for Public and Council
Services

Report Author: Linda Howells, Economic Development
Manager

lhowells@uttlesford.gov.uk

Key decision:

No

Summary

1. The Council has operated a Christmas car parking promotion for a number of years in all Council managed pay and display car parks, except for Fairycroft Road car park in Saffron Walden (at the request of Waitrose who already fund a promotional incentive).
2. The purpose of the car park promotion is to:
 - a. Support the vitality and viability of the town and village centres.
 - b. Increase footfall into the town and village centres and promote local shopping and access to services.
3. It is proposed to implement a number of free car parking dates and times to incentivise shoppers into our three main towns, Saffron Walden, Great Dunmow and Stansted. The 2022 proposals reflect local feedback and provide an incentive to shop locally and support local businesses.

Recommendations

4. It is requested that the Cabinet approve
 - a. Free parking all day on Friday 25th November and Saturday 26th November 2022 in Saffron Walden (excluding Fairycroft Road) Great Dunmow and Stansted Mountfitchet.
 - b. Free parking from midday on the following dates;
 - i. Saffron Walden (excluding Fairycroft Road car park) on 18/11, 30/11, 7/12, 14/12 and 21/12
 - ii. Great Dunmow on 1/12, 8/12, 15/12 and 22/12
 - iii. Stansted Mountfitchet on 1/11, 8/11, 15/11 and 22/11.

- c. Free parking all day between Christmas 25/12/22 – 1/1/23 (inclusive) in Saffron Walden (excluding Fairycroft Road), Great Dunmow and Stansted.

Financial Implications

5. The total estimated loss of income if the proposals are approved is £11,910 for the three centres during November and December and for free parking in all car parks (excluding Fairycroft), between Christmas and New Year (4 chargeable days) is estimated at £10,745.

Background Papers

6. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report.

Impact

7.

Communication/Consultation	None
Community Safety	None
Equalities	None
Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	None
Sustainability	None
Ward-specific impacts	Car parks are located in Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow town centres, and Stansted Mountfitchet village centre
Workforce/Workplace	None

Situation

8. For several years there has been a Christmas car parking promotion in all Council managed pay and display car parks, except for Fairycroft Road car park in Saffron Walden (at the request of Waitrose who already fund a promotional incentive).
9. The purpose of the car park promotion is to:
 - a. Support the vitality and viability of the town and village centres.

- b. Increase footfall into the town and village centres and promote local shopping and access to services.
- 10. The length of the promotion and time of day it applies have changed from year to year. In most years free parking has been a combination of the following options:
 - a. From 12 noon on the day of that centre's Christmas light switch-on event if it was held on a day when tariffs were charged.
 - b. From either 2pm or 3pm for the period 1/12 until 24/12 in all car parks, except Fairycroft Road car park.
 - c. All day between 25/12 and 1/1 inclusive.
- 11. In 2021 and in response to the rapid spread of the COVID-19 Omicron variant the Council agreed to only provide free parking between 25/12 and Monday 3rd January inclusive.
- 12. Due to the difficulties of reprogramming the car park ticket machines it has not been possible to monitor usage of the car parks during the promotional period to identify the exact amount of lost revenue to the Council or whether the promotion has increased footfall.
- 13. Anecdotal evidence from the Saffron Walden BID. and Great Dunmow Town Team, and from many individual businesses, is that these promotional campaigns do not increase footfall in the town centres. Dunmow businesses particularly complain about the free parking between Christmas and New Year when most of the businesses are closed.
- 14. In 2019 a consultant was commissioned to identify whether there was value in a Christmas car parking incentive. The key findings included:
 - Almost 90% of people parking in both Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow did not know that there was a parking incentive when they left home on that day.
 - Just over 50% reported that a free parking incentive would encourage them to visit the town centre
 - A parking promotion might encourage short stay parkers rather than long stay parkers.
- 15. The 2022 proposals reflect the local feedback and provide an incentive to shop local and support local businesses. It is proposed that:
 - a. On Friday 25th November 2022 and Saturday 26th November 2022 all car parks, except Fairycroft Road car park, will be free in all three centres

This offer coincides with the “Black Friday” weekend and is intended to offer an incentive for shoppers to visit their local retailers as an alternative to online shopping.

The Great Dunmow Christmas Lights Switch-on and Market are taking place on Saturday 26th November and this offer will also cover this event.

- b. Free parking from midday covering four Wednesdays, 30/11, 7/12, 14/12 and 21/12 in the Saffron Walden car parks, except for Fairycroft Road car park. Wednesdays are the quietest day of the week and this is intended to encourage shoppers into the town centre. In addition free parking from midday on Friday 18 November to support the Christmas activity events and the Christmas Lights Switch-on.
- c. Free parking from midday covering four Thursdays, 1/12, 8/12, 15/12 and 22/12 in Great Dunmow car parks. The retailers are intending to run four late night shopping events on these dates and have asked for free parking to encourage shoppers.
- d. Free parking from midday on four Tuesdays, 1/11, 8/11, 15/11 and 22/11 in Stansted Mountfitchet. These are intended to encourage families to attend a new Touchpoint project offering support after school / tea-time for local families.

16. Approved car parking incentives would be promoted through the use of stickers on ticket machines, local and social media advertising.

Risk Analysis

17.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Incentives do not bring in more shoppers	1 – it is likely that some additional shoppers will be attracted	1 – Little direct financial impact as income loss is not affected.	Ensure clear and widespread advertising of the individual incentives

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.

Agenda Item 12

Committee: Cabinet

Date: Thursday, 20
October 2022

Title: Great & Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan
– Examiner's Report and Decision
Statement to Proceed to Referendum

Portfolio Holder: Cllr John Evans, Portfolio Holder for Planning,
Stansted Airport, Infrastructure Strategy and
the Local Plan

Report Author: Demetria Macdonald
dmacdonald@uttlesford.gov.uk

Key decision: No

Summary

1. The Great & Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan has been successful at examination. The Examiner's Report (Appendix 1) received on 02 August 2022 recommends that the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan proceed to referendum subject to recommended modifications being made to the Plan. The recommended modifications are set out in Appendix 2 and the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan with relevant modification is at Appendix 3.

Recommendations

2. That Cabinet accepts the Independent Examiner's recommended modifications to the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan in full as set out in the Schedule at Appendix 2 and notes the recommendation that the amended Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan should proceed to a Referendum of voters within the Parishes of Great and Little Chesterford to establish whether the plan should form part of the Development Plan for Uttlesford District Council.
3. That the Cabinet approves the holding of a referendum relating to the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan and, that it will include all the registered electors in Great and Little Chesterford Parishes.

Financial Implications

4. The referendum will initially be funded by Uttlesford District Council at a cost of £5,304.90 for the examination. After the referendum, UDC (Uttlesford District Council) will be able to claim £20,000 funding from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) which will cover the cost of the examination and the referendum.

Background Papers

5. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report.

None

Impact

6.

Communication/Consultation	The plan has undergone significant community involvement in its preparation.
Community Safety	The plan deals with community safety and will have a generally positive effect on residents' health and wellbeing through its objectives and policies.
Equalities	The Plan aims to meet the needs of all residents in the Parish. The Examiner considered this Basic Condition and concluded that the Plan does not breach and is otherwise compatible with EU (European Union) obligations and human rights requirements.
Health and Safety	The Plan and policies promote the health and well-being of the residents.
Human Rights/Legal Implications	This matter has been considered by the Examiner and he has considered this Basic Condition and concludes that the NDP (Neighbourhood Development Plan) does not breach and is otherwise compatible with EU obligations and human rights requirements.
Sustainability	The plan deals with sustainability of villages and the Examiner has confirmed the sustainability of this Plan.
Ward-specific impacts	Great and Little Chesterford
Workforce/Workplace	None

Situation

7. The Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan was submitted for examination commencing 09 June 2022 following a six-week consultation period and a further two weeks to give all interested parties an opportunity to consider whether the new NPPF July 2021 published by the Government after the pre -submission consultation, had any implications for the Plan. The examination was conducted via written representations (the examiner decided that a public hearing would not be required). The examiner's report, detailing

recommendations was received on 02 August 2022 (see Appendix 1). A schedule of the Examiner's recommended modifications is at Appendix 2. A copy of the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan – Referendum Version (incorporating the Examiner's modifications) is appended at Appendix 3.

8. Planning legislation states that once a local planning authority has been issued with an examiner's report, then it must consider the recommendations and issue a Decision Statement within 5 weeks of receiving the Examiner's Report. The planning officers are satisfied that the plan meets basic conditions subject to modifications and should proceed to Referendum and the voting area should be the designated Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood area. If the authority is satisfied with the examiner's recommendations, then specified modifications should be made before the Plan proceeds to referendum.
9. The examiner's recommended modifications have been discussed and agreed with the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. Subject to these modifications being made, the Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions and other statutory requirements and can proceed to a referendum within the neighbourhood plan area.
10. Based on the current Cabinet submission timetable a decision is likely to be made at the Cabinet Meeting scheduled for 20 October 2022. Potential intervention by the Secretary of State under Reg 31A (1) Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regs 2012; this must be requested in writing and with reasons by the Qualifying Body, i.e. Great Chesterford Parish Council, since the Council has failed to take a decision to send a plan to referendum within 5 weeks of the receipt of the Examiner's Report on 02 August 2022. However, on 17 September 2022, Great Chesterford Parish Council granted UDC an extension of time to 28 October 2022 to issue a Decision.
11. The next steps will involve the Council publishing information and giving at least 28 days' notice of the referendum (not including weekends or bank holidays). It is therefore anticipated that a referendum could be held as soon as practicable. If more than half of the people who vote in the referendum, vote in favour of the Plan then the Council must adopt the Neighbourhood Plan, it then becomes part of the Council's development plan.

Risk Analysis

12.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
3 The modifications should only be disregarded if the Plan does not meet the	1 Officers are satisfied that the Examiner's recommendations are reasonable and that plan as	3 The Council does not follow the regulations set out in Neighbourhood Plan	The Neighbourhood Plan regulations have been followed and Officers agree with the Examiner's recommendations

basic conditions. If the Council do not support the Plan to referendum, then the Council must have sound reasons for doing so and open itself to legal challenge.	modified meets the Basic Conditions.	legislation.	
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1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.

GREAT AND LITTLE CHESTERFORD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

**Report to Uttlesford District Council of the Independent
Examination**

By Independent Examiner, Tony Burton CBE BA MPhil (Town Planning) HonFRIBA FRSA

Tony Burton
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August 2022

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1. Executive Summary

1. I was appointed by Uttlesford District Council with the support of Great and Little Chesterford Parish Councils to carry out the independent examination of the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan.

2. I undertook the examination by reviewing the Plan documents and written representations, and by making an unaccompanied visit to the Neighbourhood Area.

3. I consider the Plan to be an adequate expression of the community's views and ambitions for Great and Little Chesterford. It is based on an effective programme of public consultation which has informed a Vision to 2033 supported by a Plan objective and eight contributing objectives. This is to be achieved through 13 planning policies and 12 Community Projects. The Plan is supported by a Consultation Statement and Basic Conditions Statement and has been screened to determine whether full Strategic Environmental and Habitats Regulations Assessments are required. There is supporting evidence provided and there is evidence of community support and the involvement of the local planning authority.

4. I have considered the 11 separate representations made on the submitted Plan. These are addressed in this report as appropriate.

5. Subject to the recommended modifications set out in this report I conclude that the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan meets all the necessary legal requirements, including satisfying the Basic Conditions. I make a number of additional optional recommendations.

6. I recommend that the modified Plan should proceed to Referendum and that this should be held within the Neighbourhood Area of Great and Little Chesterford parishes.

2. Introduction

7. This report sets out the findings of my independent examination of the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan was submitted to Uttlesford District Council for the combined area of Great and Little Chesterford parishes. Great Chesterford Parish Council is designated as the Qualifying Body with the consent of Little Chesterford Parish Council.

8. I was appointed as the independent examiner of the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan by Uttlesford District Council with the agreement of Great and Little Chesterford Parish Councils.

9. I am independent of both Great and Little Chesterford Parish Councils and Uttlesford District Council. I do not have any interest in any land that may be affected by the Plan. I possess the appropriate qualifications and experience to undertake this role.

10. My role is to examine the Neighbourhood Plan and recommend whether it should proceed to referendum. A recommendation to proceed is predicated on the Plan meeting all legal requirements as submitted or in a modified form, and on the Plan addressing the required modifications recommended in this report.

11. As part of this process I must consider whether the submitted Plan meets the Basic Conditions as set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). To comply with the Basic Conditions, the Plan must:

- have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State; and
- contribute to the achievement of sustainable development; and
- be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan in the area; and

- be compatible with European Union (EU) and European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) obligations, including the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

12. An additional Basic Condition was introduced by Regulations 32 and 33 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) in 2018 that the making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. I am also required to make a number of other checks under paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

13. In undertaking this examination I have considered the following documents as the most significant in arriving at my recommendations:

- the submitted Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan
- the Basic Conditions Statement
- the Consultation Statement
- Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment screening statements
- the relevant parts of the development plan comprising the Uttlesford Local Plan 2005 as saved by a Direction from the Secretary of State in 2007
- representations made on the submitted neighbourhood plan
- relevant material held on the neighbourhood plan and Uttlesford District Council websites
- National Planning Policy Framework (2021)
- Planning Practice Guidance
- relevant Ministerial Statements

14. I have also given due consideration to the preparation of a new Local Plan for Uttlesford following withdrawal of a previous draft Local Plan in 2019. The new Local Plan is at an early stage of development and has not yet been published for public consultation.

15. Much of the Plan was prepared under an earlier version of the National Planning Policy Framework than that used for my examination but the consultation on the submitted Plan took place after the most recent NPPF's publication in July 2021.

16. Strutt and Parker on behalf of The Hill Group requested the Examination included a public hearing "*given the complexity of the issues*". I have reviewed the request and having considered the documents provided and the representations on the submitted Plan I was satisfied that the examination could be undertaken by written representations without the need for a hearing.

17. I carried out an unaccompanied visit to the Neighbourhood Area on a weekday during July. I visited the main locations addressed in the Plan, including the development limits and settlement boundary, the separation zones and the main Character Areas, a selection of the identified views, the development sites, the key heritage and landscape features and the Local Green Spaces.

18. Throughout this report my recommended modifications are bulleted. Where modifications to policies are recommended they are highlighted in **bold** print with new wording in "speech marks". Existing wording is in *italics*. Modifications are also recommended to some parts of the supporting text. These recommended modifications are numbered from M1 and are necessary for the Plan to meet the Basic Conditions. A number of modifications are not essential for the Plan to meet the Basic Conditions and these are indicated by [square brackets]. These optional modifications are numbered from OM1.

19. Producing the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan has clearly involved significant effort over many years by both the Steering Group and Working Group. The process began in 2015 and is informed by significant community involvement. There is evidence of collaboration with Uttlesford District Council and continuing this will be important in ensuring implementation of the Plan. The commitment of all those who have worked so hard over such a long period of time to prepare the Plan is to be commended and I would like to thank all those at Uttlesford District Council and Great and Little Chesterford Parish Councils who have supported this examination process.

3. Compliance with matters other than the Basic Conditions

20. I am required to check compliance of the Plan with a number of matters.

Qualifying body

21. The neighbourhood plan has been prepared by a suitable Qualifying Body – Great Chesterford Parish Council – with the express agreement of Little Chesterford Parish Council as confirmed in a joint statement dated 31 March 2022. As a parish council it is the only organisation that can prepare a neighbourhood plan for the area.

Neighbourhood Area

22. I am satisfied that the Plan relates to the development and use of land for a designated neighbourhood area which comprises the parish areas of both Great and Little Chesterford. The neighbourhood area was agreed by Uttlesford District Council on 18 June 2015.

23. The boundary of the neighbourhood area can be discerned from Figure 1.1. This is not at a scale or clarity that allows the detailed boundary to be determined and no link is provided to where the boundary is available online.

- OM1 –[Provide a link to where the neighbourhood area boundary can be viewed at a larger scale]

Land use issues

24. I am satisfied that the Plan's policies relate to relevant land use planning issues.

Plan period

25. The period of the neighbourhood plan runs from 2019 to 2033. This is stated on the cover, a repeating header and throughout the body of the document. It aligns with the Plan's Vision. 2033 was the end of the Plan period for the Local Plan review withdrawn in 2019. It is anticipated that the forthcoming Local Plan review will run to 2040 and beyond.

Contrary to representations made by Roebuck Land and Planning on behalf of Catesby Estates it is up to the Qualifying Body to choose the plan period they consider most appropriate. The risk of a neighbourhood plan being superseded by a Local Plan review early in its period is a matter for the Qualifying Body and not this examination.

Excluded development

26. I am satisfied that the neighbourhood plan makes no provisions for excluded development (such as national infrastructure, minerals extraction or waste).

4. Consultation

27. I have reviewed the Consultation Statement, its 17 Appendices and relevant information provided on the Neighbourhood Plan website. This provides a clear record of the consultation process that has been undertaken since the Plan's inception in 2013 as overseen by the Steering Group comprising both parish councillors and other local residents and with contributions from a number of working parties. The public consultation process has been adequately open and transparent.

28. A number of different engagement methods have been used, including a website, public meetings, online surveys, a local "Google group", Facebook, noticeboards, Village Walks, use of the local Broadsheet and materials hand delivered to all addresses.

29. Consultation was undertaken on the overall Vision and Objectives, housing land and site selection, local green spaces and the Plan as a whole.

30. Some specific consultations with young people, via Great Chesterford Primary Academy, and local businesses and landowners have been undertaken. Landowners were all approached regarding potential site allocations and this resulted in a number of meetings and refinements of the approach. This included a meeting with Historic England to address the heritage impact when assessing potential sites. Landowners were also consulted on the proposed Local Green Spaces and this resulted in amendments to the approach. Uttlesford District Council has provided input through the process and support through an independent consultant. Other independent consultancy support has been provided.

31. Participation levels have been good with half of all households responding to the Village Questionnaire. 79% of the questionnaires were responded to at Great Chesterford Primary Academy.

32. The Plan was consulted on in November 2020 and subject to Regulation 14 consultation between 29 March 2021 and 10 May 2021. This included documents being

placed online and hard copies being made available on request. A leaflet was hand delivered to all addresses and key stakeholders were contacted directly by email. There is evidence of the consultation including the required statutory and other consultees who received details of the consultation the day before the consultation period began. While relatively few responses were received I consider an adequate process has been followed. An independent Health Check has also been undertaken.

33. Details of the consultation responses and the changes made to the Plan have been recorded and there is a clear description of the way representations have been handled and responses made.

34. 11 separate representations have been made on the submitted Plan including from individuals, statutory bodies, the local Academy and development interests. All the representations have been considered and are addressed as appropriate in this report.

35. I am satisfied with the evidence of the public consultation undertaken in preparing the Plan since its inception. The Plan has been subject to wide public consultation at different stages in its development. While the number of responses to the Regulation 14 consultation is low, the participation rates have generally been good. The process has allowed community input to shape the Plan as it has developed and as proposals have been firmed up. Local businesses, landowners and the local planning authority have been engaged throughout and shaped the outcomes.

5. General comments on the Plan's presentation

Vision and Objectives

36. The Plan includes a Vision for 2033 which reflects the feedback received through consultation and is consistent with the objective and policies in the Plan. The overall approach combines a desire for organic change proportionate to the character of the area with support for sustainable development. Representations from development interests and Uttlesford District Council questioned whether this approach could be sustained given future demands for development. Nevertheless, as Uttlesford District Council notes, "*no decisions have been made*" on this strategic context. I conclude that the Plan's Vision is consistent with overarching need for sustainable development in the current context. The Vision may be revisited as part of a future Plan review if the strategic context changes.

37. The Plan has a single Objective and identifies eight ways in which this can be achieved. These contributing objectives are used variously as the basis for some but not all of the Plan's policies. The wording of each "*policy objective*" differs to varying degrees from that used in the overall objective and some policy objectives do not appear in the overall Plan objective (e.g. 5.5 to 5.9). Similarly, some parts of the overall objective do not appear as policy objectives and are not being achieved in other ways (e.g. (A) and (B)). Some parts of the plan reference the eight ways in which the objective can be achieved as separate objectives in their own right. There is also inconsistent use of numbering and lettering when referencing them. This is a source of potential confusion. There is also potential confusion in the description and use of the objective. My recommendation is to integrate and align the contributing objectives with the policy objectives in a manner which avoids duplicate text and provides a consistent approach. There is no single form of words which can best achieve this and I suggest this redrafting is agreed between the parish councils and Uttlesford District Council.

- M1- Clarify and be consistent in the drafting and use of the Plan's objective, including by:
 - Recognising the Plan has a single objective supported by contributing objectives and not multiple objectives

- Integrating the text used for the contributing objectives (currently A-H) with that used for each policy objective so it is aligned as follows:
 - 5.2 and (D)
 - 5.3 and (C)
 - 5.4 and (F)
- Add new contributing objectives to paragraph 4.2 aligned with the policy objectives for 5.5, 5.6, and 5.7
- Integrate contributing objectives (A) and (B) with policy objectives for 5.8 and 5.9 to provide separate contributing objectives for housing and employment
- Align the policy objectives for the overall spatial strategy with the Plan's overall objective
- It is an option to retain contributing objectives (E), (G) and (H) recognising they are not addressed directly by either the policies or the community projects in the Plan

Other issues

38. The Plan includes references to a number of documents which comprise the evidence base. These include the Landscape Character Assessment and the Historic Environment Assessment. It does not provide details or links to many of these documents and there is no indication of where the Plan's evidence base is provided online. The majority of the evidence base documents are made available on the Plan's website. The Plan uses base maps which are in some cases significantly out of date and do not show completed development.

- OM2 – [List all the evidence base documents used in the Plan in an Appendix and include a link to the Plan's website where they can be uploaded or links provided]
- OM3 – [Use updated base maps throughout the Plan]

6. Compliance with the Basic Conditions

National planning policy

39. The Plan is required to “*have regard*” to national planning policies and advice.

40. The Basic Conditions Statement provides a table that explains the conformity of each of the Plan’s policies with relevant sections of the National Planning Policy Framework. It concludes that “*The Neighbourhood Plan has appropriate regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State*”.

41. The assessment provided is relatively limited and uses a standard text to explain conformity with each policy. No conflicts are identified. Overall the analysis does serve to demonstrate that consideration has been given to national planning policy.

42. I address some conflicts with national planning policy in my consideration of individual policies and recommend some modifications. There are also some areas where the drafting of the Plan’s policies needs to be amended in order to meet the National Planning Policy Framework’s requirement for plans to provide a clear framework within which decisions on planning applications can be made. The policies should give a clear indication of “*how a decision maker should react to development proposals*” (paragraph 16). It is also important for the Plan to address the requirement expressed in national planning policy and Planning Practice Guidance that “*A policy in a neighbourhood plan should be clear and unambiguous. It should be drafted with sufficient clarity that a decision maker can apply it consistently and with confidence when determining planning applications. It should be concise, precise and supported by appropriate evidence. It should be distinct to reflect and respond to the unique characteristics and planning context of the specific neighbourhood area for which it has been prepared.*” (NPPG Paragraph: 041 Reference ID: 41-041-20140306). The Plan’s policies do not always meet these requirements and a number of recommended modifications are made as a result to ensure some policies are more clearly expressed and/or evidenced or to avoid duplication with other planning policies.

43. I am satisfied that the Plan meets this Basic Condition other than where identified in my detailed comments and recommended modifications to the Plan policies.

Sustainable development

44. The Plan must *“contribute to the achievement of sustainable development”*. This is addressed in the Basic Conditions Statement by a brief assessment of how relevant Plan policies contribute to each of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. This assessment identifies the most relevant policies and describes the approach. It concludes that this demonstrates *“The Neighbourhood Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development”*.

45. The assessment is broad brush and succinct and offers only limited insight. Nevertheless my own assessment of the Plan is that it is consistent with the Basic Conditions.

46. Strutt and Parker on behalf of Hill Group have questioned the Plan’s support for sustainable development on the basis that it does *“not make provisions for any further residential development for the entirety of the plan period”*. As identified in the review of the Plan’s policies for new housing its approach exceeds the indicative housing requirement provided by Uttlesford District Council, includes a site allocation for which no planning permission exists and supports further development on windfall, brownfield and infill sites.

47. Roebuck Land and Planning on behalf of Catesby Estates has also questioned the Plan’s support for sustainable development, stating that it *“fails to positively plan for development and does not provide any flexibility”* and that it focuses on *“keeping the areas beyond the built-up area open and free from development”*. I have considered these representations and conclude that the Plan is suitably positive in its approach to development overall given the known strategic context. It includes positive support for employment and housing related development and this extends to more than individual sites. The intention to protect rural land outside settlements free of inappropriate development is entirely consistent with national planning policy *“recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside”* (paragraph 174, NPPF).

48. I am satisfied that the overall contribution of the Plan to sustainable development is positive.

Development plan

49. The Plan must be *“in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan”*. The Basic Conditions Statement addresses this by relating the most relevant saved policies of the 2005 Local Plan and each of the neighbourhood plan policies to each other and providing a brief commentary. The Basic Conditions Statement recognises the Local Plan is being reviewed and references regular consultation with Uttlesford District Council. I address the relationship of the Plan to the emerging Local Plan in relation to the specific policies where this is a relevant consideration

50. The assessment concludes that the *“Neighbourhood Plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area”*. No conflicts or departures are identified.

51. Uttlesford District Council made representations on the consultation draft Plan. These did not raise general conformity issues and when requested for a view on the submitted Plan it said *“Uttlesford District Council considers that the submitted Gt & Lt Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan is in general conformity with the Local Plan 2005 Strategic Policies.”*

52. Additionally, I have considered general conformity in my own assessment of each of the Plan’s policies. I am satisfied the Plan meets this Basic Condition other than where identified in my detailed comments and recommended modifications to the Plan policies.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

53. The Plan must be informed by a Strategic Environmental Assessment if it is likely to have significant environmental effects. Great and Little Chesterford Town Council published a Screening Report prepared by Uttlesford District Council in May 2021. This concluded *“the draft Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to result in significant*

environmental effects and therefore does not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment". Historic England, Natural England and Environment Agency agreed with this conclusion and I am satisfied by the robustness of the approach taken by the Screening Report.

54. I conclude that the Plan meets this Basic Condition.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

55. The Plan must be informed by a Habitats Regulations Assessment if it is likely to lead to significant negative effects on protected European sites. Great and Little Chesterford Town Council published a Screening Report on the submitted plan prepared by Uttlesford District Council in May 2021. This concluded that the Plan *"is unlikely to result in significant effects on any European sites and consequently the plan does not require Habitat Regulation Assessment"*. Natural England agreed with this conclusion.

56. The Basic Conditions Statement states that *"There are no European sites within Uttlesford District. Therefore a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) was not required."* (paragraph 3.4.2.1). This is incorrect as the potential impacts on sites beyond the neighbourhood area are also relevant. Nevertheless, I am satisfied by the robustness of the approach taken by the Screening Report which did look beyond the neighbourhood area.

Other European obligations

57. The Plan must be compatible with European Union (EU) and European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) obligations. The Basic Conditions Statement asserts that this is the case and evidences the open and consultative manner in which the Plan has been prepared. No contrary evidence has been presented and there is evidence of changes being made to the Plan during its preparation. I conclude that there has been adequate opportunity for those with an interest in the Plan to make their views known and representations have been handled in an appropriate manner with changes made to the Plan.

58. I conclude that the Plan meets this Basic Condition.

7. Detailed comments on the Plan policies

59. This section of the report reviews and makes recommendations on each of the Plan's policies to ensure that they meet the Basic Conditions. I make comments on all policies in order to provide clarity on whether each meets the Basic Conditions. Some of the supporting text, policy numbering, headings and the Contents will need to be amended to take account of the recommended modifications.

Overall Spatial Strategy

60. **Policy GLCNP/1** – This focuses new development to locations within existing development limits and on allocated sites and establishes principles intended to protect the character of sensitive areas.

61. The Policy is supported by Figures showing both the *“Great Chesterford Development Limits”* and the *“Little Chesterford Settlement boundary”*. The Plan extends the Great Chesterford Development limit established in the 2005 Local Plan to include areas subsequently developed and areas where planning permission has been granted for development. The Plan introduces a settlement boundary for Little Chesterford which does not have a development limit identified in the Local Plan.

62. I share concerns expressed by Roebuck Land and Planning on behalf of Catesby Estates that the first parts of Policies GLCNP/1 and GLCNP/2 overlap. The general approach to the location of development should be defined as part of the overall spatial strategy in Policy GLCNP/1, including allowing for exception sites.

63. The distinction between a *“settlement boundary”* and a *“development limit”* is not entirely clear and on request I was informed that it reflected the different status of Little Chesterford. The effect of the policy is to encourage new development to be within development limits but not a settlement boundary. Development at Little Chesterford should only be on an allocated site outside the settlement boundary. I am content with this distinction.

64. The Policy establishes principles for development impacting on the Chalk Uplands, Roman Scheduled Monuments and Setting Zone and the Cam River Valley Area. These are shown in Figure 5.1. There is evidence supporting much of the definition of these areas in the Landscape Character Assessment and Historic Environment Assessment. The Chalk Uplands comprise a number of landscape character areas east of the A11 and B184. The Cam River Valley Area comprises a relevant landscape character area and the fluvial flood zone. I share some of the concern expressed by Strutt and Parker on behalf of The Hill Group about the evidence for the Cam River Valley Area and requested further information. I was informed of additional considerations for including some other land, including open farmland west of the B1383. This rationale should be provided in the supporting text.

65. Similarly I was provided with additional evidence as to the definition of the Roman Scheduled Monuments and Setting Zone, drawing on the Historic Environment Assessment and other information, which should be included in the supporting text. I note the support of Roebuck Land and Planning on behalf of Catesby Estates for the Setting Zone while expressing concern about the need to avoid identifying the setting itself as a heritage asset and considering the approach to be a *“simplified assessment of the setting of the monuments”*. While recommending modifications to clarify the Policy’s approach I am content it addresses appropriately the significance of the designated heritage asset and not the setting per se. I am also content that the Policy is consistent with the requirement in national planning policy that *“great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation”* (paragraph 199, NPPF). The level of detail provided in defining the area is appropriate and that more detailed consideration of variations within the Setting Zone can be most appropriately address through the development management process. The Policy also provides an additional level of detail appropriate to a neighbourhood plan related to the inter-visibility of the Scheduled Monuments.

66. I have considered representations that the overall approach to the three sensitive areas is overly restrictive as part of wider constraints on development outside the settlements. I share the view that as drafted the Policy takes a restrictive approach in stating what will *“only”* be supported and recommend modifications to address this. It

remains clear that support is dependent on the principles identified being met. Section 1 of the Policy is also unduly restrictive in stating where development “will” take place.

67. On the detail of the Policy drafting it relates to “development” requiring express planning permission rather than “growth” which can be more general in nature. Only one site is allocated in Little Chesterford and it is unnecessary to reference either the Plan or Area in Section 1. The Policy should also be clear as to what constitutes being “outside” the villages. The Plan is inconsistent in reference to both “Cam Valley Area” and “Cam River Valley Area”.

68. It will be helpful to provide a larger scale map online enabling the detailed boundaries of the areas defined in Figure 5.1 to be identified.

69. Policy GLCNP/1 does not meet the Basic Conditions.

- **M2 – Amend Policy GLCNP/1 to:**

- In Section 1 replace “*Growth in the Neighbourhood Plan Area*” with “**New development proposals should**”
- In Section 1 replace “*and in the housing site(s) allocated in Little Chesterford as part of this Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan*” with “**or land allocated in Policy GLCNP/9.1**”
- In Section 2 replace “*Outside of the villages*” with “**Outside of the Great Chesterford development limits or Little Chesterford settlement boundary**”
- After “*enhanced*” in Section 2 insert “**and development proposals should relate to uses that:**
 - **need to be located in the countryside;**
 - **are appropriate to exception sites; or**
 - **are employment uses at sites identified in Figure 5.24 or Figure 5.25.**”
- In Section 2 delete “*our*” in the second paragraph
- In Section 2 delete “*only*” in subsections a)-c)
- In Section 2c) delete “*River*”

- M3 – Provide further detail in the supporting text on the rationale and evidence base used to define the Chalk Uplands, Roman Scheduled Monuments and Setting Zone and the Cam River Valley Area
- OM4 – [Provide access to a larger scale map enabling the detailed boundaries of the areas described by Figure 5.1 to be identified]

Settlement Pattern and Separation

70. **Policy GLCNP/2** – This identifies the most appropriate locations for development, defines separation zones to be kept free from development and supports different kinds of development in different locations.

71. There is significant overlap between Policy GLCNP/1 and the first part of Policy GLCNP/2 in determining the most appropriate location for new development and the role of the Great Chesterford development limits and Little Chesterton settlement boundary. Policy GLCNP/2 additionally identifies the appropriateness of particular types of development that need to be located in the countryside (amplifying Local Plan Policy S7) and of employment development in Chesterford Research Park and elsewhere. My recommendation is that this aspect of the Policy is located in the overall spatial strategy as part of Policy GLCNP/1. On request the parish councils confirmed the reference to *“other places of employment in the rural area”* referred only to those sites identified in Figures 5.24 and 5.25 and I recommend this is clarified.

72. The second part of the Policy defines four *“Separation Zones”* to be *“kept open and free from development”*. The location is provided in Figures 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6 although confusingly the Figures and the Policy describe them differently as *“Separation Zones”* and *“Areas of Separation”*. It will be helpful to provide a larger scale map online enabling the detailed boundaries of the areas defined in Figure 5.4 to be identified.

73. The rationale for and boundaries of the Separation Zones are explained in the supporting text although this does not provide sufficient detail for each of the boundaries.

On request I was provided with additional information regarding their definition corresponding to relevant landscape character areas varied according to them fulfilling the purpose of a separation zone. I recommend this additional explanation is provided in the supporting text.

74. I share some of the concerns expressed by Uttlesford District Council that the approach *“should not seek to frustrate potential development”* and by Roebuck Land and Planning on behalf of Catesby Estates that *“there seems to be little justification for such a sweeping and restrictive policy basis”* to keeping a majority of the neighbourhood area *“open and free from development”*. The supporting text recognised that the purpose of a separation zone is to *“serve as a rural buffer or visual break”* and *“protect the character and rural setting of settlements”* and I recommend that the Policy is clarified to address this more focused role.

75. The location of the Separation Zones is also not consistent with the Landscape Character Assessments conclusions on the capacity of different areas to accommodate development. Significant parts of the Northern Gateway Separation Zone are identified as having medium or low/medium capacity for development. To address this I recommend the Policy relates more clearly to the specific purpose of Separation Zones.

76. This modification also addresses the third part of the Policy which considers any development proposals in respect of their impact on the *“functions and purposes of a separation zone, or its open character”*. The Policy is contradictory in seeking to keep Separation Zones *“free from development”* whilst also supporting types of development that need to be located in the countryside.

77. The statement in the fourth part of the Policy that new housing development in Springwell will not be supported is unduly restrictive. Any proposals will already be subject to stringent policies covering development in rural areas. It is also unduly restrictive in the final part of the Policy not to support any backland development in Little Chesterford even if it has no significant detrimental impact. I observed that a small amount of backland development already exists in Little Chesterford without damaging its linear character.

78. The fifth part of the Policy limits development within Great and Little Chesterford to infill despite the Great Chesterford development limits having been redrawn to include a non-infill site.

79. Policy GLCNP/2 does not meet the Basic Conditions.

- **M4 – Amend Policy GLCNP/2 to:**
 - **Delete Section 1**
 - **Replace the first two lines of Section 2 with “Development proposals in the following Separation Zones (Figure 5.4) should either be appropriate to a location outside a settlement or otherwise avoid significant harm to the purpose of the Separation Zone in providing a rural buffer or visual break between settlements and/or protecting the character and rural setting of settlements:”**
 - **In Section 2 replace all references to “Area of Separation” with “Separation Zone”**
 - **Delete Section 3**
 - **Delete Section 4**
 - **In Section 5 delete “infill development”**
 - **In Section 6 replace “will not be supported as it would change the” with “should not result in significant detrimental harm to the linear”**
- **M5 - Provide further detail in the supporting text on the rationale and evidence base used to define the Separation Zones**
- **OM5 – [Provide access to a larger scale map enabling the detailed boundaries of the areas described by Figure 5.4 to be identified]**

Getting Around

80. **Policy GLCNP/3** – This supports development contributing to sustainable transport infrastructure, including walking routes, electric vehicle charging points and use of off-site contributions for identified purposes.
81. The Policy is supported by evidence from public consultation of support for improved cycling and walking routes.
82. The Policy references specific measures to be supported by development but there is a lack of evidence as to their feasibility or priority. The measures also include road safety investment not covered by the Policy. I recommend that the measures are identified as examples rather than presented as a prescribed list.
83. The detailed Policy drafting can be improved, including to avoid including the purpose of the Policy and to ensure it is not unduly restrictive and the requirements relate only to appropriate development.
84. Policy GLCNP/3 does not meet the Basic Conditions.
- **M6 – Amend Policy GLCNP/3 to:**
 - In Section 1 replace *“In order to deliver sustainable development, all development proposals must”* with *“Development proposals should”*
 - In Section 2 insert *“where appropriate”* before *“be capable”*
 - In Section 3 insert *“as appropriate”* after *“development”*
 - In Section 2 and 3 replace *“must”* with *“should”*
 - In Section 4 replace *“to achieve the identified required”* with *“for”*
 - In Section 4 insert *“and road safety measures, including”* after *“improvements”*

Landscape Character

85. **Policy GLCNP/4a** – This addresses the need for development to address a range of landscape considerations, including identified *“Green Screening”* and *“Special Verges”*.

86. The significance, variety and nature of the landscape in the neighbourhood area is partly evidenced through a detailed Landscape Character Assessment which informs the policy. Additional consideration has been given to the landscape setting of the three main settlements, including village walks and work on local wildlife sites undertaken by Uttlesford District Council in 2007 (which is not cited in the supporting text). These identified the importance and location of Green Screening and Special Verges which are identified in Figures 5.8 and 5.9. I went to these locations during my visit and concur with the assessment of their importance. The Policy is also supported by evidence showing the distribution of woodland in the neighbourhood area.

87. I have considered representations from Strutt and Parker on behalf of The Hill Group that the Policy is not consistent with those identifying the Cam River Valley Area or Separation Zones. I do not consider there to be a conflict between the different policies relating to each of these areas. Each policy provides a distinct approach.

88. The Policy drafting is unduly restrictive in stating that development will “only” be supported if it meets the criteria. Its deletion still means support is conditional on the criteria being satisfied. It is national planning policy to “conserve and enhance” rather than “*preserve or enhance*” nature (Chapter 15, NPPF). The intention for all the criteria to apply is unclear.

89. Policy GLCNP/4a does not meet the Basic Conditions.

- **M7 – Amend Policy GLCNP/4a to:**
 - **Delete “only”**
 - **Replace all instances of “*preserves*” with “*conserves*”**
 - **Insert “and” at the end of subsection d)**
- OM6 – [Include Uttlesford District Council’s Local Wildlife Site Review (2007) in the Evidence Base]

Views

90. **Policy GLCNP/4b** – This identifies 44 “*Important Views*” and “*Locally Important Views*” to be protected and seeks to maintain panoramic views from the area’s plateaus.

91. The Plan draws on the Landscape Character Assessment, Historic Environment Assessment and Conservation Area Appraisal plus community surveys and village walks to evidence the significance and location of the views. These are summarised in Table 5.1 and detailed in the Important Views Designation Report accompanying the Plan and Figures 5.11 to 5.14.

92. The evidence base is sound and I do not agree with representations from Strutt and Parker on behalf of The Hill Group that the benchmark is the approach used in Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments. Further detail on the significance of views and potential impacts can be considered at the planning application stage.

93. I note the representations from Roebuck Land and Planning on behalf of Catesby Estates but do not consider the effect of the Policy when combined with Policy GLCNP/2 is to create “*an almost total constraint on any further expansion of Great Chesterford*”. The matter of whether a development will adversely impact on a view will be one for planning judgement when a planning application is submitted. I recommend that any such impact needs to be significant for this judgment to be required.

94. There is a lack of detail in the Plan about what distinguishes an “*Important View*” from a “*Locally Important View*”. This extends to the Policy title and the Plan sub-heading which both reference only “*Locally Important Views*”. As noted by representations from Roebuck Land and Planning on behalf of Catesby Estates there is a need also to explain how the three categories of view described in paragraph 5.4.9 – Significant, Important and Community Designated – are differently categorised into Important and Locally Important for the purposes of the Policy. Table 5.1 also fails to distinguish between Important and Locally Important views and the supporting text incorrectly identifies Table 5.1 as only including “*Locally Important Views*”. I recommend text from the Important Views

Designation Report is included in the supporting text to explain the categorisation and that this is shown in Table 5.1.

95. Additionally, the Policy addresses the importance of *“panoramic views”* from *“plateaus and uplands”*. The location of the *“plateaus and uplands”* is not provided which means the Policy lacks necessary clarity. The Landscape Character Assessment identifies the importance of the panoramic views from Chesterford Ridge and Chalk Upper Slopes and I recommend this is identified in a modified Policy.

96. I experienced a majority of the views during my visit to the neighbourhood area and agree with them being identified as having value to the area. While noting representations from Roebuck Land and Planning on behalf of Catesby Estates regarding the match between the view descriptions and the views shown in Figures 5.1 to 5.14 I am content that the significance of the view is as described and this will be what is pertinent to the decision maker. The approach is also consistent with the evidence base.

97. The Policy drafting is unduly restrictive in stating that development will *“only”* be supported which addresses the considerations. Its deletion still means the criteria need to be satisfied for support to be forthcoming. A word is missing from subsection a) and the introduction of a hierarchy of importance in the panoramic views in subsection b) is not informed by evidence in the supporting text.

- **M8 - Retitle Policy GLCNP/4b as “Views” and make the following amendments:**
 - Delete *“only”*
 - Insert *“does”* after *“and”* and *“significantly”* after *“not”* in subsection a)
 - Replace *“especially”* with *“including”* in subsection b)
 - Replace *“plateaus and uplands”* with *“Chesterford Ridge and Chalk Upper Slopes (Figure 3.1)”*
- **M9 - Make other clarifications to the supporting text:**
 - Delete *“Locally Important”* in the sub-heading on page 58 and the Contents on page 1

- Move paragraph 5.4.9 to before paragraph 5.4.8
- Distinguish “*Important Views*” from “*Locally Important Views*” in Table 5.1
- Replace “*set out*” with “*included*” in the last sentence of paragraph 5.4.8
- Insert “and Locally Important” before “*Views*” in the titles of Figures 5.13 and 5.14
- Insert “Important Views are those identified by reports in the evidence base, including the Conservation Area Appraisal and Historic Environment Assessment. Locally Important Views are those identified by the community through surveys and village walks” before Table 5.1 and explain the categorisation of Significant, Important and Community Designated views into Important and Locally Important.
- Include additional supporting text explaining the evidence for the significance of the panoramic views

Historic Environment

98. **Policy GLCNP/5** – This Policy establishes a range of considerations related to the historic environment to be addressed by all planning applications, including identifying stretches of flint wall and sunken banks which are characteristic of the area.

99. The Policy is supported by an evidence base largely comprising the Historic Environment Assessment and the outputs from Village Walks. There is evidence of support for protection of the historic environment from the public consultation.

100. The purpose of neighbourhood planning policies is to address local considerations not already included in national planning policy or a Local Plan. National planning policy is that “*Plans should.....f) serve a clear purpose, avoiding unnecessary duplication of policies that apply to a particular area (including policies in this Framework, where relevant)*” (paragraph 16, NPPF). Parts of Policy GLCNP/5 conflict with this approach, including Section 1 related to designated heritage assets, Section 5 related to Conservation Areas and Section 9 related to non-designated heritage assets. Section 7 is also inconsistent with national planning policy relating to undesignated heritage assets on a Local List.

101. The Policy comprises a mix of specific and generic (Sections 9 and 11) requirements which could be more clearly presented. I share some of the reservations expressed in representations by Roebuck Land and Planning on behalf of Catesby Estates in respect of the clarity of the policy and its consistency with national planning policy, including in relation to the setting of Scheduled Monuments.

102. The approach is unduly restrictive in stating what “*must*” be addressed or happens and what “*will not be supported*”. It also applies to all development proposals regardless of whether they have any relationship to the historic environment. It should be clear that all considerations are relevant where they are appropriate to a development proposal.

103. The Policy identifies “*Flint and Brick Walls and Sunken Banks*” in Little Chesterford as “*Local Historic Features*” to be conserved or enhanced. Their location is provided in Figure 5.17 and my visit confirmed this. Figure 5.17 references only “*Old flint walls*” and the Historic Environment Assessment largely references these features as “*flint walls*”. I recommend use of this term to avoid any potential confusion. Figure 5.17 is not at a sufficiently large scale to identify the precise location of these Local Historic Features. I recommend a larger map is provided at a scale whereby each feature can be accurately identified.

104. The Policy addresses the setting of Bordeaux Farm Scheduled Monument and this is supported by evidence from the Historic Environment Assessment. The setting is shown in Figure 5.17 although it is identified here as the “*Bordeaux Farm rural context area*”. The different terminology is a potential cause of confusion. I share concerns expressed by Strutt and Parker on behalf of The Hill Group concerning the evidence supporting the boundary shown in Figure 5.17. This is not provided by the Historic Environment Assessment. On request I was provided with a brief description of the boundaries but the basis for this remains too unclear. I recommend that it is not defined by a Figure in the Plan and it is addressed through a description of the setting in the supporting text.

105. The Policy identifies the “*Historic Core*” of Little Chesterford and its location is shown in Figure 5.17. Evidence in support of this is provided by the Historic Environment

Assessment. This emphasises the importance of the setting and I recommend a modification to the Policy to provide further clarity.

106. Policy GLCNP/5 does not meet the Basic Conditions:

- **M10 – Amend Policy GLCNP/5 as follows:**
 - **Replace opening two lines with “Development proposals should conserve and enhance the historic environment and take account of the following as appropriate:”**
 - **Delete Sections 1, 5, 7 and 9**
 - **Insert a new Section “The significance of any undesignated heritage asset, including any structure on the Local Heritage List”**
 - **In Sections 2, 4, 8 and 10 replace “*must*” with “should”**
 - **Replace Section 2 with “Open visibility between the Scheduled Monuments comprising the Roman Town and Fort and the Romano-Celtic Temple and the open aspect of the Romano-Celtic Temple area should both be conserved.”**
 - **Replace Section 3 with “Development along Newmarket Road should avoid any significant detrimental impact on views into the designated Scheduled Monuments “**
 - **In Section 4 insert “(Figure 5.17)” after “*Monument*”**
 - **Replace Section 6 with “In Little Chesterford, the Historic Core (Figure 5.17) comprising the open space and setting of the church and hall should be conserved.”**
 - **In Section 8 delete “*and Brick*”**
 - **Replace Section 10 with “The publication and dissemination of the results of archaeological investigations is encouraged where these are required to be undertaken”**
 - **Replace Section 11 with “The contribution of a high quality of design and materials”**
 - **Insert “; and” at the end of the penultimate Section**

The revised Policy will read as follows:

“Development proposals should conserve and enhance the historic environment and take account of the following as appropriate:

1. The significance of any undesignated heritage asset, including any structure on the Local Heritage List;
 2. Open visibility between the Scheduled Monuments comprising the Roman Town and Fort and the Romano-Celtic Temple and the open aspect of the Romano-Celtic Temple area should both be conserved;
 3. Development along Newmarket Road should avoid any significant detrimental impact on views into the designated Scheduled Monuments;
 4. The setting of the Bordeaux Farm scheduled Monument (Figure 5.17) should be conserved;
 5. In Little Chesterford, the Historic Core (Figure 5.17) comprising the open space and setting of the Church and Hall should be conserved;
 6. The Local Historic Features (Flint Walls and Sunken Banks) in Little Chesterford should be conserved or enhanced by any development proposals;
 7. The publication and dissemination of the results of archaeological investigations is encouraged where these are required to be undertaken; and
 8. The contribution of a high quality of design and materials.”
- M11 – Provide a revised version or a link to a scale of map for Figure 5.17 which enables each of the Local Historic Features to be accurately located
 - M12 – In Figures 5.15 and 5.17 delete “*Bordeaux Farm rural context area*” and provide a description of the setting of Bordeaux Farm Scheduled Monument in the supporting text

Valued Community Spaces and Facilities

107. **Policy GLCNP/6** – This protects a range of identified community spaces and facilities.

108. The Policy is supported by the identification of 22 “*Valued Community Spaces and Facilities*” and these are presented under five headings in Table 5.2 and identified in Figures 5.19 – 5.21. This draws on a range of evidence, including a 2016 Village Survey and 2015

Village Plan. There is support for protecting community facilities from the public consultation.

109. The Policy restricts support of development proposals resulting in the *“Loss, change of use or alteration”* of any of the 22 spaces and facilities to instances where their amenity value is not reduced and it is improved or enhanced. The drafting is unclear in requiring the value to be simultaneously *“improved or enhanced”* and *“not materially reduced”*. It is also unclear how the Policy relates to instances where the space or facility is otherwise provided in the area or instances where the space or facility is no longer needed.

110. I have considered representations from Cheffins on behalf of local landowner Robert Fairhead expressing reservations about the appropriateness of referencing the riverside walk given public access is currently only on an informal basis. It is apparent that the *“community routes”* have high levels of public support even if they are only accessed on an informal basis. The effect of the Policy is to protect them against negative impacts arising from new development. It does not fetter the right of the landowner to extend or reduce access to the land and, as such, I am content with the Plan’s approach.

111. Other drafting is unclear, including superfluous numbering of a single Section and a caveat relating to circumstances where *“planning permission is required”*. Planning policy is only relevant to development requiring express planning permission. The Contents does not reference *“facilities”*.

112. The locations of Chesterford Fisheries (4) and the route of the Riverside walk between Great and Little Chesterford (22) are not clear from Figure 5.21.

113. Policy GLCNP/6 does not meet the Basic Conditions.

- **M13 - Replace Policy GLCNP/6 with “Development proposals which result in the loss or significant reduction in the value of Valued Community Spaces and Facilities (Table 5.2) should demonstrate that either the space or facility is no longer required or that alternative appropriate provision of at least equivalent value**

exists or will be provided elsewhere in an appropriate location in the neighbourhood area.”

- M14 – Clarify the locations of Chesterford Fisheries (4) and the route of the Riverside walk between Great and Little Chesterford (22) in the appropriate Figure(s)
- OM7 – [Add “and Facilities” after both instances of “*Valued Community spaces*” in the Contents]

Local Green Spaces

114. **Policy GLCNP/7** – This designates 17 Local Green Spaces and provides policy consideration for planning applications which affect them.

115. The Policy is supported by a *Local Green Spaces Designation Report* (March 2021) which reviews each proposal in relation to the considerations in paragraph 100 (now 102) of the National Planning Policy Framework. There is evidence of very strong support for protecting local spaces from the community consultation. There is also evidence of landowners being effectively consulted and some having given explicit support.

116. I visited each of the proposed Local Green Spaces and concur with the conclusions of the Local Green Space Assessment with one exception:

- LGS-13 – Land East of Manor Farm – This is an area of farmland which was under crop during my visit. While playing an important role on the edge of Great Chesterford it is indistinguishable from a large area of farmland to the south east. There is insufficient evidence that it is demonstrably special to the local community. The land is protected from development under other development plan policies

117. While supporting designation Great Oak Multi Academy Trust expressed concern over the impact of designating LGS-5 on future development for educational purposes. I am content with the assessment of the site’s value and any future development proposals will

need to meet the requirements for Local Green Spaces contained in national planning policy.

118. The Policy includes an incorrect reference to *“Figure 5.35”*.

119. To be afforded a level of protection consistent with them being Green Belt Local Green Spaces need only by designated by the Plan. This follows a Court of Appeal case with relating to a Local Green Space policy in a neighbourhood plan (Lochailort Investments Limited v. Mendip District Council and Norton St Philip Parish Council, [2020] EWCA Civ 1259) which means it is inappropriate to include any wording that sets out how development proposals should be managed.

120. Policy GLCNP/7 does not meet the Basic Conditions.

- **M15 - Amend Policy GLCNP/7 to:**
 - **Delete Sections 2 and 3**
 - **Delete “1” in Section 1 and replace “Figure 5.35” with “Table 5.3 and Figure 5.22”**
- M16 – Delete LGS-13 from Table 5.3 and Figure 5.22
- M17 – Provide a revised version or a link to a scale of map for Figure 5.22 which enables the exact boundaries of each of the Local Green Spaces to be determined.

Employment

121. **Policy GLCNP/8** – This provides considerations for supporting new employment development related to identified sites, including measures to minimise traffic through the villages, and affords protection to employment sites.

122. The Policy is supported by the identification of six employment sites shown in Figures 5.24 and 5.25. Section 3 of the Policy is not explicit in identifying these sites.

123. Additionally, Chesterford Research Park has a defined “*Development limit*” shown in Figure 5.23. This is not addressed in any of the Plan’s policies and performs no planning function. To avoid potential confusion I recommend deletion of this Figure. The parish councils informed me of the intention to reference the Chesterford Research Park Development Limit in Section 1 of the Policy but it has not done so and so this has not been subject to public consultation. The land around Chesterford Research Park still benefits from protection under other policies in the Local Plan and this Plan and it is an option to address the issue in a future review of the neighbourhood plan.

124. I also recommend inclusion of a Table identifying the employment sites shown in the Figures in a similar way to the identification of Local Green Spaces and Valued Community Facilities and Spaces.

125. The Policy expects all development at Chesterford Research Park to be accompanied by a workplace travel plan. This may not be the case in all circumstances, such as where a planning application is for development with limited or no traffic implications.

126. The protection of existing employment sites is negatively worded in stating what “*will not be supported*” and I recommend that proposals should instead demonstrate that they meet relevant considerations.

127. Policy GLCNP/8 does not meet the Basic Conditions.

- **M18 – Amend Policy GLCNP/8 to:**
 - **At the end of Section 2 insert “where appropriate”**
 - **In Section 3 insert “significant” before “detrimental”**
 - **In Section 3 insert “identified in Figures 5.24 and 5.25” after “employment”**
 - **In Section 3 replace “will not be supported other than where evidence can be produced” with “should demonstrate”**
- **M19 – Delete Figure 5.23 and rename “Chesterford Research Park Development limit” as “Chesterford Research Park” in Figure 5.4**

Housing

128. **Policy GLCNP/9** – This supports development on three allocated sites, windfall and infill sites and provides consideration for all development seeking to ensure it is sustainable.

129. Three sites are allocated in the Plan and these have been identified through a two-step process which assessed known sites for their availability and suitability followed by a site selection process on which landowners and others were consulted. I am content with the process that has identified three sites to be allocated for development.

130. Uttlesford District Council has provided an indicative housing requirement of 96 dwellings for the Plan period. Representations from Strutt and Parker on behalf of The Hill Group question the basis for this requirement given it *“relies on housing figures from the withdrawn Local Plan”* (Uttlesford District Council letter, 23/3/21) and this Local Plan *“has no status”*. I agree that the withdrawn Local Plan itself is not an appropriate basis for the indicative housing requirement but I am also satisfied that the indicative housing requirement has been provided on the basis of the underlying evidence available during the plan’s preparation. Roebuck Land and Planning on behalf of Catesby Estates expresses concerns that the Plan is not informed by the latest information.

131. In testing the indicative housing requirement I consider it to have been provided sufficiently recently given it was required before public consultation on the Plan which was then submitted less than a year after the consultation closed. The implications of any more recent evidence and information which will inform the forthcoming Local Plan review is most sensibly managed through a review of the neighbourhood plan. This could address the matters raised in representations. Given the emerging Local Plan has not yet been published for consultation it would be premature to anticipate its contents. As Uttlesford District Council has observed, the basis for any future housing requirement may change as further work on the emerging Local Plan is undertaken. This is a matter for a future Plan review. I am also satisfied that the indicative housing requirement provided by Uttlesford District Council is based on relevant evidence which looks beyond data to *“use the authority’s local housing need as a starting point, taking into consideration relevant policies*

such as an existing or emerging spatial strategy, alongside the characteristics of the neighbourhood plan area” (Paragraph: 102 Reference ID: 41-102-20190509, Planning Practice Guidance).

132. I am content the indicative housing figure needs no further testing and that the parish councils’ reliance on the indicative housing requirement provided by Uttlesford District Council is appropriate.

133. It is also apparent that the indicative housing requirement is likely to be exceeded by a large margin. It is already met by the Plan’s three site allocations. Additional residential development will also come forward on unidentified sites consistent with Policy GLCNP/9. Additionally, there are the emerging plans for development of Chest 8 where the local planning authority has resolved to grant permission for 124 dwellings. As a result there is considerable flexibility in the ability to meet future housing requirements in the neighbourhood area.

134. While it would be helpful to address this changing context in the supporting text I do not consider it either appropriate or necessary to introduce a new site allocation or to identify further reserve sites at this late stage in the process, as advocated in representations from Strutt and Parker on behalf of The Hill Group and Roebuck Land and Planning on behalf of Catesby Estates respectively. The implications of the development of Chest 8 and the suitability of the Chest 6 sites are also best managed through a future review of the Plan and will also be considered through the Local Plan review.

135. I share the view of Roebuck Land and Planning on behalf of Catesby Estates that the references to *“sustainable development”* are unnecessary and duplicate national planning policy.

136. The three allocated sites are each subject to their own Policy. Two of the three sites are at such an advanced stage of development (Chest 9 and Chest 13) that their inclusion as site allocations within the Plan serves no planning purpose. Uttlesford District Council confirmed that construction began in March 2022 and April 2021 respectively. I

recommend their deletion from the Plan and consequent amendments to the supporting text. The sites continue to contribute to the overall housing requirement for the Plan area.

137. The Policy also supports residential development on windfall sites of less than five units or development of any size on infill/brownfield sites consistent with other Plan policies. Given the nature of the neighbourhood area it is unlikely that an infill site of larger than five dwellings will come forward as a windfall site but this is recognised by the parish councils as being possible. This confirms the need to redraft the Policy to provide support for residential development on all three types of site.

138. The Policy relates to all *“sustainable development”* although its substance relates only to residential development and sites for housing development.

139. The Policy provides a number of considerations for all residential development. This includes an expectation that any site is *“proportionate to the size of the Settlement”* and this is identified as not exceeding 10% of the size of the settlement. There is insufficient evidence supporting the quantification of what can be considered proportionate and it could, for example, be seen as excluding the development of 11 and not 10 dwellings in Site Chest 12 before detailed site capacity considerations have been addressed. The Policy’s reference to *“continued balance and vibrancy of the community”* through the provision of mixed sizes of homes lacks necessary precision and is a potential source of ambiguity.

140. The Policy also repeats national policy on Net Gain and First Homes.

141. The Policy references Policies GLCNP/9 (1) and GLCNP/9(2). Neither is included in the Plan. The Policy’s requirement for development proposals to be *“in compliance with this Neighbourhood Plan and its policies”* is unnecessary and does not *“serve a clear purpose, avoiding unnecessary duplication of policies that apply to a particular area”* (Paragraph 16f., NPPF) as all planning applications will be considered against all relevant development plan policies.

142. Policy GLCNP/9 does not meet the Basic Conditions.

- **M20 – Replace Policy GLCNP/9 with:**

“Residential development proposals will be supported which are located on:

- **site allocation Chest 12 and are in accordance with Policy GLCNP/9.1**
- **windfall sites of fewer than five units; or**
- **infill sites or previously developed land**

and which address the following considerations:

- **a scale of development which is proportionate to the size of the settlement in which it is located;**
- **provision of a mix of sizes and tenures of homes which reflects local needs;**
- **provision of specialist housing for older people where appropriate;**
- **provision of affordable homes which meet local housing needs as expressed in the local housing needs assessment; and**
- **securing contributions for the Early Years and Child Care education facility to the east of the Bowls Club in Great Chesterford where this relates appropriately to the proposed development.”**

- **M21 – Delete Policy GLCNP/9.2 and Policy GLCNP/9.3 and make consequential changes to the supporting text to describe the recent history of planning consents and the contribution to meeting the indicative housing requirement.**
- **OM8 – [Provide information in the supporting text on the intention to monitor and review the Plan in relation to the future Local Plan review]**

143. **Policy GLCNP/9.1** – This allocates land in Little Chesterford for residential development of up to 10 dwellings which incorporates a number of principles.

144. The Policy is supported by a location plan and high level plan showing the location of key access points and green screening. There is support for the site’s allocation in the public consultation and from Andrew Martin Planning on behalf of the site’s promoters Enterprise Residential Development Ltd.

145. The principles identified are generally high level and appropriate. The Policy is overly restrictive in stating what “*must*” or “*shall*” be addressed and examples should be provided in the supporting text.

146. Policy GLCNP/9.1 does not meet the Basic Conditions.

- **M22 – Amend Policy GLCNP/9.1 to:**
 - **Replace all instances of “*must*” and “*shall*” with should**
 - **Delete “(for example, a children’s playground)” in principle 5 and include it as an example in paragraph 5.9.14 of the supporting text**

8. Recommendation and Referendum Area

147. I am satisfied the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan meets the Basic Conditions and other requirements subject to the modifications recommended in this report and that it can proceed to a referendum. I have received no information to suggest other than that I recommend the referendum area matches that of the Neighbourhood Area.

APPENDIX 2

Great & Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan – Schedule of Examiner’s Recommendations

DOCUMENT PAGE/POLICY	EXAMINER’S RECOMMENDATION	EXAMINER’S REASON/S	OFFICER RECOMMENDATION AND REASON
CHAPTER 1: Introduction About the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan Page 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OM1 – [Provide a link to where the neighbourhood area boundary can be viewed at a larger scale] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The boundary of the neighbourhood area can be discerned from Figure 1.1. This is not at a scale or clarity that allows the detailed boundary to be determined and no link is provided to where the boundary is available online. 	<p>Agree</p> <p>For clarity, the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area should be at a scale that will be clear enough to allow determination of the Neighbourhood Plan boundary.</p>
GENERAL COMMENTS ON PLAN’S PRESENTATION Chapter 4 – Vision and Objectives: pages 40 - 41	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M1- Clarify and be consistent in the drafting and use of the Plan’s objective, including by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recognising the Plan has a single objective supported by contributing objectives and not multiple objectives • Integrating the text used for the contributing objectives (currently A-H) with that used for each policy objective so it is aligned as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 5.2 and (D) ▪ 5.3 and (C) ▪ 5.4 and (F) 	<p>The Plan has a single Objective and identifies eight ways in which this can be achieved. These contributing objectives are used variously as the basis for some but not all of the Plan’s policies. The wording of each “<i>policy objective</i>” differs to varying degrees from that used in the overall objective and some policy objectives do not appear in the overall Plan objective (e.g. 5.5 to 5.9). Similarly, some parts of the overall objective do not appear as policy objectives and are not being achieved in other ways (e.g. (A) and (B)). Some parts of the</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>The recommended modification eliminates potential confusion in the description and use of the objective and provides clarity and a consistent approach to the use of a single objective supported by multiple objectives.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add new contributing objectives to paragraph 4.2 aligned with the policy objectives for 5.5, 5.6, and 5.7 • Integrate contributing objectives (A) and (B) with policy objectives for 5.8 and 5.9 to provide separate contributing objectives for housing and employment • Align the policy objectives for the overall spatial strategy with the Plan's overall objective • It is an option to retain contributing objectives (E), (G) and (H) recognising they are not addressed directly by either the policies or the community projects in the Plan 	<p>plan reference the eight ways in which the objective can be achieved as separate objectives. There is also inconsistent use of numbering and lettering when referencing them. This is a source of potential confusion. There is also potential confusion in the description and use of the objective.</p>	
OTHER ISSUES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OM2 – [List all the evidence base documents used in the Plan in an Appendix and include a link to the Plan's website where they can be uploaded, or links provided] 	<p>The Plan includes references to a number of documents which comprise the evidence base. These include the Landscape Character Assessment and the Historic Environment Assessment. It does not provide details or links to many of these documents and there is no indication of where the Plan's evidence base is provided online. The majority of the evidence base documents are made available on the Plan's website.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>All policies must be backed up by robust evidence and all evidence base documents referenced in the in the plan should be included in an Appendix or a link to the Plan's website.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OM3 - [Use updated base maps throughout the Plan] 	<p>The Plan uses base maps which are in some cases significantly out of date and do not show completed development.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>The most up to date maps should be used in the Plan to reflect the latest situation on the ground but in this case a mix of up to date and out of date maps were used because some of the base maps retained are the current mapping provided by OS and other up to date base maps available do not properly show features such as topography considered important for context. Since this is an optional modification up-to-date and outdated maps were used where considered appropriate. This issue does not affect the requirement to meet Basic conditions.</p>
<p>CHAPTER 5 – The Policies – pg.42</p> <p>Policy GLNCNP/1 - Overall Spatial Strategy including key strategic landscape and heritage sensitivities: page 46</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M2 – Amend Policy GLCNP/1 to: • In Section 1 replace “Growth in the Neighbourhood Plan Area” with “New development proposals should” 	<p>On the detail of the Policy drafting, it relates to “development” requiring express planning permission rather than “growth” which can be more general in nature.</p> <p>Section 1 of the Policy is also unduly restrictive in stating where development “will” take place.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>A policy should be clearly written and concise to ensure that a decision maker can apply the policy consistently and with confidence when determining planning applications.</p> <p>Modification provides flexibility to the policy.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Section 1 replace “and in the housing site(s) allocated in Little Chesterford as part of this Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan” with “or land allocated in Policy GLCNP/9.1” 	Only one site is allocated in Little Chesterford and it is unnecessary to reference either the Plan or Area in Section 1.	The modification introduces flexibility and clarity to the plan.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Section 2 replace “Outside of the villages” with “Outside of the Great Chesterford development limits or Little Chesterford settlement boundary” 	The Policy should also be clear as to what constitutes being “outside” the villages.	Modification provides clarity and precision in policy wording allowing for appropriate development in the countryside.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After “<i>enhanced</i>” in Section 2 insert “and development proposals should relate to uses that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ need to be in the countryside; ▪ are appropriate to exception sites; or ▪ are employment uses at sites identified in Figure 5.24 or Figure 5.25.” 	The general approach to the location of development should be defined as part of the overall spatial strategy in Policy GLCNP/1, including allowing for exception sites.	The modification provides flexibility to the overall spatial strategy and allows for the location of development in the countryside, exception sites and identified employment sites.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Section 2 delete “<i>our</i>” in the second paragraph 	Policy drafting should be impersonal.	Policies wording should be neutral.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Section 2 delete “<i>only</i>” in subsections a)-c) 	As drafted the Policy takes a restrictive approach in stating what will “only” be supported.	Provides flexibility to the policy on development outside the settlements.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Section 2c) delete “River” 	The Plan is inconsistent in reference to both “Cam Valley Area” and “Cam River Valley Area.”	The deletion of “River” introduces consistency to area referenced in the Plan.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M3 – Provide further detail in the supporting text on the rationale and evidence base used to define the Chalk Uplands, Roman Scheduled Monuments and Setting Zone and the Cam River Valley Area. 	<p>There is evidence supporting much of the definition of these areas in the Landscape Character Assessment and Historic Environment Assessment.</p> <p>I share some of the concern expressed by Strutt and Parker on behalf of The Hill Group about the evidence for the Cam River Valley Area and requested further information. I was informed of additional considerations for including some other land, including open farmland west of the B1383.</p>	Additional information should be provided in the supporting text to show that the rationale for the policy is based on robust and credible evidence base and considerations.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OM4 – [Provide access to a larger scale map enabling the detailed boundaries of the areas described by Figure 5.1 to be identified] 	It will be helpful to provide a larger scale map online enabling the detailed boundaries of the areas defined in Figure 5.1 to be identified.	A detailed Figure 5.1 clearly showing boundaries of areas will ensure that the principles for development impacting on the Chalk Uplands, Roman Scheduled Monuments and Setting Zone and Cam Valley can be determined with confidence.

5.2 Settlement pattern and separation – pg. 47 Policy GLCNP/2 – Settlement Pattern and Separation: pg. 50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M4 – Amend Policy GLCNP/2 to: • Delete Section 1 	<p>There is significant overlap between Policy GLCNP/1 and the first part of Policy GLCNP/2 in determining the most appropriate location for new development and the role of the Great Chesterford development limits and Little Chesterton settlement boundary.</p> <p>Policy GLCNP/2 additionally identifies the appropriateness of types of development that need to be in the countryside (amplifying Local Plan Policy S7)</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>Section 1 is unnecessary because it duplicates part of Policy GLCNP/1 as well as reinforcing Local Plan Policy S7 (Countryside).</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace the first two lines of Section 2 with “Development proposals in the following Separation Zones (Figure 5.4) should either be appropriate to a location outside a settlement or otherwise avoid significant harm to the purpose of the Separation Zone in providing a rural buffer or visual break between settlements and/or protecting the character and rural setting of settlements:” • In Section 2 replace all references to “Area of Separation” with “Separation Zone” 	<p>The second part of the Policy defines four “Separation Zones” to be “kept open and free from development.” The location is provided in Figures 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6 although confusingly the Figures and the Policy describe them differently as “Separation Zones” and “Areas of Separation.” It will be helpful to provide a larger scale map online enabling the detailed boundaries of the areas defined in Figure 5.4 to be identified.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>This modification provides clarity and removes ambiguity and thereby ensures that a decision maker can apply the policy consistently and with confidence when determining planning applications.</p>

		<p>The rationale for and boundaries of the Separation Zones are explained in the supporting text although this does not provide sufficient detail for each of the boundaries.</p> <p>I recommend this additional explanation is provided in the supporting text.</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delete Section 3 	<p>The Policy is contradictory in seeking to keep Separation Zones “free from development” whilst also supporting types of development that need to be located in the countryside.</p>	<p>Agree Section 3 lacks clarity and should be deleted.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delete Section 4 	<p>The fourth part of the Policy that new housing development in Springwell will not be supported is unduly restrictive. Any proposals will already be subject to stringent policies covering development in rural areas.</p>	<p>Agree Government policy requires neighbourhood plans to “plan positively” and unduly restrictive Section 4 is unduly restrictive and should be deleted.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Section 5 delete “infill development” 	<p>The fifth part of the Policy limits development within Great and Little Chesterford to infill despite the Great Chesterford development limits having been</p>	<p>Agree The modification provides clarity.</p>

		redrawn to include a non-infill site.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Section 6 replace “<i>will not be supported as it would change the</i>” with “<i>should not result in significant detrimental harm to the linear</i>” 	<p>It is also unduly restrictive in the final part of the Policy not to support any backland development in Little Chesterford even if it has no significant detrimental impact.</p> <p>I observed that a small amount of backland development already exists in Little Chesterford without damaging its linear character.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>Provides flexibility to the policy.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M5 – Provide further detail in the supporting text on the rationale and evidence base used to define the Separation Zones 	<p>The rationale for and boundaries of the Separation Zones are explained in the supporting text although this does not provide sufficient detail for each of the boundaries.</p> <p>On request I was provided with additional information regarding their definition corresponding to relevant landscape character areas varied according to them fulfilling the purpose of a separation zone. I recommend this additional explanation is provided in the supporting text.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>Providing additional information on the evidence and rationale supporting the Separation Zones provides a justification and purpose of the separation zones.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OM5 – [Provide access to a larger scale map enabling the detailed boundaries of 	The second part of the Policy defines four “Separation Zones”	Agree

	the areas described by Figure 5.4 to be identified]	to be “kept open and free from development”. The location is provided in Figures 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6 although confusingly the Figures and the Policy describe them differently as “Separation Zones” and “Areas of Separation”. It will be helpful to provide a larger scale map online enabling the detailed boundaries of the areas defined in Figure 5.4 to be identified.	Clearly defined and detailed boundaries of the Separation Zones on Figure 5 will ensure that application of the policy on this Zones is consistent as to the relevant Separation Zone boundaries.
Getting Around – pg.51 Policy GLNPC/3 – pg. 54	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M6 – Amend Policy GLCNP/3 to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In Section 1 replace <i>“In order to deliver sustainable development, all development proposals must”</i> with <i>“Development proposals should”</i> ▪ In Section 2 insert <i>“where appropriate”</i> before <i>“be capable”</i> ▪ In Section 3 insert <i>“as appropriate”</i> after <i>“development”</i> ▪ In Section 2 and 3 replace <i>“must”</i> with <i>“should”</i> ▪ In Section 4 replace <i>“to achieve the identified required”</i> with <i>“for”</i> ▪ In Section 4 insert <i>“and road safety measures, including”</i> after <i>“improvements”</i> 	<p>The Policy references specific measures to be supported by development but there is a lack of evidence as to their feasibility or priority. The measures also include road safety investment not covered by the Policy. I recommend that the measures are identified as examples rather than presented as a prescribed list.</p> <p>The detailed Policy drafting can be improved, including to avoid including the purpose of the Policy and to ensure it is not unduly restrictive and the requirements relate only to appropriate development.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>The recommended modifications make the policy flexible, concise, and ensure that requirements relate only to appropriate development.</p>

<p>Landscape Character Policy GLCNP/4a – Landscape Character – page 57</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M7 – Amend Policy GLCNP/4a to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Delete “only” ▪ Replace all instances of “preserves” with “conserves” ▪ Insert “and” at the end of subsection d) 	<p>The Policy drafting is unduly restrictive in stating that development will “only” be supported if it meets the criteria. Its deletion still means support is conditional on the criteria being satisfied. It is national planning policy to “conserve and enhance” rather than “preserve or enhance” nature (Chapter 15, NPPF (National Policy Planning Framework)). The intention for all the criteria to apply is unclear.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Agree</p> <p>Proposed modification by deletion of “only” provides flexibility and clarity to the policy.</p> <p>“Conserve and enhance” is the national policy and not preserve and enhance as drafted in the original policy.</p> <p>Insertion of “and” after the penultimate criterion confirms that all criteria apply.</p>
	<p>OM6 – [Include Uttlesford District Council’s Local Wildlife Site Review (2007) in the Evidence Base]</p>	<p>The significance, variety, and nature of the landscape in the neighbourhood area is partly evidenced through a detailed Landscape Character Assessment which informs the policy. Additional consideration has been given to the landscape setting of the three main settlements, including village walks and work on local wildlife sites undertaken by Uttlesford District Council in 2007 (which is not cited in the supporting text).</p>	<p>The Uttlesford Local Wildlife Review 2007 should be included to show that the Policy is supported by a robust Evidence Base.</p>
<p>Views: pg. 56 <u>Policy GLNC/4b</u> – Views: pg. 64</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M8 – Retitle Policy GLCNP/4b as “Views” and make the following amendments: 	<p>There is a lack of detail in the Plan about what distinguishes</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Agree</p> <p>For clarity, the supporting text should explain the categorisation</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Delete “only” ▪ Insert “does” after “and” and “significantly” after “not” in subsection a) ▪ Replace “especially” with “including” in subsection b) ▪ Replace “plateaus and uplands” with “Chesterford Ridge and Chalk Upper Slopes (Figure 3.1)” 	<p>an “Important View” from a “Locally Important View”. This extends to the Policy title and the Plan sub-heading which both references only “Locally Important Views.”</p> <p>There is a need also to explain how the three categories of view described in paragraph 5.4.9 – Significant, Important and Community Designated – are differently categorised into Important and Locally Important for the purposes of the Policy. Table 5.1 also fails to distinguish between Important and Locally Important views and the supporting text incorrectly identifies Table 5.1 as only including “Locally Important Views”. I recommend text from the Important Views</p>	<p>of the views for better understanding of the Policy.</p> <p>Amendment of the Policy title to Views will provide an unambiguous Title to what the policy seeks to protect.</p> <p>The deletion of “only” introduces flexibility to an otherwise restrictive policy.</p> <p>Recommended modifications to subsection a) provides clarity and ensures that the policy can be consistently applied with confidence.</p> <p>In subsection b) the modification provides flexibility to application of the policy.</p> <p>Replacement of “plateaus and uplands” with Chesterford Ridge and Chalk Upper Slopes provides clarity and certainty when deciding on planning applications.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M9 – Make other clarifications to the supporting text: 		Agree

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Delete <i>“Locally Important”</i> in the sub-heading on page 58 and the Contents on page 1 ▪ Move paragraph 5.4.9 to before paragraph 5.4.8 ▪ Distinguish <i>“Important Views”</i> from <i>“Locally Important Views”</i> in Table 5.1 ▪ Replace <i>“set out”</i> with <i>“included”</i> in the last sentence of paragraph 5.4.8 ▪ Insert <i>“and Locally Important”</i> before <i>“Views”</i> in the titles of Figures 5.13 and 5.14 ▪ Insert <i>“Important Views are those identified by reports in the evidence base, including the Conservation Area Appraisal and Historic Environment Assessment. Locally Important Views are those identified by the community through surveys and village walks”</i> before Table 5.1 and explain the categorisation of Significant, Important and Community Designated views into Important and Locally Important. ▪ Include additional supporting text explaining the evidence for the 	<p>There is a lack of detail in the Plan about what distinguishes an “Important View” from a “Locally Important View”. This extends to the Policy title and the Plan sub-heading which both reference only “Locally Important Views”.</p>	<p>Deletion of “Locally important” in subheading and Contents page 1 reflects the amendments made in response to modification M8 and provides consistency to the plan.</p> <p>Movement of paragraphs provides a more logical presentation of the supporting text.</p> <p>For clarity Important Views and Locally important views should be clearly identifiable understood by anyone reading the Plan.</p> <p>Replacement with “included” provides flexibility to the text.</p> <p>Insertion of “Locally Important” provides clarity by making a clear distinction and identification between Locally Important and Important Views.</p> <p>Recommended insertion serves to clarify and differentiate between Locally Important and Important Views.</p> <p>Additional supporting text will result in providing convincing</p>
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	significance of the panoramic views		rationale for assigning panoramic views as significant.
Historic Environment pg:65 Policy GLNCP/5 – Historic Environment – pages 69 -70	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M10 – Amend Policy GLCNP/5 as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Replace opening two lines with “Development proposals should conserve and enhance the historic environment and take account of the following as appropriate:” ▪ Delete Sections 1, 5, 7 and 9 ▪ Insert a new Section “The significance of any undesignated heritage asset, including any structure on the Local Heritage List” ▪ In Sections 2, 4, 8 and 10 replace “<i>must</i>” with “<i>should</i>” ▪ Replace Section 2 with “Open visibility between the Scheduled Monuments comprising the Roman Town and Fort and the Romano-Celtic Temple and the open aspect of the Romano-Celtic Temple area should both be conserved.” ▪ Replace Section 3 with “Development along Newmarket Road should avoid any significant detrimental impact on views into 	National planning policy is that “Plans should.....f) serve a clear purpose, avoiding unnecessary duplication of policies that apply to a particular area (including policies in this Framework, where relevant)” (paragraph 16, NPPF). Parts of Policy GLCNP/5 conflict with this approach, including Section 1 related to designated heritage assets, Section 5 related to Conservation Areas and Section 9 related to non-designated heritage assets. Section 7 is also inconsistent with national planning policy relating to undesignated heritage assets on a Local List.	<p>Agree</p> <p>The recommended modification provides clarity of the policy and its consistency with national planning policy, including in relation to the setting of Scheduled Monuments.</p> <p>The modification introduces flexibility to the policy that was unduly restrictive in stating what “must” be addressed or happens and what “will not be supported.”</p>

	<p>the designated Scheduled Monuments “</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ In Section 4 insert “(Figure 5.17)” after “<i>Monument</i>” ▪ Replace Section 6 with “In Little Chesterford, the Historic Core (Figure 5.17) comprising the open space and setting of the church and hall should be conserved.” ▪ In Section 8 delete “<i>and Brick</i>” ▪ Replace Section 10 with “The publication and dissemination of the results of archaeological investigations is encouraged where these are required to be undertaken” ▪ Replace Section 11 with “The contribution of a high quality of design and materials” ▪ Insert “; and” at the end of the penultimate Section <p>The revised Policy will read as follows: “Development proposals should conserve and enhance the historic environment and take account of the following as appropriate:</p> <p>1. The significance of any undesignated heritage asset, including any structure on the Local Heritage List;</p>		
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	<p>2. Open visibility between the Scheduled Monuments comprising the Roman Town and Fort and the Romano-Celtic Temple and the open aspect of the Romano Celtic Temple area should both be conserved;</p> <p>3. Development along Newmarket Road should avoid any significant detrimental impact on views into the designated Scheduled Monuments;</p> <p>4. The setting of the Bordeaux Farm scheduled Monument (Figure 5.17) should be conserved;</p> <p>5. In Little Chesterford, the Historic Core (Figure 5.17) comprising the open space and setting of the Church and Hall should be conserved;</p> <p>6. The Local Historic Features (Flint Walls and Sunken Banks) in Little Chesterford should be conserved or enhanced by any development proposals;</p> <p>7. The publication and dissemination of the results of archaeological investigations is encouraged where these are required to be undertaken; and</p> <p>8. The contribution of a high quality of design and materials.”</p>		
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M11– Provide a revised version or a link to a scale of map for Figure 5.17 which enables each of the Local Historic Features to be accurately located 	Figure 5.17 is not at a sufficiently large scale to identify the precise location of these Local Historic Features. I recommend a larger map is provided at a scale whereby each feature can be accurately identified.	<p>Agree</p> <p>Maps should be at a sufficiently large scale to accurately identify the Local Historic Features in the relevant Plan.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M12 – In Figures 5.15 and 5.17 delete “Bordeaux Farm rural context area” and provide a description of the setting of Bordeaux Farm Scheduled Monument in the supporting text 	<p>The setting is shown in Figure 5.17 although it is identified here as the “Bordeaux Farm rural context area.” The different terminology is a potential cause of confusion.</p> <p>I share concerns expressed by Strutt and Parker on behalf of The Hill Group concerning the evidence supporting the boundary shown in Figure 5.17. This is not provided by the Historic Environment Assessment. On request I was provided with a brief description of the boundaries but the basis for this remains too unclear.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>The modification provides clarity and certainty by recommending a description of the setting of Bordeaux Farm Scheduled Monument in the supporting text.</p>
Valued Community Spaces and Facilities NP: pg. 71	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M13 – Replace Policy GLCNP/6 with “Development proposals which result 	Superfluous numbering of a single Section and a caveat	<p>Agree</p>

Policy GLCNP/6 – Valued Community Spaces and Facilities – pg. 76	<p>in the loss or significant reduction in the value of Valued Community Spaces and Facilities (Table 5.2) should demonstrate that either the space or facility is no longer required or that alternative appropriate provision of at least equivalent value exists or will be provided elsewhere in an appropriate location in the neighbourhood area.”</p>	<p>relating to circumstances where “planning permission is required.” Planning policy is only relevant to development requiring express planning permission.</p> <p>The drafting is unclear in requiring the value to be simultaneously “improved or enhanced” and “not materially reduced”. It is also unclear how the Policy relates to instances where the space or facility is otherwise provided in the area or instances where the space or facility is no longer needed.</p>	<p>It is both pointless and not necessary to number a single section and planning policy is required where development requires planning permission.</p> <p>The modification provides clarity and removes ambiguity so that as modified a decision maker can apply the policy consistently and with confidence when determining planning applications.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M14 – Clarify the locations of Chesterford Fisheries (4) and the route of the Riverside walk between Great and Little Chesterford (22) in the appropriate Figure(s) 	<p>The locations of Chesterford Fisheries (4) and the route of the Riverside walk between Great and Little Chesterford (22) are not clear from Figure 5.21.</p>	<p>Clarity in Figures is crucial for the reader to identify exact locations of Chesterford Fisheries (4) and the route of the Riverside walk between Great and Little Chesterford.</p>
	<p>OM7 – [Add “and Facilities” after both instances of “<i>Valued Community spaces</i>” in the Contents]</p>	<p>The Contents does not reference “facilities.”</p>	<p>Addition of “Facilities” to Contents page provides consistency with Plan content.</p>

Local Green Spaces Policy GLCNP/7 – Local Green Spaces – pg. 79	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> M15 – Amend Policy GLCNP/7 to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delete Sections 2 and 3 Delete “1” in Section 1 and replace “Figure 5.35” with “Table 5.3 and Figure 5.22” 	<p>To be afforded a level of protection consistent with them being Green Belt Local Green Spaces need only be designated by the Plan which means it is inappropriate to include any wording that sets out how development proposals should be managed.</p> <p>The Policy includes an incorrect reference to “Figure 5.35.”</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>Sections 2 and 3 are unnecessary because designation as Local Green Spaces by the Plan affords the level of protection that is consistent with the Green Belt.</p> <p>Table 5.3 and Figure 5.22 are the correct references related to Policy GLCNP/7.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> M16 – Delete LGS-13 from Table 5.3 and Figure 5.22 	<p>There is insufficient evidence that it is demonstrably special to the local community. The land is protected from development under other development plan policies</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>LGS-13 does not meet NPPF Local Green Space designation criteria and should be removed from the policy as well as any references to LGS (Local Green Spaces) 13 in Table 5.3 and Figure 2.2.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> M17 – Provide a revised version or a link to a scale of map for Figure 5.22 which enables the exact boundaries of each of the Local Green Spaces to be determined. 	<p>Provide a revised version or a link to a scale of map for Figure 5.22 which enables the exact boundaries of each of the Local Green Spaces to be determined.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>Site boundaries should be clearly provided to facilitate the exact location and extent of the sites under consideration.</p>

<p>Gt & Lt Chesterford NP: pg. 78 Employment Policy GLCNP/8 – Employment - page 80</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M18 – Amend Policy GLCNP/8 to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ At the end of Section 2 insert “where appropriate” ▪ In Section 3 insert “significant” before “<i>detrimental</i>” ▪ In Section 3 insert “identified in Figures 5.24 and 5.25” after “<i>employment</i>” ▪ In Section 3 replace “<i>will not be supported other than where evidence can be produced</i>” with “<i>should demonstrate</i>” 	<p>The Policy expects all development at Chesterford Research Park to be accompanied by a workplace travel plan. This may not be the case in all circumstances, such as where a planning application is for development with limited or no traffic implications.</p> <p>The protection of existing employment sites is negatively worded in stating what “will not be supported” and I recommend that proposals should instead demonstrate that they meet relevant considerations.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>The recommended modifications introduce flexibility and positive wording to the policy.</p> <p>Polices should be positively worded.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M19 – Delete Figure 5.23 and rename “<i>Chesterford Research Park Development limit</i>” as “<i>Chesterford Research Park</i>” in Figure 5.4 		<p>Agree</p> <p>No evidence has been provided to justify the Development Limit and the proposed Development Limit has not been publicly consulted on.</p> <p>The Local Plan protects land around Chesterford Research Park, and it is an unnecessary to duplicate existing protection.</p>

<p>Gt & Lt Chesterford NP: pg.81 Housing Policy GLCNP/9 – Housing pg. 86</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M20 – Replace Policy GLCNP/9 with: “Residential development proposals will be supported which are located on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ site allocation Chest 12 and are in accordance with Policy GLCNP/9.1 ▪ windfall sites of fewer than five units; or ▪ infill sites or previously developed land <p>and which address the following considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a scale of development which is proportionate to the size of the settlement in which it is located; ▪ provision of a mix of sizes and tenures of homes which reflects local needs; ▪ provision of specialist housing for older people where appropriate; ▪ provision of affordable homes which meet local housing needs as expressed in the local housing needs assessment; and ▪ securing contributions for the Early Years and Child Care education facility to the east of the Bowls Club in Great 	<p>The three allocated sites are each subject to their own Policy. Two of the three sites are at such an advanced stage of development (Chest 9 and Chest 13) that their inclusion as site allocations within the Plan serves no planning purpose. Uttlesford District Council confirmed that construction began in March 2022 and April 2021 respectively. I recommend their deletion from the Plan and consequent amendments to the supporting text. The sites continue to contribute to the overall housing requirement for the Plan area.</p> <p>The Policy also supports residential development on windfall sites of less than five units or development of any size on infill/brownfield sites consistent with other Plan policies. Given the nature of the neighbourhood area it is unlikely that an infill site of larger than five dwellings will come forward as a windfall site, but this is recognised by the parish councils as being possible. This</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>The recommended modifications provide flexibility, clarity and so that a decision maker can apply it consistently and with confidence when determining planning applications.</p>
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	<p>Chesterford where this relates appropriately to the proposed development.”</p>	<p>confirms the need to redraft the Policy to provide support for residential development on all three types of sites.</p> <p>The Policy also supports residential development on windfall sites of less than five units or development of any size on infill/brownfield sites consistent with other Plan policies. Given the nature of the neighbourhood area it is unlikely that an infill site of larger than five dwellings will come forward as a windfall site but this is recognised by the parish councils as being possible. This confirms the need to redraft the Policy to provide support for residential development on all three types of site.</p>	
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		The Policy also repeats national policy on Net Gain and First Homes.	Agree Reference to national policy on Net Gain and First Homes should be deleted because the plan should not be duplicating existing policy but should be addressing gaps or provide further detail rather than duplicating existing policies.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> M21 – Delete Policy GLCNP/9.2 and Policy GLCNP/9.3 and make consequential changes to the supporting text to describe the recent history of planning consents and the contribution to meeting the indicative housing requirement. 	Two of the three sites are at such an advanced stage of development (Chest 9 and Chest 13) that their inclusion as site allocations within the Plan serves no planning purpose.	Agree There is no planning purpose served by allocating the two sites with extant planning permission and under construction.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OM8 – [Provide information in the supporting text on the intention to monitor and review the Plan in relation to the future Local Plan review] 	The implications of any more recent evidence and information which will inform the forthcoming Local Plan review is most sensibly managed through a review of the neighbourhood plan.	Agree Any housing requirement may change as further work on the emerging Local Plan is undertaken. The Plan states in paragraph 1.8 that reviews will be undertaken periodically to determine whether updates are required.
Policy GLCNP/9.1 – Land opposite Rectory Barns (Chest 12)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy GLCNP/9.1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> M22 – Amend Policy GLCNP/9.1 to: 	The Policy is overly restrictive in stating what “must” or “shall” be addressed.	Agree The recommended modification provides flexibility to the policy.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace all instances of <i>“must”</i> and <i>“shall”</i> with should • Delete <i>“(for example, a children’s playground)”</i> in principle 5 and include it as an example in paragraph 5.9.14 of the supporting text 	Examples should be provided in the supporting text.	Policies should be clear and concise, and examples should be provided in the supporting text.
8.Examiner’s Recommendation and Referendum Area “I am satisfied the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan meets the Basic Conditions and other requirements subject to the modifications recommended in this report and that it can proceed to a referendum. I have received no information to suggest other than that I recommend the referendum area matches that of the Neighbourhood Area.”			



The Great and Little Chesterford

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

A Neighbourhood Development Plan for the Parishes of
Great and Little Chesterford

2019 to 2033



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(Cover page photos: Great Chesterford village sign, looking north from Susan’s Hill across the Roman Temple, Carmen Street Paddocks looking west and the bridge over the Cam at Little Chesterford) (Back page photo – a red kite over the Chesterfords).



Aerial shots of Little and Great Chesterford. All aerial photography with thanks to Tim Chapman Aerial Photography Solutions.

Other photographs reproduced with kind permission from Jane Gilbey, Joanne Joyce, Colin Day, Jon Beard and others in the community.

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*To view the content of these figures in further detail please refer to the online version which can be found at <https://udc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/mapviewer/index.html?webmap=81ed3ba58e644c949fd41449119fdf01>

A note of thanks:

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has worked incredibly hard in producing this Neighbourhood Plan, regarding which both the communities of Great Chesterford and Little Chesterford should be very proud.

We have also been blessed with assistance and engagement from our wonderful community and this Neighbourhood Plan should serve us all well in securing sustainable growth, protecting the environment and the landscape we so cherish, preserving the heritage we so uniquely enjoy and building and maintain thriving community facilities.

Particular thanks have to go to my colleagues on the Steering Group without the time sacrifice and dedication of whom this simply would not have happened – Fiona Wilkinson, Julie Redfern, Hannah Helliard and Rachel Thackray . Additional thanks to Nick Burton for his tireless assistance in producing the wonderful maps and plans.

Thank you all

Tom Newcombe
Chair, Great Chesterford Parish Council



Photo 1 - Daffodils

Chapter 1 – Introduction

- 1.1 This is the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan 2019–2033. The plan covers the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan Area which was formally designated in June 2015.
- 1.2 The Neighbourhood Plan Area comprises the two separate civil parishes of Great Chesterford and Little Chesterford.



Photo 2 – Rainbow over Carmen Street Paddocks

About Neighbourhood Plans

- 1.3 Neighbourhood Development Plans were introduced in the Localism Act (2011) and came into force in April 2012. Along with the Local Plan, they form part of the Development Plan for an area. Their intention is to give communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development of their local area.
- 1.4 Decisions on planning applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. A Neighbourhood Plan therefore provides an important framework for how communities should grow in the coming years.
- 1.5 Although the Government’s intention is for local people to decide what goes on in their Neighbourhood Plan Area, the Localism Act sets out some key restrictions. One of these is that all Neighbourhood Plans must meet four basic conditions:
 - General conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted Local Plan.

- Having regard to national policies (i.e., the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 [NPPF]), and guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
 - Compliance with EU regulations on human rights and environmental standards.
 - The plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.
- 1.6 In addition, the Localism Act allows Neighbourhood Plans to provide more houses than allocated in the Local Plan, but not fewer.
- 1.7 Neighbourhood plans allow communities to create a suite of policies that complement existing local, national and strategic planning policy, and also to provide additional detail and subtlety that reflect the special characteristics of an area that cannot reasonably be addressed by higher-level policy. They can also help to secure the infrastructure that is needed to support growth and protect the areas, landmarks and services that are most important to communities.



Photo 3 – Little Chesterford Village Hall

About the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan

- 1.8 This Neighbourhood Plan establishes a vision for the evolution and long-term sustainability of Great and Little Chesterford. It sets out a vision for the future of the area, along with objectives and a series of policies that will be used to determine planning applications within the parishes. It will be used to govern land use and development from 2019–2033. The Parish Councils of Great and Little Chesterford will periodically review this Plan during the Plan period and determine whether updates are required.
- 1.9 The Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan is being produced by the Parish Councils of Great Chesterford and Little Chesterford on behalf of the communities. The boundary of the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan, which was formally designated by Uttlesford District Council (UDC) on 18 June 2015, is shown in Figure 1.1 below:

Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan Area

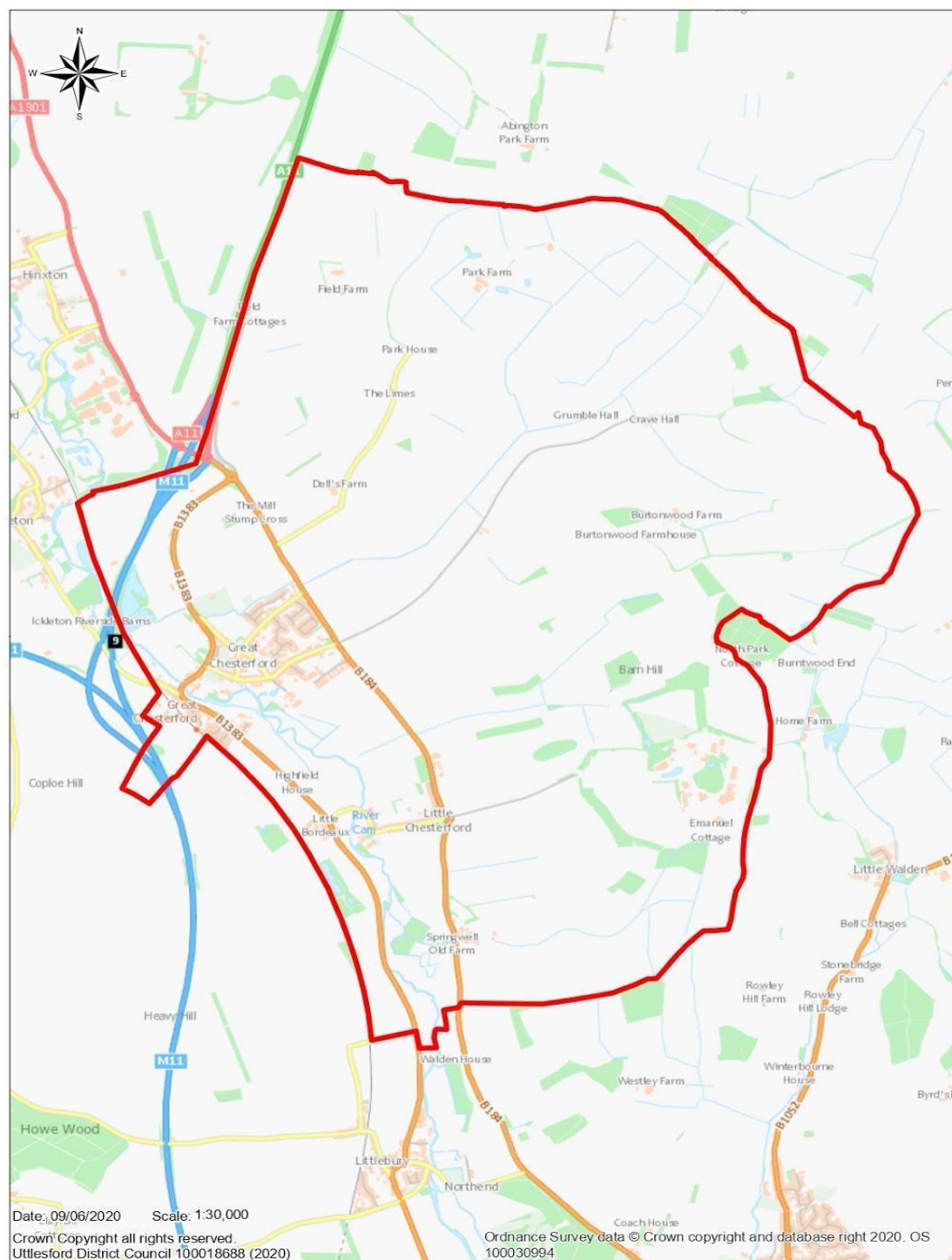


Figure 1.1 Map of the Great and Little Chesterford Plan Area, provided by Uttlesford District Council
 [To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version [here](#)]

- 1.10 The Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group was established in 2015 by the Parish Councils of Great Chesterford and Little Chesterford. The Steering Group has focused on producing a Neighbourhood Plan for the parishes which secures the villages' future and conserves their heritage. This has been done in the context of a vision for the Neighbourhood Plan Area and has been locally led throughout.
- 1.11 The Steering Group has comprised a mix of residents and Parish Councillors and these have been partially rotated throughout the process, which has helped to ensure a level of engagement and enthusiasm of which we are very proud.
- 1.12 The Steering Group has been supported in its work by Rachel Hogger as the professional representative from UDC, and financial support has been drawn from a UDC grant.
- 1.13 In addition to the Steering Group, which has led the project and taken strategic decisions in the formation of the Plan, a Working Group was established in November 2018. Members of the Working Group comprised volunteers from both villages who were tasked with reviewing the outcome of the village consultations and drafting outline content for the main policy areas. Many other residents have contributed in different ways.

The Local Plan Context

- 1.14 Uttlesford District Council (UDC) adopted the current Local Plan in 2005. The NPPF has superseded it in many respects, but in the absence of a more up-to-date adopted Local Plan, it is the 2005 plan with which this Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity.
- 1.15 UDC began work on another Local Plan in 2015. In early 2016, Great Chesterford Parish Council (GCPC) became aware that land in the east of Great Chesterford Parish could be selected as the site of a major new settlement – to become known as North Uttlesford Garden Community (NUGC).
- 1.16 GCPC, together with Little Chesterford Parish Council, objected to the appropriateness of the proposal, submitting in April 2016 detailed objections to UDC relating, in particular, to significant heritage and landscape considerations and inadequacies in the local transport infrastructure.
- 1.17 Once UDC announced its intention to include the site in its emerging draft Local Plan, the Parish Councils amplified, with the support of expert evidence, their objections to the NUGC proposal throughout the Regulation 18 and 19 consultations that followed. GCPC repeated these concerns to the Planning Inspectors following submission of the draft Local Plan to the Secretary of State for examination. Details of the submissions can be found at <http://uttlesford.gov.uk/local-plan-examination>
- 1.18 In January 2020, the Inspectors informed UDC that they had considered that the Garden Communities proposed by UDC were insufficiently justified, and that the proposed Local Plan could not be regarded as sound. In relation to NUGC the Inspectors concluded: "The North Uttlesford Garden Community is flawed in terms of landscape and heritage impacts and the potential for the A505 improvements and public transport infrastructure are uncertain, undermining the potential for this Garden Community to be a sustainable place." In light of the many barriers to NUGC's development identified by the Inspectors, and their view that it would perform least well against required Garden Community principles, they suggested that it should be deleted from the draft Local Plan.

- 1.19 In October 2020, the Cabinet of Uttlesford District Council approved a new Local Development Scheme which outlined the timetable for the production of the new Local Plan by 2024.

At the time of writing (March 2022), the preparatory work is almost complete and the evidence base prepared; but the Regulation 18 Plan has not yet been published for consultation.

- 1.20 While UDC works on the new Local Plan, this Neighbourhood Plan is considered to be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the adopted Local Plan of 2005.

Strategic Environmental Assessment / Habitats Regulations Assessment

- 1.21 Neighbourhood Plans must be in line with European Regulations on strategic environmental assessment and habitat regulations. UDC are responsible for determining the requirement for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA).
- 1.22 In order to succeed at examination, the Neighbourhood Plan must contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF as a whole constitutes the Government's view of what sustainable development means in practice for planning. The NPPF explains there are three overarching objectives for sustainable development: economic, social and environmental.
- 1.23 The Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan will, when completed, be accompanied by a Basic Conditions Statement, which will demonstrate in detail how the Great and Little Chesterford Plan will contribute to achieving the Government's sustainable development objectives.
- 1.24 The Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan is intended to set out a local blueprint for how Great and Little Chesterford should develop sustainably in the best interests of the villages, in the context of wider local and national planning policy.
- 1.25 Neighbourhood plans are restricted to dealing with matters relating to land use and development planning (excluding the County Matters of minerals and waste), and therefore many other important non-planning matters cannot be included in the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan. Chapter 6 of this Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan records the non-planning concerns raised by the community, and both Parish Councils will undertake to tackle these issues using other means where possible.

Independent Examination

- 1.26 In June 2021, Uttlesford District Council assisted Great Chesterford Parish Council with the process for appointing an independent examiner.
- 1.27 On 30 August 2021, Great and Little Chesterford Parish Council informed Uttlesford District Council of their preferred choice for the independent examiner, and UDC confirmed that they would start the examiner procurement process.

Independent Health Check

- 1.28 In January 2022, this Neighbourhood Plan, along with supporting evidence including the Consultation Statement and Basic Conditions Statement, were submitted for an Independent Health Check. The funding for this was obtained via a Locality grant and the Independent Health Check was undertaken by a highly experienced examiner who was consulting for Intelligent Plans and Examinations (IPE) Ltd.

The examiner issued a full report and made a series of recommendations. He concluded that “the time and effort that has clearly been put into the Plan to date is noteworthy. The Plan is logical and straightforward in its structure and if it can be amended with regard to the above suggestions then it will have an increased likelihood of ultimately being submitted for a successful Examination.”

The Steering Group reviewed the recommendations in detail, taking full note of the advice contained therein, and updated the Plan accordingly.



Photo 4 – Typical flint wall

Working with Uttlesford District Council

- 1.29 The Steering Group has sought to keep UDC apprised of progress with this Plan, either via the independent consultant appointed by UDC or directly.
- 1.30 This has included invitation to engage with:
- Housing Land assessment work
 - Site selection work
 - Local Green Space work
 - First full draft informal consultation
 - Regulation 14 (pre-submission) Consultation
 - Meeting post Regulation 14 feedback (May 2021)
 - Updated Plan post Regulation 14 feedback
 - Updated Plan post independent health check
 - Meeting post independent health check (Mar 2022)

Chapter 2 – Context of Great and Little Chesterford

Location and History

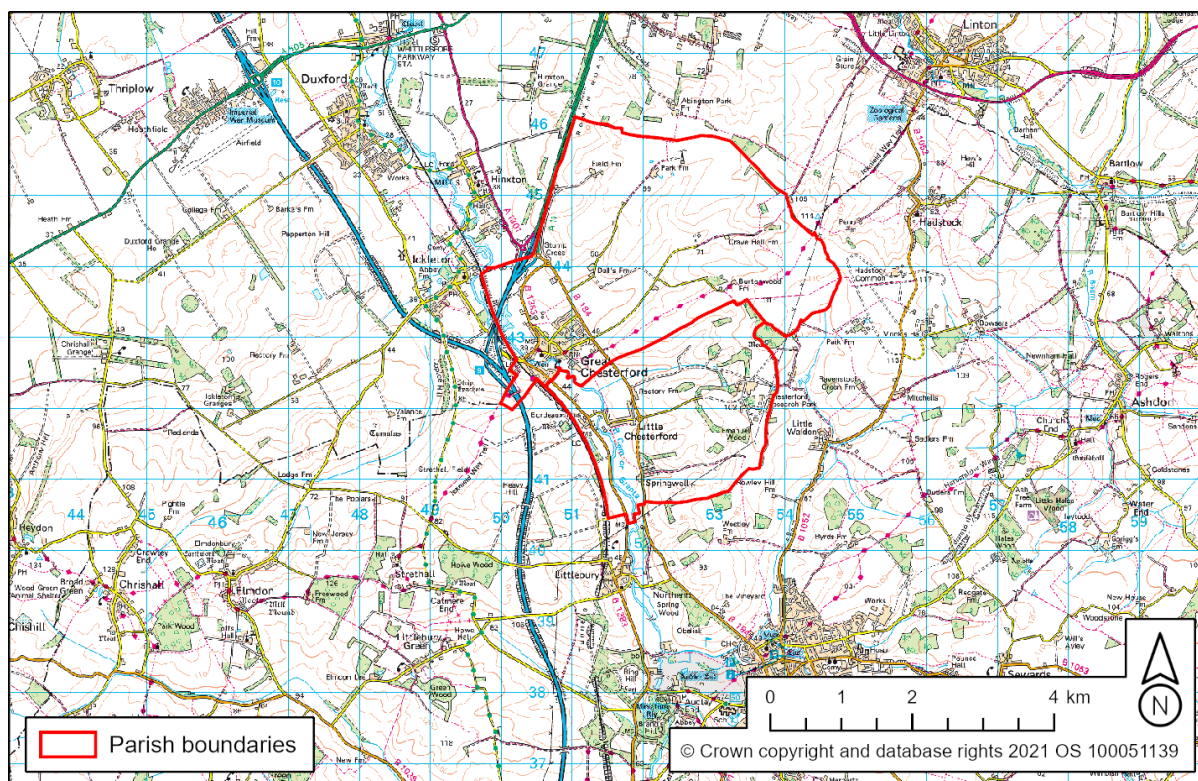


Figure 2.1 The parishes of Great and Little Chesterford
[To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version [here](#)]

- 2.1 Great Chesterford and Little Chesterford are villages and civil parishes in the Uttlesford district of Essex. Little Chesterford village is located less than a mile south-east of the village of Great Chesterford and the parish incorporates the hamlet of Springwell to the south, as well as Chesterford Park (now called Chesterford Research Park) to the east.
- 2.2 Great and Little Chesterford are located within the River Cam valley, between the B184 Walden Road/Springwell Road and the B1383 London Road. The Plan area boundary extends north to the southern edge of Hildersham Wood (Hinxtton parish in Cambridgeshire), east to Great Chesterford Common (Hadstock parish in Essex), south-east beyond Chesterford Research Park (Saffron Walden parish in Essex) and south to just below Springwell Farm (Littlebury parish in Essex). The western boundary of the parishes is, for the majority of its length, defined by the Cambridge to London mainline railway. However, to the west of Great Chesterford, the boundary extends west beyond the railway to incorporate Smock Mill House and a section of the M11 motorway.
- 2.3 The nearest villages are Ickleton, 1 mile to the west; Hinxtton, 2 miles to the north-west; Littlebury, 2 miles to the south; Little Walden, 2 miles to the south-east; and Hadstock, 3.3 miles to the east.
- 2.4 Great and Little Chesterford are situated approximately 3–4 miles north of Saffron Walden, accessed via the B184, which forms the eastern boundary of both villages, and 11 miles south of Cambridge.

- 2.5 Archaeological evidence suggests that the land around Great and Little Chesterford has been inhabited from the Palaeolithic period onwards. There was a substantial Late Iron Age settlement on the site of the current village of Great Chesterford, with a shrine located approximately a kilometre away to the north-east (shown on Figure 5.18); Bronze and Iron Age artefacts have also been found in Little Chesterford.
- 2.6 A Roman fort was constructed at Great Chesterford in the first century AD, possibly as a consequence of the Boudiccan revolt in AD 60 or in recognition of the settlement's strategic position between the territories of the Catuvellauni, Trinovantes and Iceni tribes. There is also evidence of at least three Romano-British homesteads in the grounds of Chesterford Park.
- 2.7 In the fourth century, Great Chesterford became one of only two walled towns in Essex, the other being Colchester. The name of the Romano-British town is unknown, but Civitas Ikelorum has been suggested based on a particular find.
- 2.8 There is evidence of a large, settled Saxon population at Great Chesterford from the end of the Roman period, and it was during this time that the village acquired its name Cestreforda or 'the ford by the camp'. There is evidence for a Saxon cemetery in Little Chesterford, in the form of metal-detecting finds, but the precise location is not known.
- 2.9 The Domesday Book records Great Chesterford in 1086 as a settlement with a total of 53 households; the entry for Little Chesterford records 27 households.
- 2.10 Following the Norman Conquest, Great Chesterford became a royal manor, with its occupants holding right of copyhold. The village was reasonably prosperous during the medieval period, largely due to the cloth trade (cloth was cleaned or 'fulled' at the water mill), and hosted a weekly market (which may have been held near the site of what is now the Crown and Thistle public house). Great Chesterford Park was sited on the north-eastern edge of the parish, the park boundary still survives. By 1635 the village was being used as a staging post for the Newmarket Races, often used by Charles I.
- 2.11 The small settlement of Springwell is first mentioned in 1506.
- 2.12 From the sixteenth century until 1840, Chesterford Park in Little Chesterford was a major farm with an estate in the region of 3,200 acres. Evaluations and monitoring on the Chesterford Park site have revealed post-medieval ditches and nineteenth-century garden features. The current Chesterford Park house was built from 1840 on the site of an earlier farm which dated from c.1700 but burnt down around 1840.
- 2.13 The post-medieval period was a period of decline for Great Chesterford, mainly because of the collapse of the cloth trade. The turn-piking of the road link with Newmarket and Cambridge and the coming of the London – Cambridge railway in the mid nineteenth century encouraged limited development along Station Road. Outside the medieval and post-medieval village, the settlement of the wider parish was very sparse. Great Chesterford is one of the few areas of Essex that retained its strip fields until the Enclosure Acts of 1804. Saffron gardens were a notable feature of the local economy.
- 2.14 Chesterford Park, Little Chesterford was a manor house until around 1925–36 when it was unoccupied and fell into disrepair. It was used as a hospital and ammunition store during the Second World War, until an explosion caused it to close. It again fell into disrepair until

it was sold in 1952, when it was developed into a research and development facility for a series of owners including Boots, Fisons, Aventis and Schering.

- 2.15 During the Second World War, Great and Little Chesterford again gained a military role, being adjacent to the GCHQ Defence Line, an anti-tank defence line which crossed the whole country and entered Essex at Great Chesterford.
- 2.16 Expansion in Great Chesterford has taken place in the second half of the twentieth century, chiefly on the north-eastern side, with industrial development along London Road.

Character

- 2.17 Great and Little Chesterford have a number of heritage assets including two Scheduled Monuments (comprising four sites) and the historic core of Great Chesterford village itself, much of which is designated as a Conservation Area.
- 2.18 In Great Chesterford the surviving portions of the walled Roman town, the fort, the Romano-British temple and the area of the main Roman and Saxon cemeteries are Scheduled Monuments, denoting their historical and archaeological national importance. As already noted, Great Chesterford was one of only two walled Roman towns in Essex, and the Romano-Celtic temple is one of only approximately 150 sites to have been recorded in England. Most of the medieval and post-medieval settlement lies within the Conservation Area. There are no Scheduled Monuments within Little Chesterford; however, two Scheduled Monuments (comprising the Moated Site in Paddock Wood and the Moated site, fish-pond and enclosure at Bordeaux Farm – as shown on Figure 5.18) are adjacent to the parish boundary on the east and west side respectively.



Figure 2.2 Aerial view of Scheduled Romano-Celtic temple overlooking Great Chesterford

- 2.19 Great Chesterford developed as a nucleated village centred on its historic core, with housing restricted to the western side of the B184 and the eastern side of the railway line

(which forms the western edge of the development limit). There are also natural boundaries to the north and the south of Great Chesterford, provided by the line between the Scheduled Monuments of the Roman temple and Roman settlement in the north and the separation zone between the villages in the south. In the second half of the twentieth century, growth in Great Chesterford has taken place mainly on the north-eastern side of the village, on the land south of Jacksons Lane and north of the High Street (e.g., Spencer Road, Pilgrim Close, Rookery Close, Bartholomew Close, Stanley Road, The Elms and Four Acres), as well as north of Jacksons Lane (Meadow Road and Hyll Close). This settlement pattern is illustrated in Figure 2.3 below.

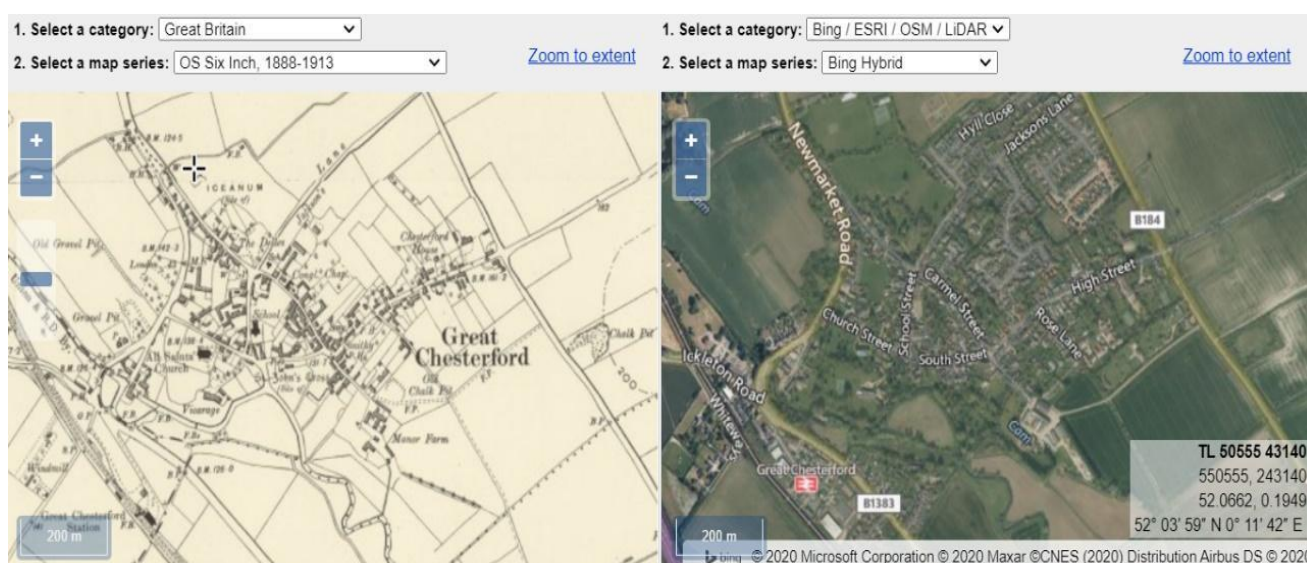


Figure 2.3 Growth of Great Chesterford showing development in a nucleated village pattern

- 2.20 The Roman Town/Fort/Cemeteries and Roman Temple to the north of Great Chesterford are of national importance for the historic significance of not only the sites themselves, but for the interrelationship between the sites and the surrounding landscape as attested by English Heritage, and as recognised by the Examining Inspectors in paragraphs 72–82 of their letter dated 10 January 2020 regarding the Uttlesford Regulation 19 Local Plan.
- 2.21 The Roman Temple was approached from the west from the Roman settlement. The approach incorporated the watercourse of the Slade (a tributary of the Cam from the east), in which ritual deposits have been discovered [Medlycott (2011) *The Roman Town of Great Chesterford*. EAA 137]. Sightline analysis [See Figure 2.4] shows that settlement patterns in Great Chesterford have historically preserved this open approach, which was uninterrupted by development until the mid-twentieth century.
- 2.22 The altar of the Roman Temple faces east and the sight lines in this direction along the river valley to the chalk ridge are of similar importance to the setting of the Scheduled Monument in the landscape.

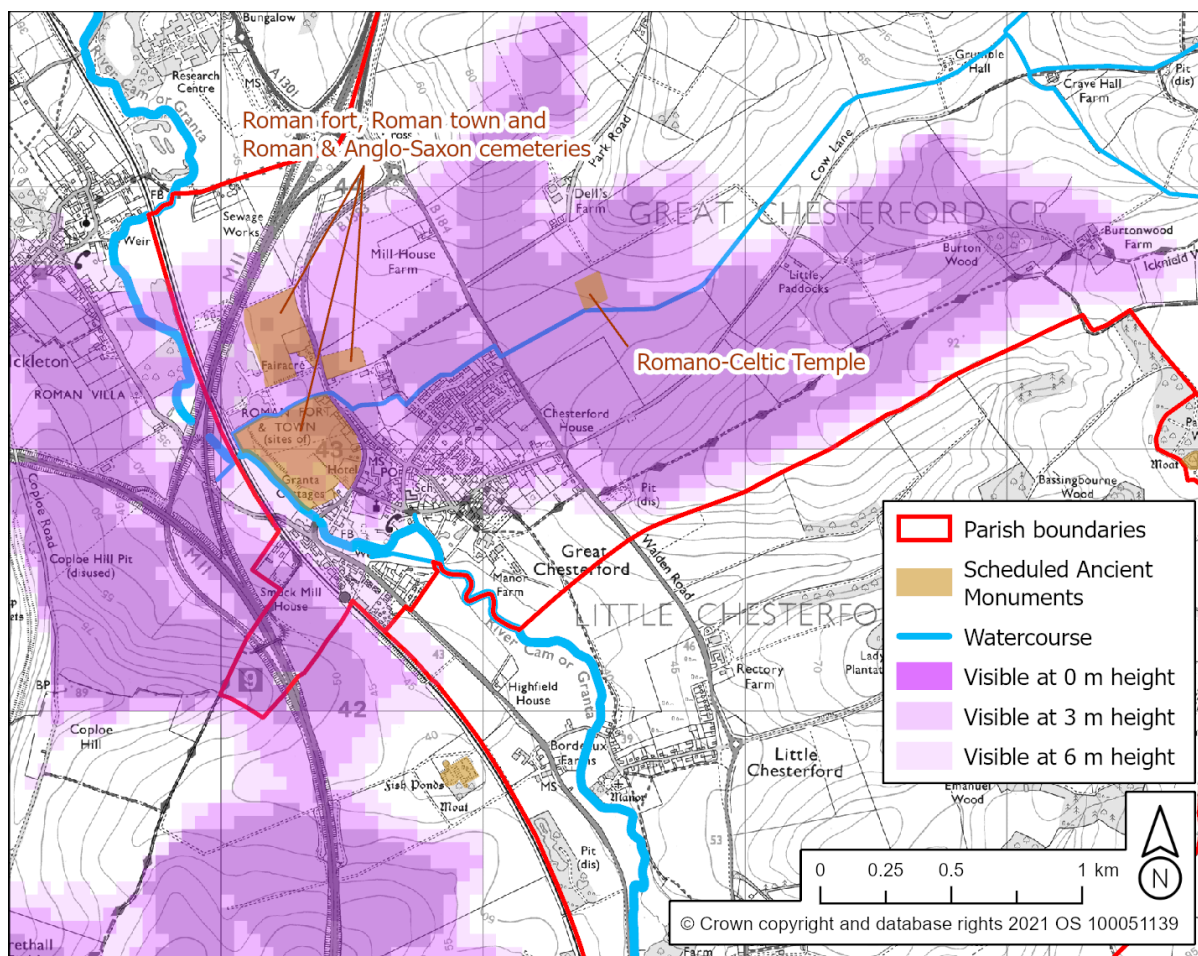


Figure 2.4 Interrelationships between the Roman Scheduled Monuments and the River Cam and tributaries, including sightline analysis from Roman temple showing areas visible at 0, 3 and 6 metres from ground level (a single storey building will typically have an elevation between 3m and 6m).

[To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version [here](#)]

2.23 In Great Chesterford, there are 69 buildings listed as being of Special Architectural or Historical Interest, one of which is Grade I (All Saints' Church), one is Grade II* (Old Vicarage) and the remainder Grade II. In Little Chesterford, there are 14 buildings or structures Listed as being of Special Architectural and Historical Interest, of these St Mary the Virgin Church is Grade II*, The Manor is Grade I and the remainder are Grade II. Little Chesterford is of particular interest in that The Manor is an exceptional surviving example of an early thirteenth-century domestic building, and St Mary the Virgin Church also had its origins in the thirteenth century; both structures are still in use for their initial purpose.



Figure 2.5 Aerial view of The Manor and St Mary the Virgin Church, Little Chesterford

- 2.24 In Great Chesterford, there are 273 non-designated assets recorded on the Historic Environment Record, with 70 in Little Chesterford.
- 2.25 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that Local Authorities shall from time to time designate Conservation Areas which are defined as being “areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to conserve or enhance.” In 2007, Uttlesford District Council completed a Conservation Area Appraisal in Great Chesterford, designating more than half of the current village extent as a Conservation Area. This included the majority of the historic medieval and post-medieval settlement in the parish, as well as the whole of Carmen Street, Carmel Street, School Street, Church Street, South Street, High Street and Manor Lane. The historic core of Little Chesterford is the village church and hall complex. This includes the Grade I Manor House and Grade II* St Mary the Virgin Church which are notable as continuing in their initial use since the early thirteenth century. This group of buildings also includes the grade II Dovecote, as well as the Grade II bridge over the River Cam. As well as the historic character of these buildings, this area is notable for its collection of mature trees and the open space beside the river.
- 2.26 The majority of houses (over 75%) within the Conservation Area are timber framed and plastered. Of these, around 50% are from the seventeenth/eighteenth centuries. Most have tiled roofs whilst a small proportion are thatched. A significant architectural feature of the village is the use of boundary walls, many of which are constructed of flint panels supported by brick piers and capping. The Conservation Area contains numerous trees,

mostly located in private gardens, but making a notable contribution to the overall impression of the Conservation Area. Many of these are protected by Tree Preservation Orders.

- 2.27 In Little Chesterford, a linear settlement pattern evolved, with the original village comprising a single row of dwellings each side of the sunken road known as The Street or High Street. Later development has included linear development along the western side of the B184 in a northerly direction; apart from this, the settlement pattern of Little Chesterford has remained unchanged for over a century. Figure 2.6 below shows a map from 1901, published in 1903, alongside an aerial map from 2020.

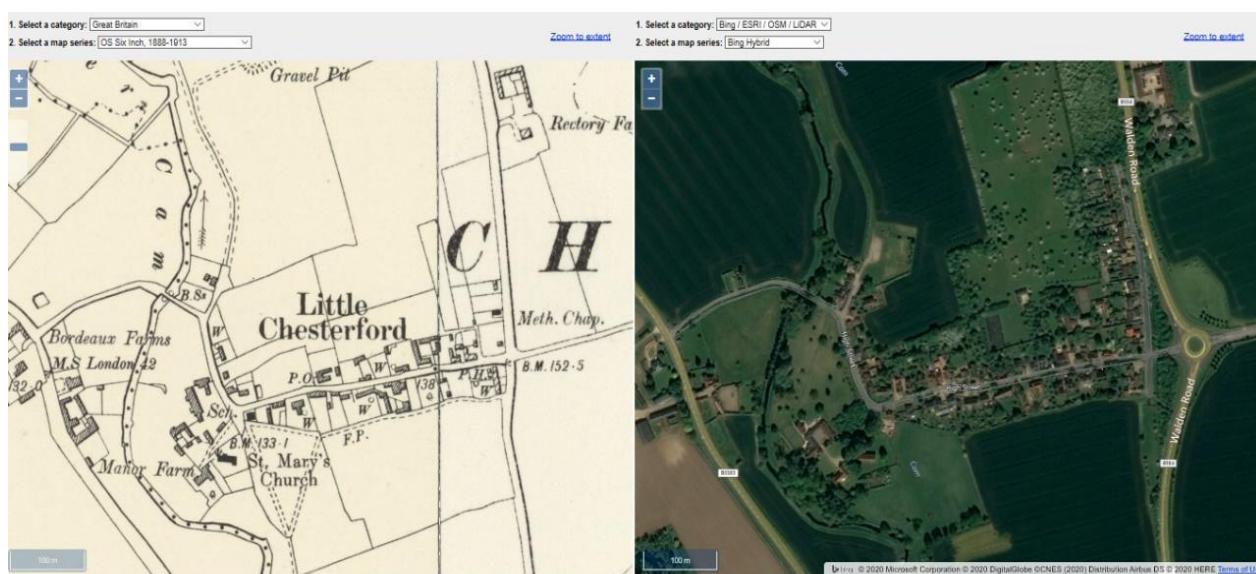


Figure 2.6 Growth of Little Chesterford showing development in a linear settlement pattern

- 2.28 Little Chesterford village comprises around 75 buildings ranging along the High Street and its junctions with Walden and London roads. It similarly has many examples of timber framed and plastered buildings, including some that are thatched. Eleven (11) village buildings (15%) are listed and date from the thirteenth to eighteenth centuries. Brick nineteenth-century buildings, including the Village Hall and the Reading Rooms with their decorative brickwork, are also a key feature of the village.
- 2.29 Springwell developed as a small cluster of dwellings on the B184. This small hamlet has had recent pressure for development of new housing, with a proposal for six new houses on the Springwell Nursery site rejected by UDC in 2013. An appeal to the Planning Inspectorate (Appeal Reference APP/C1570/A/14/2226566) was dismissed and a full explanation given that would also be relevant to any other site in Springwell. The Inspectors based their decision on two main issues (a) the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area; and (b) whether the site is in a sustainable location, with particular regard to community facilities and transport opportunities, concluding this was not a location suitable for this scale of development.
- 2.30 The hamlet of Springwell comprises eight clustered dwellings of which three (38%) are listed, timber framed and plastered buildings dating from the seventeenth to early

eighteenth centuries. The other key features of this hamlet are the open parkland and paddocks surrounding the nineteenth-century brick built Springwell Place and the plant nursery. Boundary features also include mature trees that form distinctive landscape features.

- 2.31 The adopted 2005 Uttlesford Local Plan defined Great Chesterford as a Key Rural Settlement and defined development limits (Figure 2.7). UDC has not subsequently reassessed the position of Great Chesterford within that definition.

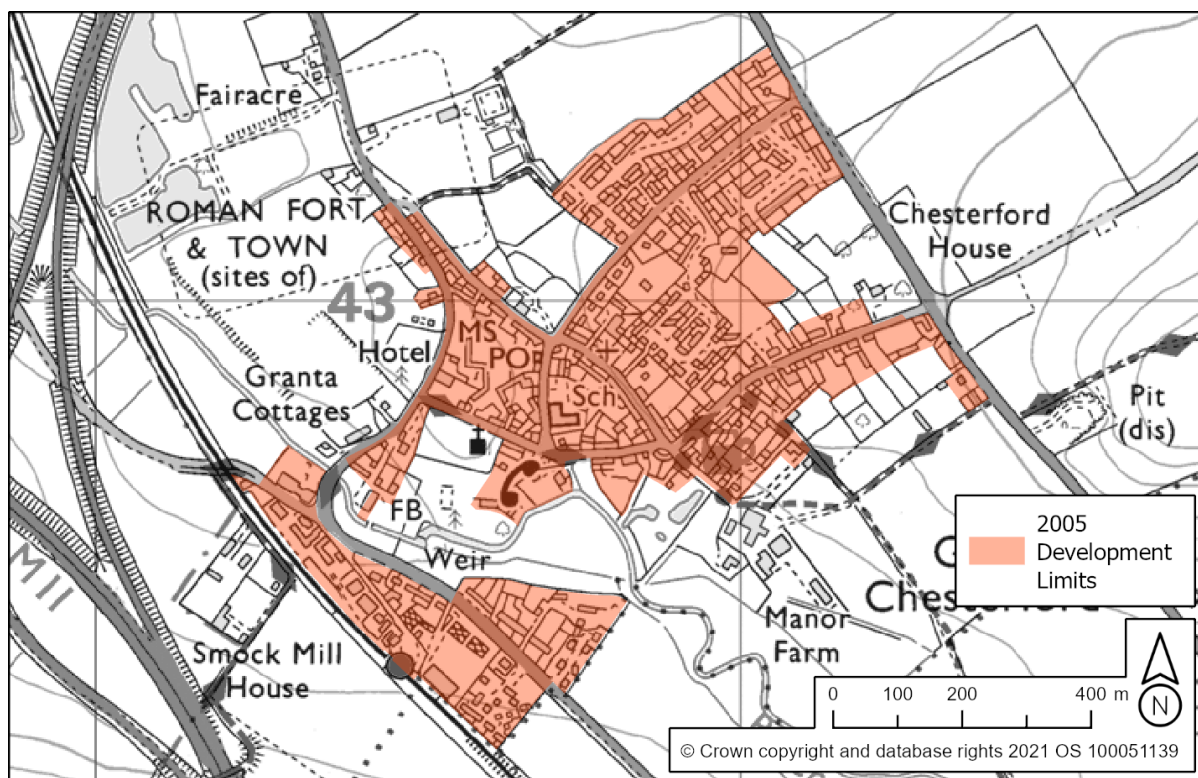


Figure 2.7 Great Chesterford 2005 Development Limits

- 2.32 The 2019 Regulation 19 Uttlesford Local Plan (since withdrawn) defined Great Chesterford as a Key Village and proposed to extend those development limits to include built developments adjacent to the south-east and eastern boundaries of the village (see Figure 2.8).

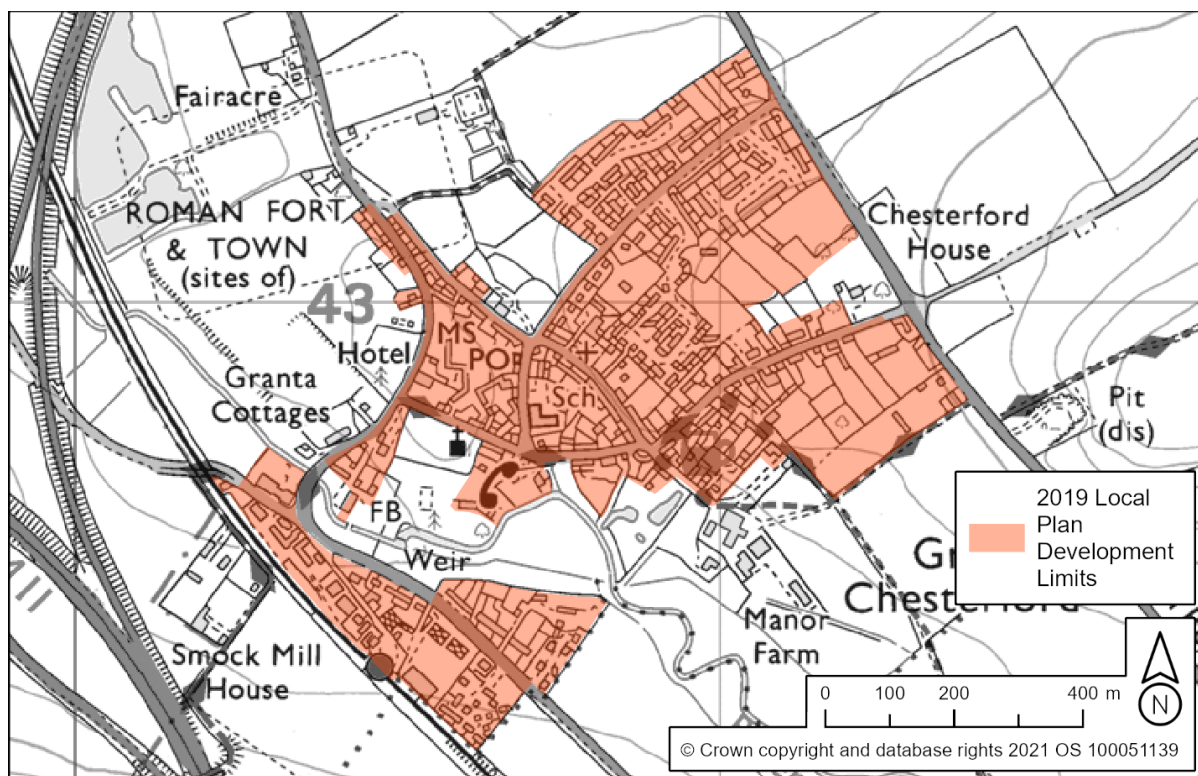


Figure 2.8 Great Chesterford Development Limits as proposed in the Regulation 19 Uttlesford Local Plan (withdrawn)

- 2.33 Chesterford Park to the east of the parish of Little Chesterford is characterised by open parkland that forms the setting for the nineteenth-century Manor House and a collection of late twentieth- and early twenty-first-century scientific buildings. The hilltop setting is screened by mature and ancient woodland.

Landscape

- 2.34 The topography of the parishes is split between the river valley, along which the villages are located, the steep slopes and plateaus which lie to the north-east through to the south-east of the villages (Chesterford Ridge) and the plateau and slopes to the south-west to west (Strethall Ridge).
- 2.35 In the Plan area the underlying rock is chalk, which during the Ice Ages was overlain by a glacial deposit called boulder clay – a mix of the scoured material glaciers stripped off the land as they crept forward. Here this boulder clay contains chalk, picked up as the glacier moved southwards over chalky regions to the north. As the glaciers melted at the end of the Ice Ages strong fast-flowing rivers of meltwater cut through the glacial material and down into the chalk underneath, creating valleys where sands and gravels carried by the rivers were deposited on the riverbed. Subsequent finer alluvial deposits in the river valley were laid down as the more modern slower flowing river flooded over its floodplain. This accounts for the glacial material on the plateaus, with chalky slopes and a valley floor with deposits of sands, gravels and alluvium. It also explains how the local landscape was formed predominantly by glacial meltwater.

- 2.36 Due to the open nature of the landscape and the dramatic changes in topography, there are important views from the villages up to Chesterford Ridge and to the opposite valley side to Strethall Ridge. From the ridges there are impressive views across the valley landscape, to which the villages contribute.
- 2.37 The area of the parishes to the east of the B184 is visually dominated by the chalk downs and Chesterford Ridge, whereas to the west of the B184, the landscape is more visually contained and influenced by urbanisation. The landform and drainage of the parishes are an integral part of the local landscape character and provide a unique sense of place.
- 2.38 The land use within the parishes is predominantly arable agriculture, with some grazing pastures adjacent to the river, to the north of Little Chesterford High Street, and to the south of The Chesterfords Community Centre in Great Chesterford. These latter fields are generally horse paddocks and are of a much smaller scale than the arable fields, which are large, open and expansive.
- 2.39 There are blocks of woodland throughout the parishes, some of it recorded as ancient woodland, as listed by Natural England, which is of historic importance, while other woods are more modern. Much of the woodland is on the hill-slopes or plateau which provides a sense of enclosure in the otherwise open landscape.
- 2.40 The River Cam (or Granta) flows south to north through the parishes. A corridor of land, between 4m and 200m wide, forms the extent of the 1 in 1,000-year flood zone of the River Cam. The parishes contain numerous other minor watercourses including streams, field drains and ponds. The river is a significant feature and has shaped the settlement pattern, transportation routes and open spaces within both villages. The Cam/Granta upper river valley has survived for millennia as an interrupted wildlife refuge and corridor. It still has little interaction with human habitations (and accompanying predatory pets) along its 40km length from its source near Widdington to Cambridge, including the 4.2km within the Neighbourhood Plan area.



Figure 2.9 Aerial view of River Cam and flood zone between Little Chesterford and Great Chesterford

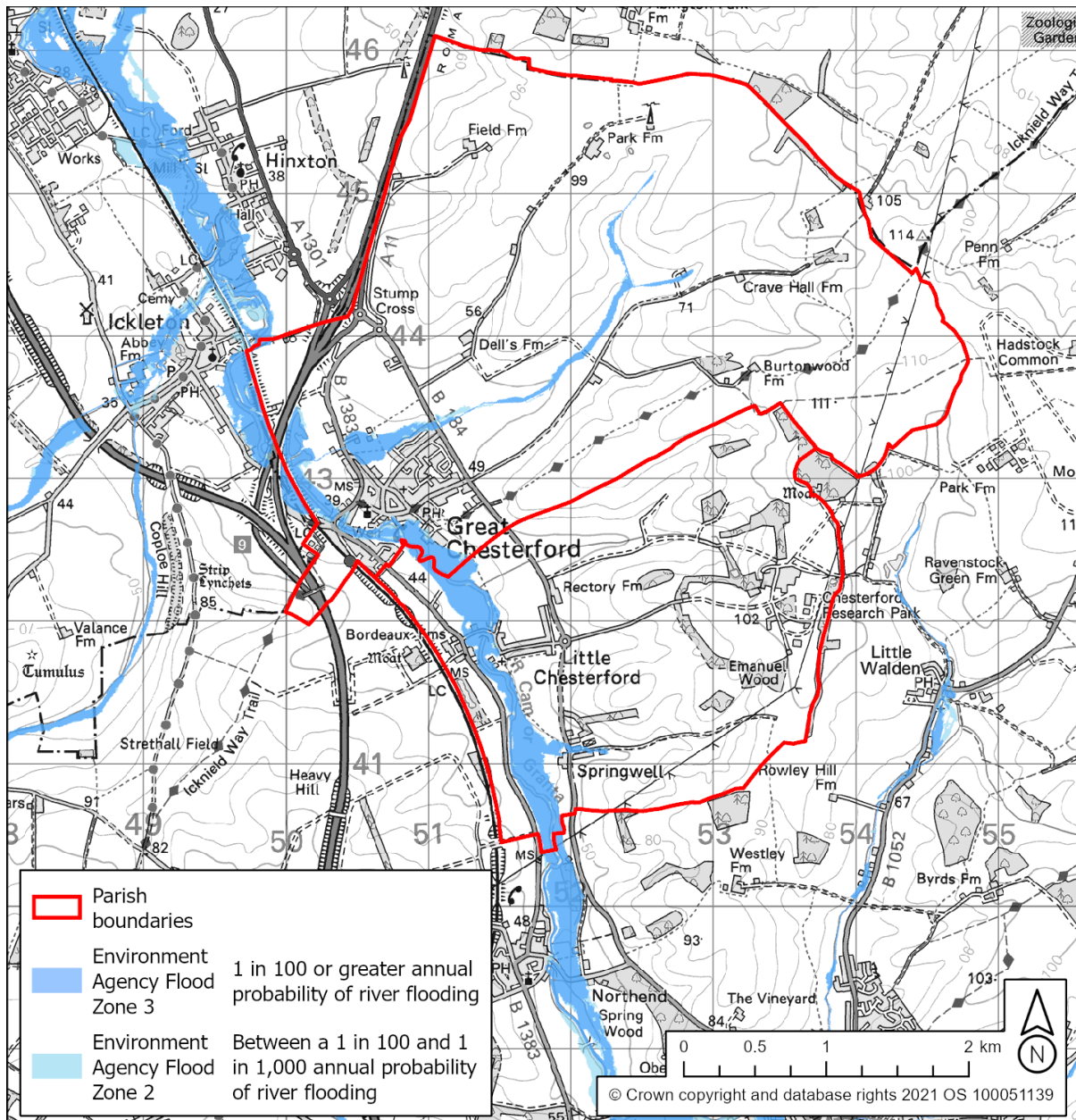


Figure 2.10 Fluvial flood zone

[To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version [here](#)]

- 2.41 Rising river levels in the River Cam, especially after prolonged periods of heavy rain, give rise to fluvial flood risk along its length, predominantly in undeveloped areas of land in the built-up area of Great Chesterford. In addition, there is a significant fluvial flood risk (affecting the Recreation Centre and playing fields) from a small tributary off the River Cam, shown in Figure 5.1. This follows a drainage route east of the River Cam from the chalk valley plateau to the north-east of Great Chesterford and across the B184, along a ditch to the north of Hyll Close and the recreation ground and continues to discharge into the River Cam near Ickleton Riverside Barns.

- 2.42 Similarly, there are areas of fluvial flood risk in Little Chesterford along the banks of the River Cam. However, since the river is at the western end of the village the risk to most properties is limited. A buried water conduit that carries surface water drainage runs down under the High Street from the B184 to the Manor entrance gates where it reverts to an open drain alongside the High Street and discharges into the River Cam next to the bridge. Much of the surface water from the Chesterford Research Park entrance road drains through this but it has been mitigated in the Park's development so that the flow is not excessive from this source causing flooding in the village.
- 2.43 Surface water (or pluvial) flood risk occurs in areas where water accumulates on the surface of land, often in a depression in the landscape, especially where the water table is near the surface close to rivers. In Great Chesterford this is a particular feature of the land north of Hyll Close and the Recreation Centre and Playing Field, and the field abutting Carmen Street. In Little Chesterford, surface water flooding can occur behind and between the houses along the High street that face the Manor field. In Springwell the land around Joseph's Farmhouse and the small field north of Old Springwell Farm are affected.
- 2.44 Flood zone maps are shown in Figures 2.10.
- 2.45 Chesterford Research Park has extensive parkland surrounding its many buildings. Despite its ridgetop location, most views into the Research Park from the villages are restricted by the surrounding woodland.
- 2.46 Numerous public rights of way cross the parishes allowing public access and enjoyment of the landscape. 5.5km of the Icknield Way Trail, a 110-mile historic route that runs from Suffolk to Buckinghamshire, crosses Great Chesterford Parish. This allows access for horse riders and cyclists, as well as walkers; it is often open in places and users are afforded panoramic views, as shown on Figure 2.11.
- 2.47 The rights of way between the villages of Great and Little Chesterford and to the south of Little Chesterford to Springwell are in alignment with the vegetated watercourses and are intimate and enclosed in character.



Photo 5 – The Cam in the Separation Zone between Great and Little Chesterford

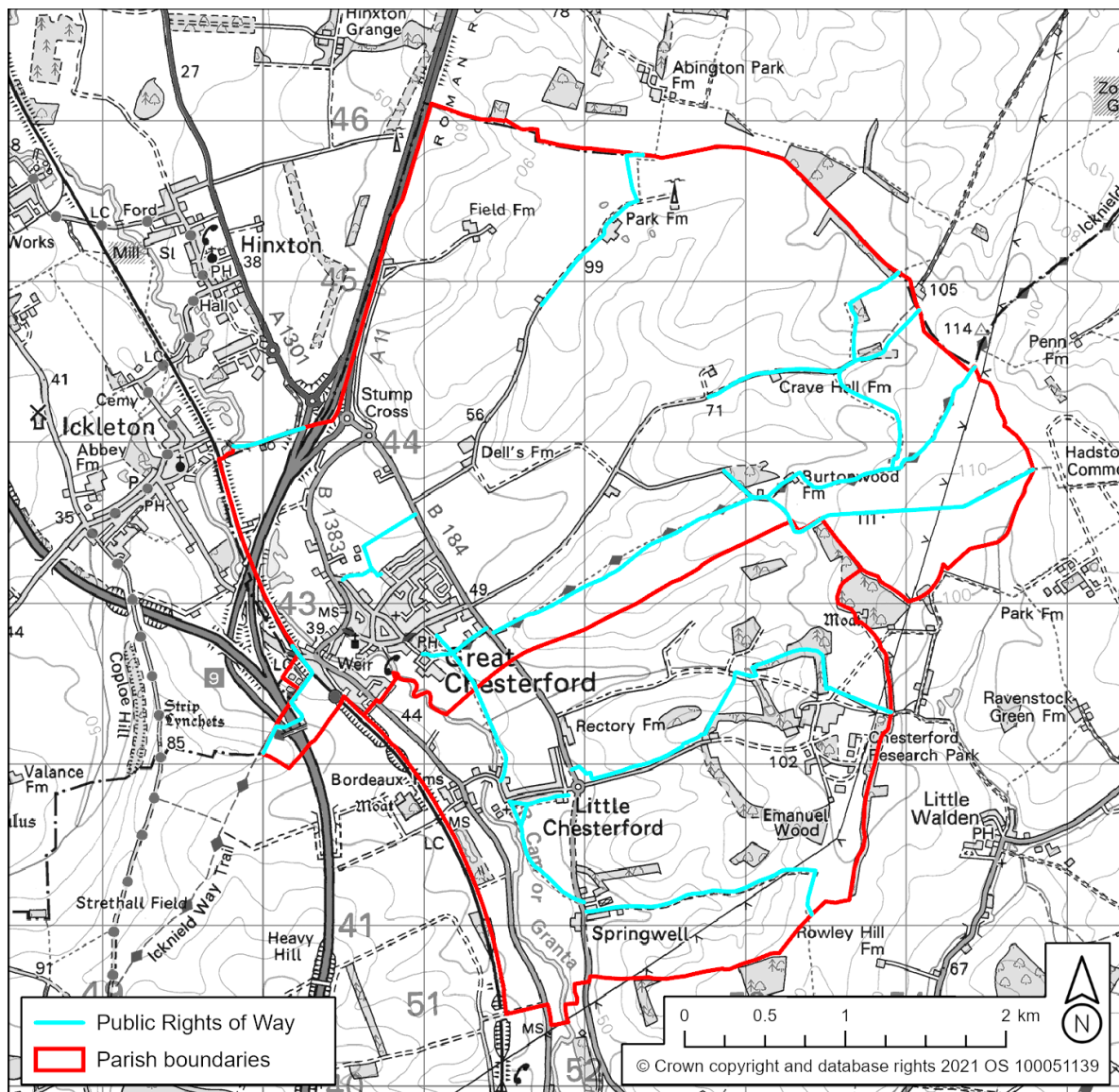


Figure 2.11 Public Rights of Way, including the Icknield Way Trail running south-west to north-east
 [To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version [here](#)]

Wildlife

- 2.48 There are no Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) within the plan area, but Great and Little Chesterford contain both Local Wildlife Sites and Ancient Woodland.
- 2.49 Local Wildlife Sites are areas of land that are especially important for their wildlife. They are identified and selected locally using robust, scientifically-determined criteria and detailed ecological surveys.
- 2.50 Most of the soil in the region is base-rich (alkaline) due to the calcareous nature of the local chalk geology from which it derives. This alkaline soil has a characteristic flora and associated fauna with acid-loving species unable to flourish, akin to that of other chalk areas nationally such as the South Downs. Thus, chalky woods, grasslands or marshes have characteristic plants and associated animal life. This, coupled perhaps with climatic

constraints, has resulted in a number of nationally scarce species being quite widespread in North Essex.

- 2.51 There are five Local Wildlife Sites within the Plan area as identified in Uttlesford District Council Local Wildlife Site Review 2007, shown in Table 2.1 below:

Table 2.1

Site	Reason for designation
Ufd71 A11 Chesterford Special Roadside Verge	This section of road verge supports Perennial Flax (<i>Linum perenne</i>).
Ufd74 Great Chesterford Road Verge	This site comprises the northernmost section of Essex County Council Protected Road Verge UTT24a. It retains a chalk grassland flora that includes Greater Knapweed (<i>Centaurea scabiosa</i>), Wild Basil (<i>Clinopodium vulgare</i>), Field Scabious (<i>Knautia arvensis</i>), Burnet-Saxifrage (<i>Pimpinella saxifrage</i>), Bladder Campion (<i>Silene vulgaris</i>) and Hoary Plantain (<i>Plantago media</i>). The flora also includes Common Star-of-Bethlehem (<i>Ornithogalum angustifolium</i>).
Ufd82 Little Chesterford Verges	These three sections of road verge comprise part of an Essex County Council protected Roadside Verge UTT24b. They support an important chalk grassland flora, which includes Wild Liquorice (<i>Astragalus glycyphyllos</i>), Small Scabious (<i>Scabiosa columbaria</i>), Greater Knapweed (<i>Centaurea scabiosa</i>), Wild Basil (<i>Clinopodium vulgare</i>), Lady's Bedstraw (<i>Galium verum</i>), Restharrow (<i>Ononis repens</i>), Common Broomrape (<i>Orobanche minor</i>) and Hoary Plantain (<i>Plantago media</i>). The northernmost section supports a large population of the Essex Red Data Listed Hawkweed Oxtongue (<i>Picris hieracioides</i>), along with a few plants of Wild Liquorice, and frequent Red Bartsia (<i>Odontites vernus</i>).
Ufd103 Burton Wood	This small ancient wood has a neglected coppice with standards.
Ufd104 Crave Hall Meadow	This small field is one of very few grasslands remaining in the extreme north of the district.



Photo 6 – The Cam



Photo 7 – A Kingfisher on the Cam

2.52 In addition, the Uttlesford District Council Local Wildlife Site Review 2007 identified two potential wildlife sites, shown in Table 2.2 below:

Table 2.2

PloWS 1 Great Chesterford Churchyard	The flora of this yard includes one or two species associated with unimproved, base-rich soils, but it is very intensively mown at present.
PloWS 4 Bordeaux Pit	This old mineral working site is actively managed by Saffron Walden Angling club. The presence of fish stock may preclude the presence of Great Crested Newts, but it does favour Kingfisher, which have apparently been seen on a regular basis by fishermen. Perhaps the area of greatest interest is a small strip of sparsely vegetated ground along the north-eastern boundary, where an abundance of Blue Fleabane (<i>Erigeron acris</i>) is notable. This area may have a significant invertebrate fauna. The common glow worm (<i>Lampyrus noctiluca</i>), found mainly on chalky grasslands is found here.

2.53 Ancient Woodland is designated by Natural England, the government's adviser for the natural environment in England, which helps to protect England's nature and landscapes for people to enjoy. There are three Ancient Woodland sites within the Plan area:

- Emanuel Wood (south of Chesterford Research Park)
- Paddock Wood (Little Chesterford Parish)
- Burton Wood (Great Chesterford Parish)

2.54 In addition, there are a number of important woodland sites, all located within the Chesterford Research Park environs. These include: The Elms, Barn Hill, Bassingbourne Wood, Fishpond Plantation, Lady Plantation and Four Acre Wood.

2.55 A variety of fauna is also found in both parishes, including but not limited to corn bunting, lapwing, grey partridge, snipe, stone curlew, tree sparrow, turtle dove, yellow wagtail, heron, badgers, bats and deer. The Four-spotted moth *Tyta luctuosa* is found on the chalk uplands of the Plan area. This species only occurs very locally in southern Britain, and is

identified as a species of principle importance for biodiversity conservation. The Liquorice Piercer Moth (*Grapholita pallifrontana*) is found in the Little Chesterford Special Roadside verge, one of only three known sites in Essex. A project to study its lifecycle commenced in April 2021 to aid conservation of this rare and declining species (a UK BAP Priority Species). Golden Plover in flocks of over 100 are visible over-wintering on the fields to the south of Cow Lane and also on the fields next to the permissive footpath from Grumble Hall to Park Farm. In 2020, there was successful breeding of lapwings on the field abutting Cow Lane. Purple Emperor butterflies, Jersey Tiger Moths and Silver-washed Fritillary are found within the parish. There are five owl species in the parish including long-eared, short-eared, tawny, little and barn, and every summer the hobby can be seen in the Parish.

Infrastructure, Amenities and Education

- 2.56 Great Chesterford has its own railway station (opened to passengers in 1848) serving Cambridge and London Liverpool Street. Junction 9 of the M11, which connects London with the North, lies less than half a mile north of Great Chesterford. The local bus service connects both villages to Saffron Walden to the south and Cambridge to the north.
- 2.57 The western boundary of the parishes is, for the majority of its length, defined by the Cambridge to London mainline railway. Land in the Neighbourhood Plan area to the west of the railway line is separated by it from the settlements and their services. The only access to this area is via the unmanned railway crossing and tunnel. These routes are unsafe for pedestrian use.
- 2.58 In Great Chesterford, there are two public houses, two medical surgeries, a hotel, a shop, a thirteenth-century Anglican church (All Saints) and a Congregational Chapel. The Chesterfords Community Centre is well used by a wide range of community, musical and sporting groups, and is situated adjacent to the recreation ground comprising football and cricket pitches, tennis courts, walking trail, outdoor gym, children's play area, skate park and the bowls club. Allotments and a village orchard have also been recently provided on a site close to the recreation ground.
- 2.59 Little Chesterford is home to a thirteenth-century Anglican church (St Mary the Virgin) and a village hall (formerly the site of the village school 1862–1902).
- 2.60 Education is provided by The Chesterfords Community Preschool for children aged 2–5 years, and Great Chesterford Primary Academy for children aged 4–11 years. There has been a school in Great Chesterford since 1514.

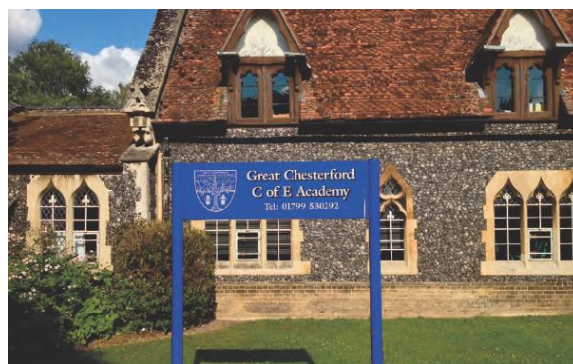


Photo 8 – Great Chesterford Primary Academy

Employment

- 2.61 There are seven main employment sites within Great and Little Chesterford: Station Approach, Plextek single occupier site, Park Farm (which comprises two separate sites), and Cam Valley Crematorium are in Great Chesterford; Rectory Farm Barns, Chesterford Research Park and Springwell Nursery and Garden Centre are in Little Chesterford. Employment sites are shown on Figures 5.23 and 5.24.
- 2.62 Plextek specialises in technology, electronic design and product design for defence, security, healthcare and Internet of Things. The company employs approximately 150 people.
- 2.63 Station Approach and Rectory Farm Barns comprise a range of businesses.
- 2.64 Chesterford Research Park comprises biotechnology, pharmaceutical and technology research and development companies of all sizes. Approximately 700 employees work at the park.
- 2.65 Springwell Nursery and Garden Centre is a family-run business offering a range of plants, shrubs and garden equipment.
- 2.66 Whilst the most common land use in Great and Little Chesterford is agricultural, modern farming practices limit employment opportunities.

Population

- 2.67 In the first National Census of 1801, Great Chesterford had a population of 600 and Little Chesterford had a population of 120. By 1841, the population of Great Chesterford had grown to 917, while Little Chesterford's population peaked at 276 inhabitants in 1861.
- 2.68 The population spread from the 2011 census is shown in Table 2.3 below:

Table 2.3

Age	Great Chesterford		Little Chesterford	
	No.	%	No.	%
0-17	369	24.7	55	25.6
18-29	134	9	18	8.4
30-44	290	19.4	35	16.3
45-59	355	23.8	56	26
60+	346	23.1	51	23.7
TOTAL	1494		215	

Housing

- 2.69 The tenure of dwellings for Great and Little Chesterford in 2011 are shown in Table 2.4 below:

Table 2.4

Tenure	Great Chesterford		Little Chesterford	
	No.	%	No.	%
Owned outright	222	37	27	33.7
Owned with a mortgage or loan	242	40.4	33	41.2
Shared ownership	3	0.5	0	0
Social rented	52	8.7	8	10
Privately rented	67	11.2	11	13.8
Living rent free	13	2.2	1	1.3
TOTAL	599		80	

- 2.70 Property prices in Uttlesford are higher than figures for the overall Region (the East) due to the district's proximity to London and Cambridge. For example, the average price of a new build house is £400,773 for the Region compared to £521,449 for Uttlesford (Uttlesford Housing Market Data Report Oct 2020).

Growth

- 2.71 In the second half of the twentieth century, growth in Great Chesterford has taken place mainly on the north-eastern side of the village, with industrial development in the west along London Road. There has also been some piecemeal development to the south and west.
- 2.72 In the first decade of the twenty-first century, it was noted by both the district councillor for Great Chesterford and the chair of Great Chesterford Parish Council that the village was not making a positive contribution to the development of new homes within the district. A more pro-active approach led to suitable sites being identified and the development of new homes in larger numbers from 2014, as set out in Table 2.6. Subsequent new developments have been built both to the east and west of the village.
- 2.73 The size of Little Chesterford has changed relatively little from the early part of the nineteenth century. Later buildings infill the gaps left by the 'Great Fire' of 1914. Housing built by the local authority to the north of Walden Road in the early 1960s is the only extension to the settlement since this time. These 16 dwellings with their large front and rear gardens form the single homogenous group within the village.

2.74 The growth of the population in the Plan area from 2001 and 2011 census data can be seen in Table 2.5 below:

Table 2.5

	Population	Dwellings
2001	1629	704
2011	1709	714
% Change	+ 4.9%	+ 1.42%

2.75 The numbers of new dwellings delivered since 2011 are set out in Table 2.6 below:

Table 2.6

	Great C'ford new	Great C'ford total	Great C'ford % change	Little C'ford new	Little C'ford total	Little C'ford % change	Great and Little C'ford new	Great and Little C'ford % increase
2011–2012	1	628	0.16%	0	87	0.00%	1	0.14%
2012–2013	0	628	0.16%	1	88	1.15%	1	0.28%
2013–2014	1	629	0.32%	1	89	2.30%	2	0.56%
2014–2015	42	671	7.02%	0	89	2.30%	42	6.44%
2015–2016	15	686	9.41%	3	92	5.75%	18	8.96%
2016–2017	7	693	10.53%	0	92	5.75%	7	9.94%
2017–2018	12	705	12.44%	2	94	8.05%	14	11.90%
2018–2019	78	783	24.88%	0	94	8.05%	78	22.83%
TOTAL	156			7			163	

2.76 The housing growth in Great Chesterford has been significant and has largely been the result of new housing sites at:

- Land south of Stanley Road and Four Acres – 50 dwellings
- Land at Thorpe Lea – 30 dwellings
- Land at New World Timber Frame and Graveldene Nurseries – 42 dwellings

2.77 Additional housing in Little Chesterford has been the result of infill and redevelopment of existing plots.

Chapter 3 – Key Issues

The Existing Planning Context

- 3.1 There is considerable strength of feeling in both villages that new housing developments may potentially harm the distinct character and identity of each village. Residents wish to see new housing developments managed in such a way that they are organic and proportionate, with their archaeological, historic and attractive settings being protected.
- 3.2 A large proportion of (although not all) residents of both Great and Little Chesterford strongly opposed the inclusion of North Uttlesford Garden Community in the previous (now withdrawn) Local Plan, galvanising volunteers and raising funds in order to enable representatives from both Parish Councils to make an effective case in opposition to the plan at examination stage 2019–2020. Upon examination, the NUGC was described as “flawed” in landscape and heritage terms by the Planning Inspectorate.
- 3.3 There is significant local development pressure as a result of the UDC substantial shortfall of new dwellings. The Local Plan process has been restarted but the timetable has already slipped. It is anticipated that once again UDC will be looking for more small and medium-sized sites for housing development.
- 3.4 In addition to the development pressure within the district, there is considerable development immediately to the north in the district of South Cambridgeshire. Consented developments include 1,500 dwellings at the Wellcome Genome Trust in Hinxton, new employment sites at Iconix Park, and the old Spicers Site in Sawston. There is also a proposal for an AgriTech technology park in Hinxton (although the developer appeal to the Secretary of State has now been dismissed). All of these developments will place increased pressure on existing inadequate transport infrastructure.
- 3.5 Consented development at The Wellcome Genome Trust Campus at Hinxton (South Cambridgeshire District Planning reference S/4329/18) extends the settlement boundary southward as far as the northern boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan area, diminishing the open landscape that forms the northern gateway to the villages.
- 3.6 There is pressure for development that would erode settlement patterns by extending the boundaries of built villages along the B184 and B1383 in both directions, including ongoing planning applications and land put forward in the Call For Sites.

Issues Raised by Residents

Findings from The Great Chesterford Village Plan 2015 and the Little Chesterford Village Survey 2016.

Housing

- 3.7 The Great Chesterford Village Plan 2015 and the Little Chesterford Village Survey 2016 identified a wide range of priorities and concerns. These included topics such as housing, traffic, sustainable transport and appropriate facilities for residents of all ages. The issues that cannot be appropriately addressed by a Neighbourhood Plan are detailed in

Chapter 6, and the respective Parish Councils will continue to review these in their planning for the villages.

- 3.8 Residents accepted that new housing would need to be built within the villages, but that the growth should be managed. Little Chesterford supported an additional 10 dwellings, while Great Chesterford accepted up to an additional 100 dwellings.
- 3.9 In both cases, it was clear that residents wished to manage growth while retaining the distinctive and rural nature of the villages, protecting surrounding fields and green spaces, as well as the open views. In Little Chesterford there was a particular desire to protect the historic core of the village – the church, the meadow and the hall.
- 3.10 Residents of Little Chesterford also expressed a desire to see proportional growth comprising a mix of housing on sites that maintained the settlement pattern of the village.
- 3.11 Great Chesterford expressed a strong desire for affordable housing for local people, especially 1–2-bedroom or 3–4-bedroom homes. However, it should be noted that the Icknield Rise development included 40% affordable homes with local connection as a priority for allocation in perpetuity, but on completion in 2019 the homes could not be filled with applicants from within the parishes.

Transport

- 3.12 Speeding was identified as a key concern in both villages and there was widespread support for traffic calming measures. In Great Chesterford concerns were raised about speeding on both the B183 and B184, as well as through the centre of the village. In Little Chesterford, concerns were raised about the village being used as a ‘rat run’ for traffic accessing Chesterford Research Park.
- 3.13 There was a clear desire from residents to improve the provision of sustainable transport opportunities, by improving the existing and planned cycleways and new cycleways between the villages.
- 3.14 Residents also identified the importance of footpaths, with regular maintenance and clear signage.

Facilities

- 3.15 The Great Chesterford Village Plan highlighted a desire for improved provision of facilities for the under 19s, including sport, activities and a youth club.
- 3.16 Little Chesterford residents were also keen that the needs of an ageing population be met.

Early Years Provision

- 3.17 The Great Chesterford Village Plan highlighted the desire of residents to improve Early Years provision within the village. 80.1% of respondents wished to see a permanent site for the existing preschool and 83.6% wished to see an increase in the number of sessions it offered (five mornings at the time).
- 3.18 In 2016 there was an s106 settlement between Uttlesford District Council and a local land owner in which land was transferred to Great Chesterford Parish Council with a covenant

that stated the land should have educational use. Since then, the Parish Council has been progressing plans to provide a permanent Early Years facility on the site.

Issues Raised by Independent Assessments

Landscape Character Assessment

- 3.19 A Landscape Character Assessment was completed in February 2017 by Hankinson Duckett Associates, commissioned to inform the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan. The assessment determines the parishes' local landscape character, identifying key characteristics and sensitivities both in terms of character and visibility. The report also seeks to set out landscape capacity and development guidelines, should development sites come forward in the future. A number of key issues were identified and these are outlined below.
- 3.20 There are a considerable number of historic assets, both within the villages as part of their built form and presence in the surrounding landscape, as exemplified by the two Scheduled Monuments. The built heritage is reflected in the local vernacular and the materials used in construction including brick, thatch and pargetting.
- 3.21 Due to the open nature of the landscape and the dramatic changes in topography, there are important views from the villages up to Chesterford Ridge and to the opposite valley side to Strethall Ridge. From the ridges, there are impressive views across the valley landscape, to which the villages contribute.
- 3.22 The report assessed 13 parish character areas and awarded sensitivity and value ratings ranging from major, substantial, moderate to slight. Areas judged to have major or substantial sensitivity or value indicate that development would have a significant detrimental effect on the character of the landscape.
- 3.23 Of the 13 parish character areas assessed, one has major sensitivity, seven have substantial sensitivity, four have moderate sensitivity, and there is one character area with slight sensitivity (see Figure 3.1).
- 3.24 The landscape value of the parishes is also mixed, with one area being assessed as having substantial landscape value, nine areas having moderate landscape value and three areas having slight landscape value.
- 3.25 No parish character areas were assessed as having high/very high landscape capacity for development. One parish character area (character area 14) has been assessed as having high capacity – this area has now been developed as Thorpe Lea. Another area has medium/high capacity and two areas have medium capacity. These areas may have limited capacity for residential development without significant harm to the local landscape character.
- 3.26 One parish character area has a negligible/low capacity for development, seven have a low capacity and one has low/medium capacity. The area with negligible/low landscape capacity is Area 1, the open plateau of the Chesterford Ridge, which is visually exposed with wide ranging views and too remote from existing settlements to be suitable for development. Development within this Character Area should be avoided as it would be out of character with the openness of the landscape in Area 1.

- 3.27 Area 7 coincides with the village core of Little Chesterford which has extremely limited space for any infill development and it has well defined settlement edges.
- 3.28 Developable land in the Great Chesterford village core is again extremely restricted. There are three grazing fields to the north of Carmen Street and Jacksons Lane. These fields bring a rural influence to the village core and make an important contribution to its landscape character, thus potential development on these fields should be resisted.
- 3.29 A large proportion of the landscape of the Great and Little Chesterford parishes has substantial landscape sensitivity and moderate landscape value, which is consistent with the contrasting landscape of open chalk uplands and the more intimate Cam Valley. It follows, therefore, that in a landscape of such contrasts there will be throughout the parishes large areas that have negligible/low to low/medium landscape capacity for future development.
- 3.30 Should any of the internal spaces within the villages come forward for development, due consideration should be given to the effect that development would have on the overall character of the villages. The majority of open spaces within the village of Great Chesterford lie within the Conservation Area, which is protected through national and local planning policy. Any proposed development would need to conserve or enhance the special character or appearance of the Conservation Area. The river, public and private incidental open spaces and feature walls are an intrinsic part of the special character of the Conservation Area. As a result, the primary open spaces and routes are particularly sensitive to new development and should be preserved. This similarly applies to the open spaces and routes to be found in and surrounding the historic core of Little Chesterford.
- 3.31 Any new development within the villages should consider their relationship to the open spaces, the river and routes within the villages; should maintain the green and leafy character of the village; and should respect the context of their location within the villages. Consideration should also be given to the scale, form and massing of built development, along with the materials to be used.
- 3.32 Development proposed within the villages but outside the Great Chesterford Conservation Area would still need to consider the setting to the Conservation Area in Great Chesterford and the historic core in Little Chesterford, and the contribution that the proposals could make to the overall character of the villages.

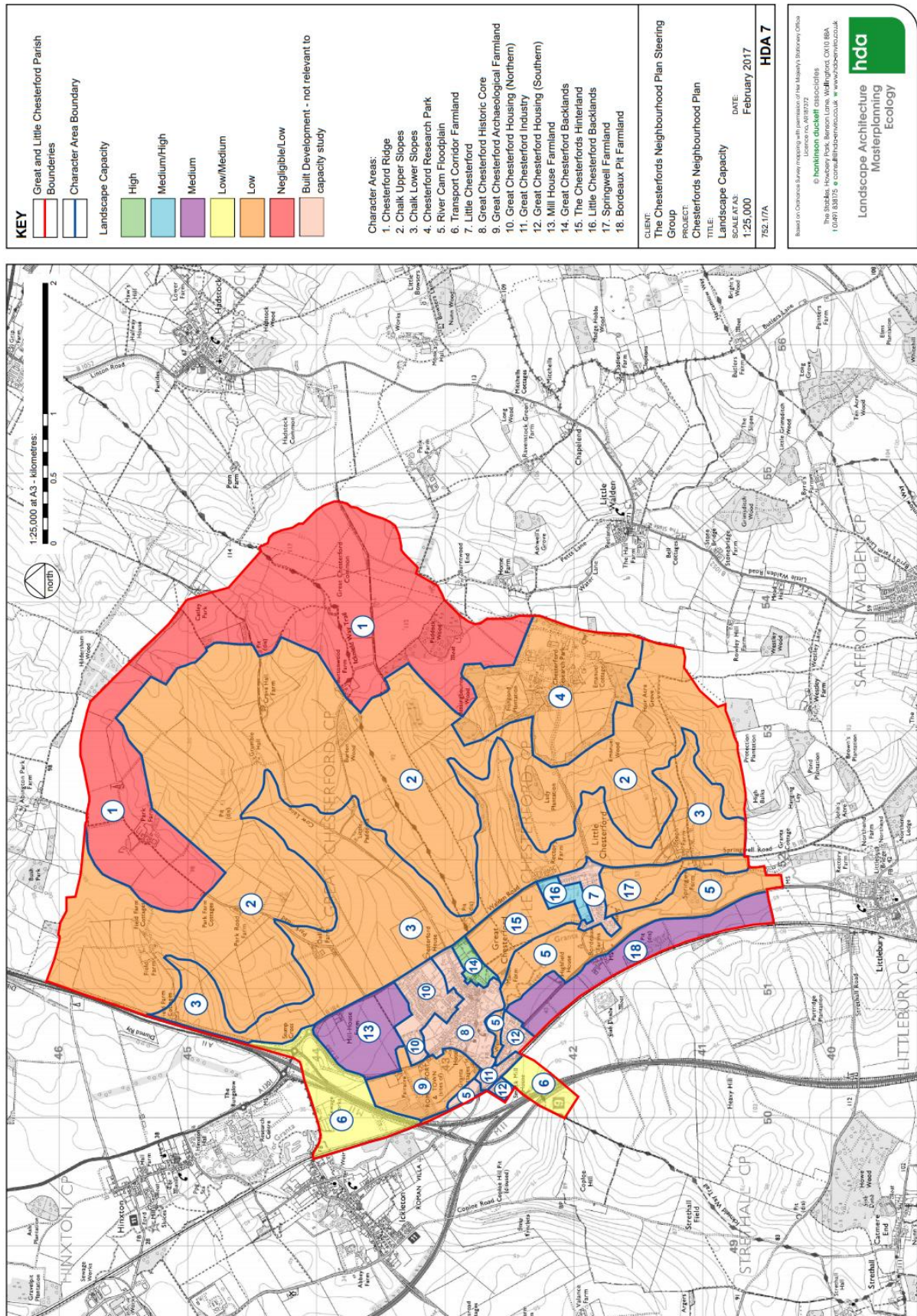


Figure 3.1 Landscape Capacity Map

Historic Environment Assessment

- 3.33 In July 2016, Essex County Council completed an Historic Environment Assessment, commissioned to inform the preparation of the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan. The report presents an overview of the historic environment within the parishes of Great and Little Chesterford and identifies the significance of the major heritage assets located within them, including the contribution to their significance made by their setting.
- 3.34 The Roman fort and town and Roman and Anglo-Saxon cemeteries of Great Chesterford are of national importance archaeologically and historically. There has been extensive archaeological study of the Great Chesterford Roman Town Scheduled site since its discovery in 1719, including numerous excavations, aerial photography and a geophysical survey. The finds from the excavations are on display at the British Museum, the Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology and Saffron Walden Museum.
- 3.35 In addition, the Scheduled Romano-Celtic temple, which is intimately linked to the history and development of the town, is located 1km to the east of the town on the site of the preceding Late Iron Age shrine.
- 3.36 The Romano-Celtic temple site is of national importance archaeologically and historically. The substantial temple complex is located within an arable field on the broad sloping hillside on the east side of the River Cam, 1km to the east of the Scheduled Roman town. Excavations took place in 1847 and 1978 – the finds from these excavations are on display at the Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology and Saffron Walden Museum.
- 3.37 Romano-Celtic temples were built and used throughout the Roman period from the mid-first century AD to the late fourth/early fifth century AD. Around 150 sites have been recorded in England. In view of their rarity and their importance in contributing to the complete picture of Roman religious practice, including its continuity from Iron Age practice, all Romano-Celtic temples with surviving archaeological potential are considered to be of national importance.
- 3.38 The temple has wide views in all directions, of which the most significant are those looking east (the direction in which Romano-British temples faced) and those looking west towards the Roman town, and it is imperative that these views are conserved.
- 3.39 The Great Chesterford Conservation Area comprises the majority of the historic village and slightly more than half of the entire modern village extent. It covers the majority of the historic medieval and post-medieval settlement in the parish, including the whole of Carmen Street, Carmel Street, School Street, Church Street, South Street, High Street and Manor Lane. This contains listed buildings, the majority of which are timber framed and plastered, with 50% dating from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The Conservation Area forms the heart of the community, including many of the homes of the village inhabitants, as well as the majority of the public buildings and public open spaces.
- 3.40 The historic core of Little Chesterford is the village church and hall complex. This includes the Grade I Manor House and Grade II* St Mary the Virgin Church, which are notable as continuing in their initial use since the early thirteenth century. This group of buildings also includes the grade II Dovecote, as well as the Grade II bridge over the River Cam. As well as the historic character of these buildings, this area is notable for its collection of mature trees and the open space beside the river. Little Chesterford village comprises around 75

buildings ranging along the High Street and its junctions with Walden and London roads. It similarly has many examples of timber framed and plastered buildings, including some that are thatched. Of these, 10 (13%) are listed buildings dating from the thirteenth to eighteenth centuries. Brick nineteenth-century buildings, including the Village Hall and the Reading Rooms with their decorative brickwork, are also a key feature of the village.

- 3.41 A significant architectural feature of Great Chesterford village is the use of boundary walls, many of which are constructed of flint panels supported by brick piers and capping. The Conservation Area has numerous trees, mostly located in private gardens, but making a notable contribution to the overall impression of the Conservation Area. Many of these are protected by Tree Preservation Orders. In Little Chesterford the banks of the eastern end of the sunken lane that is the High Street are a distinctive feature, and the brick and flint walls found in Great Chesterford also form many boundaries in Little Chesterford and Springwell.
- 3.42 In addition, residents of Little Chesterford completed a series of village walks in 2016 in which they identified similar features that they wished to conserve, including flint walls and the banks of the sunken lane that forms the eastern part of the High Street.
- 3.43 The Great Chesterford Conservation Area is visually cohesive as the bulk of a historic nucleated settlement. Its range of listed timber framed and plastered buildings dating from the sixteenth century in the historic core of the village make a particularly important contribution to the environment.
- 3.44 The report identifies a number of significant and important views within the Conservation Area, including those from Horse River Green over the River Cam into the open countryside beyond, views of the church tower, the view looking over the paddock with park-like characteristics from Jacksons Lane, and the view from Carmen Street looking west across the gently undulating paddock.
- 3.45 The Parish Church of All Saints forms the central focal point of a group of listed buildings away from the village centre; it is the only grade I listing in the village. The church is located on the south-west side of the medieval town, and it is presumed that there was an early medieval or late Saxon church on the site before the present church was built. The churchyard occupies part of the site of what appears to have been a second Roman walled enclosure located to the south of the Roman walled town. The church has played a significant spiritual and social role in the history of Great Chesterford certainly since the thirteenth century, and probably since the late Saxon period. There also appears to have been a pre-Christian religious dimension to the site.
- 3.46 The Manor in Little Chesterford is listed for its architectural and historic value as grade I. It is a rare example of an early domestic building, originally built as an early thirteenth-century manor house (c.1200), which was partly rebuilt and altered in the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries. The Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin, dating from the thirteenth century, is located to the east of The Manor and is listed as Grade II*. The church and hall complex in Little Chesterford is of particular interest in that The Manor is an exceptional surviving example of an early thirteenth-century domestic building, and the church also had its origins in the thirteenth century; both structures are still in use for their initial purpose. The complex has played a significant spiritual and social role in the history of Little Chesterford.

- 3.47 The Moated Site, Fishpond and Enclosure at Bordeaux Farms, Littlebury is a site 600m west of Little Chesterford Church. The Bordeaux Farm moated site is of national importance archaeologically and historically and is designated as a Scheduled Monument. Whilst falling outside of the Plan area, its close proximity warrants inclusion as any development associated with the eastern side of Little Chesterford has the potential to impact upon the setting of the Scheduled area. Around 6,000 moated sites are known in England, with over 900 recorded in Essex. They consist of wide ditches, often or seasonally water-filled, partly or completely enclosing one or more islands of dry ground on which stood domestic or religious buildings. The majority of moated sites served as prestigious aristocratic and seigneurial residences with the provision of a moat intended as a status symbol rather than a practical military defence. The peak period during which moated sites were built was between 1250 and 1350, and by far the greatest concentration lies in central and eastern parts of England. They form a significant class of medieval monument and are important for the understanding of the distribution of wealth and status in the countryside.
- 3.48 The Moated Site in Paddock Wood is a site 560m north-east of Chesterford Research Park. It is of national importance archaeologically and historically and is designated as a Scheduled Monument. Whilst falling outside of the Plan area, its close proximity warrants inclusion as any development associated with the western side of Little Chesterford Parish has the potential to impact upon the setting of the Scheduled area. As a moated site, its significance mirrors that of the moated site at Bordeaux Farms.
- 3.49 The recommendations of the Historic Environment Assessment were:
1. *Preserve the intervisibility between the Scheduled Monuments comprising Roman town and temple, as the visible link between these two monuments is a major component in the understanding of the inter-dependence of the monuments and forms an integral part of the setting of the two monuments.*
 2. *Retain the open aspect of the Roman-Celtic temple area to ensure that the setting of the monument is preserved.*
 3. *Restrict development along Newmarket Road, as there are significant views from there into the Roman town which should not be blocked.*
 4. *Resist any further erosion of the distinct open space between the two historic village settlements to ensure that they retain their distinct identities.*
 5. *Follow the recommendations of the Great Chesterford Conservation Area Appraisal in the future management of the area or its setting.*
 6. *Retain the open spaces identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal and avoid development in these areas (Horse River Green, the churchyard, the grounds of Bishop's House, the school field in the centre of the town and the paddocks to the east of Carmen Street).*
 7. *Preserve the open space in Little Chesterford around the church and hall, and the views along the river from the historic bridge southwards towards The Manor and northwards to Great Chesterford, by preventing development.*
 8. *Any future infill development in Little Chesterford should respect the nature of the present historic buildings and should be designed to reflect the historic architecture and layout, both in terms of design as well as boundary treatment.*

9. *Preserve the setting of the Bordeaux Farm Scheduled site by avoiding any development that does not relate directly to the agricultural role of the farm.*
10. *Promote the historic environment of the Chesterfords to the occupants of the villages as well as to visitors.*



Photo 9 – Brick and flint wall at Carmen Street

Chapter 4 – Vision and Objectives

The Vision

4.1 The vision for the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan is:

By 2033, Great and Little Chesterford will have each grown organically and proportionally and continue to be attractive places to live for those seeking a sense of community and place, retaining their separate and distinctive characteristics and identities.

The Chesterfords will continue to support change through sustainable development (in accordance with paragraph 8 of NPPF) that retains our heritage, shared resources, rural feel and inclusive, welcoming community.

Objectives

4.2 The objective of the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan is:

To contribute to the achievement of sustainable development by ensuring that Great and Little Chesterford continue to grow at an organic and sustainable rate, supporting viable and diverse communities and protecting meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

This will be achieved by:

(A) retaining and protecting the individuality and distinctive characteristics of the three main settlements (villages of Great Chesterford, Little Chesterford and the hamlet of Springwell) within the rural setting of the River Cam Valley, including their distinct settlement patterns;

(B) promoting safe and sustainable transport by promoting pedestrian use of railway station, safe pedestrian and cycle access to village services and between villages, road safety for all in village streets and promoting and enhancing cycling routes south to Saffron Walden and north towards Cambridge;

(C) conserving and enhancing important landscape characteristics and views;

(D) conserving and enhancing the historic environment features of the Neighbourhood Plan area;

(E) maintaining and enhancing community spaces that are valued for recreation, education and/or services (including designated Local Green Spaces) which make a significant positive contribution to the well-being and quality of life of residents and the aesthetic quality of the Plan area;

(F) protecting and enhancing local green spaces of value to the local communities;

(G) promoting sustainable economic development and local business within the Neighbourhood Plan Area, the protection and improvement of jobs and employment areas for employment use, providing employment to both local people and those who commute into the area, whilst protecting and enhancing the rural and village environments and sustainable travel;

(H) the protection and improvement of existing housing stock for residents and identifying land for proportionate growth of residential properties.

The Process for Establishing the Vision and Objectives

- 4.3 At the Annual Village Meeting on 12 July 2018, residents were asked to volunteer for a new Neighbourhood Plan Working Group, with follow up requests via Google Groups. The Working Group first met in January 2019 and began work on drafting the Plan's Vision, Objectives and policy outlines based on the feedback from the Great Chesterford Village Plan, Little Chesterford Village Questionnaire, Little Chesterford Village Walks and consultant reports on Heritage and Landscape. A Steering Group, consisting of Parish Councillors together with a co-ordinator, organised and collated the work and kept both Great Chesterford and Little Chesterford Parish Councils up to date with the progress of the Working Group.
- 4.4 Feedback on the draft vision and objectives was sought from stakeholders at the Great Chesterford Annual Village Meeting in May 2019, and a community-wide survey in July 2019.
- 4.5 As a result of these consultations, the wording was updated and further refined following feedback from the independent examiner, who conducted a 'Plan Health check' on the draft plan in January 2022, and from the Plan Examiner in August 2022.

Chapter 5 – The Policies

5.1 Overall Spatial Strategy

Policy Objective: To contribute to the achievement of sustainable development by ensuring that Great and Little Chesterford continue to grow at an organic and sustainable rate, supporting viable and diverse communities and protecting meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Areas for Potential Growth

- 5.1.1 Great Chesterford village (c.800 households) is the focus for local facilities. Its transport links and vibrant community together with its rural setting make it a popular location, and it has seen a 25% growth in housing in the last nine years.
- 5.1.2 Little Chesterford (c.90 households) is a small rural village with limited facilities and transport links and therefore has seen a smaller rate of growth (8%) over the same period.
- 5.1.3 The future of sustainable development in the neighbourhood will depend in large part on proximity of sites to improved services and transport, and must be proportionate to the scale of the two villages.
- 5.1.4 The current Great Chesterford development limits were established in 2005 (see 2.38–2.40). This Neighbourhood Plan extends them to include both built development and those for which planning permission has been granted, as described in Figures 5.1 and 5.2.
- 5.1.5 Little Chesterford does not have a proposed or adopted development limit, but has well defined settlement boundaries. This Neighbourhood Plan defines the settlement boundary for this village as described in Figure 5.3.

Strategic Landscape Features

- 5.1.6 The Neighbourhood Plan Area is an open area of landscape with dramatic changes in topography between the intimate and leafy Cam Valley flood plain and the sweeping Chalk Upland ridges that are highly visible both within and outside the Plan area. The neighbouring villages of Great and Little Chesterford lie along the river banks of the Cam Valley between the northern extremities of the two chalk ridges.
- 5.1.7 The Chalk Uplands area is comprised wholly of the following Landscape Character areas as defined in the Landscape Character Assessment and shown in Figure 3.1:
 - Chesterford Ridge: High Chalk Plateau
 - Chalk Upper Slopes: Steep upper dry valleys of chalky boulder clay (above 65m contour)
 - Chalk Lower Slopes: Shallow slopes of dry valleys to the east of the B184 (below 65m contour)
 - Chesterford Research Park: 150 acres of historic parkland on chalk ridge
 - Area 1 has negligible/low capacity for development; areas 2, 3 and 4 have low capacity for development.

The boundaries of the Chalk Uplands area correspond to the totality of this combined area.

- 5.1.8 The Landscape Character area 5 – River Cam Flood Plain: Flat Alluvial Flood Plain of the River Cam (low capacity for development) – is fully included in the Cam Valley Area.
- 5.1.9 Additional evidence was examined to further define the Cam Valley Area as follows: fluvial flood zone (Figure 2.10); Topography (Landscape Character Assessment Plan HDA3), Local and Historically Important Views (Figures 5.11–5.14); the current and historical land use; relationship of the land with the settlements; and wildlife habitats (paragraphs 2.48–2.55).
- 5.1.10 Within and to the north of Great Chesterford village, the area is characterised by the built environment and the Roman Scheduled Monuments. The areas corresponding to the fluvial flood zone were additionally included in the Cam Valley Area.
- 5.1.11 Between the villages of Great and Little Chesterford, the Cam Valley Area is characterised by open views and popular recreational use centred around the river, footpaths and permissive paths. The area bounded by the 40m contour line and to the west of the footpath was additionally included in the Cam Valley Area, with the exception of land adjacent to the built environment of Granta Close (which did not also form part of the flood zone).
- 5.1.12 To the south of the High Street in Little Chesterford, the Cam Valley Area is characterised by the open farmland surrounding the Cam, which flows in some parts adjacent to the B1383. The farmland to the west of the B1383 to the parish boundary was included, with the exception of the area around the built form of Bordeaux Farms and the Bordeaux Pit fishing lakes (which are screened from view from the river).
- 5.1.13 Both Chalk Uplands and the Cam Valley are identified as being of negligible/low or low capacity for development as evidenced in the Landscape Character Assessment, 2017 and are further described in paragraphs 2.34–2.47 and 3.19–3.32.
- 5.1.14 The following factors must be considered when determining the areas which most contribute towards these strategically important, distinctive and treasured landscapes: the visual and spatial relationship between chalk uplands, the river and their surrounding features; the current and historical land use; the relationship of the land with the settlements; the topography; the importance of the views from areas that have recreational use; and wildlife habitats. The Chalk Uplands and Cam Valley Areas are defined in Figures 5.1–5.3.

Strategic Historic Features

- 5.1.15 The area is rich in heritage assets, the Scheduled Monuments comprising the Roman Town/Fort/Cemeteries and Roman Temple to the north of Great Chesterford being particularly important. They are of national importance for the historic significance of not only the sites themselves, but for the interrelationship between the sites and the surrounding landscape. This is evidenced in the Historic Environment Assessment 2016, evidence submitted to the Uttlesford Local Plan Regulation 19 Examination 2019, and sightline analysis commissioned by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. These are further described in sections 2.17–2.22 and 3.29–3.45.

- 5.1.16 The following factors must be considered regarding the strategic historic feature of the setting of the Roman Scheduled sites: the lines of sight from the Roman town and fort to and from the Roman temple along the east/west axis; the lines of sight from the Roman temple eastwards; the historic watercourse; and historic, current and consented land use. The Roman Scheduled Monuments and Setting Zone is defined in Figures 5.1–5.2.
- 5.1.17 The following evidence was used to determine the Roman Scheduled Monuments and Setting Zone: Figure 2.4 Interrelationships between the Roman Scheduled Monuments and the River Cam and tributaries (which was produced using sight-line analysis), Historic Environment Assessment 2016, The Roman Town of Great Chesterford, Medlycott (2011) [EAA 137], Topography (Landscape Character Assessment Plan HDA3).
- 5.1.18 The Roman Scheduled Monuments themselves do not form part of the Setting Zone and their boundaries are included in the setting zone boundary determination.
- 5.1.19 The western boundary of the Setting Zone follows the sight lines from the Roman Temple to the modern embankment of the M11, which forms a hard boundary to the setting of the sites. The southern boundary of the Setting Zone follows the northern boundary of the Roman Town, and the current built environment of the village of Great Chesterford to the B184. West of the B184, it follows the crest of the chalk ridge forming the river valley containing the east/west watercourse that joins the Roman sites, and has both ritual and topographical importance, not only between the sites, but eastward from the altar of the Roman temple along the watercourse towards the valley head. At the eastern boundary, it follows the sight lines and topography around the head of the valley and the short tributaries of the watercourse. To the north, the boundary is formed by the topography of the chalk ridge, following its lower extent and excluding the north/south river tributaries. On the lower flood plain to the west of Stump Cross roundabout, the boundary again follows the extent of the sight line from the Roman temple, joining the western boundary of the M11 embankment to the west.

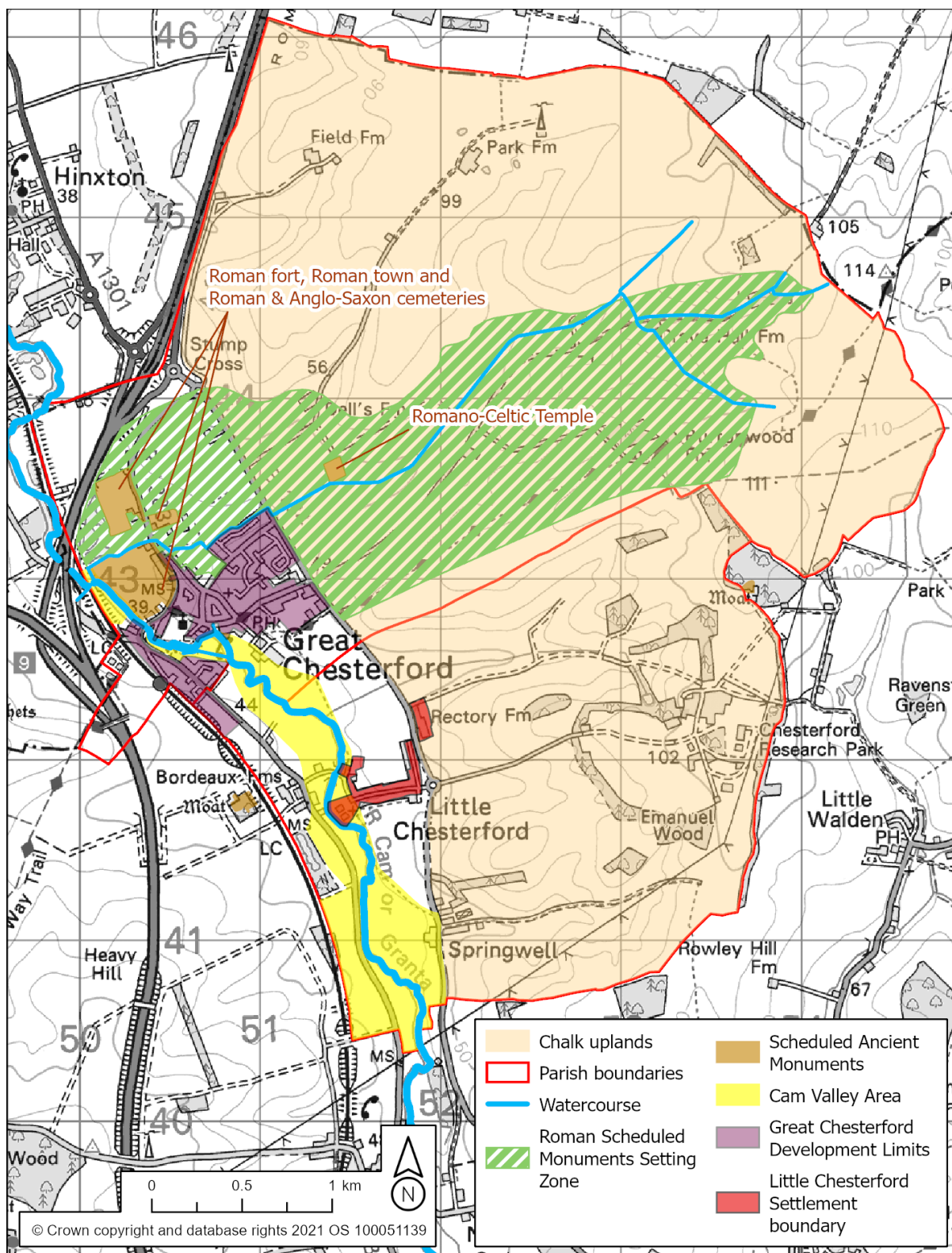


Figure 5.1 Strategic features of Plan Area
[To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version [here](#)]

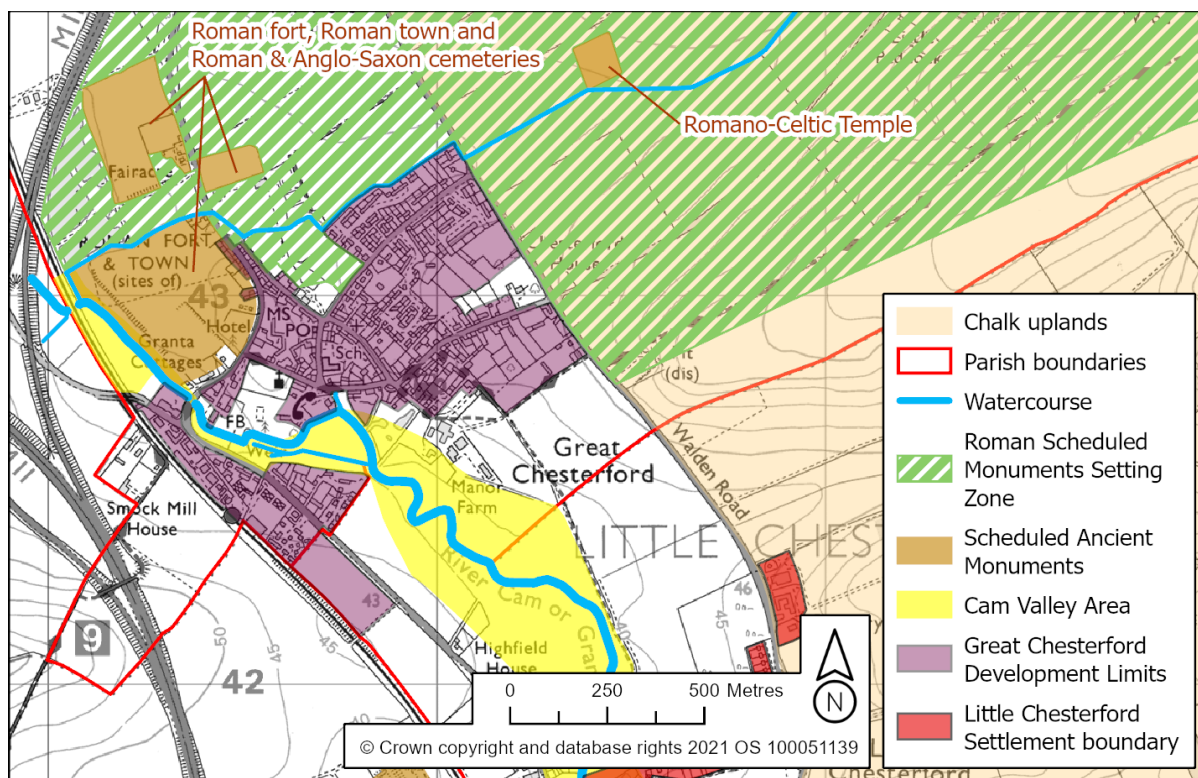


Figure 5.2 Great Chesterford strategic features
[To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version [here](#)]

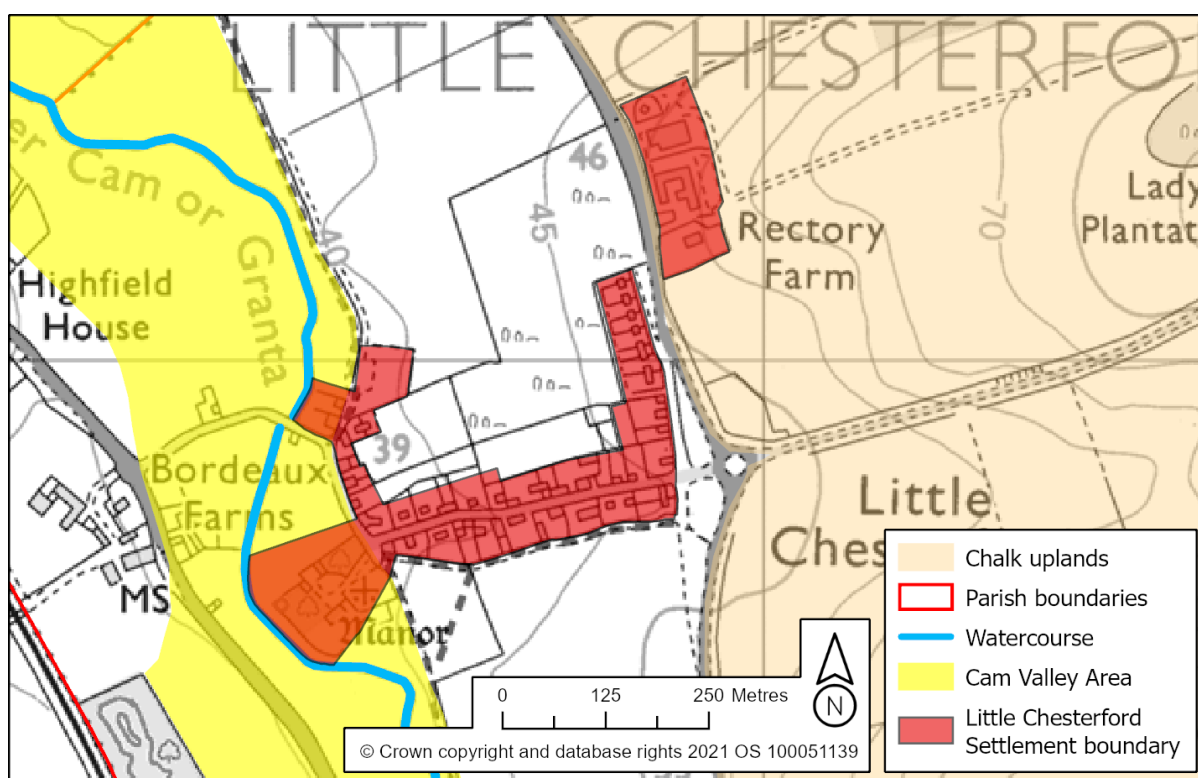


Figure 5.3 Little Chesterford strategic features
[To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version [here](#)]

Policy GLCNP/1 – Overall Spatial Strategy including key strategic landscape and heritage sensitivities

1. New development proposals should be within the development limits of Great Chesterford village, defined on Figure 5.2, or land allocated in Policy GLCNP/9.1.
2. Outside of the Great Chesterford development limits or Little Chesterford settlement boundary, the intrinsic character, rural nature and beauty of the area will be recognised and preserved and enhanced, and development proposals should relate to uses that:
 - Need to be located in the countryside;
 - Are appropriate to exception sites; or
 - Are employment uses at sites identified in Figure 5.23 or Figure 5.24.

The following principles apply in areas with specific strategic landscape and heritage sensitivities:

- a) Development proposals will be supported in the Chalk Uplands area defined in Figures 5.1–5.3 where they maintain and enhance the characteristics of the open chalk upland landscape.
- b) Development proposals will be supported in the Roman Scheduled Monuments and Setting Zone outlined in Figures 5.1 and 5.2 where they preserve and enhance the landscape features and conserve or enhance the significance of the Roman Scheduled Monuments including the inter-visibility between them.
- c) Development proposals in the Cam Valley Area as shown in Figures 5.1–5.3 will be supported if they preserve and enhance the landscape features, natural beauty and wildlife habitats of the watercourse, flood plain and river banks.



Photo 10 – Park Farm in the Chalk Uplands

5.2 Settlement Pattern and Separation

Policy Objective: To achieve the Plan's objective by retaining and protecting the individuality and distinctive characteristics of the three main settlements (the villages of Great Chesterford, Little Chesterford and the hamlet of Springwell) within the rural setting of the River Cam Valley, including their distinct settlement patterns.

Settlement Separation

- 5.2.1 Within the Neighbourhood Plan area, the distinct rural settlements of Great Chesterford, Little Chesterford and Springwell lie within Cam Valley, and the large employment site of Chesterford Research Park lies on the eastern chalk ridge. They are separated from each other by clear open areas of arable fields that have been characterised as having low landscape capacity for further development. This is further described in the Landscape Character Assessment (February 2017) and paragraphs 2.34–2.47 and 3.19–3.32.
- 5.2.2 The settlements are in a line, broadly north to south in direction, with a clear separation between each comprising arable fields. Most of these open areas have been identified in the Landscape Character assessment as having low landscape capacity for future development.
- 5.2.3 To the north of the Neighbourhood Plan area are the village of Hinxton and the Wellcome Genome Trust Campus. Planning permission has been granted for a mixed development including 1,500 dwellings extending the settlement boundary southward as far as the northern boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan area, bounded by the A1307/M11. The transition from the national road infrastructure and open plain to the north to the river valley containing the settlements in the Neighbourhood Plan area adds greatly to their sense of place.
- 5.2.4 These gaps between the Hinxton/Wellcome Genome Trust Campus and the national road network, Great Chesterford, Little Chesterford, Springwell and Chesterford Research Park serve as a rural buffer or visual break between them; they also protect the character and rural setting of settlements. These are defined as 'Separation Zones' in this Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan (see Figures 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6).
- 5.2.5 The distinctive settlement patterns of Great Chesterford, Little Chesterford and Springwell are essential to their character. Great Chesterford has developed a nucleated development pattern, Little Chesterford has retained a historic linear development pattern of a single row of dwellings to the sides of the road within well-defined settlement edges, and Springwell is a tightly clustered small hamlet. See the Landscape Character Assessment 2017 and sections 2.19, 2.27 and 2.29. The settlement boundary of Little Chesterford is defined in Figure 5.3.
- 5.2.6 Backland development in Little Chesterford would harm the character of its distinctive linear settlement pattern. 'Backland development' refers to any proposed housing development sites that do not have a direct frontage onto the existing highway.
- 5.2.7 The character of the small clustered hamlet of Springwell would be harmed by new housing development, as given in the explanation by the Planning Inspectorate (Appeal Reference APP/C1570/A/14/2226566) for refusal of a small development of

six houses, citing the effect on the character and appearance of the area, as well as the sustainability of its location. This would also be relevant to any other site in Springwell (see paragraphs 2.29 and 2.30).

- 5.2.8 The boundaries of the Separation Zones are largely determined by the topography and current and consented land use (see Plan HDA3 from Landscape Character Assessment).
- 5.2.9 The purpose of the *Northern Gateway Separation Zone* is to provide and serve as a rural buffer or visual break between Great Chesterford and the consented very large development to the north at Hinxton. It is to prevent coalescence between settlements and to provide a transition between the village of Great Chesterford and the national road infrastructure and open plain to the north to the river valley. The boundaries are therefore defined by the embankment of the M11, the B184 and the built environment/development limits of Great Chesterford.
- 5.2.10 The purpose of the *Great and Little Chesterford Separation Zone* is to provide a rural buffer or visual break between Great Chesterford and Little Chesterford and to prevent coalescence between settlements. The southern boundaries of this zone are therefore formed by the settlement boundaries of Little Chesterford north of the High Street, the western boundary by the parish boundary to the west, the northern boundary by the built limits of Great Chesterford, additionally excluding both the consented site at Chest 9 and the area between the site and the southern built limits of the Great Chesterford village at Manor Farm. To the east, the boundary is the B184.
- 5.2.11 The purpose of the *Little Chesterford and Springwell Separation Zone* is to provide a buffer between Little Chesterford and Springwell and to prevent coalescence between settlements. The northern boundaries of this zone are therefore the southern limits of the built environment at Little Chesterford, and extend aligned to the southern edge of the settlement at Springwell, and extend southwards to preserve the area between the two settlements, the southern boundary being aligned with the extent of the built environment at Springwell, extending across to the B1383. Due to the rising topography of the land, an area to the west of the road is excluded, and the separation zone boundary rejoins the parish boundary to leave the area to the south of Bordeaux Farms open.
- 5.2.12 The purpose of the *Little Chesterford and Chesterford Research Park Separation Zone* is to provide a buffer between Little Chesterford and Chesterford Research Park, and the limits are largely determined by the topography and green features of the area. The western boundary of this area is the green screening to the west of the village; the eastern boundary is formed by Emanuel Wood, and its continuing field boundary hedgerows. The southern boundary is formed by the green screening that forms the visual boundary to the north of Springwell, and its visual continuation along field boundaries to Emanuel Wood. The northern boundary is formed by the chalk ridge just to the north of the northern built limits running to the western boundary of the Chesterford Research Park.

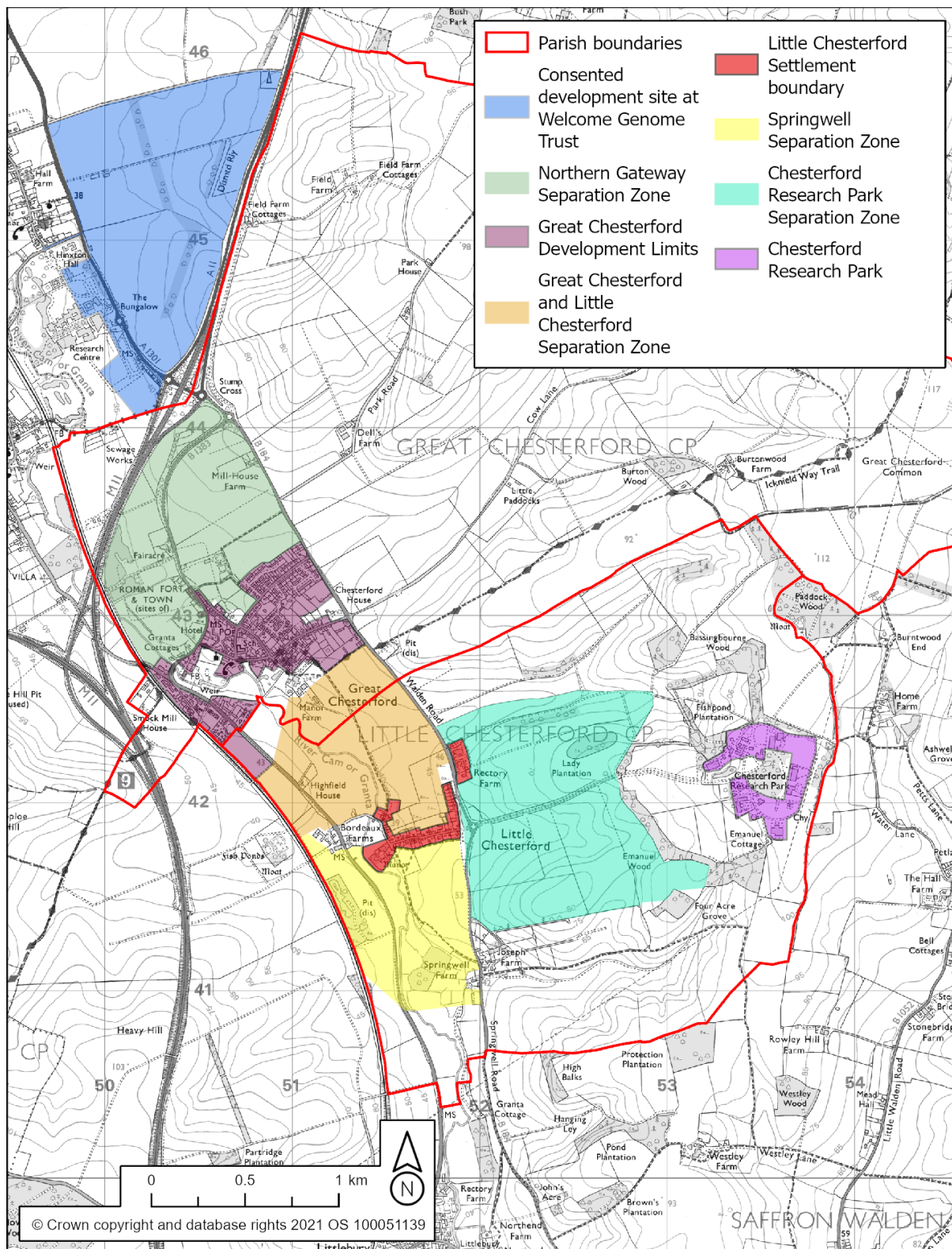


Figure 5.4 Separation zones overview

[To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version [here](#)]

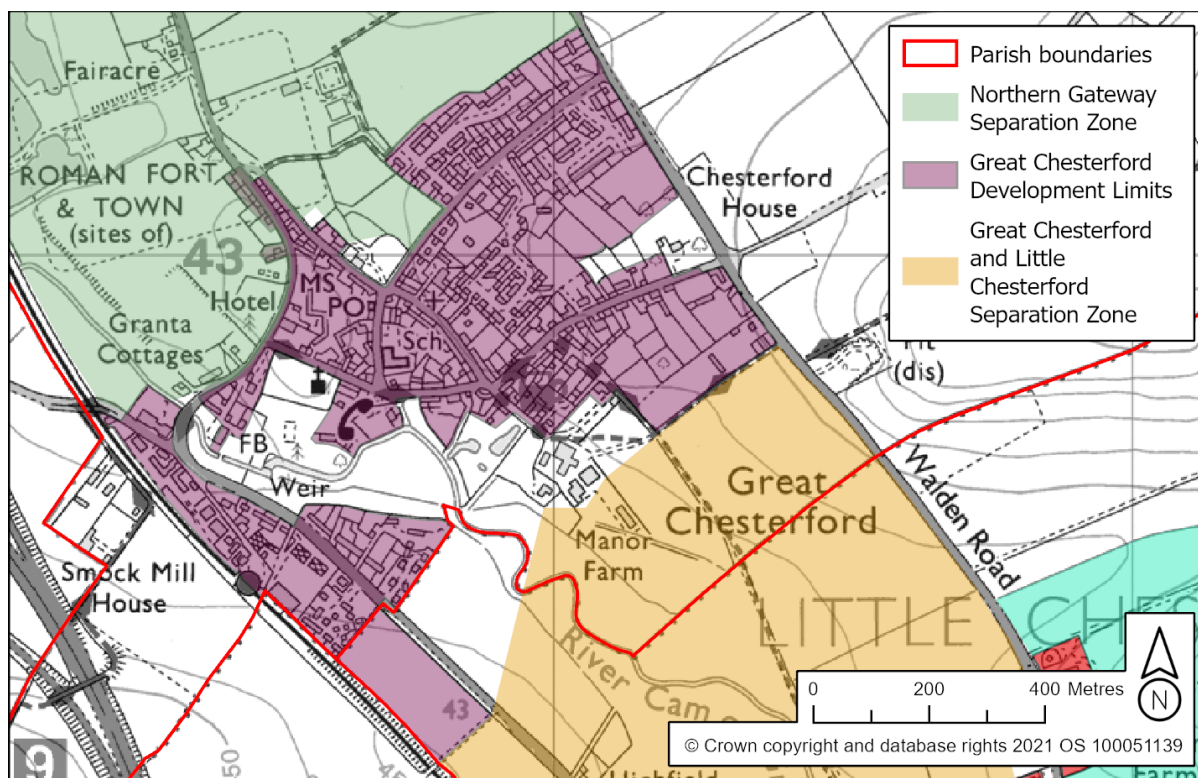


Figure 5.5 Great Chesterford separation zones
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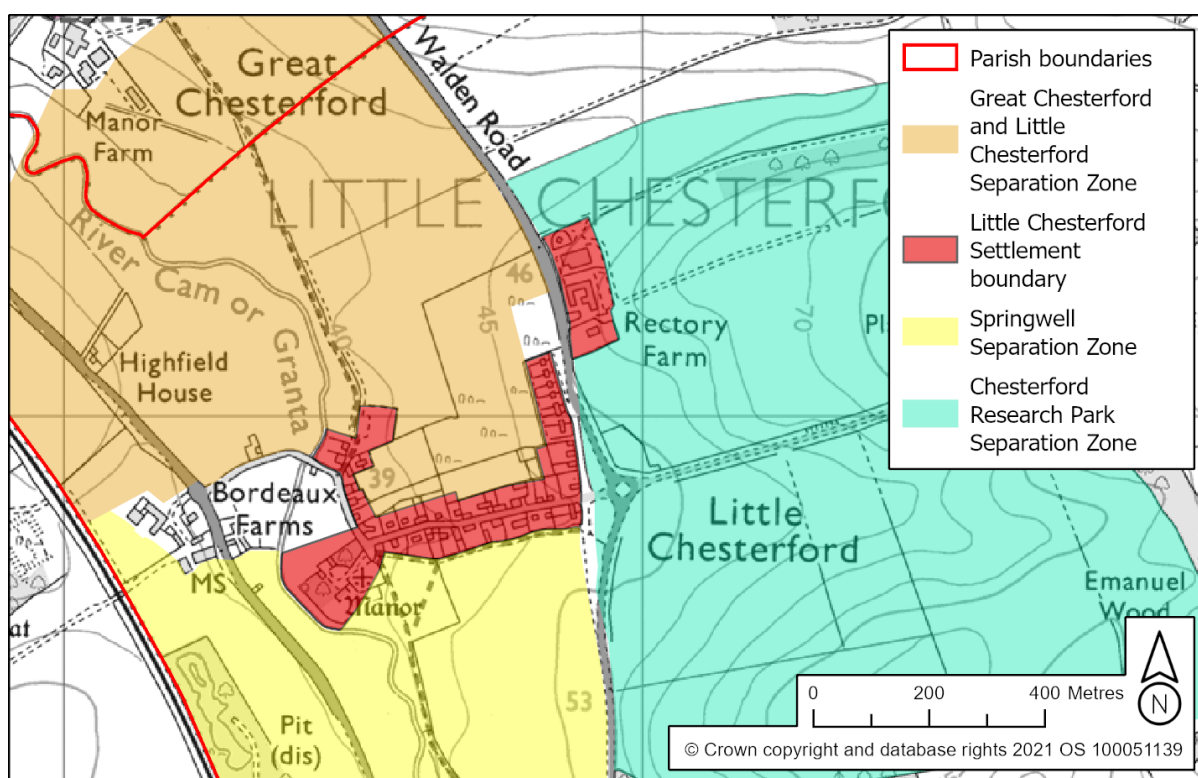


Figure 5.6 Little Chesterford separation zones
[To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version [here](#)]

Policy GLCNP/2 – Settlement Pattern and Separation

Outside the Great Chesterford development limits or Little Chesterford settlement boundary:

1. Development proposals in the following Separation Zones (Figure 5.4) should either be appropriate to a location outside a settlement, or otherwise avoid significant harm to the purpose of the Separation Zone in providing a rural buffer or visual break between settlements and/or protecting the character and rural setting of settlements:

- Little Chesterford/Chesterford Research Park Separation Zone
- Little Chesterford/Springwell Separation Zone
- Great and Little Chesterford Separation Zone
- Northern Gateway Separation Zone

Within the villages of Great Chesterford and Little Chesterford:

2. Any development should be sensitively designed, respecting the historic nature and historic architecture, conforming to the existing development patterns: nucleated in Great Chesterford and linear in Little Chesterford.
3. Backland development in Little Chesterford should not result in significant detrimental harm to the linear character of the village.



Photo 11 – Northern Gateway Area of Separation with Hinxton (and the consented site for 1,500 houses beyond the separation zone) in the background

5.3 Getting Around

Policy Objective: To achieve the Plan's objective by promoting safe and sustainable transport by promoting pedestrian use of railway station, safe pedestrian and cycle access to village services and between villages, road safety for all in village streets and promoting and enhancing cycling routes south to Saffron Walden and north towards Cambridge.

- 5.3.1 The Neighbourhood Plan Area is sited on the main route between the university city of Cambridge and the market town of Saffron Walden, close to the M11, and having a direct rail connection with Cambridge and London.
- 5.3.2 The centres of both villages are bypassed to the east by the B184 and the west by the B1383, which link the National Road network to the north of the villages to Saffron Walden and Stansted to the south.
- 5.3.3 The B1383 (formerly the A11) is a main route north to south and regularly used as a relief road when there are closures on the M11. For example, Highways England records 147 instances of partial or full road closures on full length of the M11 in just over one year, (from 1 January 2018 to 27 January 2019). It is reduced in speed through the village of Great Chesterford to 30mph but speeding is a significant issue, as is the pinch point along Newmarket Road between Church Street and Carmen Street where the road is very narrow and the pavement is too narrow for a pushchair / wheelchair. The B1383 is also unsightly as it bends round past the turning to Ickleton and has an overly urban feel.
- 5.3.4 The B184 links the national road network to Saffron Walden, and is reduced in speed to 40mph on the approaches to the roundabout which leads to Chesterford Research Park and the village of Little Chesterford. Speeding is also a significant issue on this road, and Essex County Council records one serious and one slight injury on this road from 1 January 2017 to 30 September 2020. The hamlet of Springwell experienced a fatality in 2001.
- 5.3.5 Great Chesterford contains three main internal thoroughfares: the High Street, which moving from east to west becomes South Street and then Church Street; School Street, which continues north onto Jacksons Lane; and Carmen and Carmel Streets. Little Chesterford contains one main thoroughfare; the High Street. These roads are narrow in many places, with listed buildings abutting the roadway, and frequent sections where there are no or narrow pavements.
- 5.3.6 These internal routes are frequently used as 'rat runs', especially the High Street in Little Chesterford, which forms the more direct route to Chesterford Research Park and to the north of Saffron Walden from the B1383. This is despite the efforts of the management team of Chesterford Research Park, which is committed to sustainable transport policies in order to reduce road and parking congestion (see Policy GLCNP/8 Employment). In the Little Chesterford Village Survey, 73% of respondents expressed safety concerns about volume and speed of traffic through the village.
- 5.3.7 The railway station (located to the south-west of Great Chesterford) is frequently or occasionally used by 68% of respondents to the Great Chesterford Survey and 63% of respondents to the Little Chesterford survey. Of those aged 5–18 in Great

Chesterford, 89% said they used the train at least sometimes. Trains to Cambridge take approximately 20 minutes and an hour and ten minutes to London. The route from Chesterford to both Cambridge and London is the 'stopper' service, as opposed to the Stansted Airport service or the fast route to London which, whilst they pass through Great Chesterford, do not stop there. Network Rail has stated that this is not likely to change.

- 5.3.8 There is a bus service between Saffron Walden and Cambridge which stops in the centre of the village of Great Chesterford and in Little Chesterford on the B184. Unlike the rail service, it is not well used, with 77% of respondents to the Great Chesterford Survey and 95% of respondents to the Little Chesterford Survey saying that they never or hardly ever use it. This was also reflected in those aged 5–18 years in Great Chesterford, with 57% saying they never used the bus service. The limitations of the service, including frequency and coverage, mean that it is unlikely to be a preferred option for those who have access to alternative means of transport. It remains an important service to those without alternatives.
- 5.3.9 An unpaved public footpath runs south from the end of Rose Lane/Manor Lane in Great Chesterford to the High Street in Little Chesterford alongside the river and continues to the hamlet of Springwell, as shown in Figure 5.21. There is no footway linking directly to Saffron Walden from the villages; an indirect footpath leads from Springwell up to the top of the chalk ridge to the east and down into Saffron Walden at Catons Lane.
- 5.3.10 Most people know where the public footpaths are around the villages (see Figure 2.11); and around 65% of those people in Great Chesterford use them without difficulty. The Little Chesterford Village Survey indicated a desire for better linkage of footpaths to other villages/towns.
- 5.3.11 Parking is a concern in both parishes, as reflected in the Village Surveys, with reference to parking during school drop-off and pick-up times in Great Chesterford being a particular issue, and pavement parking in Little Chesterford causing concern.
- 5.3.12 The Great Chesterford Village Plan indicated there is significant support within the parish for improved cycle routes, while in Little Chesterford, 71% of residents supported the creation of new cycle routes, with 43% indicating they would use them.
- 5.3.13 The Essex Highway report on Great Chesterford Cycle Route Feasibility Study April 2014 (DC1920) defines the need for improved cycle paths to connect Great and Little Chesterford to Saffron Walden. Option 1, also supported by 2014 Uttlesford Cycling Strategy, is the preferred route. Owing to the total cost of the project, it is broken down into eight sections (see Figure 5.7).
- 5.3.14 The Great Chesterford Primary Academy Survey 2019 highlighted that the children's top two preferred modes of transport are on foot and on wheels (such as bikes or scooters).

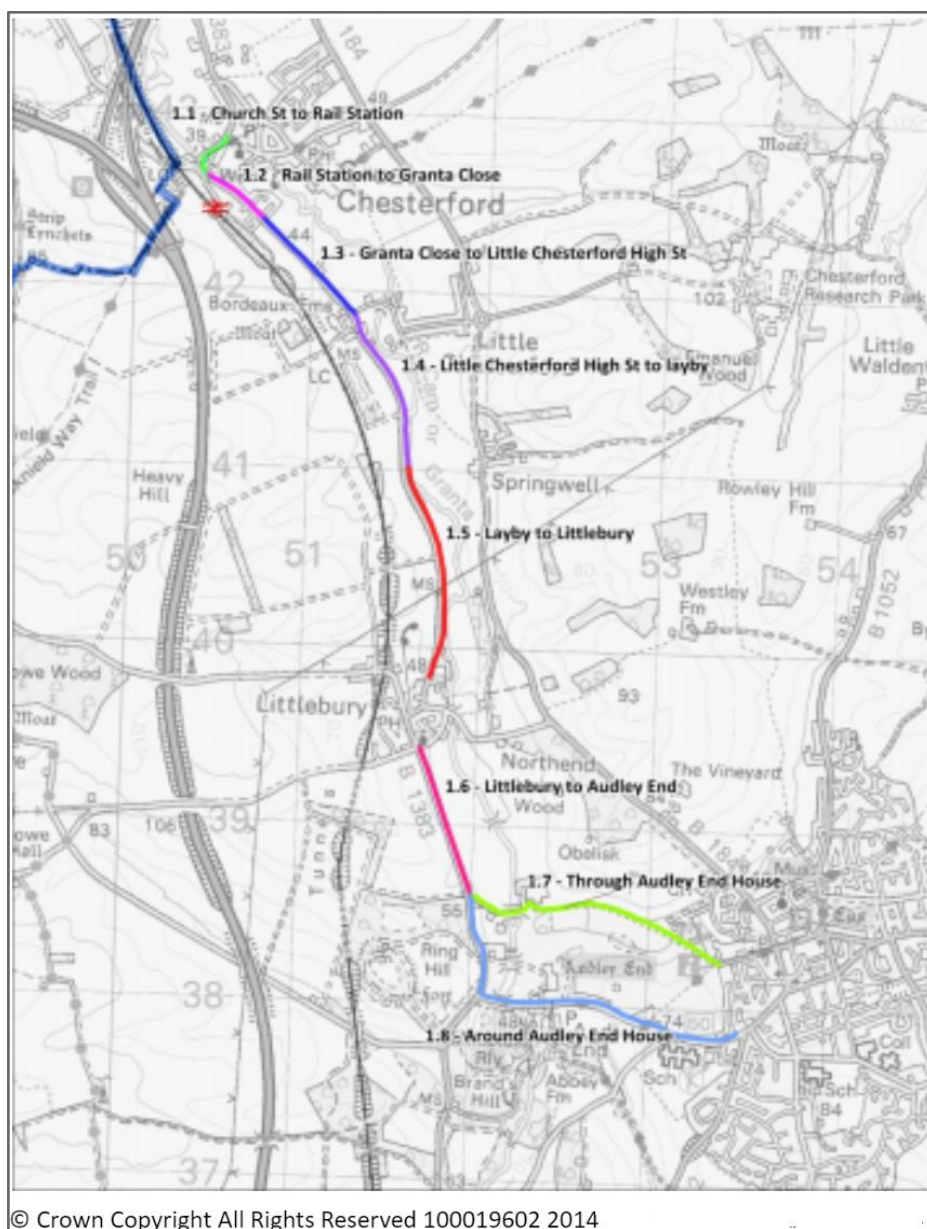


Figure 5.7 Great Chesterford Cycle Route Feasibility Study 2014 – Option 1

- 5.3.15 Development already consented within Great Chesterford on London Road (Enterprise Developments – Woodland Rise) has installed section 1.2 of the preferred route, albeit use for cycles has yet to be authorised. Further development consented on London Road is not providing a contribution to section 1.3, but rather putting in a separate section of cycleway on the west side of the road linking it to the station – critical to the sustainability of that site, but not contributing to the overall scheme.
- 5.3.16 The overall strategy is to create a cycle path linking both villages to Saffron Walden (evidenced in the 2014 feasibility study) and also to the Wellcome Genome Trust/ Sanger Institute, the latter already being linked to the Cambridge cycleway system.

- 5.3.17 Any development in the Neighbourhood Plan area should provide or contribute to:
- improvement of existing pavements serving the development to make them more accessible for all users, including children and those with limited mobility.
 - implementation of sections of the proposed Chesterford to Saffron Walden cycle route and better cycle and pedestrian connections to Great Chesterford train station.
- 5.3.18 Any development in Great Chesterford whose principal access is the B1383 will provide/contribute towards improvements to the existing narrow and unsafe pavement along the B1383.
- 5.3.19 Any development in or adjoining Great Chesterford will provide/contribute towards public realm improvements along the B1383 at the bend/junction with the road to Ickleton (which results in de-urbanising this stretch and improving the street scene).
- 5.3.20 Any development in or adjoining the south of Great Chesterford whose principal access is the B1383 will provide/fund better pedestrian links from the southern part of Great Chesterford village to the village centre, including the creation of a route over the River Cam to facilitate pedestrian access from the southern part of Great Chesterford village to the village centre.
- 5.3.21 Any development in the Neighbourhood Plan Area which will increase traffic movements through Little Chesterford will contribute to mitigation measures to improve road safety.

Policy GLCNP/3 – Getting Around

1. Development proposals should include suitable provision for adequate sustainable transport infrastructure and be designed to prioritise pedestrian and cycle movements.
2. Proposed development should where appropriate be capable of providing direct access to safe walking routes to all village amenities including provision of pedestrian crossings as appropriate. Village amenities are defined as:
 - a) In Great Chesterford: the railway station, shop, surgeries, school, preschool and the Chesterford Community Centre;
 - b) In Little Chesterford: the Village Hall and Church, and the bus stops on the B184.
3. The following on-site infrastructure should be provided on any proposed development as appropriate:
 - a) Provision of vehicle charging points for all dwellings and parking standards in accordance with the Essex Design Guide or the updated Essex Parking Standards Guidance (whichever is more recent).
 - b) Provision of adequate footway pavements which link with the existing pedestrian network.
4. Where directly, fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development, off-site contributions or physical infrastructure works shall be sought for pedestrian and cycle infrastructure improvements and road safety measures, including those listed at paragraphs 5.3.17–5.3.21.

5.4 Landscape Characteristics and Views

Policy Objective: To conserve and enhance important landscape characteristics and views.

Landscape Characteristics

- 5.4.1 The Landscape Character Assessment 2017 (LCA) determines the parishes' local landscape character, identifying key characteristics and sensitivities, both in terms of character and visibility. The report sets out landscape capacity and development guidelines. It does not, however, take account of the historic environment or other important factors such as settlement patterns which are to be found in other policies.
- 5.4.2 This LCA is used by both Parish Councils to inform planning decisions at parish level and its conclusions are endorsed, with some additional limitations.
- 5.4.3 Paragraphs 3.15–3.28 and Figure 3.1 give a detailed commentary on the findings of the Landscape Character Assessment and the recommendations it made in relation to the capacity for development within Great and Little Chesterford.
- 5.4.4 In order to conserve and enhance the landscape setting of the three main settlements of Great Chesterford, Little Chesterford and Springwell, evidence from the Landscape Character Assessments and Village Walks was reviewed to identify areas of green screening that are key to maintaining the sense of place of the settlements and their approaches. Consideration was given to their role in maintaining the green and leafy nature of the settlements in their rural landscape; the transition from open landscape and views from the road infrastructure to the built environment; characteristic local flora (e.g., the distinctive stand of pines from the northern approach to Springwell), and the absence of other protected characteristics (e.g., woodlands identified as important or ancient). These key areas of green screening are shown in Figures 5.8 and 5.9. These figures also identify the special verges (see paragraphs 2.43 and 2.47) within the Plan area.
- 5.4.5 Figure 5.10 identifies the woodland, ancient woodland, important woodland within the Plan area (see paragraphs 2.33, 2.39, 2.45, 2.48, 2.48, 2.53 and 2.54).

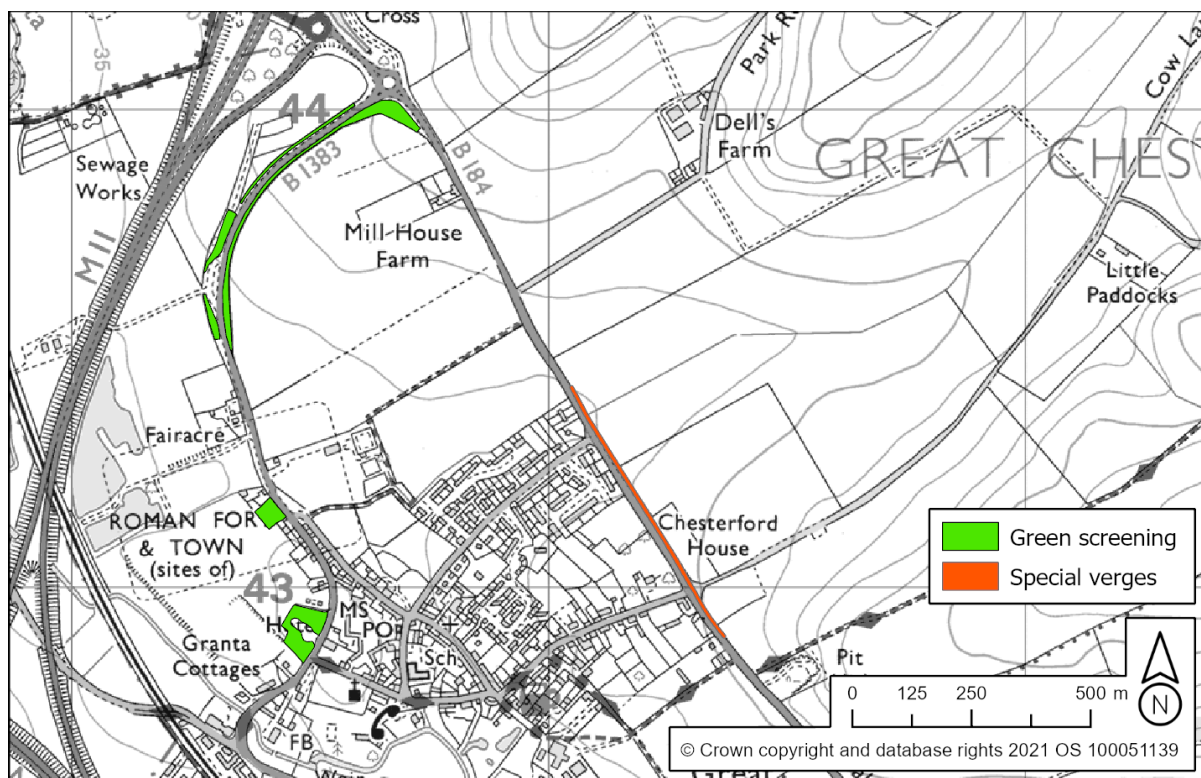


Figure 5.8 Great Chesterford green screening and special verges
[To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version [here](#)]

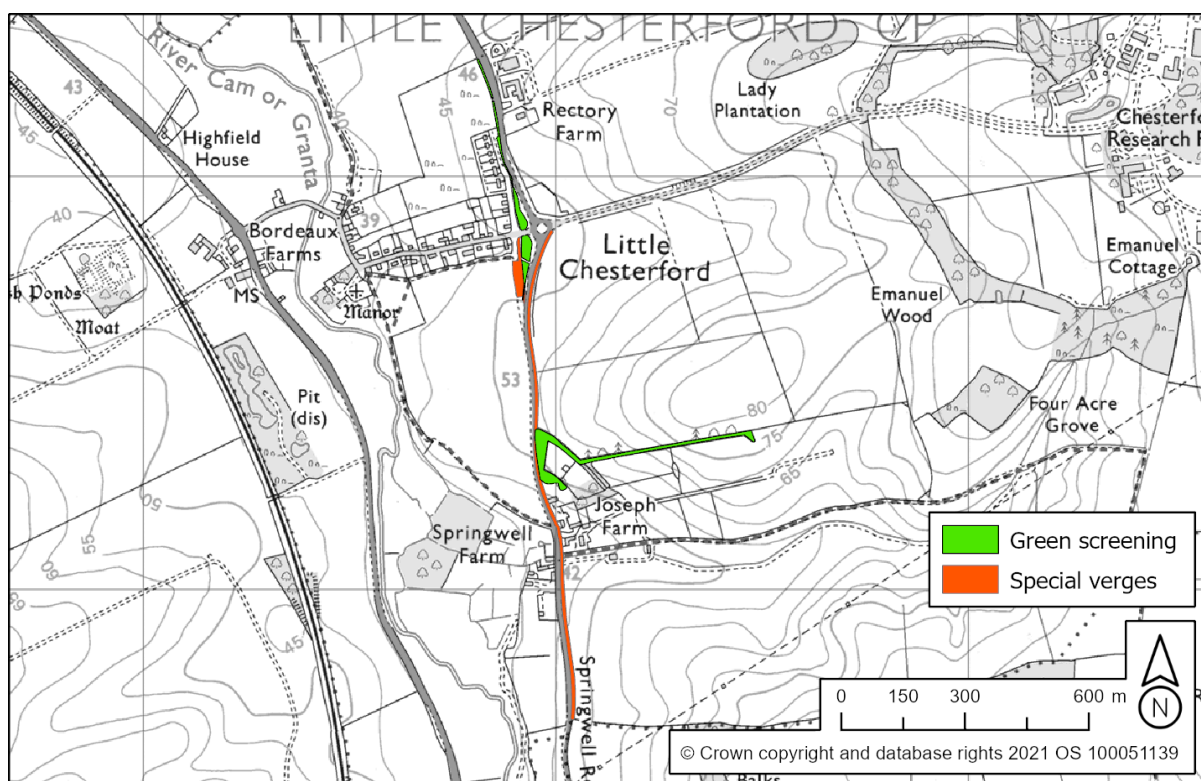


Figure 5.9 Little Chesterford green screening and special verges
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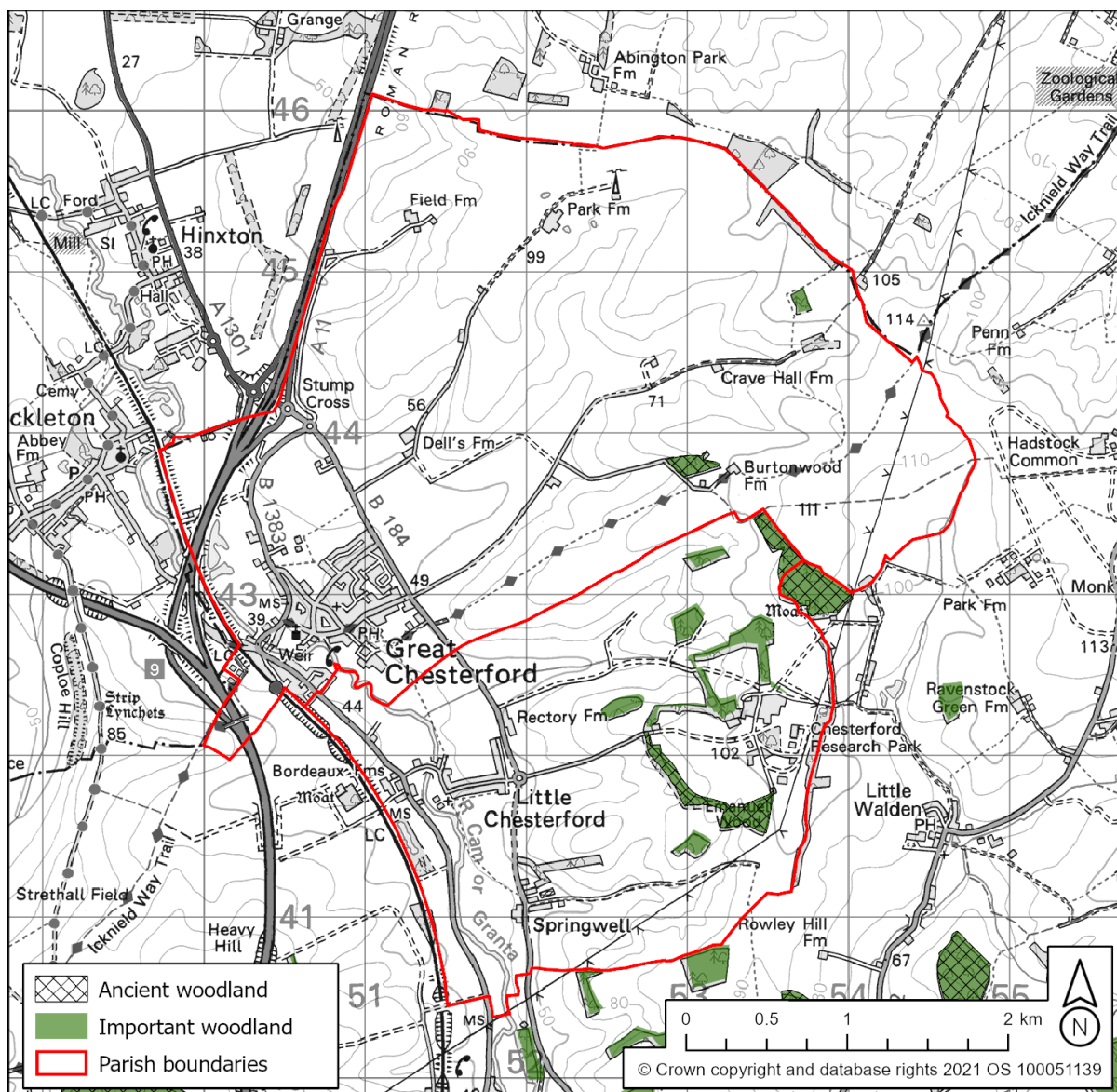


Figure 5.10 Woodland, ancient woodland, important woodland
[To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version [here](#)]

Policy GLCNP/4a – Landscape Character

Development will be supported if:

- It is appropriate, having regard to the landscape sensitivity and landscape value attributed to the landscape character area in which it is located, as described in the Chesterfords' Landscape Character Assessment 2017;
- It conserves or enhances the landscape pattern including woodland areas (see Figure 5.10), hedgerows and individual trees, and does not diminish the role they play in views across the landscape;
- It conserves or enhances the historic landscape character of field patterns and field size, greens, commons or verges;
- It conserves or enhances special verges and green screening (see Figures 5.8 and 5.9); and
- It conserves or enhances the landscape significance and better reveals cultural and heritage links.

Views

- 5.4.6 The Landscape Character Assessment 2017 identified that one of the key elements of the landscape character of Great and Little Chesterford is the views to and from the villages and the Chesterford Ridge: *“Due to the open nature of the landscape and the dramatic changes in topography, there are important views from the villages up to Chesterford Ridge and to the opposite valley side to Strethall Ridge. From the ridges, there are impressive views across the valley landscape, to which the villages contribute.”* These panoramic views to and from the Chesterford Ridge and its chalk upper slopes are valued by the community, especially where they incorporate important local landmarks such as Scheduled Monuments and historic buildings. These views should be collectively and generally maintained and enhanced in addition to the individually identified views defined below.
- 5.4.7 A number of individual Important Views were identified within UDC’s Conservation Area Appraisal 2007 (Section 3, Figures 4–7) and in Appendix 2 of the Historic Environment Assessment 2016. The views identified and listed in these three documents are set out in Table 5.1 and shown in Figures 5.11–5.14.
- 5.4.8 The Important Views Designation Report was produced to accompany the Plan and provides evidence to support Policy GLCNP/4b. It contains an assessment of the Significant Views identified in the Historic Environment Assessment, the Important Views identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal and the Community Designated Views identified by residents. A summary of these views is provided in Table 5.1 below.
- 5.4.9 Consultations with residents have identified specific views that are important to them, and which make their village an attractive place to live. The most common of these identified in village walks and surveys have been designated as Locally Important Views. Those which duplicated previously identified Important Views have not been included. As Little Chesterford does not have a Conservation Area, notwithstanding its historic character, the majority of these views are within this parish. These have been identified for the purpose of preventing development proposals that would have a detrimental impact on an Important View, by way of their scale, height, use of materials or lighting. These Locally Important Views are included in Table 5.1 and identified in Figures 5.13 and 5.14.
- 5.4.10 Important Views are those identified by reports in the evidence base, including the Conservation Area Appraisal (named Important Views in that report) and Historic Environment Assessment (named Significant Views in that report). Locally Important Views are those identified by the community through surveys and village walks (named Community Designated views in the Important Views and Locally Important Views Designation Report March 2022).

Table 5.1

View	Description
1 – Great Chesterford and Roman town from Icknield Way [Important View]	From the Icknield Way, the view north-west to south-west is of the Scheduled Roman town and Great Chesterford Conservation Area beyond.
2 – Great Chesterford from Little Chesterford [Important View]	From Little Chesterford, this view stretches across fields and along the river valley towards the Great Chesterford Conservation Area.
3 – The Roman Town from the Roman temple [Important View]	From the farm track at the north-west corner of the Scheduled temple, this view looks towards the Scheduled Roman town (the open area behind the telegraph pole).
4 – The Roman temple from the Roman fort [Important View]	From the footpath on the eastern edge of the Scheduled Roman fort looking eastwards to the temple site (in the slight valley behind the prominent tree in the far distance).
5 – The Roman fort and town [Important View]	View from the footpath on the eastern edge of the Scheduled Roman fort looking westwards into the fort and the Roman town site behind it.
6 – The Roman temple from Cow Lane [Important View]	View from Cow Lane across the Scheduled Roman temple site (in the middle distance) showing the open rural landscape setting.
7 – The Roman town from Cow Lane [Important View]	View from Cow Lane to the Scheduled Roman town (in the far distance) showing the open rural landscape setting.
8 – The Roman town from Newmarket Road (i) [Important View]	This view from an area of Newmarket Road looks into the Scheduled Roman town.
9 – The Roman town from Newmarket Road (ii) [Important View]	This view from an area of Newmarket Road looks into the Scheduled Roman town.
10 – The Roman town from Newmarket Road (iii) [Important View]	This view from an area of Newmarket Road looks into the Scheduled Roman town.
11 – The Roman town from across the River Cam [Important View]	From the bridge across the River Cam this view looks over the Scheduled Roman town.
12 – Horse River Green and the River Cam [Important View]	The view looks into Horse River Green and over the River Cam.
13 – Along the River Cam from Horse River Green [Important View]	View from Horse River Green looking north-west along the River Cam.
14 – Bishop's House grounds from All Saints' churchyard [Important View]	From All Saints' churchyard, Great Chesterford this view looks into Bishop's House grounds.
15 – All Saints' Church from Newmarket Road [Important View]	From the junction of Newmarket Road and Church Road the view looks towards All Saints Church, Great Chesterford.
16 – King's Mill from London Road [Important View]	From London Road the view looks into Great Chesterford Conservation Area and King's Mill.
17 – Carmen Street [Important View]	This view from the edge of the Great Chesterford Conservation Area faces out into Carmen Street.
18 – The paddocks from Carmen Street [Important View]	View from Carmen Street into the paddocks on the edge of the Conservation Area.
19 – Curve of Roman town walls along Newmarket Road [Important View]	This view looks westwards along Newmarket Road showing the curve of the road as it echoes the Roman town walls.

20 – Great Chesterford High Street [Important View]	This view looks westward down the High Street, Great Chesterford.
21 – All Saints’ Church from Church Street (i) [Important View]	This view from Church Street entrance looks at the whole of All Saints’ church, Great Chesterford.
22 – All Saints’ Church from churchyard [Important View]	This view from the churchyard looks over All Saints’ church, Great Chesterford.
23 – All Saints’ Church from Carmen Street [Important View]	View of All Saints’ Church, Great Chesterford from Carmen Street, across the school playing field.
24 – St Mary the Virgin church, from the carpark [Important View]	View of St Mary the Virgin Church, Little Chesterford from the church car park.
25 – The Manor, Little Chesterford from the churchyard [Important View]	View from the churchyard of St Mary the Virgin Church, Little Chesterford to The Manor.
26 – The Manor, Little Chesterford, from the High Street [Important View]	View from the High Street, Little Chesterford close to the bridge looking southwards to The Manor.
27 – Bordeaux Farm from London Road [Important View]	View of Little Bordeaux Farm from London Road of Springwell Hamlet, looking westward with the farm buildings in the foreground and the scheduled monument in the near distance.
28 – Springwell from Walden Road [Locally Important View]	View from Walden Road of Springwell Hamlet, looking northwards with the listed buildings of Springwell Farm to the west and Joseph’s Farm and Springwell Cottage to the north-east.
29 – Springwell from public footpath [Locally Important View]	View from the public footpath leading east from Springwell, looking down the hill towards the hamlet.
30 – Cross-valley view above Springwell [Locally Important View]	View from the public footpath that runs north/south along chalk uplands above the hamlet of Springwell, looking west across the valley.
31 – High Street, Little Chesterford, eastern end [Locally Important View]	View looking down High Street, Little Chesterford from the junction with the old Walden Road.
32 – Centre of High Street, Little Chesterford [Locally Important View]	View looking along the High Street, Little Chesterford adjacent to Bank Cottage.
33 – High Street, Little Chesterford, Western End [Locally Important View]	View looking along the High Street, Little Chesterford adjacent to the Reading Room Cottages.
34 – St Mary the Virgin Church, Little Chesterford along Back Lane footpath [Locally Important View]	View looking west along Back Lane public footpath towards St Mary the Virgin Church, Little Chesterford
35 – Cam valley from Back Lane footpath, Little Chesterford [Locally Important View]	View looking south from the Back Lane public footpath towards Springwell.
36 – River Cam from Historic Bridge at Little Chesterford, southward [Locally Important View]	View to the south from the historic bridge at Little Chesterford along the River Cam.
37 – River Cam from Historic Bridge at Little Chesterford, northward [Locally Important View]	View to the south from the historic bridge at Little Chesterford along the River Cam.
38 – River Cam valley from green at Manor Cottages, Little Chesterford [Locally Important View]	View along river valley and to chalk uplands from the green adjacent to Manor Cottages, Little Chesterford.

39 – Paddock from Carmen Street [Important View]	View looking east from Carmen Street over the paddock.
40 – Across the River Cam from Horse River Green [Important View]	View looking south-west across the River Cam from Horse River Green.
41 – All Saints' Church from Church Street (ii) [Important View]	View of All Saints' Church looking south-east.
42 – Paddock from Jacksons Lane [Important View]	View looking north-west from Jacksons Lane over the paddock.
43 – From Cow Lane [Locally Important View]	View between Little Paddocks and Grumble Hall towards Strethall and Park Farm.
44 – From permissive path linking Grumble Hall to Park Farm [Locally Important View]	View towards Great Chesterford and to the ridge at Strethall.

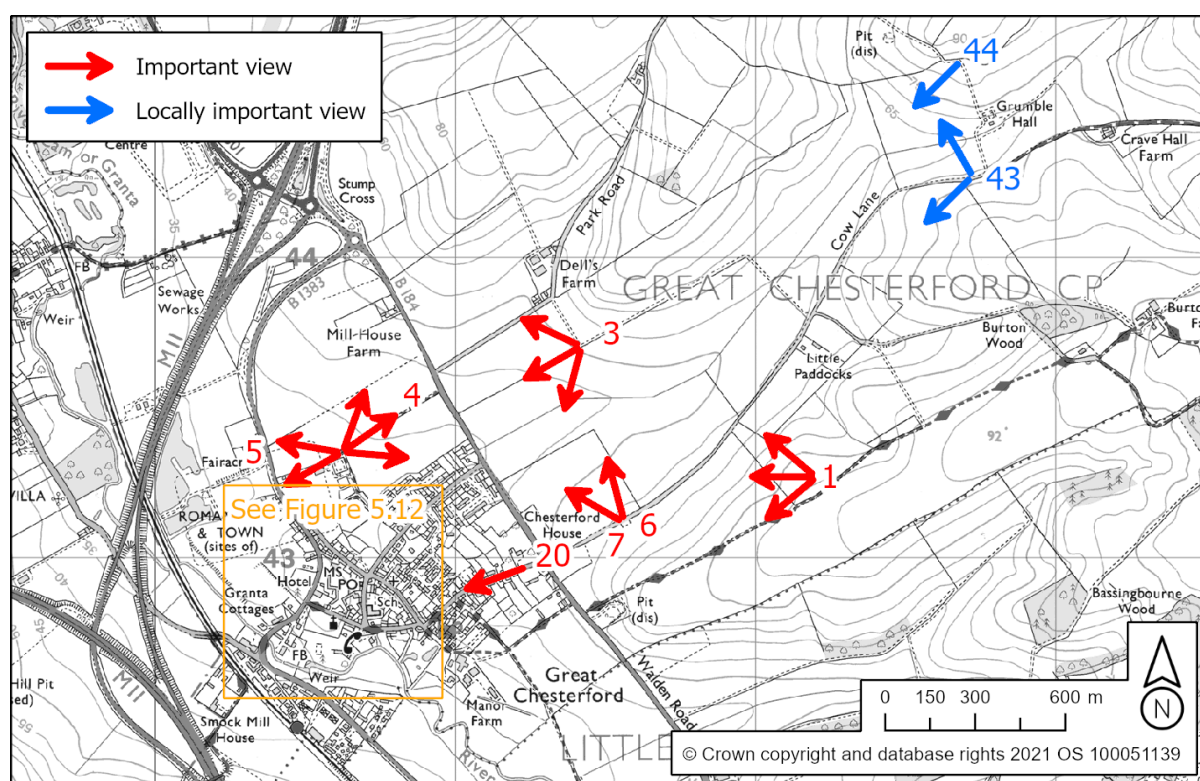


Figure 5.11 Great Chesterford Important Views – overview
 [To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version [here](#)]

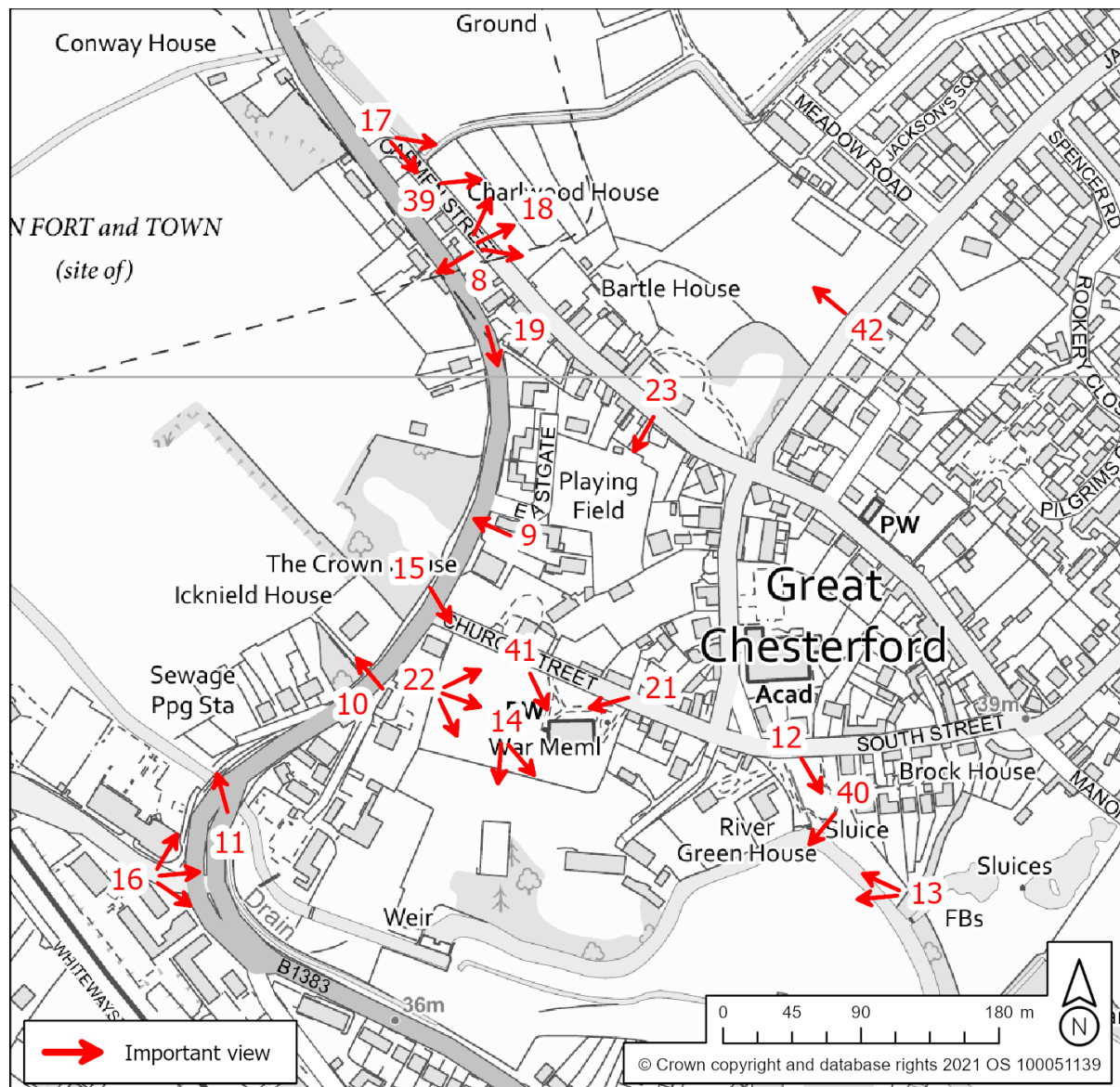


Figure 5.12 Great Chesterford Important views – detailed inset
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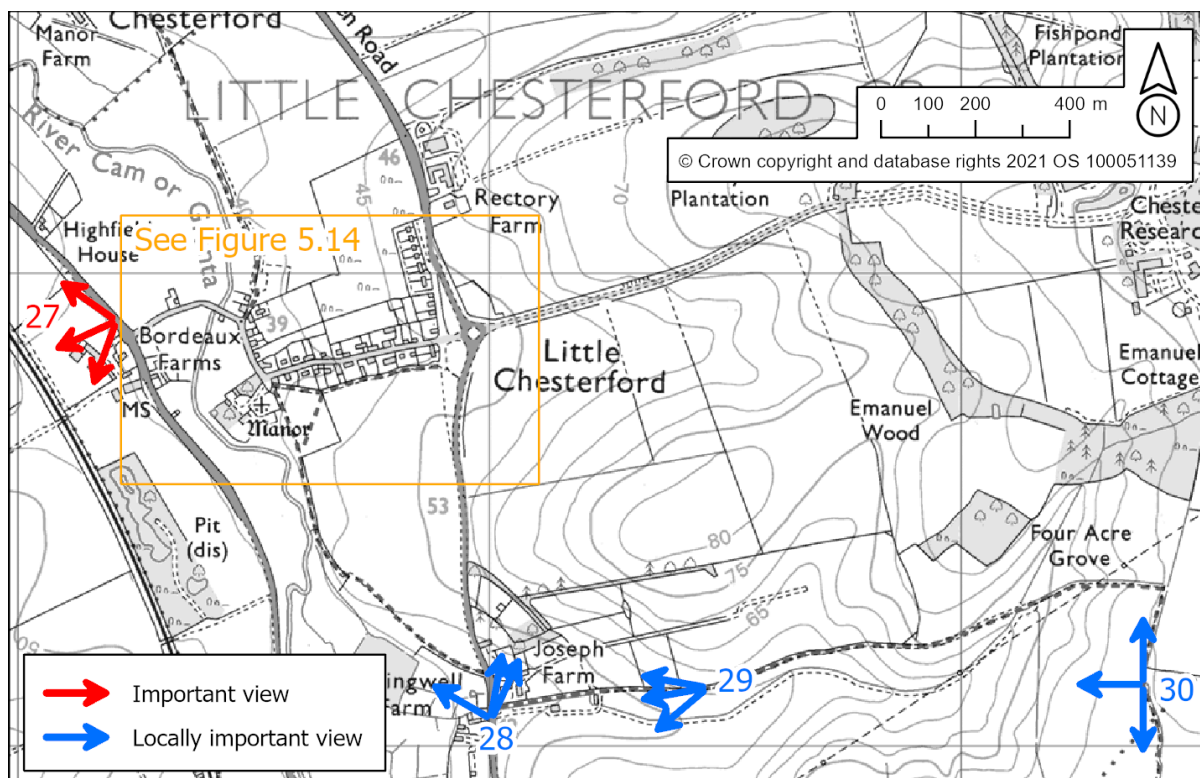


Figure 5.13 Little Chesterford Important and Locally Important Views – overview
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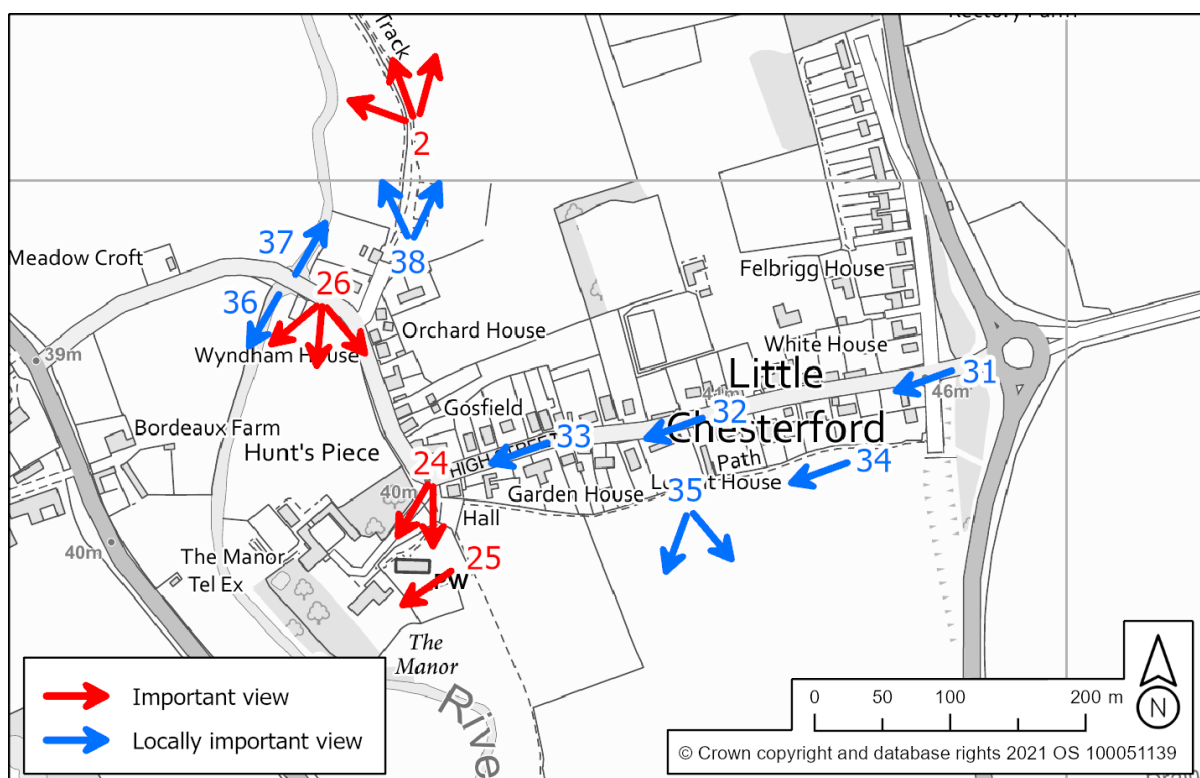


Figure 5.14 Little Chesterford Important and Locally Important Views – detailed inset
[To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version [here](#)]

Policy GLCNP/4b – Views

Development will be supported if:

- a) It maintains or enhances and does not significantly adversely impact upon the Important Views or Locally Important Views;
- b) The panoramic views to and from the Chesterford Ridge and Chalk Upper Slopes are maintained, including open views to and from Scheduled Monuments, historic buildings and landmarks such as churches.

5.5 Historic Environment

Policy Objective: To conserve and enhance the historic environment features of the Neighbourhood Plan area.

- 5.5.1 The historic environment of both Great and Little Chesterford is of national and local importance – it includes Scheduled Monuments, a plethora of heritage assets designated for protection by Historic England, historic cores in both villages and a host of historic features (see paragraphs 2.5–2.7, 2.17, 2.18, 2.20–2.26, 2.28 and 2.30).
- 5.5.2 The Local Heritage List for Uttlesford <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/local-heritage-list> covers buildings, structures and sites that are not already listed by Historic England but are worth preserving because of their quality, style or historical importance. It comprises structures which are considered to be locally significant, and contribute to the unique character and distinctiveness of the area. There are 28 structures in Great Chesterford and 3 structures in Little Chesterford on UDC’s Local Heritage List. Their inclusion ensures that any future planning proposals continue to conserve the special characteristics of the structure.
- 5.5.3 In Little Chesterford there are two particular Local Historic Features which are important and which do not have other forms of statutory protection and are therefore protected by this policy (see paragraphs 3.41 and 3.42):
- 5.5.4 (a) Flint and brick walls are a distinctive boundary treatment and a very important architectural feature of the village, constructed of flint panels supported by brick piers and capping. The use of this material reflects the local geology and historical availability of flints found in abundance on the fields surrounding the village and many are likely to have been built using materials from earlier structures, including the Roman walls themselves; and
- 5.5.5 (b) Sunken Banks running alongside the road are a historical and unique feature of the villages and they provide a buffer between roads and properties. They add to the character of the village and contribute to the historical charm and feel. Both Brick and Flint Walls and Sunken Banks in Little Chesterford will be protected.
- 5.5.6 In Great Chesterford, there are 273 Non-Designated Assets recorded on the Historic Environment Record, and 70 in Little Chesterford. These range in scale from cropmark complexes and Roman roads, down to sites of individual finds. They are widely distributed across the parish. Any development proposals will be expected to have particular regard to the heritage of the communities and be expected to be carried out in such a way in order to carefully identify any new Non-Designated Assets and treat them and existing Non-Designated Assets with appropriate sensitivity.
- 5.5.7 As described in the Historic Environment Assessment (2016), the Scheduled Monument that consists of a moated site, fishpond and enclosure at Bordeaux Farms is located to the rear of the current Bordeaux Farm in Little Chesterford. The current farm includes a grade II Listed 17th–18th century farmhouse, demonstrating a continuity of occupation and use of the farm since the medieval period. The agricultural setting, reflecting the Scheduled Monument’s original land use, makes a major positive contribution to the significance of the moated site. This agricultural setting, visible from the Monument looking west over the Cam river valley, is bounded by consented and existing residential development, but is otherwise current and historic farmland. This Neighbourhood Plan endorses the Historic Environment Assessment’s recommendation that *“The setting of the Bordeaux Farm Scheduled Site directly relates to the modern Bordeaux Farm and the*

immediate rural landscape. Development that does not relate directly to the agricultural role of the farm should be avoided in this area.”

- 5.5.8 This Neighbourhood Plan endorses the historic environment findings of the Landscape Character Assessment of 2017. In particular, that:

“The majority of open spaces within the village of Great Chesterford lie within the Conservation Area, which is protected through national and local planning policy. Any proposed development would need to preserve or enhance the special character or appearance of the Conservation Area. The river, public and private incidental open spaces and feature walls are an intrinsic part of the special character of the Conservation Area. As a result, the primary open spaces and routes are particularly sensitive to new development, and should be preserved.” This similarly applies to the open spaces and routes to be found in and surrounding the historic core of Little Chesterford.

“Development proposed within the villages but outside the Great Chesterford Conservation Area would still need to consider the setting to the Conservation Area and the contribution that the proposals could make to the overall character of the villages.”

- 5.5.9 This Neighbourhood Plan also endorses the recommendations of the Historic Environment Assessment of 2016, as set out in paragraph 3.47.
- 5.5.10 Historic Environment Features are shown in Figures 5.15 (Overview), 5.16 (Great Chesterford), 5.17 (Little Chesterford) and 5.18 (Scheduled Monuments).

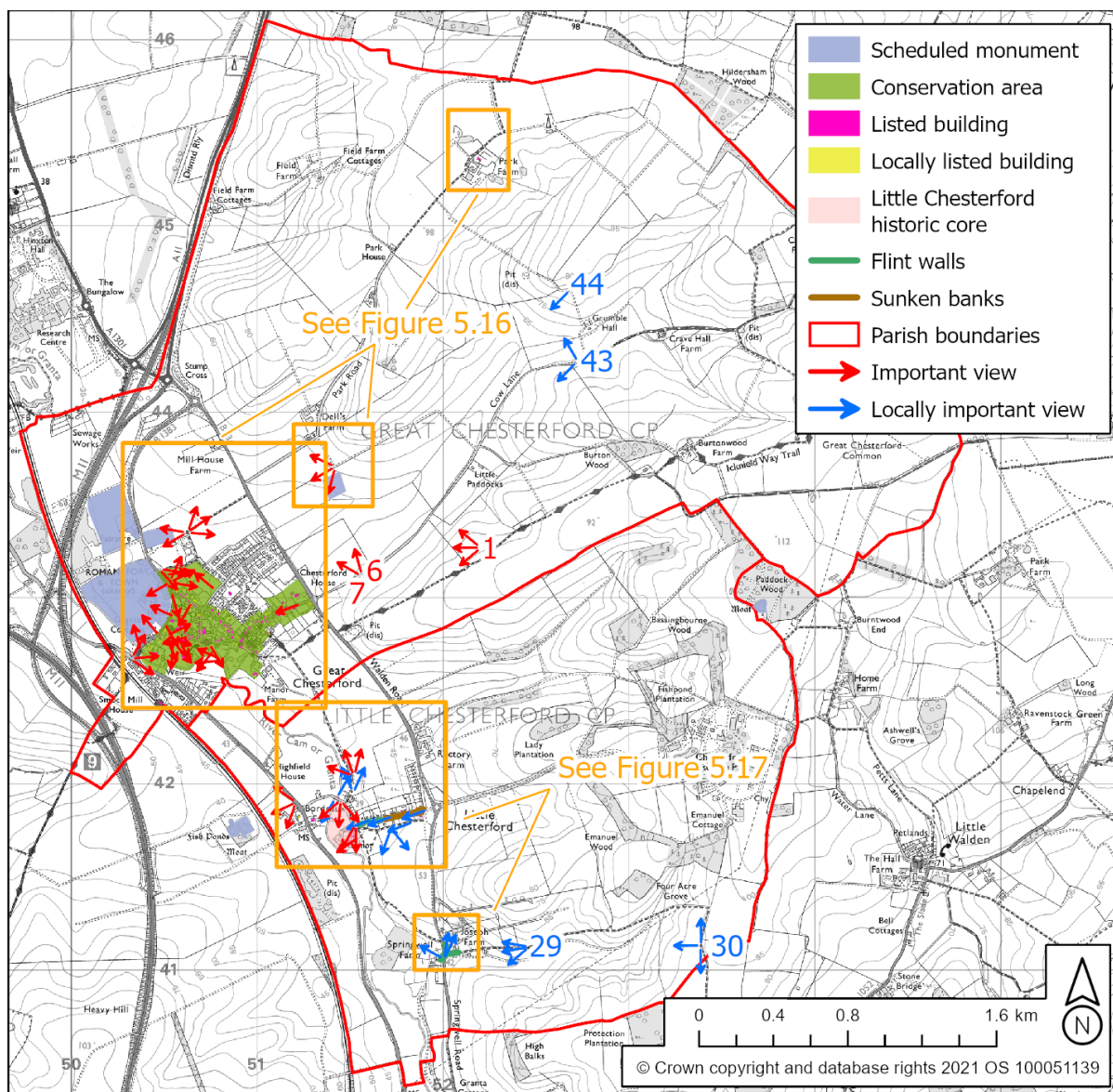


Figure 5.15 Overview of Historic Environment Features
[To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version [here](#)]

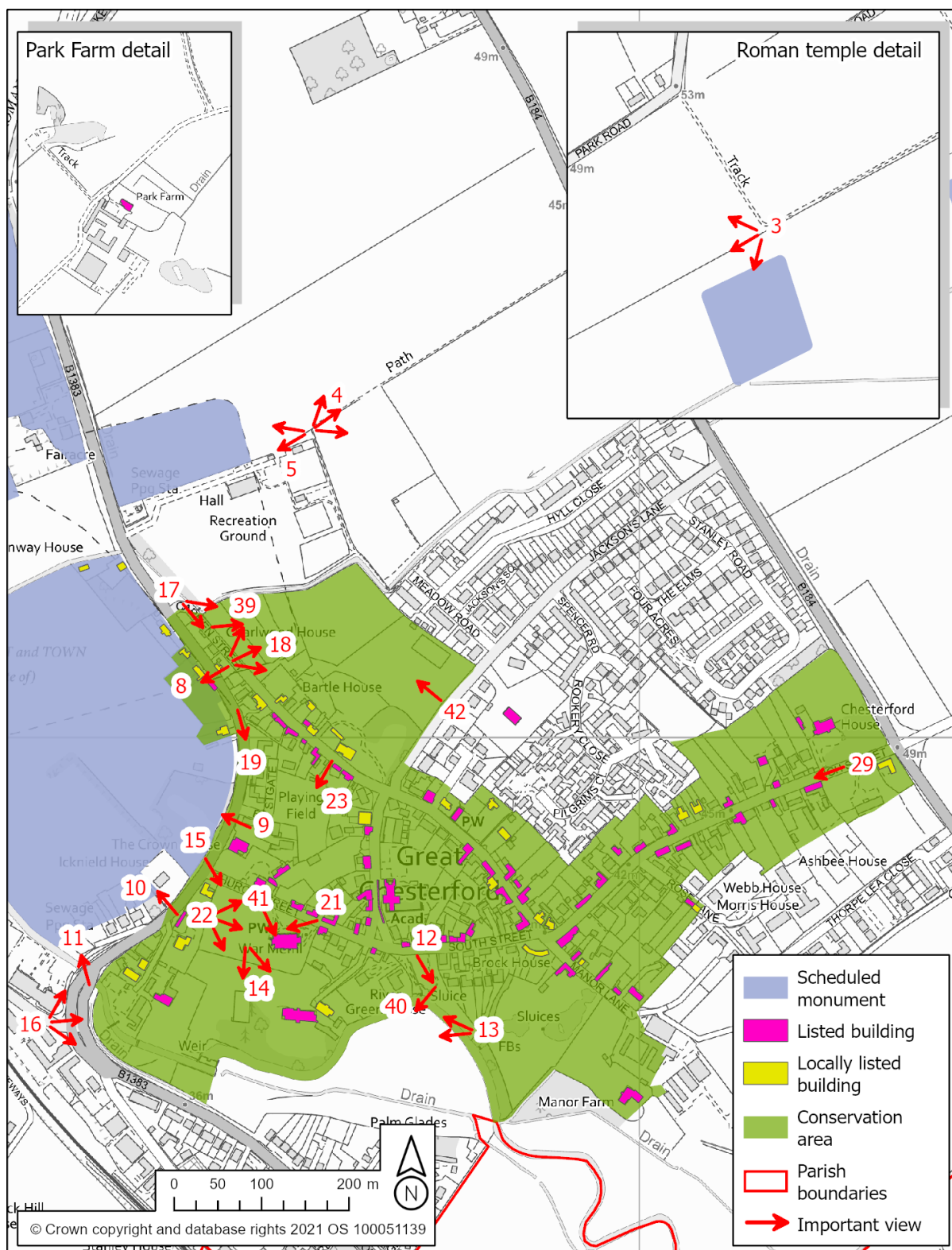


Figure 5.16 Great Chesterford Historic Environment Features
[To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version [here](#)]

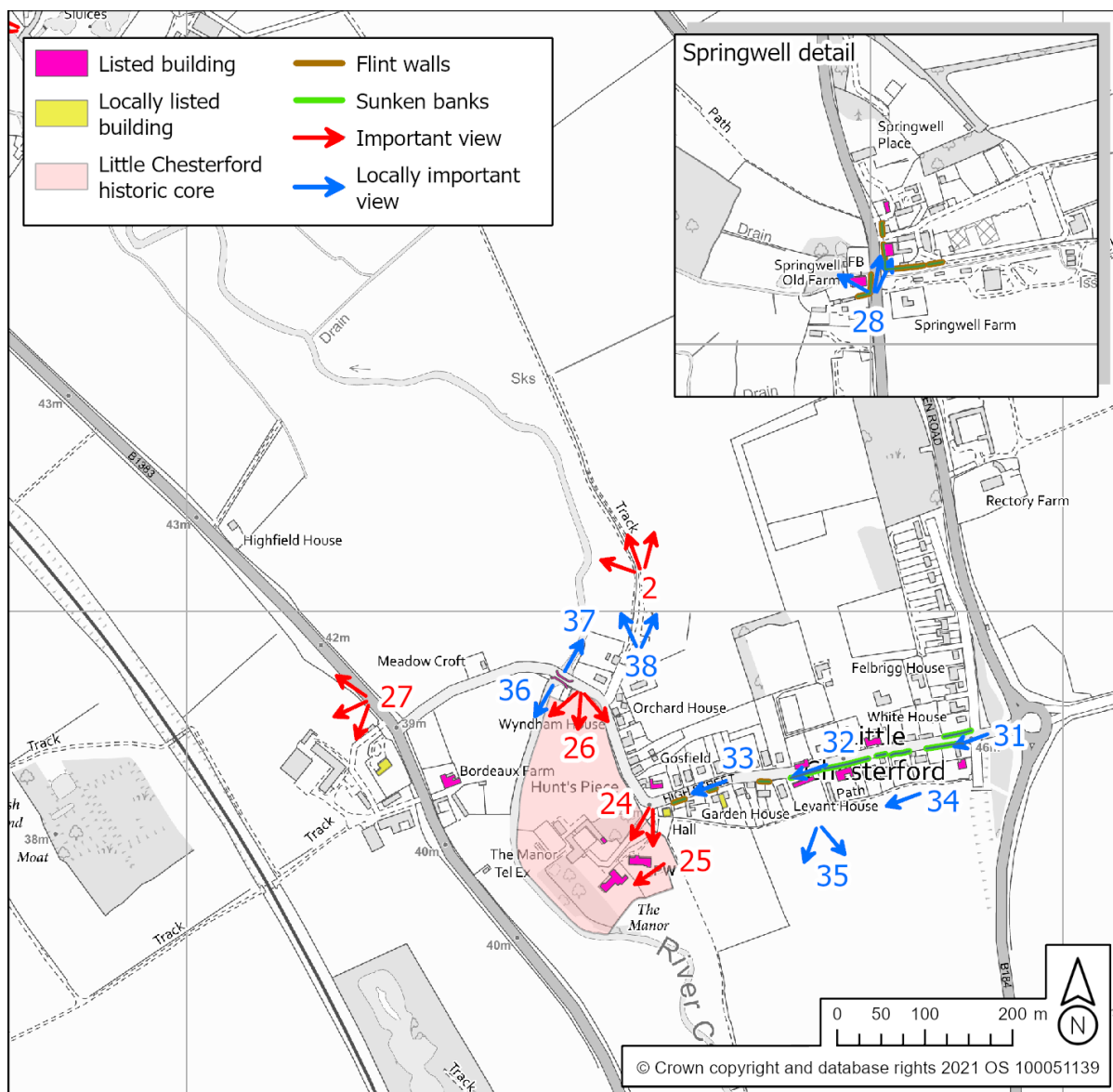


Figure 5.17 Little Chesterford Historic Environment Features
[To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version [here](#)]



Photo 12 – St Mary the Virgin Church, Little Chesterford



Photo 13 – All Saints Church, Great Chesterford

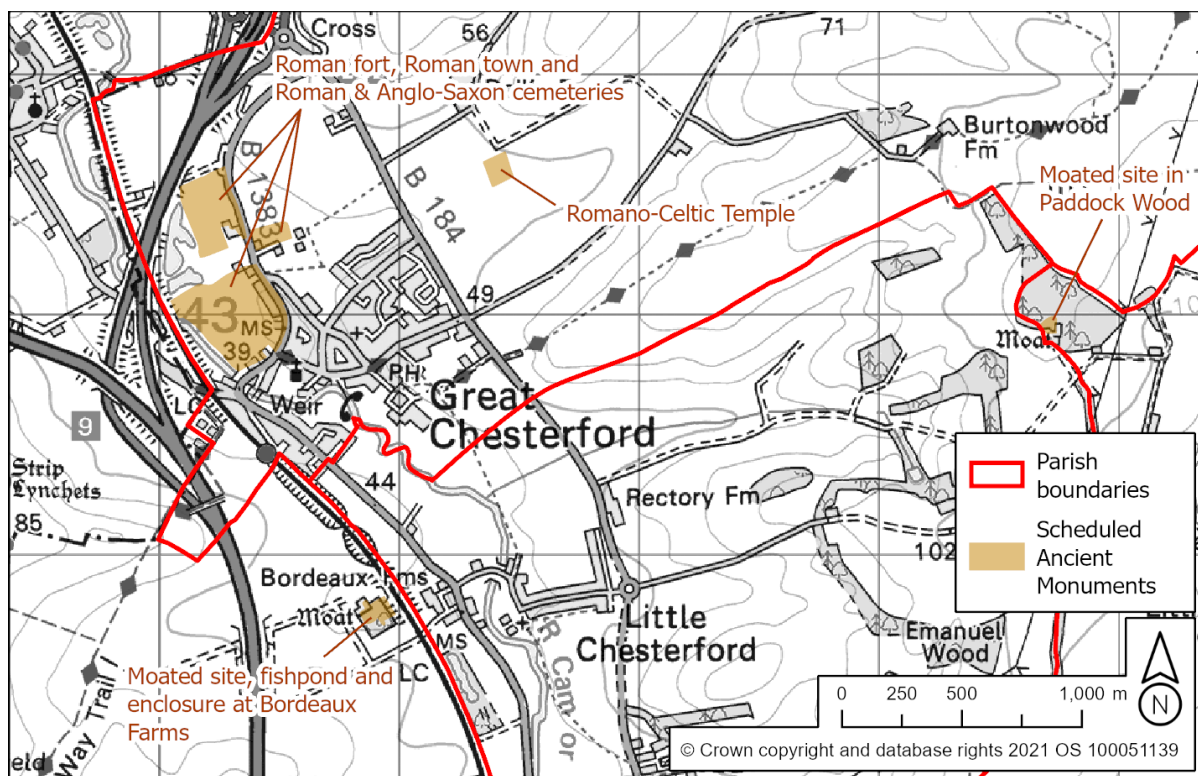


Figure 5.18 Scheduled Monuments
[To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version [here](#)]

Policy GLCNP/5 – Historic Environment

Development proposals should conserve and enhance the historic environment and take account of the following as appropriate:

1. The significance of any undesignated heritage asset, including any structure on the Local Heritage List;
2. Open visibility between the Scheduled Monuments comprising the Roman town and Fort, and the Romano-Celtic Temple and the open aspect of the Romano-Celtic Temple area should both be conserved;
3. Development along Newmarket Road should avoid any significant detrimental impact on views into the designated Scheduled Monuments;
4. The setting of the Bordeaux Farm Scheduled Monument (Figure 5.17) should be conserved;
5. In Little Chesterford, the Historic Core (Figure 5.17) comprising the open space and setting of the Church and Hall should be conserved;
6. The Local Historic Features (flint walls and sunken banks) in Little Chesterford should be conserved or enhanced by any development proposals;
7. The publication and dissemination of the results of archaeological investigations is encouraged where these are required to be undertaken; and
8. The contribution of a high quality of design and materials.

5.6 Valued Community Spaces and Facilities

Policy Objective: To maintain and enhance community spaces that are valued for recreation, education and/or services (including designated Local Green Spaces) which make a significant positive contribution to the well-being and quality of life of residents and the aesthetic quality of the Plan area.

- 5.6.1 The Neighbourhood Plan has identified through the consultation documents and other evidence a list of places and assets within the community which need to have protection afforded to them for the benefit of the community, whether that is by virtue of community use, visual or spatial amenity or value through its beauty and tranquillity.
- 5.6.2 This policy makes specific reference to the documents: Landscape Character Assessment 2017, Historic Environment Assessment 2016, Conservation Area Appraisal 2007, Little Chesterford Village Survey 2016, The Great Chesterford Village Plan 2015 and the Great Chesterford Primary Academy Survey 2019.
- 5.6.3 The Landscape Character Assessment identifies and categorises the open spaces within the villages in order to assess the contribution that the open spaces make to the landscapes of both villages. The Historic Environment Assessment details the historic significance of numerous locations within both villages, explaining their significance and contribution to the setting. The Conservation Area Appraisal refers specifically to Great Chesterford and identifies features that both contribute to and detract from the character of the village, providing management proposals accordingly. Finally, the Little Chesterford Village Survey 2016, The Great Chesterford Village Plan 2015, and the Great Chesterford Primary Academy Survey 2019 have helped to inform decisions by deepening understanding of the views of residents from both villages.
- 5.6.4 Retaining and improving village amenities is a key issue of concern to residents. In the Village Survey 2016, the residents of Little Chesterford identified the community spirit and nature of a small village, together with the open rural countryside and peace and quiet, as the key features that make the village a great place to live.
- 5.6.5 Similarly, the Great Chesterford Village Plan 2015 listed the surrounding countryside, transport links and the attractiveness of the village as the most important reasons for living in Great Chesterford, but quality of the environment for raising children, sense of community, and proximity to nearby relations were also popular reasons for living in the village.
- 5.6.6 In their survey of 2019, the children of Great Chesterford Primary Academy rated the recreation ground and skate park; the friendly, community feel; the school; the river, trees and wildlife; and the shop as the top five things they valued about living in the Chesterfords.
- 5.6.7 Great Chesterford is generally considered well served in terms of facilities. The facilities identified by the community as the most valued are the local pubs, GP surgeries, village shop and The Chesterfords Community Centre. The community centre is home to both the much-loved Chesterfords Preschool and highly-valued after-school club, as well as hosting many village activities such as Parish Council meetings, Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, craft workshops, karate, Pilates, bounce

classes, dance classes and Saffron Walden Dance Band. Furthermore, the Crown House Hotel and church were also identified as key facilities within the village.

The smaller settlement of Little Chesterford has fewer facilities, but the Village Hall and adjoining meadow are highly valued for community activities, with 92% of residents identifying an interest in these community events. The activities that take place currently and through its varied history include an Infants/Sunday School, the first Women's Institute in the area in the 1920s, and in the present day the annual village fete, village social events from birthday parties to funeral teas, art clubs to band practice as well as Parish Council meetings.

- 5.6.8 In addition to the facilities outlined above, Great Chesterford Church of England Primary Academy is a highly valued part of the community, serving both Great and Little Chesterford. 76.3% of residents of Great Chesterford identified it as the 'heart of the village' and an important amenity to be protected by the plan. The residents of Little Chesterford highly value the ability to send their children to Great Chesterford Primary Academy with 82% of respondents rating it as 'very important'. Great Chesterford Primary Academy serves the children of the whole Plan area and is valued not only for the excellent education that it provides but in its role in promoting community interaction and cohesiveness. Its location at the heart of the village of Great Chesterford is seen by many to be a key part of this role. The school has an approximate capacity of 210 pupils and the current site constrains further expansion.
- 5.6.9 Recreational facilities within the village of Great Chesterford are a key source of local entertainment, for young residents in particular. These play areas and community facilities were identified for not only their aesthetics but their ability to foster a sense of community amongst users. The survey showed that, in particular, Horse River Green, the recreation ground playground and The Chesterfords Community Centre were heavily used by villagers, with over 100 respondents willing to volunteer to maintain these spaces. In addition, the Youth Questionnaire within the Great Chesterford Village Plan highlighted that visiting the recreation ground, play areas and engaging in sport were all popular. In Little Chesterford, recreational activities centre around the village hall, meadow and church.
- 5.6.10 Green spaces within both villages provide space for the community to perform recreational activities whilst also maintaining the character of the village. The green spaces identified below are deemed to be of particular value to the community; their functions include recreation, aesthetics, green infrastructure and protection of the separation zone.
- 5.6.11 Many residents regularly make use of community routes that link public rights of way with the kind permission of local landowners. A route between Park Lane and Cow Lane adjoining the site of the Roman Temple allows appreciation of the setting of the historic asset. A route joining Grumble Hall to Park Farm provides extensive views from the chalk uplands across the Cam Valley. A route along the River Cam between Great and Little Chesterford provides access to riverside tranquillity, beauty and wildlife through a short circuit linking with the public footpath.

Table 5.2

Valued Community Spaces and Facilities	
<p>Recreational Facilities (places regularly visited)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hall Gardens (recently reduced in size) 2. Pilgrim Close Hardstanding Open Spaces 3. Saffron Walden Angling Club Bordeaux Pit (main pit and small pit) 4. Chesterford Fisheries <p>Local Services</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. The village shop on School Street 6. GP surgery on School Street 7. GP surgery on High Street 8. Great Chesterford railway station 9. The Plough PH 10. The Crown and Thistle PH 11. The Crown House Hotel 12. Fitness gym at Chesterford Research Park 	<p>Community Services</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. All Saints Church 14. St Mary the Virgin Church 15. Congregational Chapel 16. The Chesterfords Community Centre 17. Little Chesterford Village Hall 18. Telephone box on Horse River Green <p>Educational Facilities</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 19. Great Chesterford C of E Primary Academy <p>Community Routes (used by residents for recreational purposes with the kind permission of the landowners)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 20. Park Road to Cow Lane (via the Roman temple site) 21. Grumble Hall to Park Farm 22. Riverside walk between Great and Little Chesterford



Photo 14 – Horse River Green

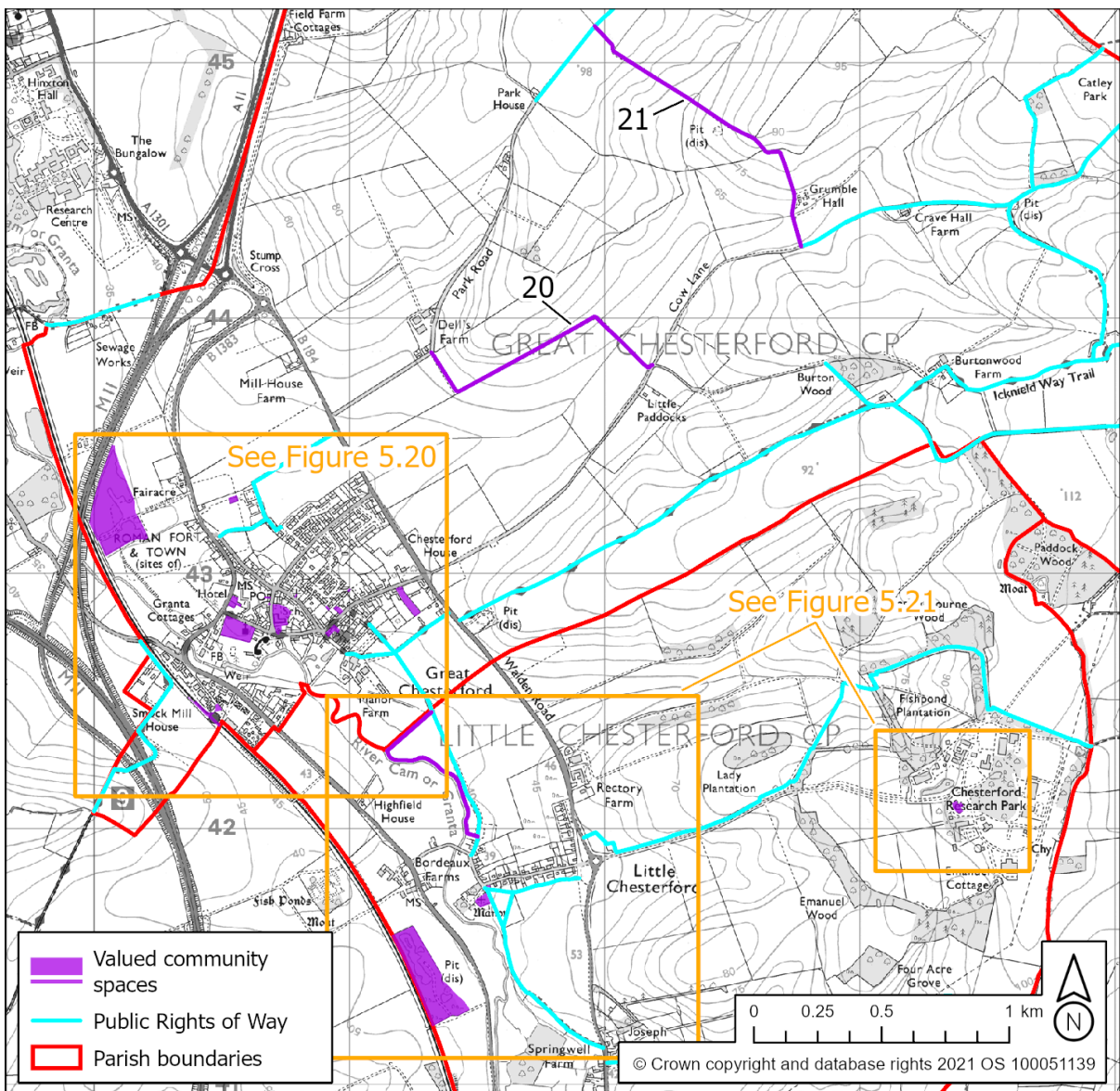


Figure 5.19 Valued Community Spaces and Facilities – overview
[To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version [here](#)]

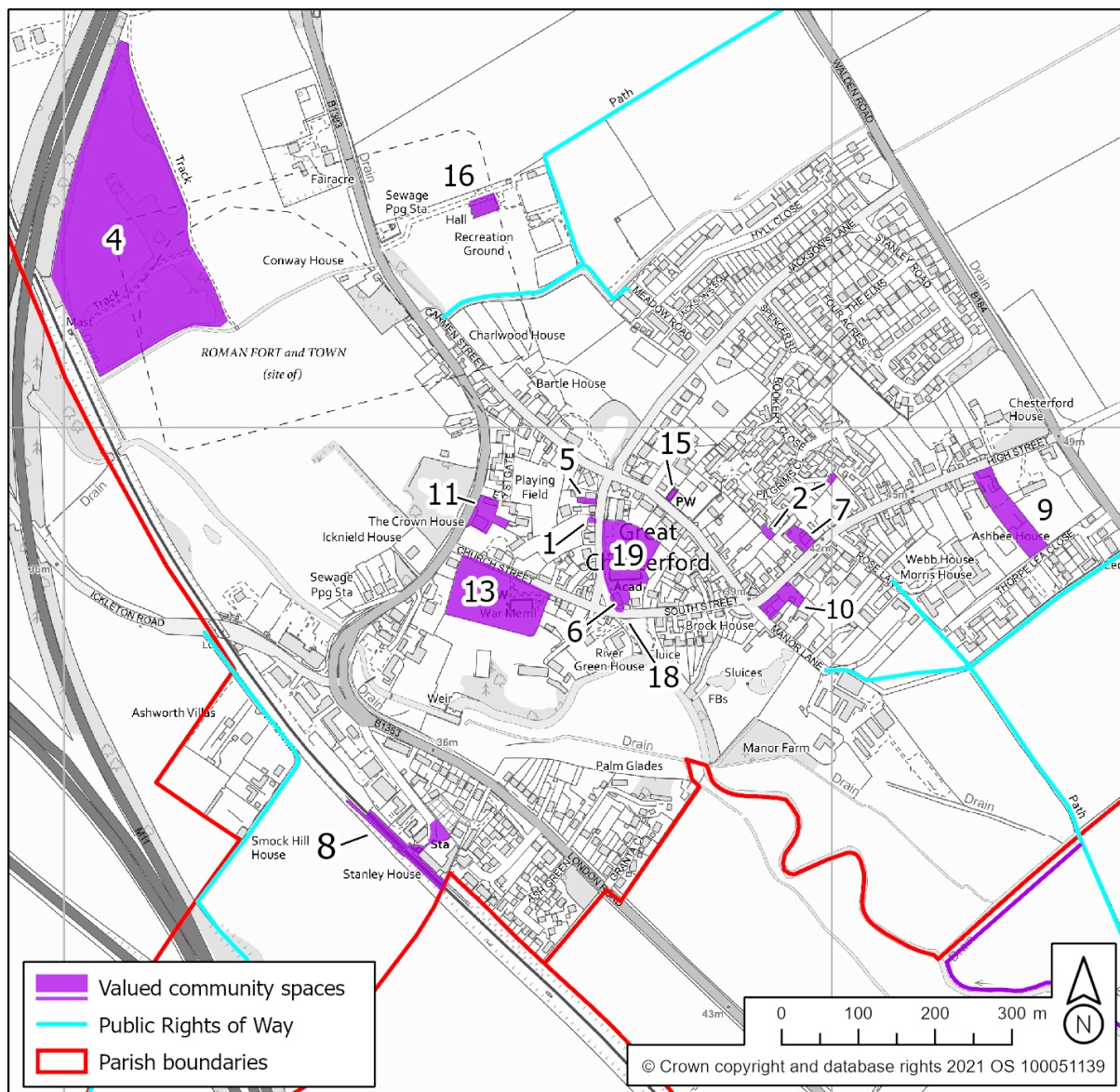


Figure 5.20 Valued Community Spaces and Facilities – Great Chesterford
[To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version [here](#)]

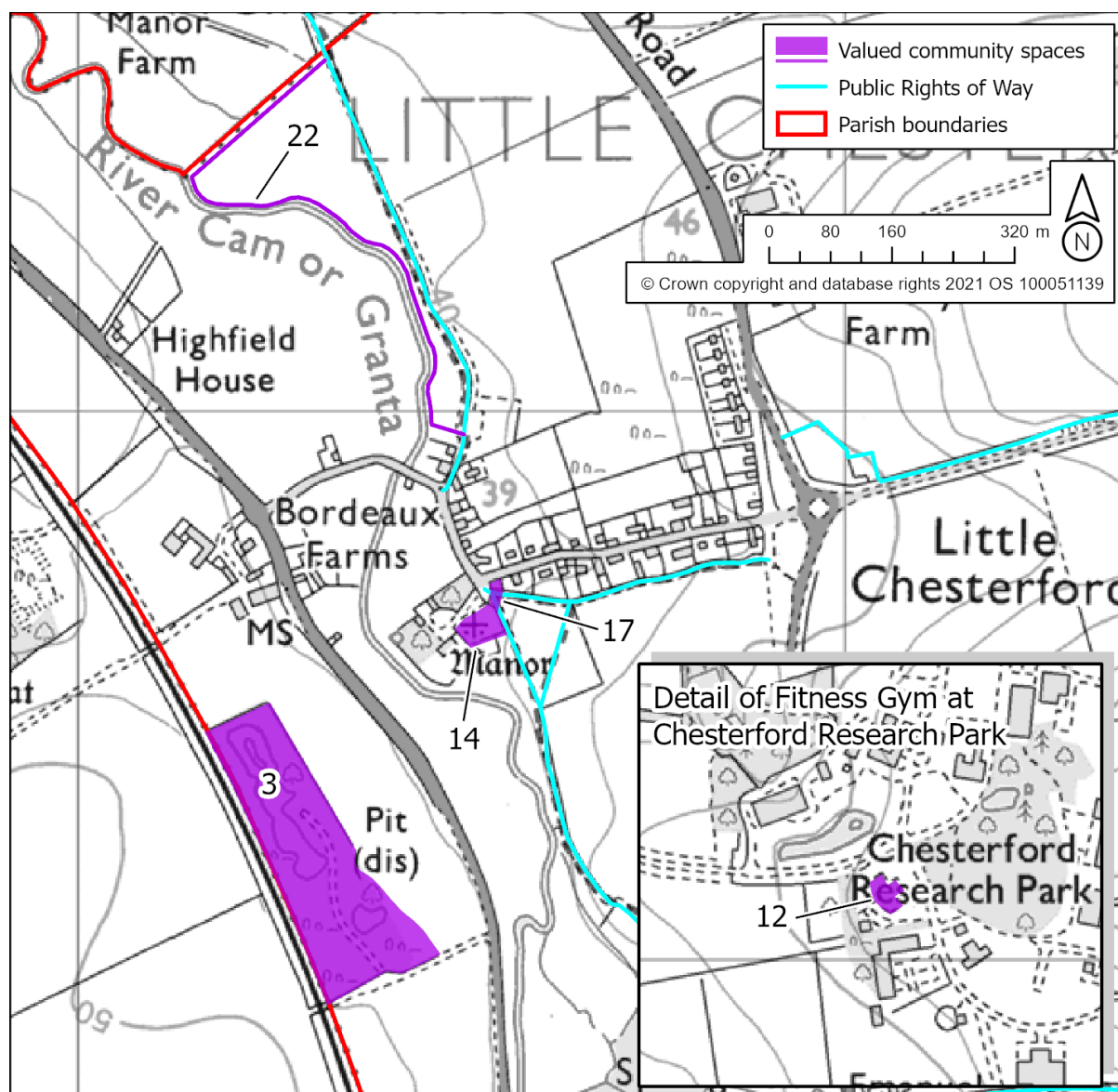


Figure 5.21 Valued Community Spaces and Facilities – Little Chesterford
[To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version [here](#)]

Policy GLCNP/6 – Valued Community Spaces and Facilities

Development proposals which result in the loss or significant reduction in the value of Valued Community Spaces and Facilities (Table 5.2) should demonstrate that either the space or facility is no longer required or that alternative appropriate provision of at least equivalent value exists or will be provided elsewhere in an appropriate location in the neighbourhood area.

5.7 Local Green Spaces

Policy Objective: To protect and enhance local green spaces of value to the local communities

- 5.7.1 At present, the parishes have a number of green spaces. Paragraph 101 of the NPPF states that particular sites in and around Great and Little Chesterford can be protected through a Local Green Space designation so that their value to the parish and surrounding area is preserved. Paragraph 102 states that for Neighbourhood Plans to designate certain areas as Local Green Space they should:
- *be in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;*
 - *be demonstrably special to a local community and hold 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*
 - *be local in character and not an extensive tract of land.*
- 5.7.2 The designation of Local Green Space affords the area additional protection from development.
- 5.7.3 A Local Green Space Assessment has been undertaken by the Neighbourhood Plan Group that demonstrates how these identified green spaces qualify when compared to the required criteria. This assessment is available to view as a supporting document.
- 5.7.4 The sites listed in Table 5.3 and shown in Figure 5.22 were identified through a variety of assessments, including the UDC Great Chesterford Conservation Area Appraisal 2007; Landscape Character Assessment 2017; and Local Wildlife sites and Historic Environment Assessment 2016. Additionally, local residents nominated sites they deemed to be of significant local importance.

Table 5.3

Site Reference	Site name	Grid reference
LGS-1	Recreation Ground – Great Chesterford	TL 50517 43221
LGS-2	Allotments, orchard, nursery field – Great Chesterford	TL 50599 43255
LGS-3	Jubilee Gardens – Great Chesterford	TL 50466 43161 & TL 50479 43138
LGS-4	Horse field parallel to Carmen Street and on Jacksons Lane – Great Chesterford	TL 50651 43096
LGS-5	Academy playing field – Great Chesterford	TL 50615 42919
LGS-6	Coronation Green – Great Chesterford	TL 50703 42775
LGS-7	Horse River Green – Great Chesterford	TL 50755 42725
LGS-8	Congregational Chapel garden – Great Chesterford	TL 50801 42904
LGS-9	Pilgrim Close open space – Great Chesterford	TL 50887 42947

LGS-10	Rookery Close open space – Great Chesterford	TL 50948 42996
LGS-11	Stanley Road play area – Great Chesterford	TL 51185 43086
LGS-12	Thorpe Lea open space – Great Chesterford	TL 51275 42801
LGS-14	Ash Green open space – Great Chesterford	TL 50670 42402
LGS-15	Green by Manor Cottages – Little Chesterford	TL 51506 41933
LGS-16	Meadow behind Little Chesterford Village Hall – Little Chesterford	TL 51613 41697
LGS-17	Grassed area adjacent to B184 – Little Chesterford	TL 51927 41778

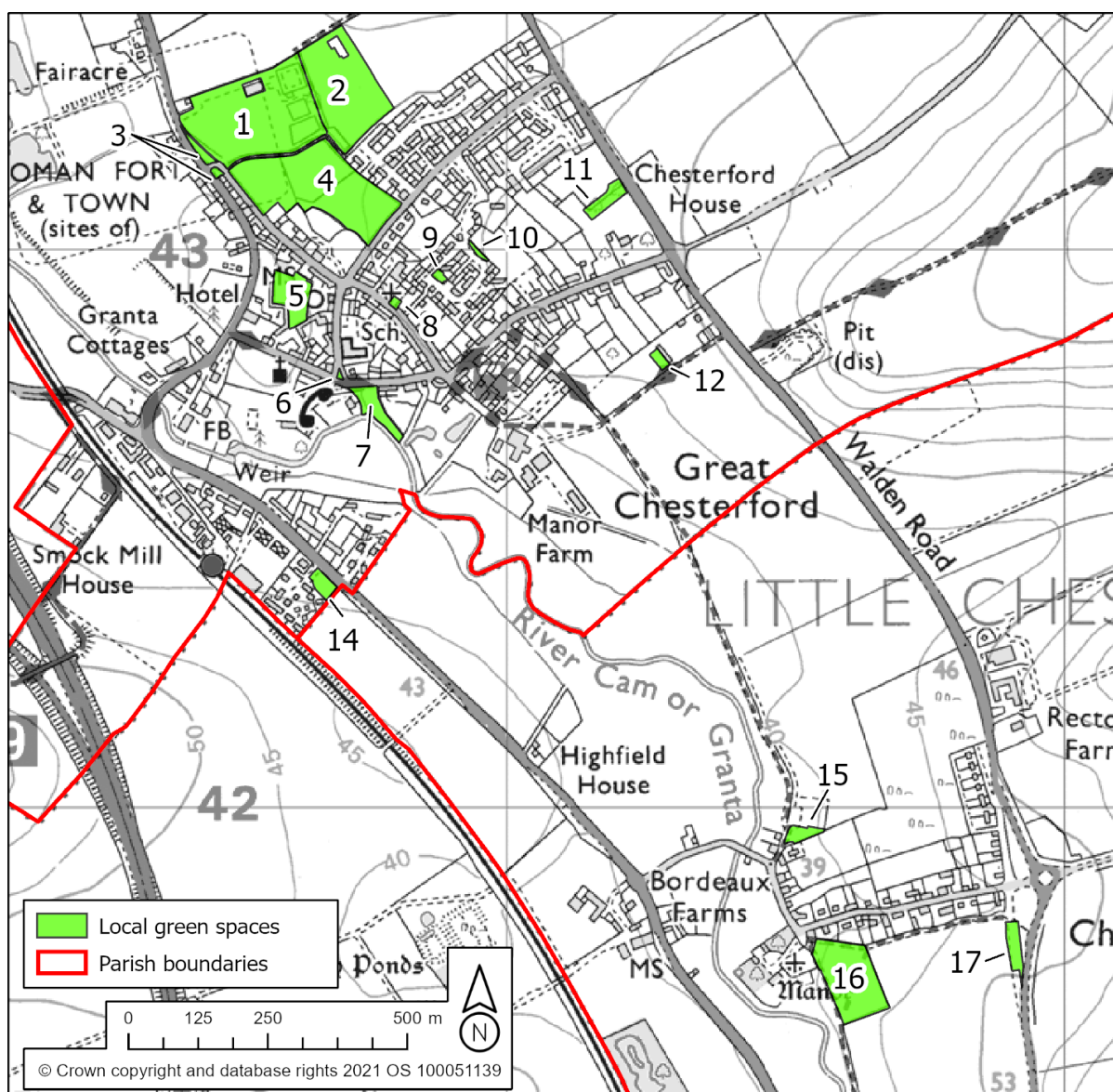


Figure 5.22 Local Green Spaces
[To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version [here](#)]

Policy GLCNP/7 – Local Green Spaces

The sites as shown in Table 5.3 and Figure 5.22 are designated as Local Green Spaces.



Photo 15 – The Cam at Horse River Green

5.8 Employment

Policy Objective: To promote sustainable economic development and local business within the Neighbourhood Plan Area through the protection and improvement of jobs and employment areas for employment use, providing employment to both local people and those who commute into the area, whilst protecting and enhancing the rural and village environments and sustainable travel.

- 5.8.1 There are a number of businesses in the Neighbourhood Plan Area and these are important to the local economy. National and local planning policy recognises the need to support appropriate economic growth in rural areas and this is also a key aspiration of the community in Great and Little Chesterford.
- 5.8.2 This policy protects the existing vibrancy of the parishes by recognising the important contribution made by local businesses. Those who work in Great and Little Chesterford include residents and those who commute into the area.
- 5.8.3 Employment is important to securing a sound economic future for the plan area. Existing employment sites will be protected and supported by the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5.8.4 Key employers within Great and Little Chesterford are focused on seven sites. In Great Chesterford the employment sites are Station Approach, Plextek single occupier site, Park Farm (which comprises two separate sites), and Cam Valley Crematorium (see Figure 5.23). In Little Chesterford, the employment sites are Rectory Farm Barns, Chesterford Research Park and Springwell Nursery and Garden Centre (see Figure 5.24). The functions of these businesses vary, creating a diverse pool of employers providing a range of employment opportunities across various sectors.
- 5.8.5 Chesterford Research Park (CRP) is the largest employer in the Plan area, and indeed one of the largest in the wider district of Uttlesford. Set in 250 acres of parkland to the east of Little Chesterford village, it comprises high quality biotechnology, pharmaceutical and technology R&D companies (see Figure 5.24). CRP is committed to sustainable transport policies in order to reduce road and parking congestion. They offer a daily coach service to and from two central Cambridge locations, as well as a shuttle bus service to and from Great Chesterford railway station. They work closely with Little Chesterford Parish Council in a bid to be a good neighbour in the local community, and encourage those working at the Park to avoid 'rat running' through Little Chesterford. This policy seeks to preserve and enhance this.

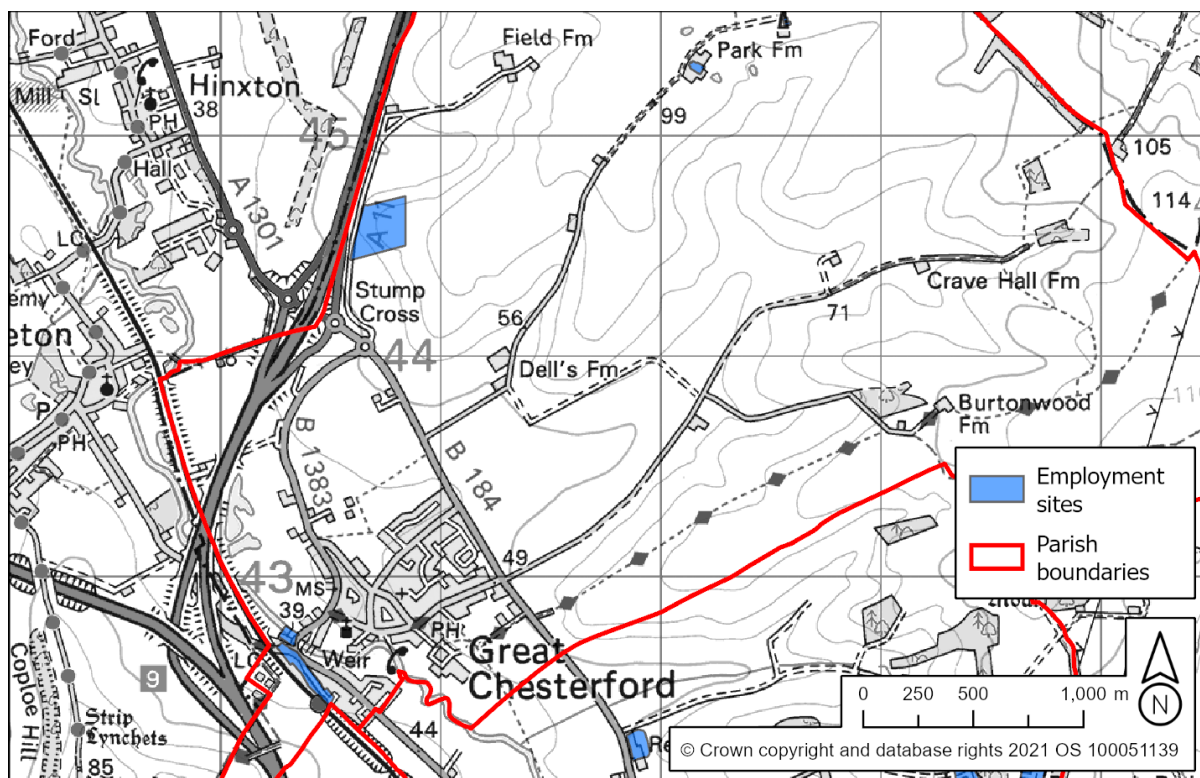


Figure 5.23 Great Chesterford employment sites
[To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version [here](#)]

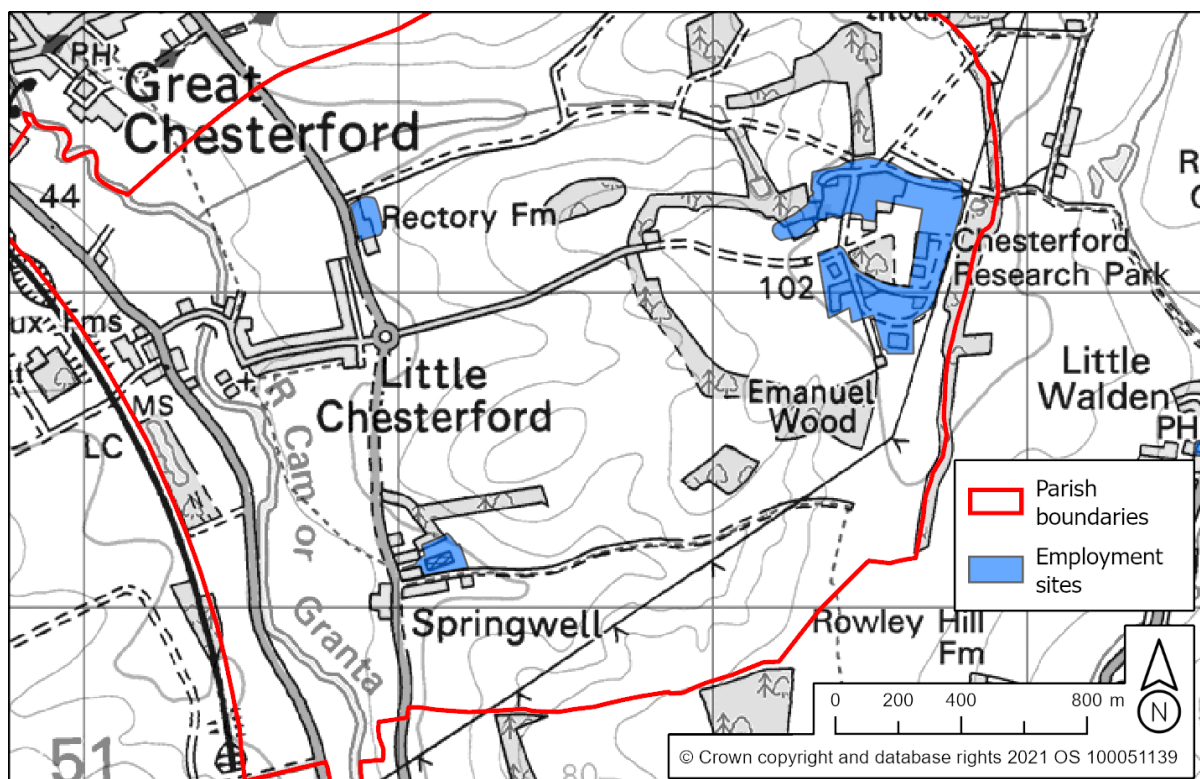


Figure 5.24 Little Chesterford employment sites
[To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version [here](#)]

Policy GLCNP/8 – Employment

1. Proposals for new employment development will be supported at the existing employment sites identified in Figures 5.23 and 5.24, and where necessary (to deliver sustainable development directly, fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development) off-site contributions are secured towards initiatives that minimise resulting through traffic in the villages.
2. Proposed developments at Chesterford Research Park will be supported where they are for research and development (and ancillary) uses, are not within the Chesterford Research Park Separation Zone (see Figure 5.4), and are subject to the provision of a workplace travel plan which takes into account the need to minimise through traffic in the villages where appropriate.
3. Proposed development that has a significant detrimental impact on sites of employment identified in Figures 5.23 and 5.24, including causing their loss or reduction, should demonstrate that the relevant business is not viable in that location and redevelopment or an alternative use is the only realistic proposal.

5.9 Housing

Policy Objective: To ensure the protection and improvement of existing housing stock for residents and identify land for proportionate growth of residential properties.

- 5.9.1 The Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan has been produced in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Uttlesford Local Plan. In accordance with national Guidance and Policy, it is essential that our housing supply policy contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.
- 5.9.2 We have been working collaboratively with Uttlesford District Council to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan Policies are complementary to those within the Local Plan. Any strategic policies should set out a housing requirement figure for designated neighbourhood areas from their overall housing requirement. Development coming forward over the Great and Little Chesterford Plan Period must be sustainable.
- 5.9.3 Housing need and in particular affordable housing is not considered to be an issue that has come up during consultation to the extent that it requires a specific approach to be taken in the Neighbourhood Plan over and above that set out in the Local Plan. Information has been taken from our consultation responses, housing needs survey and the Census as well as recent developments in the village of Great Chesterford having a very limited local take-up of affordable housing, and reverting instead to tenants and purchasers from the wider Uttlesford area. We do, however, value the opportunity that this can afford to local people and recognise that some in the villages do still hold affordable housing as a significant issue for them. As at 8 November 2021, UDC have confirmed that there are 19 applicants on the housing register with a local connection to Great Chesterford, and a further 4 applicants with a local connection to Little Chesterford. The breakdown of bedroom needs is:

	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed
Great Chesterford	9	8	0	1
Little Chesterford	2	2	0	0

(One applicant in Great Chesterford has not yet had bedroom need calculated.)

- 5.9.4 However, growth in both villages over the Neighbourhood Plan period must be sufficient to maintain healthy communities but not be too much to significantly alter the feel of these communities.
- 5.9.5 From 2011–2019, there had been a growth of 22.83% in the Plan area, which has made a very significant contribution to the housing requirement for the local area, and is significantly more than in previous years. Growth at this rate, with no associated development of infrastructure such as increase in primary school capacity, is not sustainable and consultation with residents supports this view. Additionally, Essex County Council have noted that “Great Chesterford Church of England Primary Academy is full in most year groups and accommodating pupils from new housing may prove problematic in some cohorts.”

- 5.9.6 Taking all this into account, we have therefore determined that approximately 10% growth over the Plan Period (from the baseline of 783 dwellings in Great Chesterford and 94 in Little Chesterford) for each settlement is sufficient, but also desirable, achievable, deliverable and importantly sustainable. In addition, in response to the Neighbourhood Planning body's request pursuant to paragraph 67 of the NPPF, UDC has confirmed in writing that "the Council currently considers that the indicative housing requirement for the neighbourhood area of Great and Little Chesterford is 96 dwellings between 2019 and 2033."
- 5.9.7 In order to allocate housing sites to enable this growth, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering group carried out a two-step process of Neighbourhood Plan Housing Land Assessment (NPHLA) and Neighbourhood Plan Housing Site Selection (NPHSS).
- 5.9.8 The Neighbourhood Plan Housing Land Assessment (NPHLA) assessed all known available sites for their suitability and deliverability. Sites were only considered where they had the potential to deliver at least five dwellings. Sites smaller than this did not form part of the Neighbourhood Plan Housing Land Assessment. Any such sites, when they come forward, will be considered as a planning application against current policy, including those policies adopted as part of the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan. Sites which have been fully developed since Uttlesford's site assessment work were removed from the assessment. Sites relating to the North Uttlesford Garden Village draft allocation were also removed from consideration as this was a strategic proposal not appropriate to be addressed through a Neighbourhood Plan Housing Assessment. Additionally, the UDC Local Plan containing this draft allocation had been withdrawn.
- 5.9.9 The NPHLA report explains the methodology of the Steering Group for assessing sites, provides individual site assessments for those sites considered by the Steering Group, and gives a summary of conclusions based on these assessments. After a period of consultation with stakeholders, including landowners and Uttlesford District Council, a final version of this assessment was made available in July 2020. The outcome of the assessment is summarised in Figure 5.25.

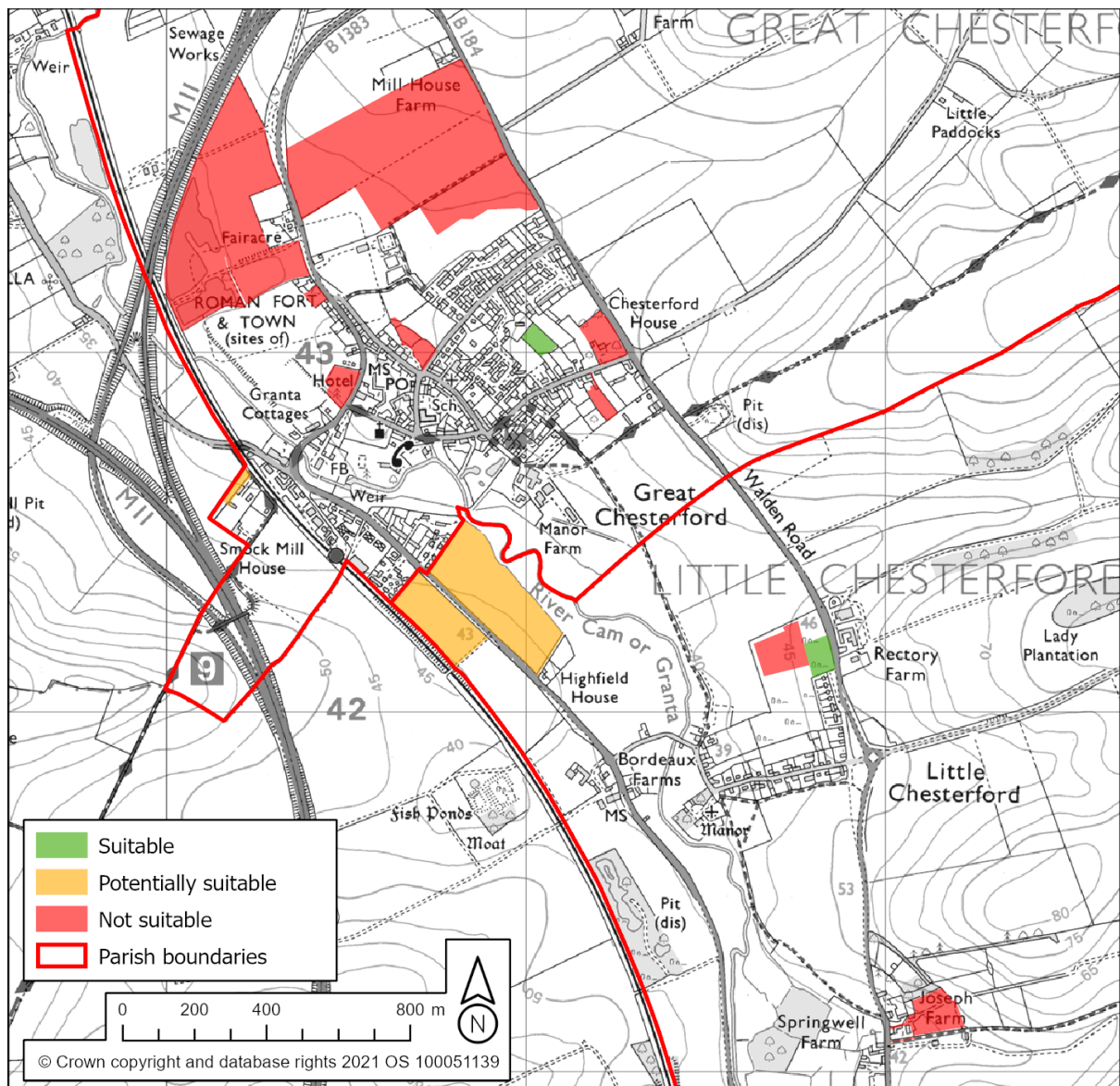


Figure 5.25 Summary outcome from Neighbourhood Plan Housing Land Assessment
[To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version [here](#)]

- 5.9.10 The Neighbourhood Plan Housing Sites Selection (NPHSS) assessed housing land previously demonstrated through the NPHLA as potentially suitable, available and achievable, against the vision and objectives of the plan.
- 5.9.11 A final version of the NPHSS, including a summary of the sites selected for allocation for housing development, was made available in March 2021 after a period of consultation with stakeholders, including landowners and Uttlesford District Council. The report explains the methodology of the Steering Group for assessing housing sites for selection, provides individual site assessments against the vision and objectives of the plan, and gives a summary of conclusions based on these assessments. [The Neighbourhood Plan Housing Sites Selection report is available as a supporting document.]
- 5.9.12 The NPHSS selected three sites for housing development as shown in Figure 5.26:
- Land Opposite Rectory Barns (Chest 12)
 - Land North of Bartholomew Close (Chest 13)
 - Land South-West of London Road (Chest 9).
- (Taken together these sites deliver 99 homes and 11.29% growth over the plan period, which is in accordance with 5.9.6 above.)
- 5.9.13 Overall development (excluding ‘windfall’ which are not specifically covered by this Policy GLCNP/9 – see 5.9.8 – but nevertheless will still be subject to all the other policies in this Neighbourhood Plan) during the Great and Little Chesterford Neighbourhood Plan period is planned for 12% of the number of dwellings in the Neighbourhood Plan Area (from the 2019 baseline of 877 dwellings). This is in line with the housing requirement as set out by Uttlesford District Council but also accords with our Vision and Objectives as being a sustainable level of growth for our communities.
- 5.9.14 Subsequent to the selection of sites Chest 13 and Chest 9 through the NPHSS, these sites were granted planning permission for 13 and 76 dwellings respectively and construction has started. These sites continue to contribute to the overall housing requirement for the plan area.
- Chest 13, Land North of Bartholomew Close: Consent was granted on 11 May 2020 for up to 13 dwellings [UTT/19/2288/FUL]. Construction began on 28 May 2021.
- Chest 9, Land to the South-West of London Road: Outline planning consent was granted 17 June 2020 for 76 dwellings [UTT/19/0573/OP]. Reserved matters were approved 21 February 2022 [UTT/20/3329/DFO] and construction began on 21 March 2022.
- These two sites together will therefore provide 89 dwellings, which represents growth of 10% and ensures delivery of 89% of the indicative housing requirement for the plan period.

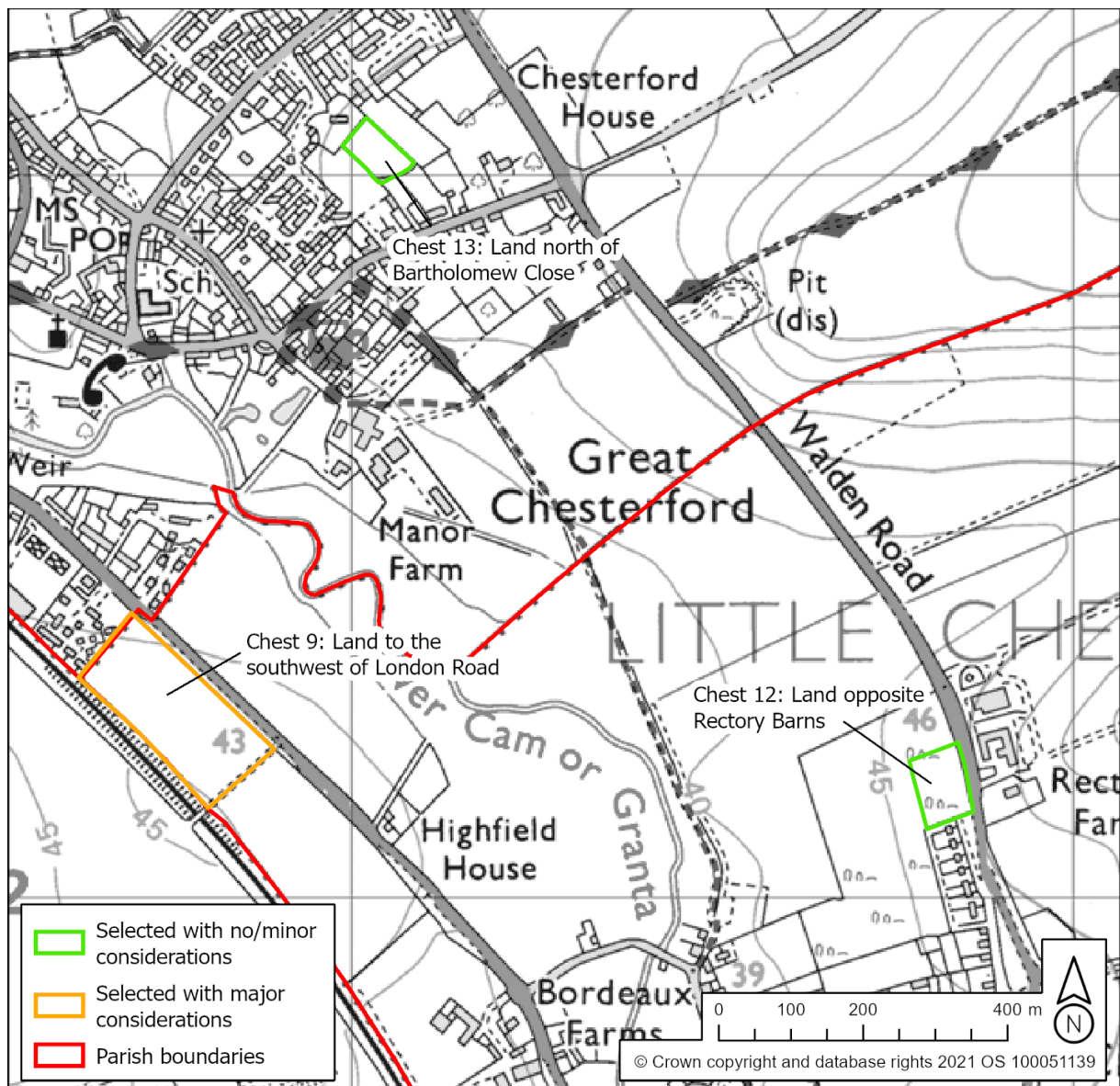


Figure 5.26 Summary outcome from Neighbourhood Plan Site Selection
[To view the content in further detail please refer to the online version [here](#)]

Policy GLCNP/9 – Housing

Residential development proposals will be supported which are located on:

- site allocation Chest 12 and are in accordance with Policy GLCNP/9.1
- windfall sites of fewer than five units; or
- infill sites or previously developed land

and which address the following considerations:

- a scale of development which is proportionate to the size of the settlement in which it is located;
- provision of a mix of sizes and tenures of homes which reflects local needs;
- provision of specialist housing for older people where appropriate;
- provision of affordable homes which meet local housing needs as expressed in the local housing needs assessment; and
- securing contributions for the Early Years and Child Care education facility to the east of the Bowls Club in Great Chesterford where this relates appropriately to the proposed development.

Land Opposite Rectory Barns (Chest 12)

- 5.9.15 Land Opposite Rectory Barns (Chest 12): The site is suitable and development of the site is achievable. Access is possible from the B184 or Walden Road. This site provides proportionate growth and there are opportunities to preserve and enhance green landscape features. Development should preserve the settlement pattern and green screening surrounding the site. This would enhance the northern gateway to the village from the B184 when leaving the settlement separation zone as the brow of the hill is reached. There is the opportunity to provide enhanced recreational facilities; for example, a children's playground. Other opportunities for enhancement of amenities have not been identified given the size of the site. Safe pedestrian access via the Walden Road or B184 should be provided.

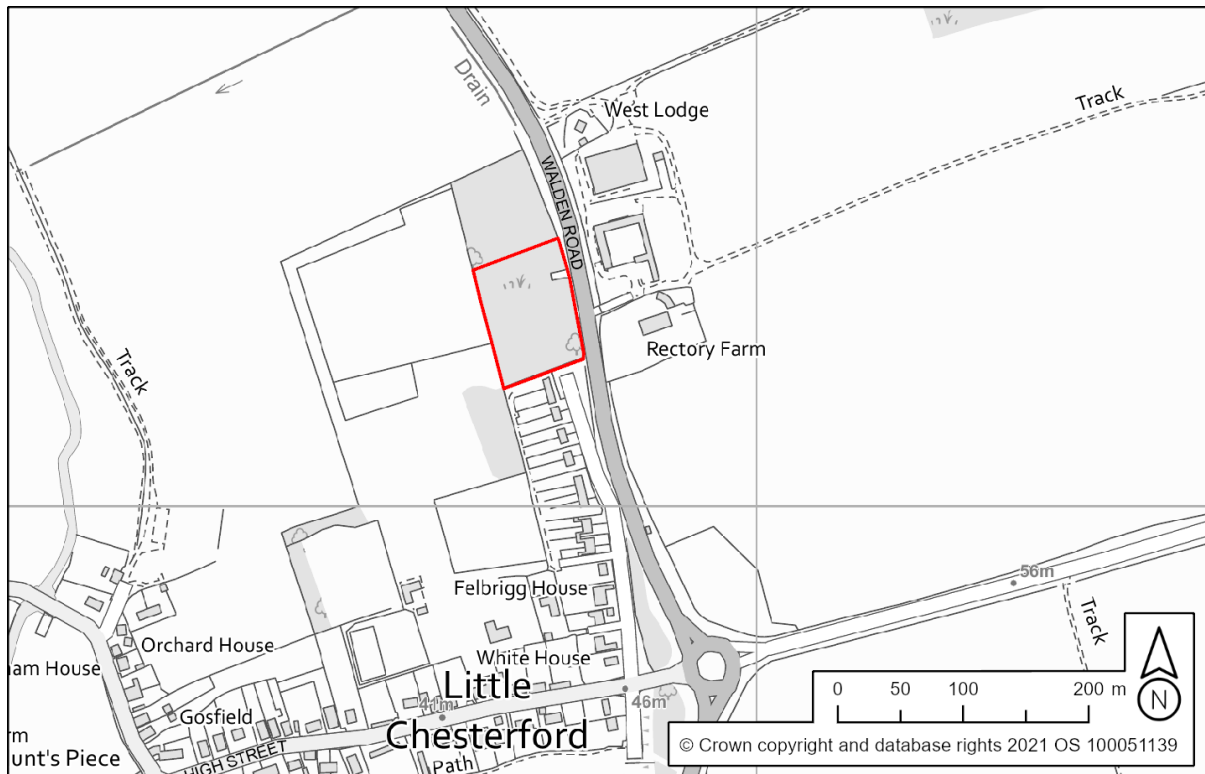


Figure 5.27 Location of Land opposite Rectory Barns

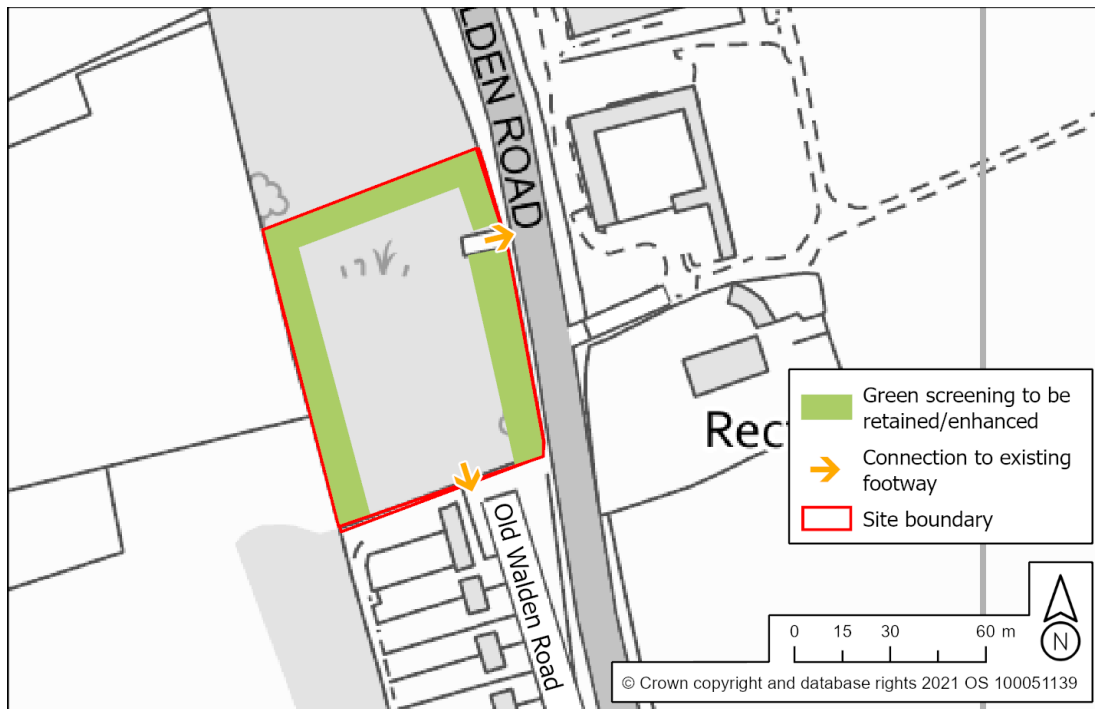


Figure 5.28 Access and green screening for Land Opposite Rectory Barns

POLICY GLCNP/9.1 – Land Opposite Rectory Barns (Chest 12)

Proposals for up to 10 dwellings at Land Opposite Rectory Barns as identified in Figure 5.27 will be supported.

Development proposals should incorporate the following principles:

1. The built form should continue the linear form of the existing dwellings along the Old Walden Road, Little Chesterford.
2. Green screening should be retained and enhanced as outlined in Figure 5.28 to preserve the visual settlement edges and views along the Walden Road and from the Cam Valley.
3. Access to the residential dwellings should provide safe pedestrian and vehicular access.
4. Access for construction traffic should minimise disruption to residents of Little Chesterford.
5. Provision of, or contribution to, recreational facilities.
6. Footways should connect the housing to the existing pedestrian network along the B184 and the Old Walden Road.
7. A minimum of a single electric vehicle charging point should be installed at each of the houses. These should be provided, fully wired and connected, ready to use before first occupation.
8. Secure cycle parking facilities should be provided for each dwelling.
9. Contribution to cycle paths connecting Little Chesterford to Cambridge and Saffron Walden.

Chapter 6 – Community Projects

- 6.1 The Great Chesterford Village Plan 2015, the Little Chesterford Village Survey 2016 and the 2018 consultation identified the following issues that cannot be directly addressed within this Neighbourhood Plan.
- 6.2 Some of the issues identified have subsequently been successfully addressed:
 - allotments have been created;
 - a community orchard has been planted;
 - the village shop has been reopened, replacing the desire for a farmers' market.
- 6.3 Improvements to station facilities, including parking, better access to northbound platform, toilets and coffee facilities – there is some money from s106 agreements for improvements. Great Chesterford Parish Council will continue to press for ongoing improvements.
- 6.4 Improved use of sustainable modes of transport – the Parish Councils will continue to look for opportunities to support residents in campaigning for increased use of sustainable methods of transport.
- 6.5 Parking issues – Great Chesterford Parish Council will continue to engage with Essex Highways, the school, the surgeries and local businesses about parking concerns.
- 6.6 Traffic calming – Great Chesterford Parish Council will continue to engage with Essex County Council and Essex Police regarding speeding in certain areas of the village. Little Chesterford Parish Council will continue to work with Chesterford Research Park on minimising traffic through the village.
- 6.7 Footpaths, bridleways and cycleways – both Parish Councils will continue to work with local landowners to maintain local footpaths, bridleways and cycleways.
- 6.8 Improvements to the visibility and profile of areas of historical interest within the Plan area, building on the recent events such as *The Big Dig, There But Not There*, etc. – the Parish Councils will continue to work with residents and local organisations.
- 6.9 Dog mess – Great Chesterford Parish Council has installed new dog bins and have raised the issue via village communication channels and will continue to do so.
- 6.10. Youth facilities for the under 19s – both Parish Councils will continue to engage with local clubs and residents.
- 6.11 Improve broadband in the villages – fibre optic cabling is now available to some residents. Both Parish Councils will continue to work with Essex County Council on this issue.
- 6.12 Needs of an ageing population – the Parish Councils will continue to engage with Uttlesford District Council and local groups to try to address these concerns.
- 6.13 Community facilities – the Parish Councils will continue to work with local groups, such as the Scouts, to assist in the provision of the appropriate facilities for these groups.

Chapter 7 – Appendix

List of evidence base documents

The following documents have been used as the evidence base for this Plan. All of these documents are available on the Great Chesterford Parish Council Website:

<https://www.lovegreatchesterford.com/evidence>

- Basic Conditions Statement
- Consultation Statement
- SEA/HRA Determination Statement
- Strategic Policies for Uttlesford Local Plan Adopted 2005
- GLCNP Housing Land Assessment – July 2020
- GLCNP Housing Site Selection – March 2021
- Great Chesterford Village Plan 2015
- Little Chesterford Village Survey 2016
- GC Conservation Area Appraisal 2007
- Historic Environment Assessment 2016
- Landscape Character Assessment 2017
- Landscape Character Assessment – maps x 6
- Landscape Character Assessment – area summary
- Important Views Designation Report
- Local Green Spaces Designation Report
- Indicative Housing Requirement Figure – 23 March 2021
- UDC Local Wildlife Site Review 2007

These can also be found, together with further information supporting the making of the Neighbourhood Plan, on Uttlesford District Council's website:

<https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/chesterfordsnp>



Produced by the Great and Little Chesterford Parish
Councils Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group with help
from many in both communities

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September 2022

Agenda Item 13

Committee: Cabinet

Date: Thursday 20
October 2022

Title: Local Development Scheme (Local Plan
Regulation 18 Consultation)

**Portfolio
Holder:** Councillor John Evans,

Portfolio Holder for Planning, the Local Plan,
Stansted Airport and Infrastructure Strategy

**Report
Author:** Dean Hermitage – Director of Planning &

John Clements, Interim Local Plan and New
Communities Manager

Key decision:

No

Summary

1. The Council is progressing work on a new Local Plan and was due to consult on its Regulation 18 'Preferred Options' document ("Reg.18") in November 2022. The production of this document is delayed. It is therefore recommended that The Local Development Scheme (LDS), which sets out the draft timetable for producing the Local Plan, is amended to reflect this.

Recommendations

1. That Cabinet adopt the revised LDS of the Local Plan.

Financial Implications

2. The approved budget for the Local Plan in 2022-23 includes sufficient provision for the work needed through to the end of March 2023. Adequate provision will need to be made in preparing the budgets for 2023-24 and 2024-25 in the revised Medium Term Financial Strategy.
3. The proposed changes to the timetable will extend the period for which the district is at risk of speculative development, and this will extend the period during which the Council is likely to face further appeals.

Background Papers

4. No additional papers were referred to by the author(s) in the preparation of this report.

Impact

5. See table:

Communication/Consultation	The draft timetable includes for wide public and stakeholder consultation.
Community Safety	No impact
Equalities	No impact
Health and Safety	No impact
Human Rights/Legal Implications	Preparation of a local plan is a statutory duty. It needs to meet legal tests and comply with regulations.
Sustainability	N/a
Ward-specific impacts	All
Workforce/Workplace	N/A

Situation

6. The Council started work on a new Local Plan in 2020. The Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out the draft timetable for producing the Local Plan. The existing LDS included for a Reg.18 consultation from November to December 2022 with a Regulation 19 consultation (final public consultation) from November to December 2023. It proposed the submission of the Regulation 19 plan (our final draft) to Government in May 2024.
7. The publication of a Reg.18 Local Plan consultation document this November was aborted as it had become apparent to senior officers that, despite strenuous efforts by the Local Plans team, the intended document could not be completed to an acceptable standard within target timescales.
8. To continue the established programme with a relatively short delay was explored but found to be unfeasible, not least due to the timetable constraints on consultation and governance leading up to and during next May's Council elections (for which the pre-election – 'purdah' – period begins on 23 March).
9. It is therefore proposed to **schedule a post-local election Reg.18 consultation, early summer 2023**. Key dates are being developed and will follow.
10. It is proposed instead to use the additional time to produce a more focused, accessible and effective form of consultation document, address perceived shortcomings in some of the current content, and further develop and integrate the evidence required to support the plan. This 'Draft Plan' should make consultation more effective, and in various ways progress the Council further towards what is the most crucial step in the process; the Regulation 19 submission of a completed and sound 'final' plan for examination. In this way the overall delay to that final stage, currently estimated at up to five months, is

less than the delay to the more immediate Regulation 18 consultation (i.e. whilst the Reg.18 consultation would be pushed back some seven months, it does not follow that the overall plan adoption date is delayed by the same period).

11. The governance timetabling has been built around the May 2023 elections, the pre-election period leading up to it, and the period following it, within which the Council appoints its portfolio-holders and committees.

12. Changing the Local Plan timetable is a common occurrence in Local Planning Authorities across the country, due to the complexities and uncertainties involved (the Planning Officers Society has very recently commented that this is currently occurring at a particularly high level for various reasons). It is nonetheless fully appreciated that changes and delay cause frustration for all interested parties, and that successive changes are particularly regrettable.

13. The updated LDS is appended to this report as *Appendix 1*.

Risk Analysis

14. See table:

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
The proposed changes to the timetable extend the period for which the district is at risk of speculative development	4 – there will be a longer time before a Local Plan is adopted	2 – the longer time period before which a Local Plan is adopted will mean the district is at risk of speculative development for longer	A more robust Reg18 allows for a better case to be put for the plan at examination. Similarly, it will help UDC 'make up' the time between the regulation 18 and regulation 19 consultations.
That the timetable proposed in the LDS slips	1 – there are unknown factors in the production of a Local Plan that require consideration and may result in slippage	4 – government intervention would significantly damage the reputation of the Council	The project plan supporting the LDS is actively managed by the Council's Scrutiny Committee with work presented to and monitored by LPLG in a more structured manner.
That the government introduces a new system for producing Local Plans	4 – the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill includes	3 – the changes currently proposed could result in a radically	The Council will monitor further consultation and changes.

	some significant changes	different Local Plan	
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1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.

Appendix 1:

Revised LDS Timetable

- 1.1 The Council is required to prepare and maintain a Local Development Scheme (LDS). The LDS provides information on the Development Plan Documents (DPD) that the Council intends to produce to form its planning policy framework for the District. It also sets out the timetable for their production. At this time the Council is proposing one document, the Local Plan, however a S106 SPD will also be taken forward.
- 1.2 This Uttlesford LDS sets out the timetable for the Councils DPD work for the period 2020 to 2025. It explains when the Council intends to reach key stages in the preparation of its Local Plan. This LDS replaces the previous LDS which was adopted on in July 2022. It is intended to help the local community and all our partners interested in development and the use of land and buildings in Uttlesford to understand what plans the Council has and intend to produce.
- 1.3 For comparison, the July 2022 LDS is set above the proposed LDS. The proposed LDS includes for a Reg18 consultation post-local elections. This means summer 2023. The overall date for anticipated adoption moves from March 2025 to October 2025. It may be possible to shorten elements of the programme following the May 2023 elections. This will depend on factors such as results from consultation and the level of changes to the council membership following the election.

[illegible]

KEY	
'Preferred Options' preparatory work	
Pre-submission preparatory work	
Submission preparatory work	
Submission	
Examination	
Adoption	
Consultation & Publication	
Governance	

Agenda Item 14

Committee: Cabinet

Date: Thursday 20

Title: Zero Carbon Communities Fund

October 2022

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Louise Pepper, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Green Issues, Equalities

Report Author: Ben Brown, Assistant Director - Environmental Services

Key Decision: No

Summary

1. Uttlesford District Council declared a climate emergency in 2019. It has pledged to take local action to prevent a climate and ecological catastrophe, through the development of practices and policies which aim to achieve net-zero carbon status by 2030 and to protect and enhance biodiversity in the district.
2. The Council set aside a specific Climate Crisis budget of £1M to be spent over three years. A figure of £300,000 of the overall Climate Crisis budget has been provisionally allocated to support community-based projects, that reduce carbon dioxide emissions or improve biodiversity.
3. This report and APPENDIX 1 set out the principles behind the Zero Carbon Community Fund and seeks feedback from the committee on the proposals.

Recommendations

4. To approve the proposed principles set out in APPENDIX 1.
5. To note the draft timetable for Round 1 bids set out in APPENDIX 2.

Financial Implications

6. The Council has already agreed a specific climate change budget totalling £1,000,000 spent over 3 years. It is proposed that a total of £300,000 is allocated to Community based carbon reduction and or biodiversity projects.
7. It proposed that two bidding rounds are held an £150,000 is allocated for each round.
8. It is proposed that funding be made available of between £1,000 and £35,000 per project.

Background Papers

9. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report:

10. Climate Change Action Plan, Climate Crisis Strategy.

Impact

11.

Communication/Consultation	The proposed Zero Carbon Community Fund has been reviewed by the Climate Change Working Group and corporate management team.
Community Safety	None
Equalities	None
Health and Safety	None
Human Rights/Legal Implications	None
Sustainability	A clear plan setting out Uttlesford district councils' approach to addressing climate change will have a positive impact on sustainability issues.
Ward-specific impacts	Potential projects should have specific ward impacts though these are not known at this stage.
Workforce/Workplace	None

Situation

12. The Council's Climate Crisis Strategy defined the Council's ambition to achieve net-zero carbon status by 2030 and to improve biodiversity and was published

in September 2020. The strategy has specific reference to taking local action to help reduce carbon emissions and or improve biodiversity.

13. The principles of the proposal to create a community-based grants scheme (the Zero Carbon Community Fund) providing direct financial support to local community groups is set out in APPENDIX 1. If agreed these principles and will be used to develop further the funding documentation required, including eligibility, bidding processes, assessment criteria and measures.
14. The proposal directly links with the Council's aims within the Climate Crisis Strategy.
15. Cabinet is asked to consider and approve the principles set out in APPENDIX 1 and note the provisional timescales shown in APPENDIX 2.
16. The aim is to launch the scheme in October with the first round of bids being assessed and finalised in February, this may require an additional meeting of Cabinet to give sufficient time for bidders and approve bids before the Purdah period.

Risk Analysis

17.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Limited Parish level capacity to prepare and sign off bids within timescales proposed.	2	2	Two rounds of funding are proposed and officers are actively looking at ways to support bids.
Scheme is oversubscribed	3	2	Clear and transparent guidance on how projects will be assessed and grants

			awarded will be published.
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Uttlesford District Council Zero Carbon Communities Fund

Introduction

£300,000 of the Climate Crisis budget has been provisionally allocated to fund community based projects that are designed to reduce direct carbon emissions or that will lock up carbon or improve biodiversity. It is proposed that the scheme is called the Zero Carbon Community Fund.

The following principles, will enable the Zero Carbon Community fund to be managed in a fair and transparent way and have been considered by the Climate and Energy Working Group and the Scrutiny Committee.

The principles set out below will also be used to set out funding documentation including eligibility, bidding processes, assessment criteria and measures.

Who can apply?

Any Parish or Town Council within the Uttlesford District.

Any Formally Constituted community group or community interest company working within the Uttlesford District.

Any 'not for profit' groups that are not formally constituted but that ARE supported by a constituted mainstream service, Town or Parish Council or community group willing to administer the funds through an organisational bank account.

What projects could be supported?

Projects that reduce carbon dioxide or other greenhouse gas emissions

Projects that reduce carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and

Projects that increase biodiversity

What assessment criteria will be used?

The project be financially sustainable at the end of project or within the project lifetime

Carbon dioxide savings or reduction in atmospheric CO₂ must be quantified using a recognised methodology.

Biodiversity projects must show how they will improve diversity using a recognised methodology.

How much is available?

Grants between £1,000 and £35,000 are available. It is proposed that two funding rounds made available one in 22/23 and one in 23/24

What can the funding be used for?

As well as capital costs funding can be used to pay for:

- Salaries of project workers

- Salaries of management staff who supervise project staff. These should be in proportion to the staff time spent on the project
- Reasonable expenses of project staff and volunteers
- Marketing and publicity for the project (as appropriate)
- Feasibility studies for future projects.

What cannot be funded?

- Activities, events or services which have already taken place, including staff development time
- Activities that benefit individuals, rather than the wider community
- Activities that generate profits for private gain
- Religious activities or content (although religious organisations may apply provided, they are providing benefit for the wider community)
- Activities that replace or supplement government funding
- Renewable energy installations where it is intended to claim Renewable Heat Incentive payments or any other payments where the use of public grants renders the installation ineligible for such payments
- Loan repayments

What are the conditions of funding?

Organisations that are awarded a grant will be expected to comply with the following conditions as a minimum:

- Funding must only be used for the agreed purpose and must be spent within 24-months of the award being made except an extension is agreed with the administering officer in writing
- Where a proposal anticipates financial savings or income, the applicant will need to show this will be for the benefit of the community
- Publicity must take place acknowledging the award provided by Uttlesford District Council
- Any unused grant must be returned to Uttlesford District Council
- An end of project report with photographs must be submitted to the Council within six months of project completion

In addition, all projects **must** follow national legislation, guidance and good practice in relation to:

- Equality and diversity
- Health and safety
- Safeguarding

What supporting documentation is required?

- A copy of organisation's constitution or mission statement (except parish councils)
- A copy of latest accounts (audited if available)
- A quote for the project costs
- Details of the methodology used to calculate carbon dioxide savings or capture

APPENDIX 2

Activity/Milestone	Date
Application Form/Guidance & FAQ ready for publication	21 th October 2022
Approval by Cabinet to proceed	20 th October 2022
Go Live on website + Email Counsellors/groups / press release	28 th October 2022
Teams/Zoom webinar – to introduce grants scheme	2 nd November 2022
CC Working Group (verbal update)	7 th December 2022
PROVISIONAL Closing date for applications	13 January 2023
Review of applications	WC / 16 January
Selection Panel Teams Meet to agree successful projects	WC 23 January 2023
Cabinet final sign off for successful bids	9 th February 2023
Successful Projects informed/ letters of agreement sent	10 th February 2023
Comms/press release	End Feb 2023

Committee: Cabinet

Date: Thursday, 20
October 2022

Title: Self Assessment Independent Housing
Ombudsman Scheme Complaints Code

**Portfolio
Holder:** Councillor Arthur Coote, Portfolio Holder for
Housing

**Report
Author:** Paul Kingston – Interim Deputy Director
Of Housing, Health, and Communities

Summary

1. The Independent Housing Ombudsman Schemes (IHOS) Complaints Code was introduced in July 2020. The Code sets out good practice that the Ombudsman expects social landlords to follow. The Code has been updated and takes effect on 1 April 2022 and Landlords have until 1 October 2022 to become compliant.
2. Landlords must carry out an annual assessment against the Code to ensure their complaint handling remains in line with the Ombudsman's requirements and publish the results. There is no longer a requirement to send the self assessment to the IHOS.
3. The Code is also a useful guide for tenants to understand what they can and should expect from their landlord.
4. The Self Assessment will be considered at the Tenants Panel meeting on the 22 September 2022.
5. Members will note there are a number of both mandatory (must comply) and best practice (should comply) requirements that either the Council do not comply or partially comply with currently.
6. Officers are working to achieve full compliance by the end of the calendar year when a further update will be provided to Housing Board.

Recommendations

7. To approve the Self Assessment of the Independent Housing Ombudsman's Scheme Complaints Handling Code.

Financial Implications

8. The Council will need to undertake a review of resources in order to comply with IHOS Complaints Code.

Background Papers

The self assessment of the IHOS Complaints Code is attached to the report as Appendix 1.

9. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report:
 - The IHOS Complaints Code

Impact

10.

Communication/Consultation	Tenant Panel on 22 September 2022
Community Safety	Not applicable
Equalities	Accessibility and awareness has been assessed as part of the self assessment
Health and Safety	Compliance with the Code will enable more openness, transparency and learning, encouraging tenants to come forward with any health and safety concerns
Human Rights/Legal Implications	Compliance with the complaints code will become a regulatory requirement
Sustainability	Not applicable
Ward-specific impacts	None
Workforce/Workplace	Review of resources to oversee and lead complaints and training to complaint responders in IHOS good practice

Situation

11. Ideally the Council should have achieved full compliance with the IHOS Complaints Code by 1 October 2022. This will not be possible and the earliest we could achieve that goal will be 30 December 2022.

Risk Analysis

12.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Compliance with the IHOS	2 - the Council will not be	2 - There is some risk of	Officers are working to achieve full

Complaints Code will become a Regulator for Social Housing requirement when the new consumer regulations become mandatory next year. In the meantime Social Landlords are being encouraged to follow the proposed consumer regulations.	compliant by 1 October 2022, and officers have earmarked the 30 December 2022 as the earliest date for full compliance.	challenge but the impact is low as long as Council is working towards full compliance with the Code by the end of the calendar year.	compliance by the end of the calendar year when a further update will be provided to Housing Board.
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1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.

Complaints Self-Assessment Form

This self-assessment form should be completed by the complaints officer and discussed at the landlord's governing body annually.

Evidence should be included to support all statements with additional commentary as necessary.

Explanations must also be provided where a mandatory 'must' requirement is not met to set out the rationale for the alternative approach adopted and why this delivers a better outcome.

Section 1 - Definition of a complaint

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
1.2	A complaint must be defined as: <i>'an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the organisation, its own staff, or those acting on its behalf, affecting an individual resident or group of residents.'</i>	Yes	Published on website: https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/7939/Complaints-compliments-and-feedback-on-housing-repairs Corporate complaints policy will need to be changed to recognise the Independent Housing Ombudsman Scheme (IHOS) Complaints Code and definition.
1.3	The resident does not have to use the word 'complaint' for it to be treated as such. A complaint that is submitted via a third party or representative must still be handled in line with the landlord's complaints policy.	Yes	With tenant's consent we have in the past and will continue to accept legitimate third-party representation.
1.6	... if further enquiries are needed to resolve the matter, or if the resident requests it, the issue must be logged as a complaint.	Partial	This matter will be covered in training to ensure complaints are dealt with in this way.
1.7	A landlord must accept a complaint unless there is a valid reason not to do so.	Yes	We will treat any matter as a complaint if it falls within the definition of 1.2. unless the complaint is considered to be: Abusive, persistent or vexatious complaints policy - Uttlesford District Council

1.8	A complaints policy must clearly set out the circumstances in which a matter will not be considered, and these circumstances should be fair and reasonable to residents.	Yes	https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/7939/Complaints-compliments-and-feedback-on-housing-repairs
1.9	If a landlord decides not to accept a complaint, a detailed explanation must be provided to the resident setting out the reasons why the matter is not suitable for the complaints process and the right to take that decision to the Ombudsman.	Yes	No examples of this to date.

Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
1.4	Landlords should recognise the difference between a service request , where a resident may be unhappy with a situation that they wish to have rectified, and a complaint about the service they have/have not received.	Yes	It is stated in the complaints policy.
1.5	Survey feedback may not necessarily need to be treated as a complaint, though, where possible, the person completing the survey should be made aware of how they can pursue their dissatisfaction as a complaint if they wish to.	No	We will be incorporating in, in all surveys including the next tenant satisfaction survey featuring the new Tenant Satisfaction Measures.

Section 2 - Accessibility and awareness

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
2.1	Landlords must make it easy for residents to complain by providing different channels through which residents can make a complaint such as in person, over the telephone, in writing, by email and digitally. While the Ombudsman recognises that it may not be feasible for a landlord to use all of the potential channels, there must be more than one route of access into the complaints system.	Yes	Tenants can complain face to face, with an online form via website, complain by phone, email or write a letter. Sheltered tenants can use feedback boxes in the schemes (this assists residents who work or don't have daily visits) or directly to their Sheltered Housing Officer. Complaints are also accepted via social media, through a Councillor, Tenant and Leaseholder rep, MP or other recognised third party with tenant's consent.
2.3	Landlords must make their complaint policy available in a clear and accessible format for all residents. This will detail the number of stages involved, what will happen at each stage and the timeframes for responding.	Yes	Website and leaflet, tenant panel has reviewed the complaints page on the website.
2.4	Landlord websites, if they exist, must include information on how to raise a complaint. The complaints policy and process must be easy to find on the website.	Partial	https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/7939/Complaints-compliments-and-feedback-on-housing-repairs The Corporate complaints policy will need to change to recognise the Independent Housing Ombudsman Scheme (IHOS) Complaints Code and definition.
2.5	Landlords must comply with the Equality Act 2010 and may need to adapt normal policies, procedures, or processes to accommodate an individual's needs. Landlords must satisfy themselves that their policy sets out how they will respond to reasonable adjustments requests in line with the Equality Act and that complaints handlers have had appropriate training to deal with such requests.	Partial	Uttlesford District Council believes that no person should be treated unfairly and is committed to eliminate all forms of discrimination. We do this by complying with our Equality Policy (PDF) [1MB] which sets out the council's aims and objectives for treating everyone equally. The council's approach to Equality Impact Assessments is being reviewed by the Communities team.

2.6	Landlords must publicise the complaints policy and process, the Complaint Handling Code and the Housing Ombudsman Scheme in leaflets, posters, newsletters, online and as part of regular correspondence with residents.	Yes	Housing News – will signpost to complaints policy and process, complaints handling code and the Housing ombudsman scheme in every issue paper and virtual, website and add leaflet to the annual rent changes letter.
2.7	Landlords must provide residents with contact information for the Ombudsman as part of its regular correspondence with residents.	Partial	Contact details are included on the website currently. See 2.6 we will add to the sign-up pack for new tenants with effect from 1 October. We will also include information regularly in the Tenants Housing newsletter starting from October 2022 edition.
2.8	Landlords must provide early advice to residents regarding their right to access the Housing Ombudsman Service throughout their complaint, not only when the landlord's complaints process is exhausted.	Yes	In acknowledgement letters the Housing Officer who oversees complaints, will quality assure that advice is given.

Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
2.2	Where a landlord has set up channels to communicate with its residents via social media, then it should expect to receive complaints via those channels. Policies should contain details of the steps that will be taken when a complaint is received via social media and how confidentiality and privacy will be maintained.	Partial	The complaints policy will need to be reviewed in the light of this code requirement. We encourage tenants to directly message e.g. email or letter as this is a more confidential method of communicating.

Section 3 - Complaint handling personnel

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
3.1	Landlords must have a person or team assigned to take responsibility for complaint handling to ensure complaints receive the necessary attention, and that these are reported to the governing body. This Code will refer to that person or team as the "complaints officer".	Yes	We do not have an officer who is dedicated to complaints as we have limited staff resources. However we do have an officer who oversees the complaints process. Resources will be reviewed with a view to ensuring full compliance with the IHOS Complaints code.
3.2	...the complaint handler appointed must have appropriate complaint handling skills and no conflicts of interest.	Yes	Although we acknowledge that we are a small team, we do our utmost to ensure impartiality. This matter will be considered as part of the review of resources and training objectives.

Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
3.3	Complaint handlers should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be able to act sensitively and fairly • be trained to handle complaints and deal with distressed and upset residents • have access to staff at all levels to facilitate quick resolution of complaints • have the authority and autonomy to act to resolve disputes quickly and fairly. 	Yes	Experienced officers deal with complaints and an independent officer oversees the process.

Section 4 - Complaint handling principles

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
4.1	Any decision to try and resolve a concern must be taken in agreement with the resident and a landlord's audit trail/records should be able to demonstrate this. Landlords must ensure that efforts to resolve a resident's concerns do not obstruct access to the complaints procedure or result in any unreasonable delay. It is not appropriate to have extra named stages (such as 'stage 0' or 'pre-complaint stage') as this causes unnecessary confusion for residents. When a complaint is made, it must be acknowledged and logged at stage one of the complaints procedure within five days of receipt .	Partial	Two stage process – see website. This will need to be quality assured by a suitably qualified and empowered complaints lead and will form part of the resources review and training objectives. We will also consider in the review of the complaints policy.
4.2	Within the complaint acknowledgement, landlords must set out their understanding of the complaint and the outcomes the resident is seeking. If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the resident must be asked for clarification and the full definition agreed between both parties.	Partial	Template letter has been updated incorporating this requirement awaiting Senior Management sign off.
4.6	A complaint investigation must be conducted in an impartial manner.	Partial	We will use case studies as part of the training to highlight the need for impartiality. There is a need to integrate Uttlesford Norse complaints practice into the corporate policy and for a system of assurance to be put in place.

4.7	<p>The complaint handler must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • deal with complaints on their merits • act independently and have an open mind • take measures to address any actual or perceived conflict of interest • consider all information and evidence carefully • keep the complaint confidential as far as possible, with information only disclosed if necessary to properly investigate the matter. 	Partial	<p>Should a conflict of interest arise the complaint will be passed to another member of the team.</p> <p>We will undertake to train all complaint handlers in quality complaint resolution by the end of 2022.</p>
4.11	<p>Landlords must adhere to any reasonable arrangements agreed with residents in terms of frequency and method of communication.</p>	Partial	<p>This requirement will also be included in training and review of corporate policy.</p>

4.12	<p>The resident, and if applicable any staff member who is the subject of the complaint, must also be given a fair chance to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set out their position • comment on any adverse findings before a final decision is made. 	Yes	The complaint handler or an appropriate line management would listen to both parties before concluding any findings. This will be reinforced in training.
4.13	A landlord must include in its complaints policy its timescales for a resident to request escalation of a complaint.	Yes	Included in the policy.
4.14	A landlord must not unreasonably refuse to escalate a complaint through all stages of the complaints procedure and must have clear and valid reasons for taking that course of action. Reasons for declining to escalate a complaint must be clearly set out in a landlord's complaints policy and must be the same as the reasons for not accepting a complaint.	Yes	<p>This requirement will be considered in both training and as part of the review of complaints policy. We consider through the monitoring of complaints that we comply with this requirement. There is a need to ensure that if a complaint is refused escalation that the reasons why are clearly and reasonably specified.</p> <p>Also see: Abusive, persistent or vexatious complaints policy - Uttlesford District Council</p>
4.15	A full record must be kept of the complaint, any review and the outcomes at each stage. This must include the original complaint and the date received, all correspondence with the resident, correspondence with other parties and any reports or surveys prepared.	Yes	Recorded on the house file and on the complaints spreadsheet.
4.18	Landlords must have policies and procedures in place for managing unacceptable behaviour from residents and/or their representatives when pursuing a complaint.	Yes	Abusive, persistent or vexatious complaints policy - Uttlesford District Council

Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
4.3	Landlords should manage residents' expectations from the outset, being clear where a desired outcome is unreasonable or unrealistic.	Yes	Complaints handlers are comfortable feeding back to residents when the request is unreasonable or unrealistic.
4.4	A complaint should be resolved at the earliest possible opportunity, having assessed what evidence is needed to fully consider the issues, what outcome would resolve the matter for the resident and whether there are any urgent actions required.	Yes	It is the responsibility of the officer dealing with the complaint to assess if it can be resolved quickly or urgent actions are required. This best practice will also be included in the review of the corporate policy.
4.5	Landlords should give residents the opportunity to have a representative deal with their complaint on their behalf, and to be represented or accompanied at any meeting with the landlord where this is reasonable.	Yes	This is accepted as long as clear consent has been provided and will be considered for inclusion in the review of policy.
4.8	Where a key issue of a complaint relates to the parties' legal obligations landlords should clearly set out their understanding of the obligations of both parties.	Yes	The obligations contained within the tenancy agreement will be referred to as necessary with advice from the Legal team where appropriate.
4.9	Communication with the resident should not generally identify individual members of staff or contractors.	No	To be reviewed and covered in training.
4.10	Landlords should keep residents regularly updated about the progress of the investigation.	Yes	The aim is to meet deadlines and if more time is required that tenants are notified. The lead officer on complaints quality assures this. This best practice will be covered in training.

4.16	Landlords should seek feedback from residents in relation to the landlord's complaint handling as part of the drive to encourage a positive complaint and learning culture.	Yes	The Tenants Panel and another group of tenants will be given a selection of anonymised complaints to look at the way in which it was handled to give their feedback on results.
4.17	Landlords should recognise the impact that being complained about can have on future service delivery. Landlords should ensure that staff are supported and engaged in the complaints process, including the learning that can be gained	Yes	Team members will have input into complaints in their area in terms of the response and lesson learned from outcomes.
4.19	Any restrictions placed on a resident's contact due to unacceptable behaviour should be appropriate to their needs and should demonstrate regard for the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.	Yes	Abusive, persistent or vexatious complaints policy - Uttlesford District Council

Section 5 - Complaint stages

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Stage 1

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
5.1	Landlords must respond to the complaint <u>within 10 working days</u> of the complaint being logged. Exceptionally, landlords may provide an explanation to the resident containing a clear timeframe for when the response will be received. This should not exceed a further 10 days without good reason.	Yes	Compliments, suggestions and complaints policy - Uttlesford District Council
5.5	A complaint response must be sent to the resident when the answer to the complaint is known, not when the outstanding actions required to address the issue, are completed. Outstanding actions must still be tracked and actioned expeditiously with regular updates provided to the resident.	Yes	Uttlesford Norse used to send a closing letter once works are completed and correspond by telephone/email during the process. Following the self-assessment, the new process has now been adopted. A full response should be sent within 10 working days.

5.6	Landlords must address all points raised in the complaint and provide clear reasons for any decisions, referencing the relevant policy, law and good practice where appropriate.	Yes	This will be covered in training and the Lead Officer on complaints will ensure this will happen in practice.
5.8	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage one in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the complaint stage the decision on the complaint the reasons for any decisions made the details of any remedy offered to put things right details of any outstanding actions details of how to escalate the matter to stage two if the resident is not satisfied with the answer 	Yes	All specified in template letters.

Stage 2

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
5.9	If all or part of the complaint is not resolved to the resident's satisfaction at stage one it must be progressed to stage two of the landlord's procedure, unless an exclusion ground now applies. In instances where a landlord declines to escalate a complaint it must clearly communicate in writing its reasons for not escalating as well as the resident's right to approach the Ombudsman about its decision.	Yes	States in stage 1 response letter how to escalate if not satisfied.
5.10	On receipt of the escalation request, landlords must set out their understanding of issues outstanding and the outcomes the resident is seeking. If any aspect of the complaint is unclear, the resident must be asked for clarification and the full definition agreed between both parties.	No	We will cover in training and quality assurance.
5.11	Landlords must only escalate a complaint to stage two once it has completed stage one and at the request of the resident.	Yes	This will be monitored by the complaints lead.

5.12	The person considering the complaint at stage two, must not be the same person that considered the complaint at stage one.	Yes	The complaint is then escalated to the Assistant Director Housing Health and Communities in their absence another director in the Council
5.13	Landlords must respond to the stage two complaint <u>within 20 working days</u> of the complaint being escalated. Exceptionally, landlords may provide an explanation to the resident containing a clear timeframe for when the response will be received. This should not exceed a further 10 days without good reason.	Yes	We aim to respond within 10 working days.
5.16	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage two in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the complaint stage the complaint definition the decision on the complaint the reasons for any decisions made the details of any remedy offered to put things right details of any outstanding actions and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> if the landlord has a third stage, details of how to escalate the matter to stage three if this was the final stage, details of how to escalate the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service if the resident remains dissatisfied. 	Yes	No stage 3

Stage 3

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
5.17	Two stage landlord complaint procedures are ideal. This ensures that the complaint process is not unduly long. If landlords strongly believe a third stage is necessary, they must set out their reasons for this as part of their self-assessment. A process with more than three stages is not acceptable under any circumstances.	No stage 3	N/A

5.20	Landlords must confirm the following in writing to the resident at the completion of stage three in clear, plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the complaint stage • the complaint definition • the decision on the complaint • the reasons for any decisions made • the details of any remedy offered to put things right • details of any outstanding actions • details of how to escalate the matter to the Housing Ombudsman Service if the resident remains dissatisfied 	No stage 3	N/A
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Best practice 'should' requirements

Stage 1

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
5.2	If an extension beyond 20 working days is required to enable the landlord to respond to the complaint fully, this should be agreed by both parties.	Yes	A letter/email etc would be sent asking if an extension can be agreed
5.3	Where agreement over an extension period cannot be reached, landlords should provide the Housing Ombudsman's contact details so the resident can challenge the landlord's plan for responding and/or the proposed timeliness of a landlord's response.	Yes	Standard to provide this on complaints correspondence
5.4	Where the problem is a recurring issue, the landlord should consider any older reports as part of the background to the complaint if this will help to resolve the issue for the resident.	Yes	Check house file etc for previous correspondence
5.7	Where residents raise additional complaints during the investigation, these should be incorporated into the stage one response if they are relevant and the stage one response has not been issued. Where the stage one response has been issued, or it would unreasonably delay the response, the complaint should be logged as a new complaint.	Yes	This would be done if relevant to original complaint

Stage 2

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
5.14	If an extension beyond 10 working days is required to enable the landlord to respond to the complaint fully, this should be agreed by both parties.	Yes	A letter/email etc would be sent asking if an extension can be agreed
5.15	Where agreement over an extension period cannot be reached, landlords should provide the Housing Ombudsman's contact details so the resident can challenge the landlord's plan for responding and/or the proposed timeliness of a landlord's response	Yes	Standard to provide this on complaints correspondence

Stage 3

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
5.18	Complaints should only go to a third stage if the resident has actively requested a third stage review of their complaint. Where a third stage is in place and has been requested, landlords must respond to the stage three complaint <u>within 20 working days</u> of the complaint being escalated. Additional time will only be justified if related to convening a panel. An explanation and a date for when the stage three response will be received should be provided to the resident.	No stage 3	N/A
5.19	Where agreement over an extension period cannot be reached, landlords should provide the Housing Ombudsman's contact details so the resident can challenge the landlord's plan for responding and/or the proposed timeliness of a landlord's response.	No stage 3	N/A

Section 6 - Putting things right

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
6.1	Effective dispute resolution requires a process designed to resolve complaints. Where something has gone wrong a landlord must acknowledge this and set out the actions it has already taken, or intends to take, to put things right.	Yes	Example of a change we have made: following contacting deceased tenants in error a new process involving several departments has now been set up to ensure all relevant parties are aware when a tenant dies to avoid this occurring in the future. Family notified of the changes made.
6.2	Any remedy offered must reflect the extent of any service failures and the level of detriment caused to the resident as a result. A landlord must carefully manage the expectations of residents and not promise anything that cannot be delivered or would cause unfairness to other residents.	Yes	Any remedies offered are inline with existing Council policies.
6.5	The remedy offer must clearly set out what will happen and by when, in agreement with the resident where appropriate. Any remedy proposed must be followed through to completion.	Yes	Responses will state if action to be taken and by when.
6.6	In awarding compensation, a landlord must consider whether any statutory payments are due, if any quantifiable losses have been incurred, the time and trouble a resident has been put to as well as any distress and inconvenience caused.	Yes	Compensation considered on an individual basis where there has been clear financial detriment. Take legal advice.

Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
6.3	Landlords should look beyond the circumstances of the individual complaint and consider whether anything needs to be 'put right' in terms of process or systems to the benefit of all residents.	Yes	See 6.1.
6.7	In some cases, a resident may have a legal entitlement to redress. The landlord should still offer a resolution where possible, obtaining legal advice as to how any offer of resolution should be worded.	Yes	Standard practice to take legal advice.

Section 7 - Continuous learning and improvement

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
7.2	Accountability and transparency are integral to a positive complaint handling culture. Landlords must report back on wider learning and improvements from complaints in their annual report and more frequently to their residents, staff and scrutiny panels.	No	Capture learning, share with tenant panel and add to annual report and share via Housing News. Learning will be shared with staff.

Best practice 'should' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary and any explanations
7.3	A member of the governing body should be appointed to have lead responsibility for complaints to support a positive complaint handling culture. This role will be responsible for ensuring the governing body receives regular information on complaints that provides insight to the governing body on the landlord's complaint handling performance.	No	Governance Audit Performance Committee – oversee all complaints to the Council including housing.
7.4	As a minimum, governing bodies should receive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular updates on the volume, categories and outcome of complaints, alongside complaint handling performance including compliance with the Ombudsman's orders Regular reviews of issues and trends arising from complaint handling, The annual performance report produced by the Ombudsman, where applicable Individual complaint outcomes where necessary, including where the Ombudsman made findings of severe maladministration or referrals to regulatory bodies. The implementation of management responses should be tracked to ensure they are delivered to agreed timescales. The annual self-assessment against the Complaint Handling Code for scrutiny and challenge. 	Partial	This will form part of the new practice as defined in the code.

7.5	Any themes or trends should be assessed by senior management to identify potential systemic issues, serious risks or policies and procedures that require revision. They should also be used to inform staff and contractor training.	Yes	Assistant Director will periodically examine learning arising from complaints with a view to reviewing risks and policies and procedures and training requirements.
7.6	Landlords should have a standard objective in relation to complaint handling for all employees that reflects the need to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a collaborative and co-operative approach towards resolving complaints, working with colleagues across teams and departments • take collective responsibility for any shortfalls identified through complaints rather than blaming others • act within the Professional Standards for engaging with complaints as set by the Chartered Institute of Housing. 	Partial	Currently working on improvement practices with UNSL.

Section 8 - Self-assessment and compliance

Mandatory 'must' requirements

Code section	Code requirement	Comply: Yes/No	Evidence, commentary, and any explanations
8.1	Landlords must carry out an annual self-assessment against the Code to ensure their complaint handling remains in line with its requirements.	Yes	Completed Sept 22
8.2	Landlords must also carry out a self-assessment following a significant restructure and/or change in procedures.	Yes	Following updated Code
8.3	Following each self-assessment, a landlord must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • report the outcome of their self-assessment to their governing body. In the case of local authorities, self-assessment outcomes should be reported to elected members • publish the outcome of their assessment on their website if they have one, or otherwise make accessible to residents • include the self-assessment in their annual report section on complaints handling performance 	Yes	Tenants Panel 22/9/22 Housing Board 27/9/22

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 3, 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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