

## Chapter 8 Protecting Village Character

- 8.1. Current plans for South Cambridgeshire include designations to protect undeveloped areas and road frontages that are important to the local amenity and character of villages and should be protected from harmful development. These are Protected Village Amenity Areas (PVAA) and Important Countryside Frontages (ICF).

### **Protected Village Amenity Areas and Local Green Space**

- 8.2. In the Council's existing plans, open areas within villages have been identified as Protected Village Amenity Areas (PVAA) where they lie within the village framework, where the risk of harm is greatest, and they are important to the character, amenity, tranquillity or function of the village. Some PVAAs may have important functions for the village such as allotments, recreation grounds and playing fields, whilst others have an important role in providing a setting for buildings and offer tranquil areas where there is minimum activity. Not all PVAAs have public access and some are undeveloped areas such as private gardens. They also vary from those that are very open to views to those that may be enclosed or semi-enclosed.

### **Approach in Issues and Options 2012**

- 8.3. The existing PVAA policy has successfully protected these areas and an issue raised in the 2012 Issues and Options consultation was whether to review the existing areas protected within villages and consider if any additional ones should be identified. A further issue raised was whether to include a policy for the new designation of Local Green Space, introduced by the NPPF, and whether any particular spaces should be identified.
- 8.4. The consultation recognised that there are similarities between PVAAs and the new Local Green Spaces (LGSs), although it commented that the level of protection given by the PVAA policy is not as strong and not all PVAAs may be suitable for the LGS designation. A LGS could also be located on the edge of a village beyond the development framework, whereas PVAAs have been identified within villages only. The new Local Green Space (LGS) designation is for green areas of particular importance to local communities, which once designated can prevent new development.
- 8.5. The Council has received much support from both Parish Councils and individuals for retaining PVAAs and for the introduction of LGS within the future Local Plan. A limited number of objectors considered it duplication to have both designations and that in order to align with the NPPF that LGS should be the policy to have in the new Local Plan. The Council will decide whether the new Local Plan should retain PVAAs and introduce LGS or whether to just have one policy to protect land

in and close to villages, having regard to comments received, and no view has been reached at this stage.

- 8.6. A significant number of new areas have been put forward for consideration in response to the 2012 consultation, and a few existing PVAAs have been questioned.
- 8.7. The Council has given further consideration to the differences and similarities between LGS and PVAAs, in Appendix 12 of the Initial Sustainability Report 2013. There is guidance within the NPPF as to when LGS designation should be used and this has been compared with the criteria that has been used for identifying PVAAs. This work has concluded that LGSs and PVAAs are very similar apart from the fact that PVAAs can only be identified *within* a village.
- 8.8. The criteria used for assessing the sites are as follows:

#### **Criteria for Assessing Sites**

- The green area must be demonstrably special to a local community;
- The green space must 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;
- The green space must be in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- The green area must be local in character and not be an extensive tract of land;
- Most green areas or open space will not be appropriate. Must be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services.

- 8.9. The assessments of these sites are included in Appendix 12 of the Initial Sustainability Report 2013. Each site has been assessed as to whether it could meet the criteria for both PVAA and LGS - the key difference for PVAAs is the need to be within a village framework. The sites that have met the tests for PVAA and/or LGS are included in the following table. The sites that are within the village framework have been grouped together as these could meet both the test for PVAA and LGS. Those outside the framework would only meet the test for LGS.

### Issue 12: Protecting Important Green Spaces

For the purposes of this consultation, the sites suggested and assessed as meeting the main tests for designation as either a Protected Village Amenity Area or the new Local Green Space are put forward in a single list to seek local views on their importance to village character and amenity. Table 8.1 below identifies whether they are inside or outside the village framework for information but please comment on any of the sites and their importance to you as local open green spaces. The Council will ensure that the new Local Plan includes suitable designations to ensure that all areas identified as being of importance are protected in an appropriate way, taking account of your views. Table 8.1 also identifies where the site has been suggested by the Parish Council.

These are shown on the Village Maps in Chapter 9.

#### Question 12:

**Which of the potential important green spaces do you support or object to and why?**

Please provide any comments.

**Table 8.1 Potential Important Green Spaces to be Protected**

 Sites inside village framework  
 Site outside village framework

Option No.	Village	Site Location / Address	Comment
G1	Bassingbourn	Play area and open space in Elbourn Way South of the road	Inside village framework Parish Council proposal
G2	Bassingbourn	Play area and open space owned by the Parish Council in Fortune Way	Inside village framework Parish Council proposal
G3	Bassingbourn	The Rouses	Outside village framework Parish Council proposal
G4	Bassingbourn	The play area and open space in Elbourn Way North of the road	Outside village framework Parish Council proposal

Option No.	Village	Site Location / Address	Comment
G5	Caldecote	Recreation sports field off Furlong Way	Outside village framework
G6	Cambourne	Land north of Jeavons Lane, north of Monkfield Way	Inside village framework Parish Council proposal
G7	Cambourne	Land south of Jeavons Wood Primary School	Inside village framework Parish Council proposal
G8	Cambourne	Cambourne Recreation Ground, Back Lane (2)	Inside village framework Parish Council proposal
G9	Cambourne	Cambourne, land east of Sterling Way	Inside village framework Parish Council proposal
G10	Cambourne	Land east of Sterling Way, north of Brace Dein	Inside village framework Parish Council proposal
G11	Cambourne	Land north of School Lane, west of Woodfield Lane	Inside village framework Parish Council proposal
G12	Cambourne	Land east of Greenbank	Outside village framework Parish Council proposal
G13	Cambourne	Land north of School Lane, west of Broad Street	Outside village framework Parish Council proposal
G14	Cambourne	Cambourne Recreation Ground, Back Lane (1)	Outside village framework Parish Council proposal
G15	Cambourne	Land north of Green Common Farm, west of Broadway	Outside village framework Parish Council proposal
G16	Cambourne	Landscaped areas within village and around edge of village	Outside village framework Parish Council proposal
G17	Cottenham	All Saints Church	Inside village framework
G18	Cottenham	Moat	Inside village framework
G19	Cottenham	Broad Lane - High Street Junction	Inside village framework
G20	Cottenham	Land at Victory Way	Inside village framework
G21	Cottenham	Cemetery, Lamb Lane	Inside village framework
G22	Cottenham	Orchard Close	Inside village framework
G23	Cottenham	Coolidge Gardens	Inside village framework
G24	Cottenham	South of Brenda Gautry Way	Inside village framework
G25	Cottenham	Dunstall Field	Inside village framework
G26	Cottenham	West of Sovereign Way	Inside village framework
G27	Cottenham	Old Recreation Ground	Outside village framework

Option No.	Village	Site Location / Address	Comment
<b>G28</b>	Cottenham	Recreation Ground and Playing Fields	Outside village framework
<b>G29</b>	Cottenham	Playing Fields	Outside village framework
<b>G30</b>	Foxton	Foxton Recreation ground	Outside village framework Parish Council proposal
<b>G31</b>	Foxton	The Green	Outside village framework Parish Council proposal
<b>G32</b>	Foxton	The Dovecote meadow	Outside village framework Parish Council proposal
<b>G33</b>	Fulbourn	Small parcel of land between the Townley Hall at the Fulbourn Centre and the access road to the same, and fronting Home End	Outside village framework
<b>G34</b>	Fulbourn	The field between Cox's Drove, Cow Lane and the railway line - as well as the associated low-lying area on Cow Lane adjacent to the Horse Pond.	Outside village framework
<b>G35</b>	Great Shelford	Land between Rectory Farm and 26 Church Street	Outside village framework Parish Council proposal
<b>G36</b>	Guilden Morden	36 Dubbs Knoll Road	Revise the boundary of existing PVAA inside village framework to exclude the garden of 36 Dubbs Knoll Road.
<b>G37</b>	Haslingfield	Recreation Ground	Outside village framework Parish Council proposal
<b>G38</b>	Ickleton	Village green - opposite the Church	Inside village framework
<b>G39</b>	Litlington	Village Green	Inside village framework
<b>G40</b>	Litlington	St Peter's Hill	Inside village framework
<b>G41</b>	Litlington	Recreation Ground	Outside village framework Parish Council proposal
<b>G42</b>	Little Abington	Scout Campsite, Church Lane	Outside village framework Parish Council proposal

Option No.	Village	Site Location / Address	Comment
<b>G43</b>	Little Abington	Bowling Green, High Street	Outside village framework Parish Council proposal
<b>G44</b>	Over	Station Road/Turn Lane	Inside village framework Parish Council proposal
<b>G45</b>	Over	Willingham Road/west of Mill Road	Outside village framework Parish Council proposal
<b>G46</b>	Pampisford	The Spinney adjacent to 81 Brewery Road.	Outside village framework Parish Council proposal
<b>G47</b>	Papworth Everard	Wood behind Pendragon Hill	Inside village framework Parish Council proposal
<b>G48</b>	Papworth Everard	Jubilee Green	Inside village framework Parish Council proposal
<b>G49</b>	Papworth Everard	Baron's Way Wood	Inside village framework Parish Council proposal
<b>G50</b>	Papworth Everard	Rectory Woods	Outside village framework Parish Council proposal
<b>G51</b>	Papworth Everard	Meadow at west end of Church Lane	Outside village framework Parish Council proposal
<b>G52</b>	Sawston	Challis Garden, Mill Lane	Inside village framework
<b>G53</b>	Sawston	Spike Playing Field – open space at end of South Terrace	Outside village framework
<b>G54</b>	Steeple Morden	The Ransom Strip, Craft Way	Outside village framework Parish Council proposal
<b>G55</b>	Steeple Morden	The Recreation Ground, Hay Street	Outside village framework Parish Council proposal
<b>G56</b>	Steeple Morden	The Cowslip Meadow	Outside village framework Parish Council proposal
<b>G57</b>	Steeple Morden	Whiteponds Wood	Outside village framework Parish Council proposal
<b>G58</b>	Toft	Land adjacent to 6 High Street	Inside village framework Parish Council proposal
<b>G59</b>	Toft	The Recreation Ground	Outside village framework Parish Council proposal

Option No.	Village	Site Location / Address	Comment
G60	Toft	Home Meadow	Outside village framework Parish Council proposal

### Parish Council Proposals

- 8.10. A number of suggested sites for inclusion as PVAA and/or LGS were put forward by Parish Councils. Those that were considered to meet the tests for either or both designations have been included in Table 8.1 above.

#### Issue 13: Parish Council proposals for protecting important green spaces

Some of the sites proposed by Parish Councils did not meet the tests outlined in paragraph 8.8 for either recognised designation and to include them as such would not be consistent with either the NPPF or the Council's approach. If Parish Councils wish to meet local aspirations by protecting such sites, this would need to be done under another new designation if they are to be included in the Local Plan. They are included in this consultation, in Table 8.2, to seek local views on the importance of these areas. If there is local support, we will work with the parish councils concerned to include appropriate community-led policies in the Local Plan.

These are shown on the Village Maps in Chapter 9.

#### Question 13:

**Which of the Parish Council proposed important green spaces do you support or object to and why?**

Please provide any comments.

**Table 8.2 Parish Council Proposed Important Green Spaces to be Protected**

Ref. No.	Village	Site Location / Address	District Council's comment
PC14	Bassingbourn	75 and 90 Spring Lane; and the junction with the by-way at Ashwell Street.	Highway and highway verges not a suitable candidate for PVAA - not 'green space'. Does not have historic significance; recreational value or amenity value to the community. Not a tranquil location. Therefore not considered a local asset for protection as LGS.
PC15	Foxton	The green area on Station Road in front of, and beside, the Press cottages	Wide grass verge following western side of Station Road. It has some trees within it creating a rural character to this stretch of road. As it is beside a road it would not have a recreational value or be tranquil. Does not consider that it meets the criteria for either a PVAA or LGS.
PC16	Gamlingay	Dennis Green, The Cinques, Mill Hill, Little Heath, The Heath (Note: the Parish Council has not provided any map)	The Parish Council would like to protect the particular settlement pattern that Gamlingay has with its numerous outlying hamlets namely Dennis Green, The Cinques, Mill Hill, Little Heath, The Heath. The outlying hamlets are outside of village framework of Gamlingay and there would need to be extensive coverage of LGS if it were to be used to protect the special local character of Gamlingay and its hamlets. Extensive nature is contrary to guidance in NPPF. LGS designation not appropriate.

Ref. No.	Village	Site Location / Address	District Council's comment
PC17	Great Shelford	Grange field in Church Street;	Adjacent to recreation ground - separated from it by a belt of trees. It consists of open grassland that is within the Green Belt and outside of village framework. It does not appear to have any distinguishing features to it to be identified as PVAA or LGS. The Parish Council has also put this site forward as open space to be allocated in the Local Plan.
PC18	Great Shelford	Field to the east of the railway line on the southern side of Granhams Road.	This is an area of open countryside adjacent to the railway line divided from north to south by a hedgeline with trees. The site is within the Cambridge Southern Fringe Area Action Plan - CSF/5 Landscape, Biodiversity, Recreation and Public Access. It does not appear to have any distinguishing features to it to be identified as LGS. The Parish Council has also put this site forward as open space to be allocated in the Local Plan.
PC19	Haslingfield	Byron's Pool	This site is a Local Nature Reserve. It is some distance from the nearest village and therefore not close to the local community. It has wildlife value which is of interest to the wider district community rather than a local one. Does not meet criteria for LGS.
PC20	Milton	Field opposite Tesco beside Jane Coston Bridge	Triangle of land on edge of Milton adjacent to the A14. Land is within Green Belt. Site outside of the village framework. Not close to the community to which it serves being beyond the industrial park area and Tesco supermarket. Does not meet criteria for LGS.

Ref. No.	Village	Site Location / Address	District Council's comment
PC21	Papworth Everard	Summer's Hills open space	Open space sloping up from bypass on the western side of village adjacent to the new housing development of Summer's Hill. This is an extensive area of open space outside of the village framework. The guidance in the NPPF does not support the identification of extensive areas of open space as LGS.
PC22	Steeple Morden	Tween Town Wood	This wood is in ownership of Woodland Trust and is located to the north of the village well outside village framework. There are no public footpaths from the village and it is not in the Council's judgement reasonably close to the community it serves.

### Important Countryside Frontages

- 8.11. In many places land with a strong countryside character penetrates or sweeps into South Cambridgeshire villages or separates two parts of built-up areas. These areas have been identified in existing plans to show that the frontage and the open countryside beyond should be kept open and free from development to protect the setting, character and appearance of the village.

### Approach in Issues and Options 2012

- 8.12. The existing Important Countryside Frontages policy has successfully protected these views and an issue raised in the 2012 consultation was whether to retain the existing policy and where existing Important Countryside Frontages (ICFs) should be removed or any new ones should be identified.
- 8.13. The Council has received much support for retaining the existing policy and a number of new ICFs were suggested by Parish Councils and individuals. There were only two requests for existing ICFs to be removed.
- 8.14. The Council has assessed all the new suggestions for ICF ensuring that they meet the following criteria:

**Criteria for Assessing ICFs**

- Open views of wider countryside;
- Open countryside separates two parts of the built up area;
- Frontage and open countryside beyond should be kept open and free from development to protect the setting, character and appearance of the village.

8.15. The frontages that have met the test are included in Table 8.3.

**Issue 14 – Important Countryside Frontages**

For the purposes of this consultation the suggested new frontages that have been assessed by the Council and found to meet the test required in the existing policy for Important Countryside Frontages are put forward in a list to seek the views of the local community.

These are shown on the Village Maps in Chapter 9.

**Question 14:**

**Which of the proposed important countryside frontages do you support or object to and why?**

Please provide any comments.

**Table 8.3 Proposed Important Countryside Frontages**

Ref. No.	Village	Site Location / Address	District Council's comment
F1	Great Eversden	South side of Church Street / Wimpole Road Great Eversden	<p>Church Street for part of its length between the Hoops and the Church is in open countryside – with views both to the south and north. The church is not within a village framework and therefore one of the criteria of protecting countryside between two parts of a village is not met by identifying an ICF along this length of road.</p> <p>Consideration could be given to protecting the character of the rural edge to the south of the village by identifying part of the south side of Church Street nearest to the Hoop within the village framework and from the cross roads along the eastern part of Wimpole Road up to property no 38. This frontage has open views of the countryside to the south of the village and towards the church.</p>
F2	Guilden Morden	Suggest the open views of the countryside that extend north-west from Dubbs Knoll Road, Guilden Morden (north of 33 Dubbs Knoll Road).	<p>This frontage follows the road and clearly brings a rural character to this edge of the village. There are clear views of the open countryside beyond with long views from the village. This frontage and open countryside beyond should be kept open and free from development to protect the setting, character and appearance of this part of Guilden Morden. Fox Cottage is a listed building which looks out over this frontage and its setting would be adversely impacted if the open countryside beyond where to be developed.</p>

Ref. No.	Village	Site Location / Address	District Council's comment
F3	Guilden Morden	Area opposite 38-44 Dubbs Knoll Road (south of 33 Dubbs Knoll Road)	This frontage follows the road and clearly brings a rural character to this edge of the village. There is a well-established hedge along the boundary which offers glimpses of the countryside beyond. This frontage creates a rural edge to the village and the adjoining countryside should be kept open and free from development to protect the setting, character and appearance of this part of Guilden Morden.

### Parish Council Proposals

- 8.16. A number of frontages were put forward by Parish Councils. None of the suggestions meet the tests for Important Countryside Frontages and therefore have not been included in Table 8.3 above.

#### Issue 15: Parish Council Proposals for Important Countryside Frontages

None of the frontages proposed by Parish Councils meet the tests for ICF. If Parish Councils wish to meet local aspirations by protecting these frontages, this would need to be done under another new designation if they are to be included in the Local Plan. They are included in this consultation to seek local views on the importance of these areas. If there is local support, we will work with the Parish Councils concerned to see if we should include appropriate community-led policies in the Local Plan.

These are shown on the Village Maps in Chapter 9.

#### Question 15:

**Which of the Parish Council proposed important countryside frontages do you support or object to and why?**

Please provide any comments.

**Table 8.4 Parish Council Proposals for Important Countryside Frontages**

Ref. No.	Village	Site Location / Address	District Council's Comment
PC24	Cambourne	Western and part of southern edge of Lower Cambourne	This frontage is extensive and follows village framework boundary of this part of Cambourne. It does not follow a roadway but goes along property boundaries that face or back onto countryside. For the most part it looks onto a bridleway so views are not to open countryside. This would not protect open views of the village as is intended by the creation of ICF. It would instead protect the views of the countryside available from those properties on this edge of Lower Cambourne. Neither does it separate two parts of the village.
PC25	Cambourne	Southern edge of Greater Cambourne	This frontage is extensive and follows the village framework boundary of Greater Cambourne. It does not follow a roadway but goes along property boundaries that face or back onto the open countryside. This would not protect open views of the village as is intended by the creation of ICF. It would instead protect the views of the open countryside available from those properties on this edge of Greater Cambourne. Neither does it separate two parts of the village.
PC26	Cambourne	Southern edge of Upper Cambourne	This frontage is extensive and follows the village framework boundary of Upper Cambourne. It does not follow a roadway but goes along the property boundaries that will be built that face or back onto the open countryside. This would not protect open views of the village as is intended by the creation of ICF. It would instead protect the views of the open countryside available from those properties on this edge of Upper Cambourne. Neither does it separate two parts of the village.

Ref. No.	Village	Site Location / Address	District Council's Comment
PC27	Gamlingay	Outlying hamlets Dennis Green, The Cinques, and the Heath (Note: the Parish Council has not provided any map)	Gamlingay has many outlying hamlets which are part of the local character and it has suggested that the ICF policy be used to protect this local character. However it would not be appropriate to designate many ICFs in order to protect this particular character since it is not the intention of this policy to prevent infilling of extensive areas such as is described in the representation. It is only frontages along a defined road or boundary that could be designated within this policy.
PC28	Great Shelford	Southern side of Granhams Road Hill	This frontage is located outside of Great Shelford and therefore having an ICF would not protect views out from the village. It is in open countryside so does not fulfil the criteria for ICF.
PC29	Over	Longstanton Road	This frontage is for most of its length alongside an employment site in Over with open countryside beyond. The employment site is behind a tall hedge and so the rural character of the village is not necessarily enhanced by its presence. An ICF along this stretch of road would not protect the rural character of this part of Over.
PC30	Over	New Road / Station Road	All of these frontages along Station Road and New Road are outside of the village beyond the edge of the rural/urban boundary. They are rural in character. Therefore having these lengths of road designated as ICF would not be in the spirit of the policy which is to protect views of countryside looking from within a village not looking from outside back towards the village.